

November 18, 2015

Report Day for 2015 will be **THURSDAY, JANUARY 7, 2016, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at Wesley UMC in Beaumont.** We will be in the **Youth Center** (building closest to the corner of Major & Folsom).

EZRA: Report Day data entry will be in the EZRA system at GCFA. This is a web based application that can be accessed via any web browser on either PC or Mac. To access the site go to: <http://ezra.gcfa.org>.

When you login for the first time, enter the GCFA number of your church as the username and `txcumc1` as the password and click Log In. You will then be directed to a User Information page to add contact information and then a page to change your password. Please choose a password that you will remember and one that you can share with others from your church working on the report. The username for your church will always be your GCFA number.

There will only be ONE login for each church (GCFA number). Multiple people can be working at the same time but only one person at a time can work on each table otherwise data will be lost.

Line Changes – Please be aware that due to the removal of some Fair Share Goals for 2015, line numbers have changed beginning with Line 93.

Help Documents: After you login, on the right side of the page are links to FAQ and a User Guide. There is also a link to print a blank report to use as a worksheet.

Data Entry: Data will be entered into three different Tables that have separate webpages. The best method for data entry is going to be to complete a worksheet by hand, review your data, and then enter a complete table into EZRA and SAVE. The different tables can be accessed using the pull down menu at the top of the page.

Warnings and Errors: When you SAVE, you may get messages indicating there are errors or warnings. Errors are things such as total fields not matching up, items that are zero that cannot be zero, etc. Warnings indicate numbers that have changed greater than 10% from the previous year.

You will be able to SAVE with errors and warnings. However, all errors must be corrected before you are able to SUBMIT your statistics. Warnings may be correct and data will still be submitted with warnings, BUT pay attention to these as they indicate the possibility of incorrect data. The system requires you to add explanations to warnings. Please provide a brief explanation for the warnings as this is helpful for the District Auditor team, Conference Staff, and GCFA staff as they review the data and for you when you complete next year's report.

Completing the report: There will not be a cutoff date for data entry. Please **DO NOT WAIT** until the last minute to enter your data. DO NOT click Submit Stats until you are finished with your Report entry and satisfied that it is correct. If you erroneously click Submit, you will need to contact an Auditor or the District Office to unlock your Report. When you do click Submit Stats, the Report will be submitted to the District Auditor for review. After submitting, you will still be able to open your Report to print any additional copies.

If you need assistance in completing your Report online, please contact one of us from the District Auditor team for guidance or assistance (contact information on back).

ACCURACY: Please be sure the numbers you enter on your Report are accurate. It creates many problems when we try to correct them later. Please pay special attention to the Yellow warnings as they indicate large changes that will affect your Apportionments for 2017. The numbers may be correct but please verify that the amounts accurately reflect your church's data. Take the time to verify the numbers before you submit.

Total Lines: Total lines will automatically be calculated when you click SAVE. However, the Grand Total Paid (Line 154) will not automatically enter the calculated number. This line will have to be manually entered. EZRA will verify that your manual entry matches the sum of the lines noted and indicate an error if the manual entry does not match the calculation.

Apportionments and Other Payments: FYI, the data for Conference Apportionments & Fair Share Goals (Lines 57-102), District Apportionments, (Lines 103-112), and other benevolences sent to the Conference Office (Lines 113-130) will be imported from Conference and District records into Ezra. This import will happen on December 4, December 23, and January 19. Therefore, if you see changes in your data on these lines during this time it is due to the importing.

All amounts from the Conference lines noted above should be and must be reflected somewhere on your Apportionment statements. If they are not, please contact the Conference Office. Any benevolent amounts paid directly to other entities should be reported on Lines 131 or 132.

Special Data Collection Items and EIN: Please note these special questions dealing with incorporation, founding date, and state charter number. The church's EIN from the IRS is necessary for GCFA to administer the UMC Group Tax Exemption Ruling and provide verification to potential donors of the church's tax exempt status. Once these items are entered in EZRA they will only be have to be verified in future years. The question on property deeds is due to the resolution regarding this passed at Annual Conference in May 2014.

Signature Block: This signature line is located at the top of page one of Table 3. This is so that the signature is on the same page as the header to indicate which church the report is from.

Payment Deadline: The deadline to mail payments to the Conference is **Wednesday, December 10, 2015**. Bring any further payments on Report Day. Adhering to this deadline will make Report Day much easier.

Online Payments to the Conference: See the enclosed handout on the availability to make online payments to the Texas Annual Conference. The deadline to make online payments is **Friday, December 18, 2015**.

Print: To print a copy of the report, on the right side of the page or at the top of the page you can click REPORTS, CHURCH STATS REPORT, and run a report will all three tables. This can also then be saved as a PDF. Using this method will give you a clean printout of 6 pages. Please use this method.

Submit Stats: When you are completely finished, click "Submit Stats" at the top of the page. This will take you to a new page where you can click "Submit Statistics."

On Report Day, please bring:

1. Any payments to the Texas Annual Conference with completed Remittance Forms
2. Any payments to the Southeast District
3. Signed copy of the Report

Early Submittal: If you are finished with your report **BEFORE January 7, 2016** and do not have any funds to turn in, you may complete your Report in EZRA, SUBMIT, and email or fax the first page of Table 3 with the signature line completed to Mark Bunch, mbunch@stpaulfamily.com, FAX: 409-735-5547. If you need to turn in funds, you may contact one of us below to set up an appointment to turn in your report and payments.

Email/Fax Submittal on Report Day, January 7, 2016: If you do not have funds to turn in and you are finishing your report **ON Thursday, January 7, 2016**, then you may also SUBMIT your report in Ezra and email or fax the signed signature page to Mark Bunch, mbunch@stpaulfamily.com, FAX: 409-735-5547.

We MUST have all reports submitted in EZRA and have received all signed signature pages and payments by 12:00pm on Thursday, January 7, 2016.

If you have any questions, while completing your reports, please contact one of us at the information below.

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