

DAILY PROCEEDINGS OF THE EIGHTEENTH SESSION

OF THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF
THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF GREATER NEW JERSEY

May 21-23, 2017

Wildwood, NJ

Sunday, May 21, 2017, 4:00 p.m.

LAITY SESSION

Rosa Williams, Conference Lay Leader, called the Laity Session to order and opened with prayer. Rosa Williams introduced the Laity Board and expressed her gratitude for their voices at the table this year. Youth and young adults in attendance were asked to stand and were welcomed.

Ms. Williams introduced Jay Brown, Director of Certified Lay Ministers, and thanked him and the newly certified lay ministers in attendance for their faithfulness.

Ms. Williams asked the delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conference to stand and thanked them for their service.

Ms. Williams informed the body that many churches demonstrated a turnaround this past year using the five markers of vitality. She informed the body that 25,000 people are now in small groups; 22,000 people are engaged in hands-on missions in our communities, and we have invested more than \$15,000,000 in missions.

Ms. Williams introduced George Lagos, Director of Lay Servant Ministry. Mr. Lagos thanked the body for all the calls and emails he has received over this past year and encouraged them to continue. He announced that graduation for Lay Servant Ministers will be on Saturday, June 3, at 10:00 a.m. He thanked Beverly Karlovich for all the work she does for the Lay Servant programs at the MRC.

Laity Leadership Academy

Ms. Williams informed the body that the 2017 Laity Leadership Academy will be held Saturday, Sept 9. Registration will open online on June 1, 2017. She discussed the six tracks being offered. She reminded the body that those who attend the Laity Leadership Academy and develop an action plan will be eligible to apply for seed grants of \$500.00 to start new ministries.

Lay Ministry Grant Recipients

A short video clip was shown highlighting one of the Lay Ministries honored this year.

Conference Award Recipients

The following 2017 Award Recipients were introduced by Marilyn Kinelski:

The Robert B. Steelman Methodist History Award: Rick Krassow, Friendship UMC

The Multi-Media Church History Award: Maries Mahler, Midvale UMC

The Harry Denman Evangelism Award: Judy Colorado, Springfield Emanuel UMC

The Harry Denman Evangelism Award: Megan Gallagher, Jackson UMC

Helen Alter Davidson Award: Rev. Fran Noll

Intercultural Competence

Ms. Williams spoke about the increasing cultural diversity in the country with GNJ being one of the most diverse conferences in the denomination. She asked "How do we develop leaders that are culturally competent and able to work across such a diverse spectrum?" She emphasized that intercultural competence is critical to success in ministry and encouraged laity to embrace diversity as cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments are made. Ms. Williams also stressed that those present at conference must help equip their congregations. She reminded the body that legislation was going to be introduced on Tuesday for a 10-year plan for cultural competence. She encouraged the body to consider how laity can help prepare congregational leaders and congregations for cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments, helping them understand that these are becoming the norm, not the exceptions. She stressed that lay leadership must become advocates of change in welcoming cross-cultural appointments in our congregations to provide safe, non-judgmental transitions for clergy to bridge all ethnic groups within communities.

DAILY PROCEEDINGS

Video

A video clip was shared from a recent conference-wide workshop on graceful conversations. It emphasized how important and transforming conversations with those different from ourselves can be.

Equipping Laity

Ms. Williams shifted to the topic of equipping laity for ministry. She read Ephesians 4:12-14, and reminded the body that the Laity Board continues to focus on equipping the laity by providing programs and opportunities. When laity is equipped, they are better prepared to meet the goals of the GNJ strategic plan around professions of faith, increasing small groups and reaching new persons.

Ms. Williams introduced Rev. Juel Nelson, the new Director of Leadership Development, to share her role in Lay Ministry. Rev. Nelson spoke about her personal history and how the laity in her home church invested in her and powerfully influenced her journey. She referred to the apostle Paul who likened the church to the body of Christ. She stated that when each part is working at its best, the church, the body of Christ, is its healthiest. Rev. Nelson said GNJ is at the very beginning of equipping the laity. She spoke of the two areas of focus: technical development and adaptive development. She explained that technical development equips the local church with knowledge and skills to lead with excellence. Adaptive development seeks to equip local churches to face challenges that may not have clear answers, like conflict resolutions leading through change or community organizing and fruitfulness through the five points of vitality. She encouraged the body to attend the workshops that are being developed.

Announcements

Rosa Williams made the necessary announcements. She thanked the United Methodist Men who would be setting up for the last session of the day.

Video

A video, "Rise Against Hunger," was shown.

Blessing

John Hartman closed the session with a blessing for dinner.

Sunday, May 21, 2017 – 4:00 p.m.

CLERGY SESSION

Bishop John Schol began with words of welcome. The bar for the clergy session was set. Rev. Hector A. Burgos, Director of Connectional Ministries, led the body in song. Rev. Thomas Korkuch, chair of the Board of Ordained Ministry (BOOM), read John 17: 6 – 11. Rev. Shawn Callender-Hogan offered the opening prayer.

QUESTIONS 17-50a

Rev. Korkuch and Rev. Jessica Naulty, also on the Board, presented the report of the Board Report (Parts II-V of the Disciplinary Questions – 17 – 50a). As each question was presented, it was received and/or adopted, as action required. During this time, the Candidates for Ordination were introduced. Bishop Schol asked the historical questions, and the candidates were led out of the room. Bishop Schol asked for a vote to approve the candidates. They were approved unanimously. Similarly, the Candidates for Commissioning were introduced, led out of the room, and Bishop Schol asked for a vote to approve the candidates. They were approved unanimously.

MOTION

When question 50b was presented, which involved approval of continuing Rev. Jisun Kwak on Involuntary Leave of Absence, a motion was made by Rev. David Wiley to suspend the rules and use a process agreed upon by all concerned parties, in order to discuss the question. The motion passed. There were three speeches for and three speeches against question 50b.

Question 50 of the Board of Ordained Ministry Report

DAILY PROCEEDINGS

50. Who are the provisional, ordained members or associate members on leave of absence and for what number of years consecutively has each held this relation (¶353)? (Indicate credential. Record Charge Conference where membership is held.)

	Name	Number of Years	Charge Conference
a) Voluntary?			
(1)	Personal, 5 years or less (¶353.2a 3) (v)		
	Kristin Helms (PD)	2	St. Paul's: Thorofare
	Eugene Kim (FE) (eff. 1/1/17)	2	Hackensack
	Matthew Na (FE)	3	Cornerstone: Hasbrouck Heights
(2)	Personal, more than 5 years (¶353.2a 3) (v 2/3)		
	Holly Hughes Cartwright (FE)	17	Keyport: Calvary
(3)	Family, 5 years or less (¶353.2b 3) (v)		
	William Benjamin (FE)	1	Asbury: Woodlynn
	Allyson Estes (FE)	5	Asbury Park: Ballard
(4)	Family, more than 5 years (¶354.2b 3) (v 2/3)		
(5)	Transitional (¶353.2c)		
	Maylis de La Fe Rodriguez (PD) 1		
b) Involuntary (¶ 354)? (v 2/3)			
	Jisun Kwak (FE) (eff. 10/22/16) 2		First UMC: Millville
	<i>(Clergy Executive Session did not affirm)</i>		

MOTIONS

Rev. Robert E. Costello made a motion to take the vote for question 50b by written ballot. The motion passed. The ballot was taken and tellers retired to count the votes.

Rev. Costello read a motion requesting a declaratory decision from the Judicial Council, as follows:

"Bishop, I move that the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference request a declaratory decision from the Judicial Council on the following matter regarding the involuntary leave of Jisun Kwak:

"What is the constitutionality, application, meaning and effect of Paragraphs 636 and 362.2 of the 2012 Book of Discipline in regard to ensuring 'that the disciplinary procedures for discontinuance of..., involuntary leave of absence (Para 355),...are properly followed' in the case of the Rev. Dr. Jisun Kwak where her numerous objections were dismissed by the Administrative Review Committee without a fair process hearing with her or her counsel, where the results were not given to her until the meeting of the clergy session seven months after she entered her request for review with them and after reminders from her on two further occasions that she had presented her objections for review?

"Challenges and objections presented included, but are not limited to (a copy is available):

"the challenge by the respondent that Bishop Schol held a supervisory meeting on June 6th, exerted coercive influence on her by giving her a proposed resolution that was presented to her at the meeting, and by giving her only 3 days to execute the resolution, without having even filed a complaint, in violation of previous Judicial Council rulings; "included also was the objection that Bishop Schol admittedly held ex parte meetings with members of the Board of Ordained Ministry Executive Committee and the Board of Ministry itself prior to their hearings, in direct violation of prohibitions set forth in Paragraph 362.2d;

"included also was the challenge that Bishop Schol failed to handle the matter in a timely manner as required in Paragraph 362.2 and 363.1b, by first suspending the respondent and then seeking an involuntary leave of absence,

DAILY PROCEEDINGS

without having his chosen Counsel for the Church file a complaint as of May 21, 2017, and further noting that Judicial Council decision number 973 clearly indicates that making a request for an involuntary leave of absence does not constitute the filing of a complaint.

“Further, what is the constitutionality, application, meaning, and effect of the various paragraphs and Judicial Council Decisions cited in the objections individually or collectively presented by Rev. Dr. Kwak to the Administrative Review Committee with respect to being sufficient grounds to overturn the recommendation for involuntary leave of absence?”

“Further, we request from the Judicial Council a declaratory decision on the constitutionality, application, meaning and effect of Paragraphs 355.2a (2012 Book of Discipline) as used in the putting of Rev. Dr. Jisun Kwak onto involuntary leave of absence without a fair process hearing, particularly in light of the entire process being based on untested allegations, in violation of the presumption of innocence until such time as a fair process could only be completed with the filing of a complaint, the findings of the Committee on Investigation, and a trial as set forth in Paragraph 2701 (2012 and 2016 editions) and elsewhere in the Book of Discipline, and in accordance with provisions set forth in Paragraphs 2701 to 2716 in the 2012 edition and 2701 to 2719 in the 2016 edition, in light of the fact that Paragraph 362.1a was violated by the respondent being denied fair hearing prior to the final decisions on her status.

“Further, we request from the Judicial Council a declaratory decision on the constitutionality, application, meaning and effect of the requirements of separation of powers as noted in Judicial Council decisions 915, 1156, 1216 and elsewhere, particularly in light of the fact that the entire process was led by the bishop, based merely on allegations and that the Administrative Review Committee report indicated that its focus was merely on timelines in the process, and the entire process was not reviewed by the Administrative Review Committee as required by paragraph 636 of the Book of Discipline.”

The motion passed. Rev. Costello announced that he needed to type the motion and would present it when it was ready. *(It was presented to the Conference Secretary following adjournment of Annual Conference at 12: 32 p.m. Tuesday, May 23, 2017. The text above is based upon that submission.)*

A recess was taken for dinner.

REPORT OF VOTE

After the recess, Bishop Schol reported the result of the vote: 122 yes votes, 137 no votes. Question 50b to continue Rev. Jisun Kwak on Involuntary Leave of Absence was not supported.

QUESTIONS 52-72

The remainder of the Board report from the Board of Ordained Ministry was presented and approved.

Bishop Schol acknowledged all the retirees.

The Clergy Report in its entirety was presented for approval. The entire report was approved with the exception of question 50b.

Rev. Dr. Gina Hendrickson, Dean of Cabinet for GNJAC presented the proposed process for initiating part-time appointments and then made a request for a decision of law.

REQUEST FOR DECISION OF LAW

Rev. Dr. Gina Hendrickson, Dean of Cabinet for GNJAC, submitted the following request: “Bishop Schol, I ask for a decision of law. Does the cabinet’s process for initiating part-time appointments abide by the requirements of paragraph 338 of the Book of Discipline?”

This was received, and the session adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

DAILY PROCEEDINGS

Ordained Deacon

Debra A De Vos

Ordained Elders

Karline “Kay” Dubuisson

Sandra Lee Stenstrom

John Inverso

David Alan Tillisch

Earl Kim

Heather E. Valosin

Todd Richard Lattig

Catherine Elizabeth Williams

Ninabeth Metcalf

Bishop Schol invited all who may have heard God’s call to ministry while at the service to come forward and promised those newly commissioned or ordained would pray with them. He then offered a closing prayer and benediction.

Following the recessional, a reception was held in the outer hallway.

Monday May 22, 2017, 8:30 a.m.

GATHERING

The conference praise team gathered the worshippers with songs of praise. Bishop John Schol thanked the band and had Eric Drew, Director of Worship, introduce the members.

OPENING

Bishop Schol celebrated the news that five cards were received from individuals who felt the call to ministry at the Ordination Service. Another card was brought up at this time.

Bishop Schol announced that 1383 individuals have registered for this year’s conference, which he noted was a new record.

OPENING PRAYER

Bishop Schol invited Rachel Prutzman forward. She offered an opening prayer.

BAR OF CONFERENCE

Conference Secretary, Rev. David Wiley, made a motion to set the bar of the conference. The motion passed.

Conference Secretary, Rev. David Wiley, made a motion to allow Conference staff to speak on the floor throughout the entire Annual Conference session, as needed. The motion passed.

EPISCOPAL ADDRESS

Bishop Schol opened his address by talking about numerous programs in which local churches in the conference are involved to help in their respective communities. He rejoiced at how God is at work in our midst. He stressed how, by doing good, GNJ continues to make God’s work visible in local areas. The bishop stressed that by doing this work, we have reason to be joyful. He stated that joy is sustained by hope, which lives at the edges of faith. It is rooted in the conviction that God’s grace prevails, that love wins, and that Jesus Christ makes all things new. Bishop Schol went on to celebrate the positive results that have happened over this past year throughout the conference. He led the body in “Re-joicing” over these accomplishments. Bishop Schol spoke about some of the challenges the conference and denomination has faced as well. He reminded the body that the denomination has rarely fully agreed on any issue. He encouraged GNJ United Methodist’s lead the way showing how to be diverse while still being able to thrive and grow – let GNJ lead the way. He rejoiced in the diversity in the conference.

Bishop Schol spoke about the geo-political shifts happening in our nation and how he is concerned about what is going on in the world. He called the body to be remain faithful and biblical in our response. He reminded the body that scripture has always been clear: we are to welcome the stranger, the refugee and the immigrant. He reminded the body that as the world is full of rhetoric that heightens conflict, we are called to stand firm in our values and engage in conversations that glorifies God and witnesses to the life of Jesus Christ.

Bishop Schol spoke about the challenge of the changing society and how we are not changing fast enough. He shared how

DAILY PROCEEDINGS

some churches have changed and grown. He told the body that all can do this; the path may seem daunting but is not difficult. He described four pillars needed to accomplish this: passionate faith, transformational leaders, vital mission congregations and financial resources.

Bishop Schol announced that the CFA has proposed a budget for 2018 that decreases apportionments for local churches, which was received with a 're-joyce'. He explained that while decreasing apportionments, the conference is developing other financial streams of income through the Foundation. He explained how the Foundation is increasing its net worth because more churches are investing through it.

Bishop Schol concluded encouraging the body to rejoice, for God is doing great through us.

VIDEO

A video "Rejoice in New Places for New and Diverse People" was shown.

WELCOME

Bishop Schol welcomed Claire and Emily Drew, twin sisters, on the dais as they rode their bikes around the stage.

LEGISLATION

Nominations Report

Rosa Williams made a motion for the approval of the Nominations Committee Report published on the Pre Conference Journal addendum with editorial changes reported to the body. Rev. Manuel Sardinas, Gateway North District Superintendent, made a friendly amendment to add Rev. David Le Duc to the Gateway North District Committee of Ordained Ministry. Ms. Williams accepted this amendment. The motion passed.

Trustees Enabling Resolution

Rev. Clifford Still, Chair of the Board of Trustees, made a motion for the approval of the Trustees Enabling Resolution. The motion passed.

Advanced Specials

Rev. Isabel Quezada, Chair of the Board of Global Ministries, made a motion for the approval of the conference recognized Advanced Specials. The motion passed.

Historic Sites

John Callanan, Chair of the Commission on Archives and History, made a motion for the approval of the three historic sites resolutions: Frankford Plains UMC, St. John, Fordville, UMC and St. Paul's UMC, Nyack, NY. The motion passed.

Constitutional Amendments

Rev. Tom Lank and Lynn Caterson, heads of the GNJ General Conference delegation, were invited forward. Bishop Schol explained to the body who could vote for the constitutional amendments sent from General Conference.

Rev. Lank and Ms. Caterson explained each amendment.

Ballots were distributed to all who could vote. The vote was taken. The ballots were collected. Bishop Schol explained that the results would not be announced until all annual conferences have voted, which would be several months away.

VIDEO

A video "Rejoice with A Future With Hope" was shown.

A Future With Hope, Inc. By-Laws Change

Bobbie Ridgely, Executive Director for A Future With Hope made a motion to approve A Future With Hope, Inc. By-Laws changes. The motion passed.

Statements of Relationship with Vital Mission Partners

Robert Dietz, Chair of the Council on Finance and Administration, made a motion to approve the Statements of Relationship of GNJ Vital Mission Partners: A Future With Hope, Centenary Fund, United Methodist Communities, The United Methodist

DAILY PROCEEDINGS

Stewardship Foundation of Greater New Jersey and GNJ Camping Ministries. The motion included an editorial change to the Camping Ministries Statement of Relationship to include “and other students’ ministries” to line forty-two on page thirty-eight of the Pre-Conference Workbook. The motion passed.

2019-2023 GNJ Strategic Ministry Plan Process and Timeline

Rev. Sang Won Do, Chair of GNJ Connectional Table, made a motion to approve the 2019-2023 GNJ Strategic Ministry Plan Process and Timeline resolution. The motion passed.

Discontinuance of Churches

Rev. Varlyna Wright and Rev. Myrna Bethke, District Superintendents of the Capital and Gateway South districts respectively, came forward and made motions for the approval of the closure of three churches: First UMC in Salem; Union UMC in Center Square and Cadwalader-Asbury UMC. The motions passed.

Pension and Health Benefits

Rev. Bill Wilson, Chair of the Board of Pensions, made a motion for the approval of the Pension and Health Benefits resolution, including the Health Insurance Guidelines. The motion passed.

Clergy Equitable Compensation for 2018

Re. Christine Day, Chair of the Commission on Equitable Compensation, made a motion for the approval of the Clergy Equitable Compensation for 2018 resolution, including the Standards for Parsonages. The motion passed.

GNJ Vital Mission Partners

Rev. Hector A. Burgos, Director of Connectional Ministries, introduced GNJ Vital Mission Partners.

The United Methodist Stewardship Foundation of GNJ

Rev. Burgos spoke about the United Methodist Stewardship Foundation of GNJ. He invited Ed Bowen, President, forward to speak about the Foundation. Mr. Bowen recognized Sue Goodman, interim executive director and introduced the new executive director effective July 1, 2017, Rev. Jana Purkis-Brash.

United Methodist Homes and Communities

Rev. Ginny Samuel Cetuk and Larry Carlson were invited forward to speak about United Methodist Communities.

Centenary Fund

Eleanor Hartley was invited forward to speak about the Centenary Fund.

Camping and Retreat Ministries

Rev. Brandon Cho was invited forward to speak about Camping and Retreat Ministries.

A Future with Hope, Inc.

Bobbie Ridgeley and Nicole Caldwell-Gross were invited forward to speak about A Future with Hope, Inc.

VIDEO

A segment of the Ted Talk video “Transformational Power of Classical Music” was shown.

SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE AND COMMUNION

The Service of Remembrance opened with Bishop Schol, the cabinet, and the members of the families of those who had died during the preceding year, processing in to Bach’s string trio, “Air in G”. Bishop Schol led the call to worship from the Baptismal font. He approached the altar to ‘Jesus, United by Thy Grace’. Bishop Schol led the opening prayer. Zachary Holder, a young adult delegate, read Habakkuk 3:17-19.

Rev. Varlyna Wright began her sermon by thanking Bishop Schol for the honor and privilege of being the preacher for this service. She reminded the body that one of the reasons we are here this day is to acknowledge the lives of those we now miss. She focused on 1 Peter 5:7, which tells us to cast all our anxiety on God. This in turn echoes the psalmist who said, “cast all your cares on the Lord and God will sustain you.” If we follow this instruction, she told us, we will get through our grief. She reminded the body that the Lord has the power and ability to use our burdens, trials and sufferings for God and God’s glory.

DAILY PROCEEDINGS

She explained Peter's reason for why we should cast our burdens on the Lord: it's because God cares for us and this should give us great comfort. She ended by inviting the body to lay their burdens down on the Lord and rejoice, because God will take care of you.

Rev. David Wiley invited the body to stand in honor of those whom they have known and come to remember as the names of the saints were read. He then read the Glory Roll:

Laity:

Fritz "Fred" Harz

Clergy Spouses:

Dawn Burton	Eleanor C. Robbins
Betty Carter	Lucile Sayre
Mary Whitcher Crowther	Marianne Smith
Bonnie E. Finch	Linda H. Stratton
Elizabeth "Betty" Jewett	Jean White
Mary Palmer	Dorothy E. Worth

Clergy:

E. Jay Amey	Constance A. Martin
Frances Ballinger	Thomas Naglee
Ralph L. Barrett	Mark O'Shields
O. Clyde Bradway	Ramon Putnam
Ethel Mary Brodie	Elmer Ridley
Edward B. Cheney, Jr.	Perfecto Romero
Marjorie Eriksen	Linwood G. Sharp, Sr.
Robert Godleski	James A Stermen
Champion B. Goldy, Sr.	Clara E. Thomas
Vern A. Jensen	Linda Tocher
Ellen Little	Clarence "Clancy" M. Wilson
Lillian G. Lopez	Alan D. Yeo

Bishop Schol offered a prayer of thanks for all those who had been called home to glory.

Bishop Schol led the liturgy for Holy Communion. Communion was celebrated as the bread and cup were shared with all present.

Bishop Schol led the closing prayer and gave the benediction.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Wiley made the necessary announcements.

PRAYER

Peace Magomero gave the blessing for lunch.

Monday, May 22, 2017, 1:30 p.m.

PRAISE AND WORSHIP:

The Praise Team gathered the worshippers with music and singing.

OPENING PRAYER

Bishop Schol introduced Charlotte Jansky, from the Red Bank UMC, who offer the opening prayer.

VIDEO

A video 'Rejoice in Developing Young Leaders' was shown.

DAILY PROCEEDINGS

LEADERSHIP ADDRESS

Bishop Schol introduced Rev. Hector A. Burgos, Director of Connectional Ministries, who led the presentation of the leadership address. The presenters were: Rosa Williams, Conference Lay Leader; Rev. San-Won Doh, Chair of the Connectional Table; Rev. Vanessa Wilson, Chair of the Commission on Race and Religion; Rev. Debbie Barnett, Chair of the Council on Youth Ministries, and Rev. Blair Goold, Chair of the Council on Young Adult Ministries. Each spoke about the progress being made and the adaptive challenges being faced in fulfilling the mission and the God-sized strategic goals set forth for our ministry together.

Rosa Williams presented statistics on the growth of small group ministries, disciples serving in mission and the diversity of worshippers in our congregations.

Rev. Burgos discussed new resources being developed to equip our spiritual leaders, both clergy and lay, and how engagement goals were set. He recognized ministry happens at the local churches, so district superintendents and the Connectional Ministries team promote the use of the resources in the local church.

Rev. Sang-Won Doh discussed challenges we are still facing. While there has been some progress, we continue to struggle in creating new and relevant spaces for new and diverse people and to provide for the needs of the rising generations in our mission field. He explained that although many churches continue to consolidate and budgets are decreasing, missional needs continue to grow. He stated that despite these challenges, God has been seen at work through our resources. Rev. Doh explained to the body that because of collaboration between the Board of Ordained Ministry and the Board of Laity, a new Leadership Development position has been created that will continue to develop transformational lay leaders. He announced that Rev. Juel Nelson will be joining the GNJ staff in the new role as Director of Leadership on July 1.

Rev. Vanessa Wilson presented the goal of making our congregations welcoming for all of God's children. She reminded the body that a shift from diversity to intercultural competence takes time and requires intentionality and perseverance, but with God's help, growing intercultural competence will allow us to respectfully and faithfully fulfill our mission to make disciples of all nations.

Rev. Debbie Barnett spoke about the importance of young people in GNJ. She announced that the leadership of GNJ, in collaboration with the GNJ Camping and Retreat Ministries Board, has drafted a Next Generation Ministry Plan which is intended to nurture new generations of enthusiastic young disciples.

Rev. Blair Goold spoke about campus ministries and its collaboration with GNJ's Mosaic initiative.

Rosa Williams spoke to the goal of reinvigorating GNJ camps so they are mission-focused, debt free and sustainable.

Rev. Sang-Won Doh explained how we must trust God and then leverage the resources available so we can dream big while using the finances available to us.

Rev. Hector Burgos thanked the body for being faithful disciples of Jesus Christ and for all that is being done in communities to witness the healing love of God.

OFFERING

An offering was taken for the Mission Fund.

VIDEO

A video was shown showing the successful initiatives of Imagine No Malaria and A Future With Hope.

PRAYER

Bishop Schol invited District Superintendent Myrna Bethke to come forward and offer a prayer.

THANKS

Bishop Schol thanked Carl Sanders, lay delegate from Waretown United Methodist Church, for his ministry and the sign language interpreters for their work during the Conference.

DAILY PROCEEDINGS

LEGISLATION:

GNJ 2018 Budget and Proposed 2018 Shared Ministry Formula:

Robert Dietz, Judy Colorado and David Yamoah, members of the Council on Finance and Administration (CFA), presented the GNJ Budget and Shared Ministries Formula resolutions. Robert Dietz made a motion to approve and adopt the Budget and Shared Ministry Formula. The motion passed.

Bishop Schol thanked CFA for their work. Robert Dietz thanked the conference staff, especially John Cardillo, Director of Administrative Services and Conference Treasurer.

Future Management of Cemeteries Owned by GNJAC

Rev. Jack Scharf, chair of the GNJ Cemeteries Task Force, explained to the body the purpose and challenge for the task force responsible for managing cemeteries owned by the conference. He made a motion for the approval of the Future Management of Cemeteries Owned by GNJC resolution. The motion passed.

Students Ministry Plan

Rev. Brandon Cho presented the Student Ministry Plan, on behalf of the GNJ Camping Ministries Board. He made a motion for its approval. The motion passed.

Stewardship Presentation

Sue Goodman, interim Executive Director of the United Methodist Stewardship Foundation of GNJ, introduced Karen Manczko from Wespath Investment. Ms. Manczko gave a presentation on Wespath Investment Management, which is used by the UM Stewardship Foundation of GNJ. She informed the body that Wespath is the largest known faith-based asset management group and its investments are aligned with the social principles of the UMC.

Ms. Manczko explained five megatrends which are influencing financial, economic, environmental and social sustainability. She shared Wespath's strategies and approaches to investments using three strategies: avoid, engage and invest. She then gave examples of each.

Bishop Schol invited Ms. Manczko to speak on several unique investments Wespath has made.

Sue Goodman talked about Wespath's diversified funds and the multiple asset fund growth. She thanked the body for their time and attention. She encouraged everyone to stop by the Wespath table and take information to your church.

Bishop Schol thanked both Sue and Karen for their work and presentation.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. David Wiley made the necessary announcements. Bishop Schol announced that \$44,500.38 was collected for the Mission Fund from the offering received during the Leadership Address.

CLOSING PRAYER

Moselle Jules offered the closing prayer. Attendees spent the remainder of the afternoon participating in various workshops and a mission project Rise Against Hunger at which non-perishable meals were assembled and bagged.

Tuesday, May 23, 2017, 8:45 a.m.

GATHERING

The praise team gathered the worshippers with music and songs.

PRAYER

Bishop Schol invited Paul Barnett, from the Medford UMC, to come forward and offer the opening prayer.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bishop Schol announced that several hundred individuals packed 30,000 meals in an hour and a half on Monday at the Rise Against Hunger mission project. The meals will be going to a needy country.

DAILY PROCEEDINGS

SPEAKER

Bishop Schol introduced Erin Hawkins, General Secretary on the Commission on Religion and Race (GCORR). Ms. Hawkins gave a history of the Commission on Religion and Race, stating it started in 1964 with the requirement from the merger of the Methodist Church and the United Brethren church that the church be desegregated. Ms. Hawkins explained that the key focus of the GCORR is in three areas: Intercultural competency, institutional equity and vital conversations. She shared that a recent poll stated that the longer a church is in an area, the less they know the people in their community. She went on to speak on how global the world has become and how interconnected and tied together we are. She challenged the body to think about how to live in a world that continues to build walls when Jesus has already determined that the walls have come down.

VIDEO

A video titled 'The Lunch Date' was shown.

After the video, Ms. Hawkins asked, 'what did people see?' People saw grace, racism, privilege and aggression. She explained that what we see is based off our culture, and this shapes our judgement. She used the metaphor of glasses for culture, explaining that the lens in glasses help inform what we see just as culture helps inform what we see, but at some point, we need to ask ourselves if we need new prescriptions to see the world in a better way, to have a cultural shift.

Ms. Hawkins read John 8:1-8, the passage about the woman to be stoned for adultery. Jesus did not condemn her. She explained this passage from a cultural perspective and how Jesus chose not to see or live by those cultural norms. She encouraged the body to choose to live by looking through different lenses and to be bridge builders, connecting all people.

Ms. Hawkins commended the GNJC for working on a ten-year plan on intercultural competency. She applauded this commitment.

Ms. Hawkins ended by encouraging the body to be bridge builders, not because intercultural competency is a good thing, but because it is what Jesus calls us to be and do for those who are far away and bring them near.

Bishop Schol thanked Ms. Hawkins and presented her with a gift of a cross as a thank you and an appreciation of her work. He offered a prayer.

MOMENT OF PRIVILEGE

Bishop Schol invited Geoffrey Tillisch forward and thanked him for loaning him one of his favorite spinners. Geoffrey then gave Bishop Schol his own new, purple spinner.

VIDEO

A video "Rejoice in Justice" was shown.

SPEAKER

Bishop Schol introduced a former Associate Justice of the New Jersey Supreme Court, Gary Stein to speak of a program that is working to desegregate the New Jersey school systems. Bishop Schol explained that New Jersey has one of the most segregated school systems in the country and that Justice Stein is working on a project to change this.

Justice Stein reiterated that New Jersey has among the most intensely segregated school system in the nation, segregated both by race and by poverty. He gave statistics about the current school system across the state, as to how districts are divided by race. He explained that schools that serve black and Hispanic students are likely to fail due to the facts that there is high teacher turnover, lack of strong parental support, poor facilities and low motivation to succeed. He stated that when schools are diverse racially, ethnically and economically, students are more likely to do better, graduate and attend college.

Justice Stein explained, historically New Jersey has been segregated since WWII and continued to be so into the 1990's. In the 1990's the courts judged that schools in the poorest districts were to be provided the same funding that wealthier districts provided their schools. This ruling was based on financial reasons only; racial discussions were not considered.

Justice Stein explained many suburbs practiced "exclusionary zoning" requiring large lots to keep out low and moderate-income families from moving into those areas. Even the federal government, through HUD and Veterans Administration, had "exclusionary" practices to stop racial mixing of developments and towns.

DAILY PROCEEDINGS

A coalition of diverse New Jersey schools has been formed to address this issue of segregation. Justice Stein is a member of this group and explained the solutions they have come up with, such as county-wide school systems, magnet schools and busing. He gave examples of success stories from different states using these solutions.

Justice Stein ended by stating that he and his colleagues are committed to change the course of the educational system in New Jersey and he hoped that United Methodist congregations would join in when possible.

Bishop Schol thanked Justice Stein for his presentation and presented Justice Stein with the book *Switch: How to Change Things When Change is Hard*.

Bishop Schol noted that within our conference we have one hundred and fifty multi-cultural congregations, one hundred cross-cultural appointments, and nine languages spoken in our churches.

SERVICE OF PASSAGE

The Service of Passage began with the song 'Today Is the Day' while Bishop Schol, the District Superintendents and other participants processed to the dais. Rev. Dr. Regina Hendrickson opened with the call to celebration and introduced the retirees.

Bishop Schol celebrated and gave thanks for all the years of leadership the retirees have given to the church.

The newly ordained came forward and Bishop Schol read their names. They stood before the retirees. The retirees anointed the new full members.

Bishop Schol explained the biblical and historical symbolism of the passing of the mantle, reminding the body that for centuries the mantle has been passed to men and women who were gifted and called to make disciples to build up the body of Christ. The mantle was symbolically passed from the retirees to the newly ordained.

Rev. Eunice Vega-Perez called forward the newly commissioned class and instructed them to stand before the newly ordained. Explaining that a portion of the mantle also falls on them, the newly ordained passed on a portion of the mantle to the newly commissioned class as well as anointed them.

Rev. Dr. Varlyna Wright introduced the newly appointed local pastors and called them forward to stand in front of the newly commissioned. The commissioned symbolically passed on a portion of the mantle to them and anointed them.

Rosa Williams, holding the mantle, invited all the new certified lay ministers in the congregation to stand so they could be recognized. Afterward, Williams passed the mantle through the congregation.

Bishop Schol took a moment to recognize Rev. Dr. Varlyna Wright, who was retiring. He celebrated her ministry within GNJ.

READING OF APPOINTMENTS

Bishop Schol read the names of the new appointees to the cabinet and to general agencies.

Each district superintendent came forward and read the names of the new appointments within their districts.

Rev. Pat Bruger offered the charge for all new appointments.

Bishop Schol closed with prayer.

VIDEO

A video "Vitality in All Sizes" was shown. Bishop Schol commented that no church is too small to do the work of God.

THANKS

Bishop Schol thanked all the staff and volunteers who helped at the conference session.

VIDEO

A video about the IGNITE youth conference was shown.

DAILY PROCEEDINGS

LEGISLATION

10 Year Intercultural Competency Plan

Rev. Vanessa Wilson, Chair of the Commission on Religion and Race, made a motion for the approval of the 10 Year Intercultural Competency Plan. The motion passed.

2016 Conference Legislation Follow Up

Rev. Dr. Gina Hendrickson, Dean of the Cabinet, came forward to report on two pieces of legislation that was carried over from last year's annual conference. She spoke first that the legislation 'Affirming Our Covenant and Accountability' would have required or recommended action by the Bishop and conference concerning homosexuality and may have had some question if it would be in order. She informed the body that, after prayerful consideration, the cabinet decided it would not act on this or bring the legislation to the conference until the Commission on a Way Forward completed their work and the 2019 Special General Conference was held.

The second piece of legislation was 'Create New Rule #86 in GNJ Rules of Order'. She stated that the cabinet reviewed this legislation and determined that the Book of Discipline, paragraph 2549 already has a clear process in place to deal with the issues raised in that legislation.

Rev. Hector A. Burgos spoke on legislation from last year that would require the remaining balance from the Peace and Justice grants be distributed to food pantry ministries within the conference. This legislation was referred to the Board of Church and Society. He stated that, in conjunction with the author of the legislation, a process was agreed upon in which the Board of Church and Society would report back to conference any remaining funds from the Peace and Justice grants.

Amend Rule #19

Creed Pogue presented the Amend Rule #19 resolution for approval.

Motion

Rev. Dan Gepford made a motion to refer this resolution to the Rules Committee and CFA. The motion passed.

Plea for Obedience and Unity

Creed Pogue made a motion for the approval of the Plea for Obedience and Unity resolution.

Motion

Rev. Amanda Hemenetz made a motion to table this legislation. The motion passed.

Request for BOOM to Consider Solutions to our Current Situation

Creed Pogue withdrew this legislation.

Registration Fee for Retired Elders and Deacons in Full Connection

Rev. Larry Potts withdrew this legislation.

Motion

Rev. Robert E. Costello made a motion to suspend the rules to provide back salary and benefits for Rev. Dr. Jisun Kwak, who was on involuntary leave of absence. The motion did not pass.

QUESTION OF LAW

Rev. Robert E. Costello presented the following question of law: "In light of action taken on May 21, 2017 in the executive session of this 2017 Greater NJ Annual Conference meeting, in which the clergy session acted on question #50 of the business of the conference, regarding paragraph 354 (2016 edition) 355 (2012 edition) in the *Book of Discipline*; and in which the clergy turned down the Board of Ordained Ministry's recommendation for an involuntary leave of absence dating back to October 22, 2016; and further in light of judicial council decision 1230, in which a clergyperson was forced to retire involuntarily and that retirement was overturned by the Judicial Council and all compensation was restored; (see also decision 1270); In order to be made whole, should Dr. Jisun Kwak receive from the conference the full salary, and all pastoral benefits including housing, health insurance, pension credit and funding, and travel expenses that she was receiving in her appointment, from the time her involuntary leave began until she is back in an appointment or until, through appropriate process, she is determined to be ineligible for appointment, and that the rate of such compensation should be at the level she was receiving as of October 22,

DAILY PROCEEDINGS

2016.”

Bishop Schol explained that he has thirty days to respond to this point of law.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. David Wiley made the necessary announcements.

VIDEO

A video highlighting this Annual Conference session was shown. This video is available for all churches through the conference website.

SENDING FORTH

Bishop Schol thanked all at Annual Conference for the hard work they did over the past days. He encouraged the body to go home and continue the good work.

BENEDICTION

Jane Elhers offered the benediction, after which Bishop adjourned the conference, at 12:30 pm.