

1 **Camden Neighborhood Center Historic Site**

2 **No Financial Impact**

3 WHEREAS, in 1913, at the peak of establishing deaconess homes and training schools in the United
 4 States, Camden’s Deaconess Home and Community Center is founded by the New Jersey Conference
 5 Woman’s Home Missionary Society with deaconess Hattie F. Davis in charge. A house on 273
 6 Kaighn’s Avenue was purchased for the work. The initial offerings to the community were sewing
 7 classed, children’s’ story hour and mother’s meetings. Shortly thereafter a kindergarten and
 8 employment bureau was launched. In that same year the deaconess made nearly one thousand
 9 home visitations to the needy.

10 WHEREAS, by 1921, the Neighborhood Center moved to 278 Kaighn’s Avenue when they purchased
 11 the Kaighn Family mansion. Three years later the mansion was demolished and with funding help
 12 from the New Jersey Annual Conference along with the New Jersey Conference Woman’s Home
 13 Missionary Society, a new building costing \$100,000 was dedicated on April 30, 1925. Later
 14 construction came in the form of the Craft building (1964) and the Broadway Center (1971).

15 WHEREAS, the Neighborhood Center continually expanded its outreach to meet the needs of
 16 Camden’s underprivileged in subsequent years. Programs included weekly groups, children, youth,
 17 teen, senior outreach programs, a thrift store, GED program, Bible classes, recreation, music
 18 programs, drug rehabilitation for women and young mothers, emergency service, a soup kitchen
 19 that serves meals seven days a week, three hundred and sixty-five days a year, child care and after
 20 school programs.

21 RATIONALE: The Neighborhood Center has its roots in the international Deaconess movement’s
 22 focus on serving Camden’s disenfranchised through a variety of ministries which continue today.
 23 The Neighborhood Center is a product of the New Jersey Conference Woman’s Home Missionary
 24 Society women and the annual conference since 1913. The 1925 building façade is a testament to
 25 early 20th century architectural design. The Neighborhood Center has stayed true to its original
 26 purpose throughout the years and is a prime example of a historic Greater New Jersey Annual
 27 Conference ministry that remembers what they will be for many years in the future.

28 BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, as one of the most successful Deaconess based ministries that has
 29 evolved their ministry over the years to meet the needs of Camden’s citizens we feel that the
 30 Neighborhood Center deserves to be recognized by this body as a Greater New Jersey Annual
 31 Conference Historic Site.

32 Submitted by and Presenter:
 33 Reverend Bill Wilson, Chair
 34 Commission on Archive and History
 35 February 22, 2015
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37

1 Annual Church/Charge Conference Report to Archives and History

2 No Financial Impact

3 WHEREAS, the annual conference journal records basic local church information in the form of
 4 pastoral appointments, numeric totals for financial statistics, membership, attendances, vital
 5 ministries, real estate assessments, incomes, expenditures, etc. which provides only bare bones data
 6 about local churches without documenting anywhere near the faithful ministries and work of the
 7 congregation for the Kingdom of God.

8 WHEREAS, local church histories provide gradient historical context of each church depending on
 9 the amount and breadth of the research as evident in the narrative essay by putting the sinew on
 10 daily church life. Descriptions of buildings, events, class meetings, Sunday Schools, members on
 11 various boards and agencies, women’s ministries, mission support, vital records all frame the life of
 12 the church in compressed categorical segments. These histories are important but often lacking the
 13 complete story.

14 WHEREAS, the annual church/charge report is the final piece of the local church’s historic puzzle
 15 which allows historians to tell the full story of the life of a local congregation. These reports contain
 16 valuable information lacking in other forms of documentation.

17 WHEREAS, Church/Charge reports only come to the archives for permanent deposit when a church
 18 closes its doors. The older the church the less likely a complete set of reports will be collected within
 19 the transferred records.

20 RATIONALE: Archives and History wants to capture this important document on a yearly basis as to
 21 avoid the potential loss of its valuable information in the best way possible. By having a resolution
 22 requiring each church to send a printed copy to the archives on a yearly basis allows the archives to
 23 capture this record while they are readily available

24 BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that The Greater New Jersey Annual Conference Commission on
 25 Archives and History recommends that each local church send a copy of their annual church/charge
 26 conference report to the archives once the church’s church/charge conference is done.

27 Submitted by and Presenter of Recommendation:

28 Reverend Bill Wilson, Chair

29 February 22, 2015

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31

32 50th Anniversary of the 1964 Merger of Former Delaware Annual Conference
33 Churches in New Jersey with the Newly Formed NNJ and SNJ Conferences

34 No Financial Impact

35 WHEREAS, in 1939, when the Methodist Episcopal Church, Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and
 36 the Methodist Protestant Church merged to form the Methodist Church, the new denomination
 37 continued a policy of demeaning racial segregation through the creation of a jurisdictional system

1 with five white jurisdictions and one, separate African American jurisdiction. The Central
 2 Jurisdiction's Delaware Annual Conference (1864-1965) was the home conference to greater New
 3 Jersey's Black local churches.

4 WHEREAS, despite the intention of segregating and by default debasing African American
 5 Methodists, the Central Jurisdiction provided a new, larger, network amongst its church leaders not
 6 previously possible in the old Negro conferences and created a new generation of leaders for a
 7 church within a church system which will be important later on in time. Almost immediately these
 8 newly formed networks pushed to end the Central Jurisdiction.

9 WHEREAS, by 1964, the end of the Central Jurisdiction was at hand due to a number of factors
 10 including legislation by the Pittsburgh General Conference, the fruits of Methodist church
 11 organizations within the jurisdiction and amongst the general church agencies, various annual
 12 conferences, pastors and local non-black congregations. These groups along with others showed
 13 the way to a more fair and inclusive vision of the church. There was pressure by the Evangelical
 14 United Brethren Church to end the Central Jurisdiction as well or union with the Methodist Church
 15 would not come to be. Civil rights legislation and building civil unrest started to hammer the final
 16 nails in the Central Jurisdiction coffin. The official end of the Central Jurisdiction came in 1973.

17 WHEREAS, in that same year twenty-three Delaware Annual Conference churches merged into the
 18 newly created Northern and Southern New Jersey Annual Conferences. At that same time Bishop
 19 Prince Taylor became one of two first Black bishops to be assigned to predominately white episcopal
 20 areas. Taylor's assignment was, of course, the New Jersey Episcopal Area. There would be a
 21 handful more post 1964 Delaware African American Methodist congregations joining the two new
 22 conferences making the merger complete.

23 RATIONALE: Born out of racism, the Central Jurisdiction is today a terrible stain upon Methodist
 24 identity. Despite the demeaning nature of this segregated plan it proved to be a crucible by which
 25 the networking and training of African American leaders who were to push for complete integration
 26 in both the church and larger American society. Greater New Jersey African American Methodists
 27 were instrumental in the fight for civil rights both within and beyond the Delaware Annual
 28 Conference boundaries as well as ending the Central Jurisdiction once and for all. By 1964, greater
 29 New Jersey Methodists on both sides of the racial line embraced the merger of the Delaware Annual
 30 Conference into two new inclusive conferences. The former Delaware Annual Conference leaders
 31 proved to be a valuable asset in the spiritual growth of existing black and white churches and push
 32 social justice campaigns with Bishop Prince Taylor leading the way.

33 BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that The Greater New Jersey Commission on Archives and History
 34 petitions this annual conference to take a moment to recognize the struggle and gifts that these
 35 former Delaware Annual Conference churches which made a second reunification possible in 1964
 36 and beyond.

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 39 February 22, 2015
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1 Elect a Local Church Historian and Include in Church Conference Report

2 No Financial Implication

3 WHEREAS, The *Book of Discipline* “strongly recommends that the charge conference elect a church
 4 historian in order to preserve the history of each local church. The responsibilities of this historian
 5 are to keep the historical records up to date; ...cooperate with the annual conference commission
 6 on archives and history; provide an annual report on the care of church records and historical
 7 materials to the charge conference; and also provide, with the pastor and the committee on records
 8 and history, if any, for the preservation of all local church records and historical materials no longer
 9 in current use. Records and historical materials include all documents, minutes, journals, diaries,
 10 reports, letters, pamphlets, papers, manuscripts, maps, photographs, books, audiovisuals, sound
 11 recordings, magnetic or other tapes, or any other documentary material, regardless of form or
 12 characteristics, made or received pursuant to any provisions of the *Discipline* in connection with the
 13 transaction of church business by any local church of The United Methodist Church or any of its
 14 constituent predecessors...” (§1247.5)

15 WHEREAS, the local church historian works with the church office to implement and maintain a
 16 records retention schedule that streamlines the life-cycle of records by designating them as being
 17 either “active” or “inactive” and also as holding “non-permanent” and/or “permanent” status.

18 WHEREAS, the local church historian is a valuable member of the church’s ministry and witness to
 19 the larger community by providing leadership in the ministry of memory-evangelism through the
 20 celebration and commemoration of our Wesleyan-Christian faith identity.

21 WHEREAS, the local church historian needs to be named in the annual church/charge conference
 22 report so that the annual conference commission on archives and history has a contact person in
 23 which to train, advise and amplify the ability of the local church historian to become more effective
 24 in the administration and ministry of the local church.

25 RATIONALE: The local church historian is an important part of the administration and ministry of
 26 every local church. By maintaining the archive of a local church and leading the congregation in
 27 celebrating and living-out our Wesleyan identity, the local church historian ensures the church’s
 28 ongoing witness will inspire future generations for greater faithful service to Jesus Christ.

29 BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that The Greater New Jersey Annual Conference Commission on
 30 Archives and History (CAH) recommends that each local church elect a Church Historian to enhance
 31 the efficiency of its record keeping and keep its ministry of memory-evangelism relevant for future
 32 generations. CAH also recommends that the name of church historian be included on the yearly
 33 church/charge conference report in order for the CAH to identify, train, support and advise the
 34 historian for better service within the local church.

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