Resourcing the history of our annual conference and beyond came in the form of digitizing previous historical publications of the former Northern New Jersey Historical Society that are now available on our GNJ web pages. Titles include: The Civil War Diaries of James B. Faulks and The Personal Diaries of John Summerfield Coit; The Diaries of Stephen S. Day, 1895-1934; The Journals of the Reverend Thomas Morrell, Methodist Patriot and Preacher, 1747-1813; The Maverick Strain: Dissent and Reform in the United Methodist Tradition, On the Trail of Francis Asbury, Untrod Paths, A Forgotten Chaplain of the Civil War: Commander John L. Lenhart; One Hundred Twenty-Five Years of Methodism; Skeletons in Our Closets: Unique, Amusing, and Human Incidents from the Life of Our Churches; The Story of Our Ethnic Churches; Visiting the Past, Present and Future: A Tour of Methodism in Northern New Jersey.

We remained active in our jurisdiction CAH connection through attending the annual meeting in Connecticut and by having Don DeGroat serve as a member on NEJCAH’s Executive Committee. The same is true with our close connection with the General Commission on Archives and History, who rents us shelving to properly store the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference archives. We also offer professional assistance in all phases of archival practices. Our archivist served as one of the test contributors to GCAH’s revamped on-line catalog of United Methodist annual conferences’ holdings for public searching.

Other items of note include a survey of annual conference commission on archives and history budgets in order to see where we fit in to the larger annual conference funding picture. A result of the survey revealed a mean average budget of $27,034. There were three conference budgets over $100,000 and nine conference budgets below $10,000 in the mean average calculations. Some of our members speak at local churches on the value of archives and history in a vital congregation. We help churches date and interpret their history. Another important aspect of CAH’s work is supplying and subsequently advising proper records management through retention scheduling. There were times when our members helped churches with preservation of their treasures whether at our repository or how-to discussions with the local church historian.

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Greetings in the Spirit of Jesus Christ! The Boston University School of Theology (STH) walks with you on the journey of discipleship, seeking to love God and to love our neighbors with all our hearts, souls, minds, and strength. Thank you for your prayers that inspire and support the STH mission to love God, build knowledge, and equip leaders for the church and society.

New faculty: This year, Boston University welcomed new faculty in ethics, psychology, theologies of spirituality, comparative theology, church renewal, Black church leadership, and mission studies. We welcomed: Nimi Wariboko (Walter G. Muelder Professor of Social Ethics); David Decosimo (Theology); Theodore Hickman-Maynard (Evangelism and Church Renewal); Andrea Hollingsworth (Theology); Barbod Salimi (Psychology and Peace Studies); and Daryl Ireland (Associate Director of the Center for Global Christianity and Mission).
Spiritual life: STH continued to expand and deepen its spiritual life program, led by Charlene Zuill, Spiritual Life Coordinator and United Methodist elder. Bishop Susan Hassinger, Claire Wolfteich, and many others also offer a rich selection of courses in spirituality and leadership.

Chaplaincy track: STH added a chaplaincy track to the MDiv degree, preparing students for hospitals, prisons, and military settings.

Engaging in Dialogue: STH spent much energy this year in hard conversations on violence, racism, and injustice, seeking to be honest and vigorously open to change, while honoring the dignity of all persons.

Power, Privilege and Prophetic Witness is the STH theme for 2015-2017: We engaged the theme in classes, lectures, retreats, and workshops, seeking to stretch our capacities to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God.

Examining the intersection of theology and race: The opportunities this year included: a brilliant new documentary on North Korea; a dialogical viewing of Selma; dialogues on racism with Thandeka and Andrew Sung Park; a retreat on building race relations; circle worship; a student-led event Missing Voices, Daunting Choices: The Erasure of Black Women in Black American Movements; and events on interfaith understanding.

Caring for the Church through Leadership and Service

Serving the United Methodist Church: Students served local churches and church bodies as interns, staff, and volunteers. Faculty served with such bodies as: United Methodist Women, World Methodist Council, Ministry Study Commission, Women of Color Scholars and Mentors program, Pan Methodist Commission on Children in Poverty, and boards and agencies of the general church and annual conferences.

Empowering young Latino/a leaders: Young leaders gathered with seasoned mentors to enhance their gifts and service as Christian leaders: Hispanic Youth Leadership Initiative (HYLA) and Raíces Latinas Leadership Institute

Facilitating dialogues on church renewal: We launched a new initiative on Evangelism and Church Renewal.

Reflecting on worship: We contributed to a special issue of Worship Arts Magazine, edited and written by STH faculty, alumni/ae, and students, and published by the Fellowship of United Methodists in Music and Worship Arts.

Caring for the World

Offering opportunities for engaged learning: Opportunities included the Doctor of Ministry program in Transformational Leadership; an urban ministry course; travel seminars to India, the Arizona-Mexico border, Israel-Palestine, Mexico, and Turkey (Ephesus); work with leaders in Ferguson, MO; and a travel seminar for UMC clergywomen to Cuba, co-sponsored by GBHEM and STH.

Collaborating with the global church: Collaborations included sponsorship of the Dictionary of African Christian Biography; events and art exhibits on local and global ecology; and dialogues with global church leaders.

As we at STH seek to be faithful and to partner with you in ministry, we give thanks for your witness. Thank you too for your continuing inspiration and contributions to our shared journey.

Blessings and gratitude,

Mary Elizabeth Moore
Dean of Boston University School of Theology