

## Table of Contents

Reports.....	2
Archives and History, Commission on.....	2
A Future With Hope.....	5
Boston University School of Theology.....	6
Candler School of Theology.....	8
CUMAC (Center of United Methodist Aid to the Community).....	9
Cabinet.....	11
The Centenary Fund and Preachers' Aid Society.....	14
Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns, Committee on.....	14
Church and Society, Board of.....	16
Educational Society.....	17
Episcopacy Committee.....	18
Finance and Administration, Council on.....	18
Global Ministries, Board of.....	19
Higher Education and Campus Ministry, Board of.....	19
Laity, Board of.....	21
Lay Leaders Report.....	24
National Plan for Hispanic/Latino Ministry Committee.....	25
Native American Ministries, Committee on.....	26
Parish and Community Development.....	27
Pension and Health Benefits, Board of.....	27
Religion and Race, Commission on.....	31
Religious Leaders of New Jersey, Coalition of.....	32
Status and Role of Women, Commission on (COSROW).....	33
Treasurer's Report.....	34
Trustees, Board of.....	41
Trustees, Board of.....	42
United Methodist Stewardship Foundation.....	43
United Methodist Women.....	44
Wesley Theological Seminary 2018.....	45
Young Adult Ministries, Council on.....	48
Youth Council.....	48

# Reports

## Archives and History, Commission on

2017 has been a very productive and successful year of engaging in the ministry of memory for the GNJC Commission on Archives and History (CAH). Through these initiatives we have supported vital congregations by encouraged clergy, lay leaders and local congregations to strengthen their Wesleyan identity and have successfully fulfilled our Disciplinary mission to identify, preserve and make available the historic record of ministry within GNJ. Highlights include:

### **1. Archival Depository:**

- a. **Archival Space:** We preserve the historical records of all closed churches within the bounds of GNJC and its antecedents and provide for the retention of the corporate records of GNJC boards, agencies and committees in collaboration with those bodies. Our collection is located in the fire-safe and climate controlled archival depository in the vault of the General Commission on Archives and History (GCAH), UMC, in Madison, NJ.
- b. **Cost-Effectiveness:** Our archival space is secured through a unique and cost-effective rental agreement with GCAH, which preserves our closed church and conference agency records and demonstrates effective stewardship by limiting the impact of archival costs on our shared ministry budget.

### **2. Communication Platforms and Strategies:**

Our digital, print and oral communication strategies increased our ministry presence and impact and helped us be effective stewards of conference resources.

- a. **Ancestry.com:** Our GNJCAH page on Ancestry.com received a total of 508,986 page views, 289,026 image views and 219,960 text views for the twelve months between 12/01/16 and 11/30/17. Our closed church vital statistics (births, baptisms, deaths, and marriage records) are easily accessible, highly utilized and extend our ministry impact well beyond the boundaries of GNJ!
- b. **Internet Archive:** We completed the migration of our extensive digital library of historical journals and resources to Internet Archive (IA) and created a link to this resource from the GNJC website. IA is a free portal that allows us to post an unlimited amount of historical material on the internet. Utilizing IA has significantly increased the volume of historical resources we are able to make available online and reduced our actual and future impact on GNJC data rates. For the eleven months from 3/2017-1/2018, 79 items on IA have been viewed 1,209 times by people from 8 different states and two countries.
- c. **GNJC Website:** We recently recruited a CAH member, Todd Lattig, to serve as a blogger and look forward to engaging this platform further in 2018. During 2017, the GNJ website page for CAH received 286 page views, 400 page views for history resources and had 127 hits for downloaded resource items (St. Johns (Fordville) Oral Project—36 hits, 2017 Church Anniversaries page—35 hits and 2015 Church Anniversaries page—56 hits).
- d. **Consultation & Speaking:** We also supported local churches celebrating their Wesleyan identity and significant anniversaries by providing speakers. One of our consultants preached at a local church anniversary service and attended two historic site dedications. Other members remain available to assist local churches in reflecting upon on their Wesleyan identity and role within the mission of GNJC.

- e. Others: We ran advertisements for events and promoted our annual church history contests in GNJ Digest, updated our commission information and resources on the GNJC Website, advertised the church history contests and submitted an article for publication in the UM Relay on John Wesley's practice of worship and the principles that support vital worship today, and hosted a display table at annual conference which highlighted our awards, conference historic sites and the work of the commission

### **3. Conference Historic Sites:**

We presented three nominations for Conference Historic Site status, which were approved by vote of the 2017 Session of GNJAC. These three new sites are the St. John UMC in Fordville, NJ; Frankford Plains UMC in Frankford Plains, NJ and The Old Stone Church in Nyack, NY. All are now registered on the GCAH denominational Historic Site list and either have already or will receive UMC Historic Site Markers in the near future. Nominating these sites created excitement about our historic heritage at annual conference and has proven to be a way that CAH can inspire our congregations to celebrate their place in the mission and ministry of GNJC. We continue to monitor a list of two dozen potential future Conference Historic Sites. We plan on nominating Kingwood UMC in Kingwood, NJ, Evangelical UMC in Clarksboro, NJ and Emmanuel UMC in Union City, NJ as three additional proposed Conference Historical Sites to be voted on and approved by the 2018 GNJ Annual Conference Session.

### **4. Local Church History Awards:**

We sponsor three church history awards each year to create incentives for congregations to collect, preserve and celebrate their stories of faithfully inspired ministry. The church history contest thus invites local churches to inspire their future by learning from their past.

- a. The Robert B. Steelman Methodist History Award: We gave the 2017 Steelman Methodist History Award to the Friendship UMC in Monroeville, NJ, for submitting the best overall church history within GNJC this year. The Steelman Award is given annually to the local church that submits a history which best exemplifies an inclusive narrative on the life and ministry of the congregation from its beginnings to the present day. This year, we are presenting the 2018 Steelman Award to Centenary UMC in Metuchen, NJ.
- b. The John C. Goodwin Multi-Media Church History Award: We awarded the 2017 Goodwin Multi-Media Church History Award to Midvale United Methodist Church of Wanaque, NJ, which was recognized for submitting the best overall multi-media church history within GNJC. This was a special recognition, as this is the first-ever presentation of the Multi-Media award.
- c. The Morris L. Smith Ethnic Local Church History Award: This year, we named the Ethnic History Award in honor of Mr. Morris L. Smith, the Church Historian of Zion UMC in Lawnside, NJ, in recognition for his longstanding efforts to use the history of his church and community to inspire pride and respect for his African American Heritage and for his practice of using stories of perseverance and faithful resistance to prejudice to build transformative relationships with persons of other racial and ethnic backgrounds within our conference. Our hope is that this award will carry on his personal legacy of promoting African American history as a tool for transforming our Church into a more inclusive, just, and faithful body, and also inspire other ethnic and multi-cultural churches within GNJC to honor and preserve their vital stories of faith.

### **5. Ministry Collaboration:**

In 2017 we advanced the ministry of memory within GNJ and modeled good stewardship by collaborating with other conference, jurisdictional and denominational organizations.

- a. Dobbins UMC & GNJC Historical Society: CAH collaborated with Dobbins UMC in Delanco, NJ and the GNJC Historical Society by supporting the Historical Society's 2017 Annual Meeting

and historical program on Saturday, October 28, 2017 entitled, "Bishop John Heyl Vincent's Influence on the Creation of Our Social Creed." The program featured Rev. Kevin Newburg, PhD, who is Assistant Professor of Christianity at Drew Theological School, as the keynote speaker and highlighted the work of Delanco's respected local historian Alice Smith. Through this collaboration we encouraged the telling of the dynamic stories of our faith tradition and recognized the contributions and expertise of a volunteer local church historian.

- b. On-Line Local Church Historian Training: We supported the Indiana Conference CAH's Local Church Historians School by advertising their program and encouraging our local church historians to participate in it. As a result, four persons within GNJC completed the three month on-line training course.
- c. NEJCAH: We continue to have a representative, Donald DeGroat, on the Northeast Jurisdiction Commission on Archives and History Executive Board, which gives GNJ CAH a presence, leadership role and influence on the jurisdictional commission. Additionally, our chairperson attended the NEJCAH meeting in Charleston, WV in April of 2017, where he and Don actively supported the ministry of the Jurisdictional Commission.
- d. GNJ Hispanic/Latino Ministries History Working Group: During 2017 our chairperson established a relationship with the chairperson of the GNJ Committee on Hispanic/Latino Ministries and they took initial steps toward establishing a collaborative working group to craft strategies to identify, encourage and support ongoing efforts to collect, preserve and publish the story of Hispanic/Latino ministries within GNJ. This effort has already inspired several pastors to begin collecting materials in anticipation of the task force meeting in the near future. We look forward to this initiative continuing and toward growing CAH's ability to engage, partner with and support all of our ethnic congregations and constituent groups within GNJ.

#### **6. Recognition of Significant Local Church Anniversaries:**

We presented recognition certificates to those churches celebrating major anniversaries and continued to receive positive feedback that congregations were excited to receive the acknowledgement of their significant milestones.

#### **7. Work of the Archivist:**

Our commission assisted local churches efforts to document their past ministry with the help of our volunteer archivist, Walter Jones. Walt responded to 60 specific information requests in 2017, where he assisted in the research, and made many more referrals where he directed people to other resources. A statistical breakdown shows the range: Genealogy searches - 10, Baptismal records - 14, Marriage records - 4, Membership records - 1, Obituary requests 2, Burial records - 2, Churches merged - 3, miscellaneous inquiries - 24. We acquired some L. Burdell hawk sermons and the sold property records from Beverly Schol, Assistant Property manager for GNJC. The New York conference has digitized the records of the New York and Vicinity UMC including some New Jersey and Connecticut from 1775 to 1949. Total records were 499,925. We encourage churches to place a Christian flag on the grave sites of ministers on Memorial Day.

#### **8. Ministry Impact and Stewardship:**

The cost-effectiveness of our archival storage arrangement with GCAH and with the metrics cited under Ancestry.com, Internet Archive, the Conference website and the Work of the Archivist, all noted above, combined with the other initiatives described herein, demonstrate that we were good stewards of conference resources. In 2017, we supported and resourced an incredible amount of inquiry and

inspired historical preservation at limited, and in many cases no, expense to the conference Shared Ministry budget.

Beyond metrics, impact can also be assessed in terms of contributions. One example is that CAH has recently identified in our collection one of the few, if not the only official handwritten minutes of the early 19th century Methodist Protestant Church meeting—a significant contribution to our denominational DNA. Further, Don DeGroat, Commission Vice-Chair/Treasurer, has been researching the history of the Evangelical Association and the Evangelical United Brethren Church in New Jersey. He has identified that their challenges reaching people for Christ in areas of changing cultural dynamics, ethnic and racial heritage and languages seem prescient to today's challenges for congregations to embrace and engage changing communities.

Further, advertising for the upcoming church history contest inspired a person, previously unfamiliar with CAH's ministry of memory, to challenge the contest coordinator, CAH Vice-Chairperson and Treasurer Rev. Donald DeGroat to an intense theological discussion unrelated to a local church but related to sin and the issue of ethnic cleansing of Native American tribes. This was a three email exchange just before the Thanksgiving holiday. The writer—perhaps a youth, young anyway—had recently learned of his or her Native American roots and was wrestling with historical issues of ethnic cleansing and sin, now hitting close to her. While the long-term impact of this conversation remains an unknown, the tenor of the interaction gives us the impression the individual found the conversation a valuable support in their process of discernment.

We thus hold that our commission creates significant impact in a highly cost-effective manner. We are good stewards of the Ministry of Memory and of the precious conference resources that are entrusted to us. Therefore, in closing, I wish to express my profound gratefulness for all the dedicated volunteers who make our ministry effective.

Submitted by:  
Rev. John D. Callanan, Chairperson

## A Future With Hope

A Future With Hope (AFWH) is a GNJ Vital Mission Partner working to extend our conference mission and ministry. Organized as a non-profit in 2012 to provide relief and recovery following Superstorm Sandy, AFWH has accomplished the following in support of this ministry.

- Disaster Case Management services provided to 461 families
- Repaired or rebuilt 269 homes
- Housed and utilized the skills of more than 12,215 volunteers, who are residents of 46 states and Canada
- Volunteers contributed a financial value of more than \$8,117,000 toward labor costs
- Raised more than \$18 million dollars toward the recovery efforts

AFWH acknowledges and appreciates that these results were made possible in part due to the generous UMCOR grant, donations received through the A Future With Hope Mission Campaign, and the many GNJ churches who served as volunteer host sites, organized and sent volunteer teams, provided volunteer meals and offered generous financial support. We are deeply grateful for the sustained commitment of the people of GNJ.

As AFWH nears completion of their Superstorm Recovery efforts, we are being called upon to share best practices in disasters across the country. Recently, members of GNJ and AFWH traveled to Puerto Rico for the purpose of sharing expertise on hurricane recovery. AFWH's response model will continue to serve as the benchmark for rebuilding and recovery for disasters going forward.

From its inception, A Future With Hope recognized that as the recovery process across New Jersey helped communities rebuild, there would be a need to help them reach a place of transformation, a new normal where their neighborhoods could build upon assets they hadn't yet identified, where resilience became the framework for success. This foundation directed AFWH into the following areas during 2017:

- Communities of Hope training. Twenty-five congregations have been trained to date in community engagement, inter-cultural competency, community asset identification and development of key partnerships. Participants to date have established an initial action plan for their community, and in 2018 congregations and partners will receive continued training and guidance with the goal of identifying and achieving community aspirations for sustainable change.
- Hope Center locations. Eight outreach programs and partners that provide needed community services have been identified to date. They include CAMP YDP, CUMAC, Pathways to Prosperity, The Neighborhood Center, Camden Urban Ministry Initiative, The Crisis Room, and the Atlantic City Cooperative of three congregations. The target in 2018 is to identify an additional 8-10 locations. AFWH Community Engagement Specialists work with Hope Centers to improve diversity, maximize service delivery, enhance program savings, and support training needs with professional development and/or strategic plans.
- Repurposing of underused or unused church properties into sustainable, community valued, economic development projects. AFWH Community Engagement Specialists work with Church leaders to coordinate efforts for the vision and engagement with all identified stakeholders throughout construction.

In 2018, AFWH anticipates a productive year engaging our congregations and their partners in the ever-growing work of community leadership and transformation. Those interested in any of the programs may reach a Community Engagement Specialist at AFWH to begin the conversation.

A Future With Hope is exceedingly grateful to Bishop John Schol for his vision to create a God-sized ministry to support not only Sandy survivors, but all those in need in throughout New Jersey and to our Board of Trustees who guide this mission.

Submitted by:  
John Cardillo, Interim Executive Director

Boston University School of Theology

Greetings from Boston University School of Theology (BUSTH) as we travel together in this journey of discipleship!

**Breaking News:**

- **Students:** Our entering students were the most diverse in our history, creating remarkable opportunities for in-depth exchange and fruitful collaboration.
- **Faculty:** We welcomed three amazing faculty this year: **Rebecca Copeland** in Theology (focus on environmental theology); **Theodore Hickman-Maynard** in Black Church Studies; and **Cornell William Brooks** as Visiting Professor of Social Ethics, Law, and Justice Movements. Thanks to loyal alums, we also endowed the Harrell Beck Professorship in Hebrew Scripture and installed Kathe Darr as the first Beck Professor.
- **Congregations:** The Lilly Endowment awarded the Center for Practical Theology \$1.5 million to create an innovation hub, which will foster creative vocational reflection in congregations, and a sharing of the congregations' wisdom.
- **Doctor of Ministry:** The DMin in Transformational Leadership is soaring with lively student cohorts that are broadly ecumenical, culturally diverse, and global. The model includes intensives, online courses, and faculty mentoring.
- **Scholarships:** We continue our offer of free tuition to UMC registered candidates for ordained ministry, and we continue to build student scholarships and housing as a central campaign priority. New scholarships include the Dale Andrews Scholarship in Practical Theology and Race, Korean Student scholarship, and the Bishop John H. Adams and Dr. Dolly D. Adams Scholarship for candidates for ordained ministry in the AME, AMEZ, and CME churches.
- **Arts Initiatives:** Recent exhibits and events include "Symbols and Art of China, Korea, and Japan" and "Bridging Divided Communities through the Arts"

**Partnering For Ministry and Transformation** Preparing students for ministry means meaningful partnerships with the local spiritual community.

- **Congregational courses:** Courses in congregations with church leaders and students learning together.
- **Religion and Conflict Transformation Clinic:** Internships and workshops that foster justice and reconciliation.
- **Travel seminars:** Courses engaging local communities on Arizona-Mexican border, Israel and Palestine, India, spiritual life centers, and Serbia and Croatia (with focus on interreligious dialogue).
- **Ecumenical partnerships:** Continuing close work with UMC, AME and other Wesleyan denominations, while launching robust Communities of Learning with the Episcopal Church and United Church of Christ.
- **Partnership with Hebrew College:** Joint courses and public events, plus co-sponsoring *The Journal of Interreligious Studies*. The focus is on enriching theological education with interreligious learning and leadership opportunities.

**Taking Action Globally and Locally:**

- **Campus action:** Work to improve accessibility and sustainability. BUSTH is the first certified Green School in BU, and is active in the Green Seminary Initiative. It has also been named as one of the "Seminaries that Change the World."
- **Internships in global service and peacemaking:** Student-initiated internships for service with communities across the world, and for just peacemaking projects with international organizations.

**Commitment to Justice:** Celebrating differences while joining in action.

- Faculty and students have led and participated in service for victims of hurricanes and fires, protests on behalf of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, protests of white supremacist movements, protests and services on behalf of immigrants and DACA young people, and ecumenical and interreligious witnesses for justice in the city of Boston.
- The community (often student-led) has had deep conversations on issues that divide (including theological issues). We seek to foster respectful listening that builds community life and communal action.

**Other Notable News:**

- Celebration of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Anna Howard Shaw Center

As BUSTH looks back on 2017, it celebrates transformational leaders who keep the word of Jesus Christ alive. Their living legacy and perceptive witness gives us hope and courage for the future.

Submitted by:

Mary Elizabeth Moore, Dean

## Candler School of Theology

For more than 100 years, Candler School of Theology at Emory University has prepared *real* people to make a *real* difference in the *real* world. Since our founding in 1914, more than 10,000 students have graduated from Candler, where they have been shaped as thoughtful, principled, and courageous Christian leaders dedicated to transforming the world in the name of Jesus Christ.

One of 13 official seminaries of The United Methodist Church, Candler has been included on a list of “Seminaries that Change the World” for five years running, and was recently named a “Bright Spot in Theological Education” by Auburn Seminary.

Candler is also one of seven graduate professional schools of Emory University, a top-tier research institution offering extensive resources and a demonstrated commitment to service. Our location in Atlanta provides a hands-on learning environment rich with opportunity: The General Board of Global Ministries is headquartered here, as are numerous public health, international development, and social service organizations. Simply put, there is no better place to prepare for ministry that engages our major denominational priorities: developing leaders, starting and growing churches, ministry with the poor, and improving global health.

In order to keep pace with the needs of the church and the world, Candler offers 16 degrees: six single degrees and ten dual degrees pairing theology with bioethics, business, international development, law, public health, or social work. One of our newest degrees is a Doctor of Ministry that is 90 percent online, so students can remain in their places of ministry as they study and immediately apply to their context what they learn in class. Our Teaching Parish program allows eligible United Methodist students to serve as pastors in local churches while they’re enrolled—they earn a salary as they earn course credit and pastoral experience, plus they are mentored by an experienced United Methodist elder.

Candler’s student body continues to reflect the diversity and breadth of the Christian faithful, with an enrollment of 455, reflecting 49 percent women, 35 percent people of color (U.S.), and a median age of 30. Students represent 39 denominations, with half coming from the Methodist family. 82 percent of students are seeking a degree to prepare them as ministry professionals.

Candler has a deep commitment to alleviating student debt and employs a multi-pronged approach to tackle this issue. In 2017-2018, we awarded \$5.3 million in Candler scholarships, with 97 percent of MDiv students receiving aid and the average scholarship covering 75 percent of tuition. Plus, our comprehensive “Faith & Finance” program teaches money management skills that serve our students now and will continue to serve them—and the churches they lead—well into the future.

Half of Candler’s faculty are United Methodist and 58% come from traditions within the larger Methodist family. This year, we welcomed fellow United Methodist Helen Jin Kim to the faculty as Assistant Professor of American Religious History, and we sent best wishes along with our colleague Mary Lou Greenwood Boice as she retired after 25 years of remarkable service to Candler.

Candler draws considerable strength and inspiration from its relationship with The United Methodist Church. Our ability to fulfill our mission of educating faithful and creative leaders for the church’s ministries throughout the world depends upon your support, gifts, and prayers. Thank you for the countless ways you advance this vital ministry in the life of our denomination. Visit us in person in Atlanta or online at [candler.emory.edu](http://candler.emory.edu) to see firsthand how Candler prepares *real* people to make a *real* difference in the *real* world.

Submitted by:

Jan Love, Mary Lee Hardin , Willard Dean and Professor of Christianity and World Politics

## CUMAC (Center of United Methodist Aid to the Community)

Thank you to our friends and partners within the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference for your help making 2017 a successful year! With your steadfast commitment to those we are called serve, CUMAC is ministering to the poor and working hard to feed people and change lives. In 2017, CUMAC celebrated the following accomplishments:

- Over 30,000 people, including 8,138 children, received food to stave off hunger, while an additional 35,000 people received fresh produce and bread
- Over 350 people were supported with disaster relief after experiencing fire, flood, domestic abuse relocation and other natural disasters
- 9 people had a place to call home and a support system to assist them as they work to recover from years of homelessness and instability
- Over 70 men and women had the opportunity to learn critical job skills needed to move toward gainful employment
- Nearly 2,000 children living with homelessness, illness and other challenges received school supplies, Easter baskets and holiday gifts
- Over 40 local pantries, shelters and soup kitchens were supported in their efforts to feed the hungry by the Depot and Community Food Coalition

At CUMAC, we are not only in ministry for the poor, but with the poor. With this guiding ethos, we are in constant communication with our clients, as well as community members and leaders, in order to better understand and respond to the issues our clients face every day. With knowledge gained from these conversations, CUMAC is now collecting and distributing hygiene items, which are prohibitively expensive for households on limited budgets. A growing number of UMC partners now collect the shampoos, soaps, toothpastes, deodorants and other items that go to families and individuals who

would otherwise go without and we are so grateful. CUMAC's supportive housing program, Place of Promise, overcame one of its biggest challenges this past June by moving residents into a new home. The new apartment building offers a healthier living environment in a safer neighborhood, providing residents with a safe space in which to work toward personal development. Through a partnership with the Community Food Bank of NJ, CUMAC is now accepting and delivering over 100,000 pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables annually to pantries and soup kitchens that collectively feed between 9,000 and 15,000 clients a month in some of Passaic County's most underserved areas. As an increased number of pantries are able to provide healthy food to their clients, families and communities who have struggled with food related health issues will instantly benefit and ultimately thrive.

CUMAC's leadership team has been busy nurturing partnerships with other leaders in hunger alleviation, health promotion and poverty reduction. We recognize that our 30+ year history uniquely positions us to lend resources and expertise to the larger conversation around poverty issues and we are dedicated to addressing the root causes of hunger. We are committed to fostering meaningful dialogue and action that has the power to create lasting change. In the words of our executive director, "we're working hard to put ourselves out of a job" by taking strategic steps to lift people out of poverty and beyond the need for emergency support services.

CUMAC is proud to start the year 2018 having hired 3 new staff members to fill critical roles in our office, warehouse and pantry. Each of our new employees were hired from the local community and bring to their work a deep understanding of the challenges faced by CUMAC's clientele. Growing our staff is critical to our ability to efficiently and effectively serve our clients, volunteers and donors, and we are proud to welcome our 3 new team members. We are also proud to announce equipment upgrades that include a brand new forklift (which allows staff to unload and process food more efficiently), the purchase of a new refrigerated truck (which will be critical to growing our fresh food reclamation efforts) and a new stabilized shelving system that is helping us to safely and securely store the 1.2 million pounds of food that are processed by our Depot annually. Topping CUMAC's facility needs going forward is the repair or replacement of our aging elevator. This piece of equipment is critical to our ability to move food between our main and supplemental warehouse spaces, and operating without has been challenging.

In July 2017, Reverend Patricia Bruger retired as CUMAC's executive director after 27 years and was replaced by Mark Dinglasan. With more than 15 years of experience in both the corporate and not-for-profit sectors, Mr. Dinglasan has led teams in the areas of youth development, program management, sales and strategic planning, mission and ministry. Mark is using his considerable experience and skill to strengthen CUMAC's core foundation and to further the scope and breadth of CUMAC's mission. He has enjoyed meeting many of CUMAC's church partners and continues to visit UMCs throughout the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference in order to meet clergy and share CUMAC's vital mission.

Under Mark's leadership, CUMAC's staff and programs are looking toward "big, crazy dreams" and we're excited for what the future holds. Going forward CUMAC's leadership and staff are renewing efforts to grow our financial stability so that we can ensure our vital work continues unimpeded. CUMAC's leadership is working to increase the revenue it generates to support operations and build sustainable long-term relationships with corporate, individual, and government funders. To this end, CUMAC will focus on 4 development strategies:

- Develop an annual grant strategy
- Enhance revenue generated by CUMAC events

- Cultivate relationships with corporations centered on both volunteerism and sponsorship
- Strengthen individual giving

The desired short-term outcomes of this plan are to eliminate periods throughout the fiscal year with less than \$30,000 in CUMAC's main checking account; have strong fundraising events, and increase corporate presence at CUMAC. Desired long-term outcomes are to stabilize fiscal year revenues and ensure that we can continue our critical work from a place of strength in the years and decades to come. Increased financial stability is key to our ability to continue addressing facility and equipment needs, and also to filling critical staffing gaps, so that we can efficiently and effectively serve our community. These efforts will help ensure that CUMAC can continue to act as a bastion of hope in Paterson, Passaic County and northern NJ while serving with confidence in our ability to provide the best possible care to those who need us.

Our work would not be possible without the 2,800 volunteers and countless supporters who dedicate their time, talent and resources to ensuring people are fed, clothed, housed and cared for.

Throughout 2017, churches of the Greater Annual Conference played an instrumental role in our work. 27 Methodist churches sent volunteers, while 103 churches held food and other material collections, or made financial contributions to ensure CUMAC's vital ministry. Bible studies, UMWs, UMMs, youth groups, young adult groups, pastors and congregants alike found in CUMAC a way to live Christ's words in action: sorting and bagging food, collecting hygiene items, and ministering to the poor more generally. They joined hands with area civic groups, corporations, and other houses of faith to live a shared belief that together we have the power to make the world a better, more secure place for all of its inhabitants. Thank you and keep up the great work in the fight against hunger. For our friends old and new, there are many ways you can help CUMAC minister to the poor and hungry. Summer food collections and financial donations will be critical to ensuring children don't go hungry while not receiving in-school meals. Volunteers will be needed year-round to pack bags and prepare household items. Your work to organize speaking events and educate others about hunger will be imperative to keeping hunger awareness alive. You, more generally, will be instrumental to making sure that, in this age of plenty, none among us go hungry. We simply couldn't help so many without your creativity and generosity, truly we are blessed to count you among our fold. Thank you and keep up the great work in the fight against hunger!

CUMAC can be reached by calling 973-742-5518 or e-mailing [info@cumacecho.org](mailto:info@cumacecho.org). Information about our work is available at [www.cumac.org](http://www.cumac.org), [facebook.com/cumacfeedspeople](https://facebook.com/cumacfeedspeople), [twitter.com/cumacfeeds](https://twitter.com/cumacfeeds) or [instagram.com/cumacfeeds](https://instagram.com/cumacfeeds).

Submitted by:  
Stephanie Ames, Administrator

## Cabinet

"So, what exactly is your job?" That was the question asked of a District Superintendent by a local church member as the two walked from a meeting towards the parking lot. It is a fair question to ask since many in our churches have not grown up in The United Methodist Church and are unfamiliar with our polity and for those who have, it is often still seen in terms of mostly an administrator. However, in 2012 the General Conference of The United Methodist Church clarified the role of the District Superintendent as the "chief missional strategist". This description was a way of transforming the work

and role of a superintendent from one of maintenance to mission. It has been the Cabinet's effort to continue trying to work towards that goal.

As "strategists" we continue to look for ways to help support and grow clergy to go further in becoming transformational and apostolic leaders. One of the successes has been in freeing more time for superintendents to do one on one coaching with their peers. This has allowed for clergy to find a place to share their challenges in ministry and be empowered to discover that answers are often within themselves if they just had the opportunity to be coached up.

Along with coaching we continue to strategize with the connectional ministry resource team to develop pace groups, workshops, day of learning, and district events where creative and adaptive ideas can be used in local settings in reaching our vitality goals. This has led to where the Central region brought together over 190 churches for a Super Saturday Church Conference. Beyond the business of the church, which must be done, it allowed for 1,000 in worship with the challenge to "jump into the deep end" in mission and outreach for Christ as well as remembering the connectional importance that we are in this work together. In the Southern region after the success of the Revolutionary Stewardship workshop it prompted the creation of the Refresh retreat where clergy had the opportunity to reconnect anew with their "call" story and how it impacts worship and small groups. In the Northern region last year Regional Day of Learning was named "Outbound" and it provided pastors and congregations with "out of the box" ideas about outreach and sharing the Message in new ways.

In the role of strategist, the cabinet has also been looking at the local church and communities to discern what challenges and opportunities stand before us. This has led to the continued work with Team Vital in walking along side of congregations that are rediscovering their changing communities both within and outside the doors of the local church. Team Vital has allowed us to dream and reimagine with the local church in helping them move from "status quo" to becoming risk takers for the Kingdom of God. Such things as "Dinner Church" and small groups meeting in coffee houses or other venues outside the church walls has emerged from such creative thinking. In strategically looking into the future, Team Vital for the first time has recently been offered in an all-Spanish segment so that we might reach our growing Latino population in our urban areas.

In their role as strategist, the cabinet has worked close with the Episcopal Team to encounter places where re-purposing buildings could be an option and where re-developments could take place. The facility of the former Fairfield UMC is under redevelopment to be transformed into a much-needed center for the training of handicap persons as a UM Hope Center. The Christ UMC in Jersey City is in the process of being also transform into a 25<sup>th</sup> floor building. In the early steps of this project the superintendents help congregations identify themselves as the place where this kind of transformation will take place. As a Cabinet we are looking into our communities to explore the potential of Hope centers throughout the annual conference, where new ministries can develop that will address such things as urban poverty, opioid and other addictions, educational job training, life skills, youth and senior centers, etc. Such Hope centers are a means by which we continue in our rich Wesley heritage by "doing all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the places you can, to all the people you can, for as long as you can."

The Cabinet is also given the task of strategizing with the Bishop in the appointment process. This has meant spending time with staff parish relations committees and local churches to understand the needs, challenges, and missional possibilities of each congregation. While in one way we work independently in

our church setting we are also connectional. Which means that pastors are members of an annual conference and all are reviewed to discern the best way to use their passion, fruitfulness, gifts and talents that will maximize our disciple making. We are very much aware that many of our clergy will also be nearing retirement in the next five to ten years and that finding that next transformational apostolic leadership is of vital importance. The cabinet continues to look at developing our next generation from within the conference as well as recruiting from seminaries around the country. We seek to find passionate people who can reach those in our pews and at the same time address the changing church culture in which we live.

Throughout our work we have been encouraged by how some of our churches, varying in different sizes, have been striving to make disciples of Christ, have transformed their worship experience, created new small groups, reached into their communities with out of the box innovative ideas and have grown in their level of generosity. We have witnessed as people have celebrated and found a deeper spiritual passion through remembering and reclaiming their Baptism through the Water and Roots series. There has been encouraging feedback about the Transitional Workshops and Cultural competency training that is helping both clergy and laity work through the challenges of change with positive outcomes. There have been new church starts and new ways of reaching out through technology in live feeds on social media, podcasts, and church apps. Leadership development has equipped pastors to sharpen their skill levels and raised the level of goal setting and higher expectations in their ministry. This type of effective leadership leads to reviving congregations.

However, in moving forward we are not without our challenges. The cabinet continues to deal with church closures, the number of full-time appointments that have now moved to half-time, a decline in worship, an aging population, and a shrinking revenue base. There is the need to deal with developing more apostolic leaders, find ways to reach the next generation, address social ills, improve decaying facilities, and be the beacon of light that is needed in our communities. It will not change overnight or even in one year, but we continue to work in perfecting the new goals for our conference that will address these areas over the next four years. We continue to invest our time to be involved with the new camping ministry, the Ignite weekend, and working with grant recipients that can begin to make these changes as well as the many other ways that have been mentioned in this report. We refuse to become complacent or think our best days are behind us as a conference or church. Instead, like the Apostle Paul's words to the Corinthians, "we are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; stuck down but not destroyed." Our hope is in the Lord!

Yet, we are also mindful that we are more than strategists. We are prayer partners, laborers in the harvest, servants who are not afraid to wash feet, worship leaders, and disciples of this Christ who have been called into this position for such a time as to work alongside of our sisters and brothers for something greater than ourselves: to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. To that end we continue along this journey filled with optimism, determination, and hope that truly God is with us.

Submitted by:

Delaware Bay District Superintendent Glenn J. Conaway and  
Gateway North District Superintendent Manuel Sardinas

## The Centenary Fund and Preachers' Aid Society

The Centenary Fund and Preachers' Aid Society was established by charter granted in 1857. In 2000 the charter was amended to rename the corporation The Centenary Fund and Preachers' Aid Society of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. The purpose of the Fund is to provide maximum income, consistent with the preservation of principal, for the support of retired clergy and surviving spouses and dependent children of deceased clergy who have served in the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference.

A primary way the Fund meets that purpose today is by contributing towards the cost of providing retiree healthcare. In 2017 the amount contributed was \$600,000, and since 2004 the Fund has contributed over \$6 million for this purpose. The Fund also provides grants to pastors and their families with special needs who have requested aid, including help with extraordinary medical expenses, transportation needs, and loans to assist retired pastors obtain housing in Methodist (and other) Homes, among other ways.

The Fund has only been able to do this through the generous support of clergy, laity and churches, by means of annual contributions and periodic donations as well as bequests. Since inception the Fund has received more than \$6.3 million in donations. The Fund Balance as of the end of November 2017 was \$11,656,099.

To continue support for retired clergy and their families in the future, increased donations will be needed. Reverend Douglas Miller is the Centenary Fund's Outreach Director and is working to increase our Donation Base. We have also recently partnered with the Stewardship Foundation and the Communications Committee to raise our profile and increase our support.

We hope you will help us build up the Centenary Fund with your tax-free donations so that The Centenary Fund and Preachers Aid Society will be able to continue the substantial contributions needed in the future to fund retiree healthcare and to provide aid to retired clergy and their dependents.

Thank you so much for your support to date.

Submitted by:  
David E Wiley III, Vice –Chair

## Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns, Committee on

2016 and 2017 are the fruitful year for Committee on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns. On behalf of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference the members of the committee we could participate in many trainings on the local level in general and with other denominations. We had workshops and trainings with United Methodist Ecumenical and Interreligious Training (UMEIT) that was an interactive training session which helped us to come together with United Methodist ecumenists from the local and general levels of The United Methodist Church for mutual enrichment, encouragement and exchange of ideas.

The National Workshop on Christian Unity is an annual event shared by various denominations that brings together laity, pastors, ecumenical officers, theologians and church leaders to exchange ideas and programs, and to pray and plan together for the sake of Christian Unity. This annual workshop offered a rich variety of voices with ecumenical and interreligious experiences across Catholic and Protestant traditions in the belief that this is an opportunity to learn from each other and for the Holy Spirit to deepen God's gift of unity in our various churches and communities.

Our coming together as United Methodists created for a focus on ecumenical unity and challenged to ground us in our own faith tradition. Our ultimate hope is that as we participate in the prayer, programs and fellowship of the National Workshops to gain new inspiration and tools to strengthen our local witness of unity in Christ and make disciples of Christ as the Holy Spirit guides us.

Our attending the national level workshops benefitted to meeting the local leaders in other communities who shared their interest (vice versa) in ecumenical and interreligious work. This participation also helped us to develop a network for mutual sharing and support during the year.

Participating in the United Methodist connection is a way to train leaders for ecumenical and interreligious ministries. The involvement of our clergy and laity enriched our local congregation with new ideas and insights.

We as Committee on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns took the advantage attending numerous seminars held at Minneapolis, Minnesota for the week at the National Workshop on Christian Unity.

What are some of the highlights and headliners for CUIR this year?

CUIR is changing! In 2017, we began the transition from the committee members to young clergy and laity participation to annual training sessions. Under the leadership of Connectional Director of the Conference we have moved our activities from program to resource oriented. We also hope to establish a year-round internet and social media presence. We need our colleagues in the conference to help us think through how this idea "Program to Resource" can function structurally, financially and programmatically. Now this is our opportunity to impact the future development of CUIR and make it even more effective in meeting the needs of your ministry.

We have perceived the ideas of National Council of Churches in avail the suggestions on Interreligious Relations and Collaboration Table and its inclusive variety of viewpoints and traditions regarding interfaith relations and the work of the Table is carried out in consultation with other faith communities, such as

Study Interfaith Issues, Build relationships between the churches and people of other religious traditions, Develop opportunities for the fullest possible sharing of ideas and counsel among the churches on the topic of interfaith relations, Nurture relationships with local and national ecumenical and interfaith bodies, Promote Interreligious dialogue and understanding etc.,

Some of our members participated in "Sixteen Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence: This 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence" in the month of November 2017. and amplify voices of peace. Throughout the campaign, the WCC will release special prayers, social media photos, and news and video releases.

Four members of the CUIR attended the workshop hosted by UMEIT and it was an Annual United Methodist Ecumenical and Interreligious Training in May 2017 in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The chair of CUIR attended the Conference of Episcopal Diocese on the invitation of Rev. Lynne Weber, Diocesan Ecumenical and Interreligious Officer. It was the 144<sup>th</sup> Diocesan Convention of the Diocese of Newark, held on Friday, January 25 –Saturday, January 26 at the Hilton Hotel, One Hilton Court, Parsippany, NJ 07054.

The CUIR met five times this year to discuss the importance of its existence in the conference and to coordinate the programs.

I take this privilege to thank all the members of the CUIR for their whole-hearted support.

Submitted by:  
Rev. Dr. Vijaya Kumar, Chair

### Church and Society, Board of

“The stranger who resides among you shall be to you as one of your citizens. You shall love him as yourself, for you were once strangers in the land of Egypt.” Leviticus 19:33

The Board of Church and Society has been in a year of transition with interim leadership, yet continues to seek how we as the church can address issues of social justice at this time in our nation.

Our Board Focus dinner at Annual Conference welcomed the General Secretary of the Board of Church and Society, the Reverend Dr. Susan Henry-Crowe. Her keynote presentation, “Ministry with Immigrants and Refugee Communities” set the tone and direction for the Boards work in 2017/2018. In December a strategic meeting of the Northeast Jurisdictional Immigration Task Force at our Conference Mission and Resource Center, brought together some fifty clergy and laity throughout the jurisdiction, including seven members of the GNJC. A decision was made that the Board of Church and Society would be tasked with the creation of an immigration task force for GNJC.

In January, under the leadership of the Director of Connectional Ministries, the Rev. Hector Burgos, the task force met with Bishop John Schol, hearing powerful and moving testimonies of many of its members who came to the United States as immigrants and now serve churches throughout our conference. It has been noted by Bishop Schol that our five largest congregations are ethnic congregations, we speak nine languages on Sunday morning, and we have more than 150 multicultural congregations and more than 100 cross racial appointments.

While tasked with Broad issues around immigration, the immediate and primary objective was to engage clergy and laity in our conference to advocate for the Dream Act. The 2012 General Conference of the United Methodist Church, “urged the US Congress to adopt the Dream Act and provide for these children, who have lived in this country, access to educational opportunities and full participation in the life of the only nation they have known, and identify with the US”, #3164 United Methodist Book of Resolutions. The Dream Act, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, provided a protected status for young immigrant people brought to the US by their parents from deportation. The program was phased out in 2017.

Task force members have been engaged in reaching out to congregations throughout the Conference in an effort to encourage members of the New Jersey Congressional delegation to be supportive of the Dream Act. Members include Rev. Nathan Addo-Nartley, Rev. Hector Burgos, Rev. David Delaney, Rev. Kay Dubisson, Rev. Henriella Griffin, Rev. Rupert Hall, Rev. Myungsun Han, Rev. Jack Johnson, Ms. Yesenia Palomino, Rev. Lyssette Perez, Rev. Pedro Pillot, Rev. Anna Thomas, Rev. David Tokpah, and Rev. Brenda Wheeler Ehlers.

The Board, under the leadership of Rev. Jonathan Campbell, awarded Peace with Justice Grants in 2017. The program underwritten by Peace with Justice Sunday, witnesses to God's demand for a faithful, just, disarmed, and secure world. Two congregations in our conference were recipients of those grants. The Galilee UMC in Englewood award was for its ministry, "Love and Action", designed to work with families whose members are imprisoned and to serve those who are in the process of transition from prison. St. Paul's UMC in Ocean Grove was awarded a grant to assist their efforts to provide housing for persons who are homeless.

The Board has continued to support the efforts of New Jersey Campaign against Isolated Confinement in New Jersey Prisons, the work of the Anti-Poverty Network of New Jersey, the Coalition of Peace Action's Annual Conference in Princeton, and the New Jersey Eastern Service Workers, whose work is focused on migrant farm workers.

Underscoring all the efforts of the Conference Board of Church and Society are ministries of transition from mercy to justice. One has said that "Compassion and Justice are companions, not choices.

Submitted by:  
Reverend Jack Johnson, Interim Chair

## Educational Society

### **Ministry Report 2018**

The Educational Society is an agency of the Greater NJ Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church whose goal is to assist with the education of clergy for the edification of the church. We are composed of clergy and laity from across the conference and have been assisting men and women of New Jersey called by God to full-time Christian service by providing scholarships and loans for more than one hundred and fifty years. We are supported by the repayment of loans, interest earned from long-standing endowments, grants from the Annual Conference, and by local churches and individuals through the Conference Advance #622. The Conference Advance #622 is an opportunity for local churches to subsidize and affirm the ministry and education of New Jersey United Methodist pastors who have reaped the benefits of the Society's ministry by supporting the Educational Society in its historic mission.

In 2017 the Educational Society was delighted to award \$14,000 in scholarships to 3 recipients (Joshua Mularski, Rachel Callender) in order to further their seminary education. Applications for GNJ Educational Society scholarships and loans can be downloaded from the conference website at <https://www.gnjumc.org/resource/2016-educational-society-application/>

If you would like more information about the Educational Society and its ongoing ministry of underwriting seminary education, please stop by our display at Annual Conference or email Rev. Donald Stevens (revdon64@hotmail.com) or Mrs. Jo D. Malessa ([ma\\_malessa@comcast.net](mailto:ma_malessa@comcast.net)).

Submitted by:  
Rev. Donald M. Stevens, President

## Episcopacy Committee

The Episcopacy Committee has met quarterly with Bishop Schol during the past year for the purpose of support, encouragement, communication of Conference priorities, and to provide feedback when solicited. We have participated in an evaluation of the Bishop, discussed matters related to the Jurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy, and assured that the Episcopal residence is in excellent condition. At each meeting the Bishop has provided a detailed report of his work and goals for the Conference. The Committee has had lively discussions of the reports, including the draft of the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan. The Bishop has provided candid responses to all our questions. We very much appreciate his openness and positive example throughout the year, as well as his warmth in expressing gratitude for the shared ministry of all laity and clergy in the Conference.

Submitted by:  
Eleanor Hartley, Chairperson

## Finance and Administration, Council on

As we close 2017 and begin 2018 and beyond, we do so knowing together we have accomplished much with the resources God has blessed us. Under the leadership of our Bishop and Cabinet, the Council on Finance and Administration has been able to support the ongoing effort of the many programs within the Conference, including efforts for Hope Centers and our Vital Congregations. Our congregations have led the support for these efforts by again raising the Shared Ministry collection rate to 87.84%, an increase over the prior year. We were blessed that 406 of our local churches paid 100% of their shared ministry allocation, while 449 paid 100% of their billables. We are grateful to the churches of the Conference for their stewardship and support, together we are accomplishing the work of Christ throughout our conference.

During 2017 we were able to maintain our funding commitments, for our staff and our programs, as well as for our clergy benefit programs. We have also partnered with other committees in support of a Strategic Plan, Hope Center developments and further outreach efforts to the communities we serve. In doing so, expenses were well controlled throughout the Conference, allowing our Conference to finish the year in a position to pay 100% of our General Church apportionments, for the 11th consecutive year.

The year also was marked by continued prudent investment returns, managed in partnership with Wespath Inc., as well as an enviable audit report of 2016, reflecting only minor areas of opportunity for improvement. All of the Council's sub committees were efficient and timely in their respective areas, insuring effective management of our precious resources.

As we begin 2018, we remain empowered by where Christ is leading us. We are working to develop support in the form of shared services for new efforts in Hope Centers, as well as other efforts in support of the conference, our churches and our staff. Additionally, we recognize the need to remain focused on attaining our current Shared Ministry formula goals and are committed to achieving the goal for the 2019 budget.

I would be remiss if we did not recognize the efforts of our Treasurer, John Cardillo and his staff for their continued excellence in performing their roles. All of our staff remains dedicated to continuing to achieve outstanding results and their work does not go unnoticed. We are blessed to have them and are grateful and thankful for the blessings of them in our conference and lives!

In closing, on behalf of the Conference Council on Finance and Administration, we offer our thanks to Bishop John Schol and the Cabinet for their leadership and support, as together we continue to spread the good news of Our Savior Jesus Christ.

Submitted by:  
Robert Dietz, President

## Global Ministries, Board of

The Conference Board of Global Ministries works with Missionaries, our Advance Specials, Agencies, Conference staff and it also aligns with the strategic goals of GNJAC.

Advance Specials: Each Advance Special is assigned to a CBGM member who acts as the liaison with the Board to assure the continuation of ministries. Visits with the agency have been planned within the year 2018. Advance Specials are required to submit a reapplication each year and provide supporting documentation. The list of Advance specials may be found in the Board's resolution.

Although the Conference does not fund Advance Specials directly, they are encouraged to reach out to churches and the churches are encouraged to support them by sending funds through the Conference treasurer.

Global missions, Conference Secretary (CSGM): In the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference, the position of CSGM is held by the Chair of the Board of Global Ministries as well. The CSGM works with the General Board of Global Ministries with the responsibilities outlined by the Book of the Discipline which includes accommodating missionaries itineration at our conference.

In 2017 Dr. Emmanuel Mefor and his wife Florence, as well as Rev. Mutwale and his wife Kabala itinerated in Greater New Jersey.

Isabel Quezada attended the Northeastern Jurisdiction CSGM 2017 fall retreat from September 18-20, 2017 in Haverford, PA. This was a three-day event consisting of worship, workshops and the opportunity to meet with current CSGM's of the Northeast Jurisdiction.

The Conference Board of Global Ministries has met several times including conference calls to discuss activities for 2018. There is a unanimous interest from committee members to be more involved in communicating mission opportunities to youths and young adults in our Conference.

Submitted by:  
Isabel R. Quezada, Chair

## Higher Education and Campus Ministry, Board of

Did you know that "GBHEM is the leadership development agency of The United Methodist Church and that its mission is preparing global leaders for a global church and the world? Every elder, deacon and

licensed local pastor benefits from our training and candidacy programs. Many young adults find help in clarifying their vocation and God's call on their lives through our leadership and discernment programs." (gbhem.org)

Did you know that "UM Collegiate Ministries are the missional presence of The United Methodist Church on college and university campuses around the world? Through a network of chaplaincies, Wesley Foundations, ecumenical ministries and church-based ministries, The United Methodist Church reaches more than 1,300 campuses around the world! We are called to share with our campuses the transformational nature of Christ in a way that raises up a new generation of thoughtful, articulate Christians who care about making the world a better place. While this calling looks and feels very different across our campuses, it is central to our identity and it compels us to provide intentional, student-led ministries that reach this emerging generation of leaders." (gbhem.org)

Did you know that "Campus ministry would not be possible without the support of Annual Conference leadership? Through connecting with other leaders and developing specific training resources for their work, we are constantly looking for ways to support the work of our conferences as they look toward the future of campus ministry." (gbhem.org)

Did you know that you can find more on the responsibilities and mandates of the GBHEM in The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church in ¶1634?

Greater New Jersey's BHEM is working towards fulfilling its goals and responsibilities. This year GNJ BHEM's board members have met to review its responsibilities, mandates, and to set new goals. With the approval at last year's Annual Conference of Next Generation ministries along with new IGNITE initiatives and the proposed Greater New Jersey Strategic Plan, the BHEM will also be working on and intentionally finding ways to equip, develop, and nurture new generations of transformational leaders and disciples for Jesus Christ. The plan includes all young people from as early as the sixth grade to young adults and we are currently able to anticipate its success through IGNITE participants, growing campus ministries, and camp ministries.

Scholarship opportunities through GBHEM is another one of GNJ's most inspiring contributions. We receive numerous applications from students who share stories of witness, mission, and ministry and dream of integrating their passion for Christ in their careers of choice. It is very difficult to narrow down to a few the recipients of the scholarships. This past year 17 students were awarded scholarships. This year's scholarship process is currently underway.

Yearly, BHEM encourages and accepts nominations for the Francis Asbury Award which recognizes and encourages support of higher education and campus ministries within the United Methodist Church. It is for all clergy or lay, employed or volunteer, who are active in supporting, strengthening and promoting higher education ministries. It is a non-monetary award

The BHEM provides scholarships and grants to seminars, workshops, training, and conferences to clergy, deacons, laity, local pastors, and seminary students, as they continue to discern and prepare for their leadership roles and call to ministry and service in the United Methodist Church.

In an initiative from prior BHEM leadership, \$1,000 grants are awarded to local churches that apply and that envision new ideas and ways to bridge the church with students in nearby campus. This initiative encourages and unleashes creative ways not only to serve students but to engage with them in different

service projects and ministry programs in the communities. This continues to be a very important part of GNJ's BHEM scholarship/grant contributions.

Campus Ministry chaplains currently serving are Rev. John Kwon at Rockland County Community College; Rev. Don Gebhard at Centenary College; Rev. Erik "Skitch" Matson, Wesley Foundation Director at Princeton University; and Jessica Winderweede, FeedTruck at Princeton University. The Raritan Valley District local churches are envisioning ways to reach out to students of Rutgers University under the leadership of Rev. Frances Preston.

From the FeedTruck ministry was a three-year initiative funded by GNJ's BHEM and from this ministry was born the Princeton Feed Truck Café, a pop-up coffee shop and study space at Princeton University. The café provides a safe space for students to gather, study, fellowship, and engage in deep theological conversations.

Campus ministers and chaplains present a yearly report in which they share the joy of engaging in deep conversation and establishing meaningful relationships with students. Whether it be through coaching, counseling, discipleship, or simply sharing time of conversation, students look forward to their time in worship, Bible studies, mission, and ministry with their campus ministers and chaplains. Some students just feel comfortable being in a safe place and space.

Like all projects, mission, and ministries challenges present themselves in every turn and it is through generous donations from churches and other organizations that ministry is able to continue. This coming year, GNJ's BHEM will continue to create awareness in and encourage participation from local churches to participate in and with campus ministries through donations and hands on volunteers that will assist with the current GNJ limited funding availability. We will focus on contacting local churches, using social media, the sharing of stories from campus ministries to scholarship recipients at Annual Conference, district gatherings, and IGNITE events to create such awareness and increase participation.

As conversations and work continue around the proposed Greater New Jersey Strategic Plan, Next Gen Ministries, and the Connectional Team, BHEM anticipates an increase in participation of local churches, campuses, and students to further advance BHEM goals in providing leadership development and discipleship and ministry opportunities to all who are passionate about and heed their call to ministry.

The BHEM board members ask for GNJ's continued prayers and support as we move forward into a new season with God-sized visions and dreams and for current disciples and those disciples in the making everywhere.

Submitted by:

Iraida Ruiz de Porras, Chair

Don Gebhard

Maritza Gonzalés Colón

Catherine Jordan-Latham

Francie Preston

Betty Quakenboss

Julie Spelman

Anson Wilson-Watson    Trey Wince

Laity, Board of

**Laity Development Initiative**

## **Desired Outcome**

Grow vital congregations by developing laity leadership resources to equip the local church with knowledge and ability to effectively lead congregations and address challenges in their ministry. (2019-2023 Strategic Plan Goal #2)

The Laity Leadership Development Initiative will cultivate and equip laity leaders “*who make disciples who make disciples*” (Strategic Plan, Leadership 100). Laity leadership development will occur as leaders engage in

- GROWING their faith
- DEVELOPING their core leadership skills
- MULTIPLYING ministries in their local church as they lead others in one of the five areas of vitality, so that they engage effectively with people in their communities through relevant and life-changing ministries and initiatives.
- CELEBRATING ministries that inspire others to make disciples who make disciples

The Laity Leadership Development Initiative will provide the opportunity for leaders to

- Enroll in learning opportunities based on their developmental needs and interests
- Receive certification credits for lay servant ministry and certified lay minister programs

The goal is to develop passionate disciples who make disciples who transform the world. (Matthew 28:19)

## **Disciples Who Make Disciples**

Below are some examples of effective lay leadership in the Five Areas of Vitality that grow faith, develop leadership skills and multiply ministries.

*Worship:* A vital worship leader in partnership with the pastor identifies and trains new worship leaders.

*Small Groups:* A passionate small group facilitator multiplies small group opportunities in the church by empowering and equipping others to lead.

*Mission:* A gifted outreach leader identifies new opportunities that engage the church and community in mission projects that transform lives.

*Giving:* An inspiring stewardship team member encourages the church to give their time, talent and treasure, and invites others to share God’s impact on their lives.

*New Disciples:* An effective disciple leads a team that reaches out into the community and invites people to connect with Jesus and the ministries of the church.

## **Fruitful, Transformational and Apostolic Laity Leadership**

Below is a fruitful, transformational and apostolic leadership model and its application for small group ministry.

**FRUITFUL** Leaders develop their leadership in one of the 5 Areas of Vitality. A fruitful small group leader

- encourages and builds relationships
- makes people feel valued
- increases small group membership

**TRANSFORMATIONAL** Leaders set the expectation for change where individuals are led towards faith development and further engagement in the Five Areas of Vitality. A transformational small group leader

- starts a new small group within the congregation
- provides opportunities for life changing spiritual growth for present worshipers and new people
- identifies necessary change for ministry momentum

**APOSTOLIC** Leaders multiply ministry by creating new innovative missional opportunities. An apostolic small group leader

- plants new small groups that are contextually relevant and attract more people from the community
- Recruits, develops and coaches small group leaders towards effectiveness and accountability
- Inspires others to grow congregational vitality and connection with the community

### **Leadership Core Competencies**

*Five Areas of Vitality:* Worship, Small Groups, Mission, Giving, New Disciples

*Leadership Capabilities:* Spiritual Leadership, Emotional Intelligence, Leading through Change and Conflict, Cultural Competency, Narrative Leadership

*Attributes:* Positivity, Purpose, People (Relationships), Pursuit, Progress

### **Laity Development Initiative Will Shift Resourcing**

FROM singular knowledge based learning experiences TO groups focused on applied learning, experiential learning, practical application, implementation and follow-up

This initiative will

- leverage technology for learning and follow-up
- offer training events for facilitators that provide program consistency for desired outcomes
- increase engagement with younger and more diverse leaders
- develop a yearly program calendar with a clear communication strategy

### **Next Steps**

The Laity Leadership Academy is one of the GNJ core resourcing efforts to carry out our mission and achieve our goals as identified in the Strategic Plan 2019 – 2023. In 2019 participants will

- engage in development beyond a one-day event
- develop in the leadership core competencies
- participate in pre-event and follow-up opportunities for learning
- learn how previous grant recipients applied their learning in developing vital ministry
- receive a calendar of laity learning opportunities for further development

Submitted by  
GNJ's Laity Board

Jay Brown  
Arthur Harrell  
George Lagos  
Carolyn Pendleton

Judy Colorado  
John Hartman  
Juel Nelson  
Kathy Schulz

Judy DiCecco  
Thomas Kemper  
Carole Nelson  
Rick Walker

Millie Grey  
Marilyn Kinelski  
Sang Surk Noah  
Rosa Williams

## Lay Leaders Report

“To equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ” (Ephesians 4:12–13).

My prayer is that the Holy Spirit will rekindle within us a great passion for making disciples in our faith communities of Greater New Jersey, where the good news of Jesus Christ will be shared in relevant and meaningful ways. Where doing the work of the church is exciting, invigorating, and fulfilling and each disciple is filled with passion, joy and enthusiasm. Everyone is invited to come into any church to worship and that we leave on Sunday to go out into the world to share the love of Christ in tangible ways. The Laity Board Partners with the community of Laity of GNJ. The Board is the elected lay leadership representatives of the Annual Conference.

The Discipline (§631) is clear that the Board of Laity shall have responsibility for the following:

- fostering an awareness of the role of the laity,
- developing the advocacy role for laity,
- increasing the participation of laity in the life of the church
- encouraging laypersons in the general ministry of the church,
- developing and promoting programs to cultivate an adequate understanding of the theological and biblical basis for lay life and work,
- developing and promoting stewardship of time, talent and possessions,
- providing for the training of lay members to Annual Conference,
- providing support and direction for such lay programs as lay servants, the observance of Laity Sunday, and the work of lay leaders on the local and district levels,
- organizing a conference committee on lay servant ministries.

These are all action verbs that would suggest that the Board of Laity will be “doing something” rather than just “meeting”. GNJ Laity Board are made up of the District Lay Leaders, Conference Lay Servant Director, President of the UMM & UMW, Lay Consultants and Director of Leadership Development.

Board of Laity Ministry Mission: To empower and equip lay persons to be partners with clergy in mission and ministry in all aspects of the life of the church, making a positive difference for Jesus Christ in our communities and world.

Conference Lay Leader Vision: To equip and mobilize the laity for ministry to become disciples who make disciples of Jesus Christ, going out into their communities and the world to witness and serve.

As GNJ Conference Lay Leader, I am a member of the team working on our new Strategic Plan for 2019-2023 “Miracles Everywhere.” This five-year plan focuses on the five markers of vitality, and is a renewed effort to make disciples and grow vital congregation to transform the world. This is very exciting work as it looks at developing resources and strengthened services and support for developing lay leadership.

Another exciting work, I have been involved as a team member, this work focus on our ten-year plan for Intercultural Competence. The GNJ IC Task Force completed individual and collective IDI Profile and created personal/team IC development plans. Working with GCORR leaders to ensure that the taskforce is competent to do this work as it look to educate other in our conference over the next years and embark on train the trainer education throughout the conference. GNJ is a very diverse conference, which implies that we need to be inclusive and have specific competences to live out our call of social harmony with all people of Greater New Jersey.

The Laity Development initiative is at the assessment phase of laity education as it currently occurs in our conference, looking at our systems of education and how it works to serve the leaders of our local churches. The goal is to create a dynamic system of educational excellence that will equip laity to be transformational leaders which build off goals of the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan. This assessment is in its infant stages and calls for visioning of the future of education of laity. This will be a five-year planning commitment and a team will look at what is our preferred future for lay leadership education in GNJ. All congregation whether they are small, medium or large, laity can be equipped for discipleship and service. Becoming a partner in ministry with pastors by praying, visioning, sharing, and working together. The Laity Board take seriously the role of advocacy and equipping laity for ministry and helping those persons seeking out in a serious way to develop a significant ministry in their local church. I believe that when Laity are called, equipped and effectively deployed, the missional results in the local church and community can be empowered to do the work of ministry, resulting in congregations who are excited and have hearts that are on fire to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Submitted by:  
Rosa Williams, Conference Lay Leader

## National Plan for Hispanic/Latino Ministry Committee

As the National Plan for Hispanic-Latino Ministries Committee in GNJ we are committed to help the Hispanic-Latino congregations to contextualized the Annual Conference Strategic Plan and empower them to move forward with the GNJ vision and mission.

### **Leadership Development**

SELAH- (Hispanic/Latino Theological and Leadership Development Training Center). The mission of SELAH is to equip disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world; and its purpose is recruit and develop transformational leaders for the church of the 21st century by providing theological and practical ministry, and leadership development education in the Wesleyan tradition. We have been working on SELAH new curriculum, choosing the teachers who will be part of the faculty and the administration team. In March 18, 2017, 17 students from SELAH and 15 students from the National Plan Modules 1 and 2 graduated at Drew Theological School as Lay Missionaries.

### **Support to Children and Youth Ministry**

As every year we supported the Hispanic/Latino Children and Youth Retreat called “Niños y Jovenes para Cristo” that usually take place at Pinelands Center. This year we offered scholarships to 48 campers. We also offered 43 scholarships to support youth and young adults to participate at IGNITE 2017.

### **Support to Walk to Emmaus**

We continue to support the ministry of Walk to Emmaus. This is a highly effective resource that provides spiritual formation for people to become faithful disciples of Jesus Christ.

### **Events to strengthen unity among our clergy and laity**

The Epiphany Service it's a great example of the call to unity with in the Hispanic-Latino congregations in the conference. This event has great relevance for our community, because it strengthens the unity and traditions of the Hispanic/Latino people, and it is attended by all our congregations within GNJ. Bishop Schol was our guest speaker, and he was assisted by members of the cabinet in serving communion and pray for the people.

At Annual Conference we had a dinner to celebrate Ordinations of Rev Debra A. De Vos and the Commission of Rev. Charles Perez

### **Tools for Church Vitality**

Some of our goals of our committee looking ahead:

- Encouraging our congregations to get involved in Team Vital.
- Work in collaboration with Next Generation to support youth and young adults' ministry in our context.
- Organize workshops about cultural competence, and support our pastors serving in cross-cultural appointments.

Submitted by:

Rev. Waleska Trinidad, Interim Chair

## **Native American Ministries, Committee on**

We are grateful as Native people in this conference that the Act of Repentance is a part of the life of the conference. Again, we had an Indigenous Welcome at our 2016 Annual Conference. We were proud to have Ms. Allie Mosley, the young adult member of the CoNAM and the Princess of the Lenni-Lenape Tribal Powwow give the Welcome. At the Act of Repentance Service, Bishop Schol stated that the Tribes would not be forgotten. This has been true in two instances: first the Lenni-Lenape Tribe lost their state recognition and the conference stood by them as friends of the court and are therefore helping to bring back that recognition. The second time was when St. John UMC was recognized as a historical site.

One of our goals is to support the Tribes in the state. We continue to support St. John UMC with a VBS program. We are working on building relationships with the Rampough and Powhatan Tribes. Another goal is to include Native American youth and young adults into the life of the Church. We continue to send youth to the IGNITE and the Peg Leg Flamingos which is youth leadership program under the Native American International Caucus (NAIC). It is also important for the CoNAM to be involved with other Native American organizations in the Church. I attended the Why Waters Matter Summit in Minneapolis, MN and some of the items discussed regarding the respect and protecting the water will

be implemented here in the conference; we again had four CoNAM members attend the Northeastern Native American Ministries Committee (NEJNAMC) Annual Meeting in Eliot, ME in October 2017. We were honored to co-sponsor the National CoNAM Gathering with the Native American Comprehensive Plan (NACP) which was held in Vineland and Bridgeton, NJ in September/October 2017. We also sent three people to the Native American International Caucus (NAIC) Native American Family Camp in Gore, OK in July. This was the first Camp since 2006, so it was a reunion for many that had attended in the past.

Our overall goal is to keep the conference informed on the work of the CoNAM and the issues that relate to Native people. We are happy that we have a webpage on the conference website. We look forward to people reviewing that page and sharing with us what type of information they would like to see.

Submitted by:  
Cynthia Kent, Chair

## Parish and Community Development

"[Parish and Community Development] shall include persons involved in significant types of parish and community ministries...the general responsibilities of the committee shall include research, evaluation, planning and strategy development, policy formulation, program implementation, local and national liaison (denominational and ecumenical) related to parish and community development, and such other functions as the conference or agency to which the committee is accountable may determine."

Much of the work of this committee over the past year has been spent gaining clarity on who we are and on the nature of our mission. We have also been brainstorming and developing ways to foster greater connection and collaboration between churches and faith leaders and their communities. To this end, the committee is exploring the following:

1. Partnering with existing conference projects such as PACE groups and Communities of Hope in ways that align with our purpose;
2. Facilitating ways that clergy and churches can connect based on ministry affinities and strengths, not just along geographic lines, in order to have a greater community impact;
3. Working with churches on evaluative measures relating to their community connections and involvement.

It has been a privilege to lead this group of dedicated disciples who want to see the church and its leaders maximize their impact in the community. Our members are: Rev. Gabrielle Martone, Rev. Denise Tiedemann, Rev. Brian Joyce, Rev. Ivan Alberts, Marilyn Powell, and Jim Whitt. Thank you for the opportunity to serve the Greater New Jersey Conference.

Submitted by:  
Evan Rohrs-Dodge

## Pension and Health Benefits, Board of

The Greater New Jersey Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits (the Board) is authorized by The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church to contribute to the support, relief, assistance

and pensioning of clergy and their families, as well as other church workers and lay employees of the United Methodist Church.

Working with the Wespath Benefits and Investments, the Board endeavors to implement and interpret national and conference policy.

**Pension**

**Pre-1982 Pension Plan**

The 2018 Past Service Annuity Rate for pre-1982 annuitant payment is \$672 per year of pre-1982 service. The 2019 Past Service Annuity Rate for pre-1982 annuitant payment will be \$685. The pre-1982 pension program continues to be fully funded and in a strong position.

**CRSP/MPP and CPP**

The General Conference's pension plan, Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) is a hybrid of defined benefit and defined contribution approaches which took effect in 2007. For 2018 churches pay CRSP at 12.5% of clergy plan compensation and for the Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP) at 3% of clergy's plan compensation, and UMLife Options at 2% of plan compensation for ½ time clergy.

The 2012 General Conference enacted changes to the Clergy Retirement Security Program. Effective 1/1/2014 for all contributions going forward, the CRSP Defined Benefit component was reduced from 1.25% of DAC to 1.0% of DAC. Under the CRSP Defined Contribution component, contributions were reduced from 3% to 2% of clergy plan compensation and, in addition, match up to 1% of compensation if clergy contributes 1% to UMPIP. Contributions previously made will not be affected by this change and benefits paid upon retirement will be based on the previous formula for all benefits accrued prior to 1/1/2014. Any benefits accrued from that date forward is based on the new formula.

Additionally, the General Conference changed the participation requirements from all clergy under appointment to only clergy under full time appointment. Clergy appointed to less-than-full-time (3/4 and 1/2-time) are eligible based on the decision of the Annual Conference after approval of the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits. The Board has voted to include those clergy appointed to less-than-full-time (3/4 and 1/2 time) appointments in CRSP. For clergy appointed to 1/4 time appointments, a vote of the Board has made UMPIP available as a pension option for those clergy. Please contact Alexa Taylor, Insurance and Benefits Services Manager, for more information on this option. These changes require Annual Conference approval.

The rates of remittance for the Clergy Retirement Security Program/Ministerial Pension Plan (CRSP/MPP) and Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP) decreased from last year's rates to 92.08% and 96.93% respectively. Eighteen percent of churches were unable to pay these bills on time. Below is a summary of 2017 remittances:

Type	Remittances Rate	2017 Shortfall	# of Churches Paying < 100%	% of Churches Paying < 100%
CRSP	92.08%	\$200,021	101	18.36
CPP	96.93%	\$16,455		

To maintain clergypersons' participation in CRSP/UMPIP and CPP/UMLife Options, the Greater New Jersey Conference fully pays delinquent church accounts using funds from the Reserve Account at Wespath Benefits and Investments. We are concerned that some churches are not fully meeting their obligations with the resulting decrease in the Reserve Account.

By 2017 year-end the cumulative delinquent amount for years prior to 2017 was \$2,015,000 for CRSP/MPP and \$433,000 for CPP - a total of \$2,448,000, an increase of \$120,000.

We thank those churches that maintained faithful stewardship, paying 100% of their obligation. We also appreciate the continuing efforts of our district superintendents, Alexa Taylor, Insurance and Benefits Services Manager, to collect the past due balances. More than \$100,000 of the 2002-2016 shortfalls was collected in 2017.

**Pre-Retirement Seminars**

As in years past, the Board sponsored a retirement education session held at the Mission and Resource Center of Greater NJ on March 1, 2018. The pre-retirement seminar focuses on those anticipating retirement within five years. Fifty persons were scheduled to attend. Presentations by Robert Christophel of Wespath Benefits and Investments and a Social Security representative provided valuable guidance to assist retirement planning. Special thanks go to Jennifer Cho for organizing this event. Thanks also to Alexa Taylor, Insurance and Benefits Services Manager, for assisting and providing support.

**Health Insurance**

For 2018, the Board continued Active health insurance under HealthFlex, the health insurance plan sponsored by the Wespath Benefits and Investments. The medical provider network is Blue Cross/Blue Shield PPO; the pharmacy benefits are provided through OptumRx. Beginning in 2015, Wespath no longer offers retiree health insurance. The Board implemented United HealthCare’s National Medicare Advantage PPO Plan which combines the participants’ Medicare A & B, supplemental coverage and Part D prescription plan.

The Board has again provided a contribution to participants’ Health Reimbursement Accounts for 2018 of \$1,250 for single and \$2,500 for all other plan types which can be used for qualifying medical expenses (such as co-pays and deductibles). These funds do not expire and are accessed through a MasterCard branded debit card, or via a reimbursement form.

**Premiums and Remittances**

The following chart shows church premium rates in effect for 2018. These rates reflect a Cabinet-requested blended rate for all categories, which the Board has been moving toward for several years, so that health insurance premiums are not a factor in determining clergy appointments.

Health Insurance Premiums for 2018	
Employee	\$14,500
Employee & Child(ren)	\$14,500
Employee & Spouse	\$14,500

Employee & Family	\$14,500
-------------------	----------

The Board thanks all churches that fully paid their health insurance premiums in 2017. Overall, churches paid 94% of the total \$3,762,507 health insurance billings, a decrease from the 2016 remittance rate of 96%. The 2017 shortfall was approximately \$220,000. By 2017 year end, the amount owed from years prior to 2017 had been reduced by \$118,059 and the cumulative unpaid health insurance bills had increased to \$3,194,630 owed for years prior to 2017.

Churches failing to fully pay their premiums burden all churches and result in higher health insurance premiums for all. Thanks go to the Conference/BOPHB Treasurer John Cardillo, Benefits Specialist Alison Walsh, and the Cabinet for their continued efforts to collect health insurance arrearages.

The Board and the Conference staff have continued their efforts to ease the continued transitions in healthcare. The Health Insurance Guidelines included in these 2018 Conference Reports and Recommendations have been updated.

### **Annuitant Health Care Liability**

As of the end of 2016, the Financial Accounting Standards Board FAS 158 liability for annuitant healthcare costs in the amount of \$58 million was posted to the Conference balance sheet. This liability is the estimated present value of the future costs of annuitant healthcare. The Annuitant Health Insurance Contingency Fund described below has been set up to address this large liability over time.

#### **Annuitant Health Insurance Contingency Fund**

In 2002-2003 the Board, recognizing the growing magnitude of annuitant healthcare costs, together with the Centenary Fund, representatives of CFA, the Cabinet and the Association of Retired Ministers and Spouses (ARMS), developed a plan for a long term Annuitant Health Insurance Contingency Fund that begins to offset the liability and ensure that retirees continue to enjoy conference-paid health insurance. The Fund was initiated by the 2003 GNJ Annual Conference and earmarked exclusively for healthcare costs for annuitants to cover higher premium costs expected in future years. The plan for the Fund involves a multi-year period during which excess pre-1982 retirement funds would be used to pay CRSP defined-benefit requirements, and comparable funds from churches would be used to create a permanent retiree health fund. This is a critical initiative since it is clear that the Conference cannot continue to fund retiree health insurance on a cash basis out of the Conference Budget.

As of December 31, 2017, the Annuitant Health Insurance Contingency Fund held a balance of \$7,741,352 after transferring \$630,937 to the Annuitant Health Insurance Account to avoid a negative balance in that account at year-end. In 2017 approximately \$2,159,000 came into the Contingency Fund (representing the 2% clergy and staff salary contributions toward the cost of health insurance) plus the Centenary Fund's annual contribution (in excess of \$300,000, separate from their \$100,000 contribution directly to the Annuitant Health Insurance Account).

### **The Board Itself**

The Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits endeavors to serve the Conference and the needs of those in ministry. There continues to be much to accomplish, especially in the challenging field of health insurance. Christ strengthens us to meet these challenges and we pray for the Holy Spirit to guide and inspire our actions.

Current leadership is Rev. Dr. William Wilson, Sr., Chair; Rev. Dr. Jennifer Cho, Vice Chair; Rev. William Williams III, Secretary

Submitted by:

Rev. Dr. William B. Wilson, Sr., Chair

## Religion and Race, Commission on

“Now we got to get this thing right. What is needed is a realization that power without love is reckless and abusive, and that love without power is sentimental and anemic. Power at its best is love implementing the demands of justice, and justice at its best is love correcting everything that stands against love. And this is what we must see as we move on.” Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. “Where Do We Go from Here” #MKL50

On April 4, 1968, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated by James Earl Ray while standing on a balcony of the Lorraine Hotel in Memphis, Tenn. A deep sadness and sense of despair hung over the country; acts of civil disobedience ensued in some areas. Later that month, on April 23, 1968, the United Methodist Church would be formed. Recognizing the challenges of race in this country and in this church, the General Commission on Religion and Race was established. Fifty years later we commemorate the life and legacy of Dr. King. Although the country has advanced in many ways, we recognize that we still have a long way to go to achieve the beloved community of which Dr. King spoke. It is my hope and dream that the people called United Methodist will “get this thing right” by leading the fight for justice, modeling the love of Christ and establishing an inclusive community where there is access and equity for all of humanity.

The Greater New Jersey Commission on Religion and Race (GNJ CORR) advances the mandate of the General Commission on Religion and Race (GCORR). “GCORR is the core agency within the United Methodist Church tasked with empowering the Church to pursue racial equity and cultural competency to build a stronger, more vibrant UMC.” GNJ CORR is charged with this same task in the Greater New Jersey Conference (GNJ). By promoting full and equal participation of the racial and ethnic constituency in the total life and mission of the church, GNJ CORR seeks to empower clergy and laity to develop transformational leaders and vital congregations.

Appreciation and gratitude is extended to the members and volunteers of GNJ CORR for their diligent work; special commendations to Rev. Danny Thomas who leads the Prison Reentry PaCE group and Rev. Brian Joyce who opened the doors of Trinity UMC for GNJ CORR events.

GNJ CORR 2017 activities included:

- Coordinated the Prison Reentry PaCE group under the leadership of Rev. Danny Thomas. “The original scope of the PaCE group to introduce and pilot at least one Station of Hope congregation in the Southern region by end of 2017 was infeasible. ... What we discovered was that for many in our congregations, their employment was based on serving within or supporting of the prison system. We learned that re-entry programs may be easier to launch in areas where the congregation does not have daily service/subordinate contact with prison institutions.” The next steps include inviting reentry and criminal justice specialist to speak.

- Developed draft curriculum for 2018 PaCE group, “Christianity, Race and US Law”. “This PaCE group will review the intersection, influence and practice of the Christian religion, race and the development of US law as it is related to race, racism and marginalization and/or liberation of racial/ethnic groups. The goal is to understand how past actions have influenced the modern church and to think about methods of effective ministry to heal and make whole a church that has been divided along racial ethnic lines. We will pay particular attention to the influence and activism of Methodism.”
- Co-hosted the 2017 Board of Church and Society Annual Conference Dinner – “Living Faith, Seeking Justice, Pursuing Peace”. The keynote speaker was Rev. Dr. Susan Henry-Crowe, General Secretary of the General Board of Church and Society.
- Participated in the Cultural Competency Taskforce and the leadership address at the Annual Conference. Rev. Wilson spoke about Cultural Competency and the work of the Cultural Competence Task Force.
- Co-wrote “The Uncomfortable Truth: Racism, Injustice, and Poverty in New Jersey”, a report sponsored by the Anti-Poverty Network of New Jersey which was released September 2017. Rev. Wilson wrote the preface and was a chapter contributor to this report which examines the intersection of race and poverty.
- Served as a keynote speaker and panelist at the United Methodist Women Fall Meeting; discussed race and religion in South Africa and America from the perspective of an African American visiting the continent of Africa for the first time. Rev. Wilson also discussed feelings of displacement as an African American whose ancestors were victims of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, as well as the beauty and acceptance that she found in South Africa.
- Facilitated A Wisdom Circle which provided an opportunity for clergy and laity at cross-racial, cross-cultural sites to be in conversation. Dr. Anita Foeman also spoke to this gathering about the DNA Discussion Project. GNJ CORR will host a DNA Discussion Group in 2018.

GNJ CORR looks forward to continuing to serve GNJ through training, consultation, research and advocacy to empower clergy and laity to be able to be an effective witness for Christ in a diverse world.

Submitted by:

Reverend Vanessa M. Wilson, J.D. Chairperson

*GNJ CORR Members*

Bonnie Harley    Laura Linn

Teresita Matos-Post

Jee Hei Park

Kathleen Stone

Danny Thomas

Vanessa M. Wilson, J.D.

## Religious Leaders of New Jersey, Coalition of

This past year the Coalition welcomed Cardinal Joseph Tobin as the new Archbishop of the Roman Catholic Arch Diocese of Newark as its newest member. Bishop John Schol and Bishop Mark Beckwith of the Episcopal Diocese of Newark welcomed Cardinal Tobin in his service of installation on behalf of the New Jersey ecumenical community in New Jersey.

The fall meeting of the Coalition was the occasion to meet with the then two candidates for Governor, Lieutenant Governor Kim Guadagno and the Honorable Phil Murphy. The Coalition will be meeting with Governor Philip Murphy in the spring of 2018. This meeting will enable Coalition members to share their mutual concerns and serves as a moral voice on issues that impact the welfare of the citizens of New Jersey. The fall meeting also launched an effort to seek support from the New Jersey Congressional delegation to support the Dream Act of 2017. Some forty religious leaders in the state, including our Bishop, John Schol, endorsed the statement. The statement reads as follows:

Coalition of Religious Leaders here in The New Jersey expresses their deep concern and opposition to President Trump's plan to phase out the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Program. We believe that this action is a clear violation of our faith principles of hospitality, compassion and justice. We believe the President's decision to end this program threatens the emotional, social, and economic stability for millions of individuals and tears at the fabric of our country. The young people, who have been protected from deportation by DACA, attend our schools, serve in our military, are members of our faith communities, and make significant contributions to our economy. Their hopes and dreams are no different from the children who are born here and there is no legitimate reason for inflicting this needless suffering on these children. Their only crime, if you even call it that, was that they lovingly and obediently accompanied their parents in pursuit of the dream of freedom and opportunity.

We, the Religious Leaders of New Jersey deeply lament the pain and fear that so many young immigrants are experiencing in the wake of the President's decision to terminate the DACA Program. We condemn this shameful and unacceptable position. We will not stand by as DACA youth, as well as undocumented immigrants, are blamed for the economic and social problems facing our nation.

We call upon members of our New Jersey Congressional delegation to support the Dream Act of 2017 (S 1615/HR 3440). This act will protect almost 800,000 youth who entered the United States as children and know America as their only home. Tens of thousands dreamers call New Jersey home.

Our respective faiths call us to welcome the dreamer, and we stand with them in this moment of time. It is for us a moral imperative that we call upon our representatives in Congress to support the Dream Act of 2017. We call upon our member congregations to pray and advocate for the dreamer and to uphold the dignity of every person and work for the common good. Let us exemplify our best ideals and beliefs.

Our March meeting will be a presentation by Rabbi Irwin Kula, President of the National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership. Rabbi Kula's presentation will address cultural shifts that are changing faith communities. The Coalition will also host a State Legislative Leadership Breakfast in June, at the Shiloh Baptist Church in Trenton. Legislative leadership will be addressing critical issues before the State Legislature.

Submitted by:  
Rev. Jack Johnson, Coordinator

### Status and Role of Women, Commission on (COSROW)

"There is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:28)"

The mission of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (COSROW) is “to challenge The United Methodist Church at all levels to work for full and equal participation of women in the total life of the denomination, including ordination of women, equal access to policy-making and recognition that Jesus Christ calls men and women alike to salvation, liberation, discipleship and service in church and society.”

We have been able to serve continually with dedicated team members throughout this past year. COSROW in the Greater New Jersey Conference will continue to carry out its purpose through the following projects: (1) **Helenor Alter Davission Award**: The recipient of the award in 2018 will be Rosa Williams to celebrate and affirm her courageous servant leadership. (2) **Leadership Training**: we will encourage and support leaders to attend 2018 **Do No Harm**: A United Methodist Sexual Ethics Training “Prevention of and Response to Sexual Misconduct” (3) **Sexual Ethics Training/Workshop for all pastors in GNJ**: We are planning to offer the opportunity this fall: Its goals are to raise awareness of sexual ethics and issues, prevent sexual abuse, promote healthy boundaries, and bring about justice and healing in order to do no harm and do good in every possible way at all times (4) **Display Table at the Annual Conference** to promote COSROW’s ministry and provide resources for its mission goals. (5) **Support Local Church to Celebrate Women’s History Month in March**: Turning Point UMC in Trenton is planning to offer a workshop on Saturday, March 24 for the congregation and community on sexual abuse/harassment and response to the #Me-Too.

The Council of Bishops and the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women reaffirmed our core belief that “sexual harassment must be understood as an exploitation of a power relationship and interfering with the moral mission of the Church,” and encouraged the United Methodists leaders to respond #metoo and #churchtoo. ([www.GCSRW.org](http://www.GCSRW.org))

The Commission on the Status and Role Of Women in GNJ provides helpful resources to affirm, educate, and advocate for the rights of all women. Feel free to contact any of the commission members with your questions to work toward full inclusion. Bible study guides, slide presentations, webinars for training, and booklets are available for free download from the Web site: [www.GCSRW.org](http://www.GCSRW.org).

Submitted by:  
Michelle Ryoo, Chair

Treasurer’s Report

Property and Liability Insurance  
 December 31, 2017

<b>Balance Forward</b>		<b>615,724</b>
<b>Receipts:</b>		
Interest Income	57,154	
Premiums from Churches	3,144,319	
Worker's Compensation	590,139	
Prior Year Receipts	226,811	
	4,018,423	
<b>Disbursements:</b>		
Insurance Premiums	3,415,498	
Worker's Compensation	608,312	
	4,023,810	
Change in Operation		(5,387)
<b>Ending Balance 12/31/17</b>		<b>610,337</b>
<b>Ending Balance as of 12/31/17 is for Reserve for Uncollectible Premiums.</b>		

## Health Insurance Accounts

<b>Assets</b>	<b>12/31/2016</b>	<b>12/31/2017</b>	<b>Variance</b>
<b>Health Insurance Investments-BOA</b>	7,376,176	7,976,346	600,170
A/R-GNJAC	1,418,724	(121,177)	(1,539,901)
Mortgage Receivable/Accrued AR-CBOPHB	0	0	0
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>8,794,900</b>	<b>7,855,169</b>	<b>(939,731)</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>			
Post Retirement Benefits	49,555,111	58,018,509	8,463,398
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>49,555,111</b>	<b>58,018,509</b>	<b>8,463,398</b>
<b>Actives Fund</b>			
<b>Balance Forward</b>	<b>5,464</b>	<b>6,419</b>	955
<b>(Receipts)</b>			
Billing Non-Annuitants	3,917,623	3,753,795	(163,828)
Dist. Supt. & Staff Premiums	496,954	505,255	8,301
Staff Family Premiums	0	0	0
2% of Sal. Contrib.W/H fr Staff&DS's	42,319	47,753	5,434
Incapacity from 127	898,167	975,851	77,684
Transfer from 127 Subsidy	970,000	1,200,000	230,000
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>6,325,063</b>	<b>6,482,654</b>	157,591
<b>(Disbursements)</b>			
Non- Annuitants Premium	5,997,065	6,042,784	45,719
Consulting Fee	0	0	0
Other Expense	0	0	0
Transfer 2% Pastor Salary Contribution	284,306	335,036	50,730
Transfer 2% Staff Salary Contribution	42,737	47,703	4,966
<b>Total Disbursements</b>	<b>6,324,108</b>	<b>6,425,523</b>	101,415
Receipts less Disbursements	955	57,131	56,176
<b>Balance</b>	<b>6,419</b>	<b>63,550</b>	57,131
<b>ANNUITANTS Fund</b>			
<b>Balance Forward</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	0
<b>(Receipts)</b>			
Shared Ministries for Annuitants	1,980,101	2,005,306	25,205
Billing for Annuitants over 65	52,163	59,224	7,061
Billing for Annuitants under 65	55,504	85,317	29,813
Medicare	6,283	0	(6,283)
2% Salary Funds Reserve Transfer	565,260	630,937	65,677
Transfer from 127 Subsidy	0	0	0
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>2,659,311</b>	<b>2,780,784</b>	121,473
<b>(Disbursements)</b>			
Blue Cross - Premium Expense	2,407,043	2,564,068	157,025
Administration Expense	18,977	9,645	(9,332)
Staff Expense	184,135	162,012	(22,123)
CBO - Salary	28,856	27,664	(1,192)
Adoption Support/ Refunds	0	0	0
Consulting Agency Fee	20,300	17,395	(2,905)
<b>Total Disbursements</b>	<b>2,659,311</b>	<b>2,780,784</b>	121,473
Receipts less Disbursements	0	0	0
<b>Balance</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	0

Health Insurance Accounts (con't)

<b>Reserve Fund for Retiree Health Ins.</b>			
<b>Balance Forward</b>	<b>8,958,134</b>	<b>8,748,335</b>	(209,799)
<b>(Receipts)</b>			
Centenary Fund Additional Contribution	547,072	500,000	(47,072)
Transfer 2% Pastor Salary Contribution	284,306	335,036	50,730
Transfer 2% Staff Salary Contribution	42,737	47,703	4,966
Investment Income	333,573	923,485	589,912
Misc Income	2,198,408	0	(2,198,408)
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>3,406,096</b>	<b>1,806,224</b>	(1,599,872)
<b>(Disbursements)</b>			
Transfer to Annuitants	565,260	630,937	65,677
Transfer to Non Annuitants	970,000	1,200,000	230,000
Dividend Expense	175,519	0	(175,519)
Strategic Transformation Grants	34,000	6,417	(27,583)
GNJAC Settlement Mortgage	872,949	0	(872,949)
Transfer to Annuitants Incapacity	898,167	975,851	77,684
Transfer to Reserve	100,000	0	(100,000)
<b>Total Disbursements</b>	<b>3,615,895</b>	<b>2,813,205</b>	(802,690)
Receipts - Disbursements	(209,799)	(1,006,981)	(797,182)
<b>Balance</b>	<b>8,748,335</b>	<b>7,741,354</b>	(1,006,981)
<b>DENTAL Fund Balance Forward</b>	<b>20,079</b>	<b>40,146</b>	20,067
Billing for Dental Insurance	93,887	153,832	59,945
Dental Insurance Premiums	73,820	143,713	69,893
Receipts - Disbursements	20,067	10,119	(9,948)
<b>Balance</b>	<b>40,146</b>	<b>50,265</b>	10,119
<b>Post Retirement Fund Balance Forward</b>	<b>(51,687,699)</b>	<b>(49,555,111)</b>	2,132,588
Current Year Transactions	2,132,588	(8,463,398)	(10,595,986)
<b>Balance</b>	<b>(49,555,111)</b>	<b>(58,018,509)</b>	(8,463,398)
<b>Interest Reserve Fund Balance Forward</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	0
Current Year Transactions	0	0	0
<b>Balance</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	0
			0
<b>Total Fund Balance</b>	<b>(40,760,211)</b>	<b>(50,163,340)</b>	<b>(9,403,129)</b>

## Pension Accounts

<b>ASSETS</b>			
<b>A/R-GNJAC</b>	148,559	(198,930)	(347,489)
GBOP Deposit Account	1,584,615	1,239,064	(345,551)
Pension Investments-BOA	991,964	1,180,948	188,984
Accounts Receivable -GBOPHB	0	0	0
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>2,725,138</b>	<b>2,221,082</b>	<b>(504,056)</b>

<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
Pension	0	0	0
Due to Conference	0	0	0
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

<b>General Fund</b>			
Balance Forward	2,809,815	2,725,138	(84,677)
<i>Receipts</i>			
Investment Income	52,106	188,984	136,878
GBOP Invest. Gain/(Loss)	112,986	233,925	120,939
GBOP Invest. Refund/Adj	164	519	355
GBOP CPP Premium Holiday	0	0	0
AUMCPBO Event		60,797	60,797
Annual Conference Offering			0
Chartered Fund Income	367	394	27
Pre-Retirement Seminar Income	825	620	(205)
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>166,448</b>	<b>485,239</b>	<b>318,791</b>
<i>Disbursements</i>			
Global Pension Trust			
Pensions - Moving Expense Reimb	41,402	57,648	16,246
Grants/Relief	1,496	1,496	0
GNJAC -Settlement / Mortgage Subsidy	0	0	0
Pre-Retirement Seminar Expense			0
Strategic Transformation Grants	0	0	0
Staff Expense	142,528	171,841	29,313
CBO Salary Expense	28,852	27,664	(1,188)
Pension Adjustment Expense	0	2,409	2,409
AUMCPBO	0	60,797	60,797
Operating Expenses	36,847	8,332	(28,515)
<b>Total Disbursements</b>	<b>251,125</b>	<b>330,187</b>	<b>79,062</b>
<b>General Fund Balance</b>	<b>2,725,138</b>	<b>2,880,190</b>	<b>155,052</b>
Receipts - Disbursements	(84,677)	155,052	239,729

Pension Accounts (con't)

<b>Current Service Fund</b>			
Balance Forward	0	0	0
<i>Receipts</i>			
General Board of Pension Income	1,942,051	0	(1,942,051)
Staff Premiums			0
Conference CRSP/ MPP Income	2,496,318	2,405,002	(91,316)
Conference CPP Income	597,225	541,295	(55,930)
Total Receipts	5,035,594	2,946,297	(2,089,297)
<i>Disbursements</i>			
Refunds/Adjustments			
Transfer to Fund 127 Retiree Health	2,025,832	0	(2,025,832)
Expense entry	1,749,415	2,390,461	641,046
GBOP Billing	1,260,347	1,214,944	(45,403)
Total Disbursements	5,035,594	3,605,405	(1,430,189)
<b>Current Service Fund Balance</b>	0	(659,108)	(659,108)
Receipts - Disbursements	0	(659,108)	(659,108)
<b>Interest Reserve Fund</b>			
<b>Interest Reserve Fund Balance</b>	0	0	0
0			
<b>Total Fund Balance</b>	<b>2,725,138</b>	<b>2,221,082</b>	<b>(504,056)</b>

**2017 Receipts Comparison**  
**Greater New Jersey Annual Conference**

	Fd #	Funds	2015			2016			2017		
			Budget	Dec YTD	%Budget	Budget	Dec YTD	%Budget	Budget	Dec YTD	%Budget
Shared Ministry Funds	100	Clergy Support	5,727,298	5,014,342	87.55%	5,319,436	4,625,288	86.95%	4,942,160	4,325,244	87.52%
	200	Administration	2,947,208	2,729,383	92.61%	2,853,078	2,639,495	92.51%	3,263,083	2,966,343	90.91%
	300	WorldService/Conf.Ben.	3,745,763	3,194,351	85.28%	3,765,928	3,411,579	90.59%	3,727,535	3,421,114	91.78%
	410	Black College	202,814	171,595	84.61%	197,700	171,411	86.70%	199,222	176,213	88.45%
	420	Africa University	45,383	39,369	86.75%	44,256	39,683	89.67%	44,585	40,087	89.91%
	430	Ministerial Education	508,422	424,310	83.46%	495,598	424,616	85.68%	499,439	435,000	87.10%
		<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>13,176,888</b>	<b>11,573,350</b>	<b>87.83%</b>	<b>12,675,996</b>	<b>11,312,072</b>	<b>89.24%</b>	<b>12,676,024</b>	<b>11,364,001</b>	<b>89.65%</b>
	<b>Prior Yr. Shared Ministry</b>		<b>19,931</b>			<b>9,879</b>			<b>7,634</b>		
Billing Funds		CRSP	2,594,175	2,488,714	95.93%	2,548,698	2,405,010	94.36%	2,524,475	2,324,454	92.08%
		2016/Prior Year CRSP	195,362	66,959		201,461	42,324		183,195	27,397	
		Prior Years CRSP	1,765,279	88,219		1,806,657	48,984		1,912,748	53,151	
		<b>Total CRSP</b>	<b>4,554,816</b>	<b>2,643,893</b>	<b>58.05%</b>	<b>4,556,816</b>	<b>2,496,318</b>	<b>54.78%</b>	<b>4,620,418</b>	<b>2,405,002</b>	<b>52.05%</b>
		Comp. Protection Plan	585,452	559,546	95.58%	577,523	575,205	99.60%	536,578	520,123	96.93%
		2016/Prior Year CPP	42,922	13,892		49,906	9,379		41,680	7,823	
		Prior Years CPP	372,875	16,919		384,986	12,642		412,767	13,348	
		<b>Total CPP</b>	<b>1,001,249</b>	<b>590,357</b>	<b>58.96%</b>	<b>1,012,415</b>	<b>597,225</b>	<b>58.99%</b>	<b>991,026</b>	<b>541,295</b>	<b>54.62%</b>
		Property/Liab. Insurance	3,056,080	2,878,178	94.18%	3,269,240	3,015,522	92.24%	3,497,334	3,144,319	89.91%
		2016/Prior Year P/L	245,787	73,140		285,459	69,918		249,262	66,000	
		Prior Years P/L Insurance	1,755,405	92,364		1,836,095	94,050		1,955,452	75,943	
		<b>Total P/L Ins.</b>	<b>5,057,272</b>	<b>3,043,683</b>	<b>60.18%</b>	<b>5,390,794</b>	<b>3,179,490</b>	<b>58.98%</b>	<b>5,702,048</b>	<b>3,286,262</b>	<b>57.63%</b>
		Health Insurance	4,276,240	4,227,385	98.86%	3,872,800	3,731,749	96.36%	3,762,507	3,542,469	94.15%
		2016/Prior Yr Health Ins	332,648	101,139		352,028	60,587		266,389	43,926	
		P/Ys Health Insurance	2,722,289	123,685		2,827,528	62,660		3,046,376	74,209	
		<b>Total Health Ins.</b>	<b>7,331,177</b>	<b>4,452,209</b>	<b>60.73%</b>	<b>7,052,356</b>	<b>3,854,997</b>	<b>54.66%</b>	<b>7,075,272</b>	<b>3,660,604</b>	<b>51.74%</b>
	Workers Comp Ins	536,164	529,655	98.79%	622,560	621,632	99.85%	609,864	590,140	96.77%	
	2016 Workers Comp	12,694	-1,605		32,162	18,677		24,922	10,638		
	Prior Years Workers Comp	101,586	7,316		104,178	3,281		114,121	74,229		
	<b>Total Workers Comp Ins</b>	<b>650,444</b>	<b>535,366</b>	<b>82.31%</b>	<b>758,900</b>	<b>643,590</b>	<b>84.81%</b>	<b>748,907</b>	<b>675,006</b>	<b>90.13%</b>	
<b>Total Shared Min. &amp; Billing</b>			<b>31,771,846</b>	<b>22,858,789</b>	<b>71.95%</b>	<b>31,447,276</b>	<b>22,093,570</b>	<b>70.26%</b>	<b>31,813,694</b>	<b>21,939,805</b>	<b>68.96%</b>
<b>Special Giving</b>			<b>0</b>	<b>1,082,584</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>1,018,866</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>1,289,809</b>	
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>			<b>31,771,846</b>	<b>23,941,373</b>		<b>31,447,276</b>	<b>23,112,436</b>		<b>31,813,694</b>	<b>23,229,614</b>	

## Trustees, Board of

### **Property and Liability Insurance Program of the Board of Trustees**

#### **2018 Insurance Renewal:**

For the 2018 policy year the Conference has renewed our coverage with Church Mutual Insurance Company. This year's negotiations resulted in a flat cost renewal. Included in the package was a 4% building and contents value increase for all church owned properties. It is critical that we continue to maintain up to date property values. Sovereign Insurance Group has been retained as our Broker for these negotiations. Church Mutual Insurance is the largest insurer of churches in America with over 100,000 house of worship insured. As it relates to United Methodists they insure over 10,000 United Methodist churches across the country. In 2018 the Conference looks forward to further utilizing additional loss control services provided by Church Mutual. That would include things like the use of Drone technology to perform church roof/steeple inspections, and the Nurses Hotline (Medcor) a service offered that allows our churches employees 24/7 access to call a nurse when they are injured to receive preliminary advice on how best to proceed with treatment. All of these initiatives are designed to help our conference control their overall cost of risk.

#### **Sensor Program:**

As part of our active loss control program the Conference churches have been participating in Church Mutual's CM Sensor program. This program provides 24/7 temperature and water monitoring units free of charge. The sensors themselves alert the local church in the event building temperatures drop or water begins to appear in unexpected areas. There are currently 433 properties eligible for the program and 326 of the sensors are actually installed. Our goal of course would be 100%. In the past 12 months CM Sensor have sent over 700 alerts to participating churches warning of a potential problem! With continued implementation of this program the Conference hopes we can continue to mitigate the claims caused by water damage.

#### **Workers' Compensation:**

Workers' Compensation coverage is with Church Mutual Insurance Company and is effective January 1, 2018.

#### **Automobile Insurance:**

The Board of Trustees continues to make available a voluntary automobile insurance program for church-owned vehicles. The 2018 premium cost is overall 3% lower than in 2017. Each church has access to this program and pays the premiums individually.

#### **Claims Experience:**

The 2017 loss experience was extremely good. We had very few significant claims. That certainly had an impact on our positive renewal terms. However, the loss ratio for the 2011 to 2016 policy years is 113% due to several large loss events. The Board of Trustees believes Church Mutual understands the nature of our overall loss experience and is committed to utilizing all available resources to help to control our losses.

#### **Billing:**

The 2017 billing was the final year of the ten year Parity Plan. For the 2018 renewal there was no cost

increase to member churches.

**Surplus:**

The Board of Trustees endeavors to complete each policy year with a positive fund balance. The accumulated surplus is used to cover uncollected premiums, fund cash flow in order to pay insurers timely, assist in payments for uninsured or underinsured losses and to pay deductible differentials. Surplus is also potentially needed to offset future rate increases that might arise due to adverse loss experience.

**Summary:**

The Board of Trustees encourages each church to take advantage of the assistance available through Sovereign Insurance (800-222-4478), the Conference insurance program's broker.

Submitted by:

Rev. Clifford Still, President

Trustees, Board of

The Officers of the Board are: Chairperson – Rev. Clifford Still; Vice-Chairperson – Rev. James Ryoo; Secretary – Mary Beth Scherer. The following Trustees serve as liaisons to the properties for which the Board is responsible: Ed Bowen, Hosuk Chung, Judy Hopkins, Jack Green, Rev. David Lehmkuhl, Rev. Rupert Hall, Sang Chul Shin and Tracy Estes.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance/care of the following properties: the Episcopal residence, nine District parsonages, the previous Palisades District parsonage situated in Harrington Park, NJ, the land in Paterson, NJ, as well as the Conference Office building. Additionally, they oversee the actions needed to be taken in reference to churches and parsonages that have been closed, representative of formal action taken at prior Annual Conferences. Six cemeteries are also under the care of Trustees.

Some items of note as a result of Trustee action taken during the 2018 Conference Year:

-Seven of the closed churches have been sold in accordance with the Annual Conference action leaving fourteen left. The original number was twenty five.

The Trustees are privileged to work with, and receive the cooperation of, many individuals and groups throughout the Conference. The counsel which is offered to the Board from Conference Chancellors Lynn Caterson, Esq. and Sanford Brown, Esq. is invaluable. John Cardillo, Conference Treasurer and Director of Administrative Services, serves as Treasurer of the Board Alex Mayer, Property Manager and Beverly Schol Assistant Property Manager serve as staff liaisons to the Board. As a result of their guidance and expertise in reference to overall financial resources of the GNJAC and specifically the funds which the Board oversees, the Trustees are better equipped to prioritize and responsibly address the needs of the various properties. The Conference Trustees are also grateful for the opportunity to work more closely with Bishop Schol and the Cabinet during the course of this Conference year.

Submitted by:

Rev. Cliff Still, President

# United Methodist Stewardship Foundation

**Vision:** To enable individuals, congregations and Conference mission organizations experience the joy of generosity and facilitate the generation of increased financial resources to make new disciples, provide inspiring worship opportunities, grow faith groups and engage disciples in mission to the community.

**Mission:**

The Foundation enables disciple making, increased congregational vitality and community mission engagement by assisting congregations and mission organizations grow their financial assets by providing stewardship education and investment opportunities.

**Officers of the Board of Trustees:**

President – Vasanth K. Victor (Laity), Secretary – William Markert (Laity), Treasurer – John Cardillo (Conference Staff)

**Brief History:**

- Created in 1992 by action of the 135th Session of the Northern Annual Conference, with the first investment made by the Conference.
- In 2000, became the UMF of Greater NJ after the merger of the Southern and Northern Conferences.
- Wespath Investment Management became the Investment Manager in August 2015.
- As of the end of 2016, the amount of investment in the foundation was \$36 MM.

**Developments in 2017:**

- The Foundation hired Reverend Jana Purkis-Brash as the full time Executive Director on July 1, 2017. Under her leadership, the focus of the Foundation now is three fold – to increase conference wide fund raising especially by providing planned giving opportunities; to assist congregational giving campaigns by providing stewardship education; and to provide socially responsible investment opportunities for congregations and conference mission organizations.
- Additional Foundation staff were also hired to complete the team – Brian Mickle as Director of Development and Alison Aiello as Administrative Assistant.
- Jana and Brian made over 30 presentations at churches throughout the Conference explaining the work of the Stewardship Foundation.
- As of the end of December 2017, the investment balance invested with the Foundation totaled \$44.1 MM

**Plans and Goals for 2018:**

The Foundation continues to enjoy excellent investment returns through Wespath. We urge everyone to spread the word so more of our churches and partner organizations whose missions align with Methodist principles will invest and grow through the Foundation. A very important goal for the Foundation in 2018 is to increase our Planned Giving capabilities. The initial focus is to be in a position to offer Donor Advised Funds by September 2018.

Submitted by:  
Vasanth K. Victor

## United Methodist Women

The Greater New Jersey United Methodist Women had a productive and spirit-filled year. In January, we sent nine new officers to the Leadership Development Days, in Charlotte, NC. Women from all over the United States and the world came there to be trained in their various leadership roles, to worship together, and to bond in spirit as United Methodist Women. Our theme this year was baptism, and "Wade in the Water" became the theme song! This was the beginning of the assault by the current administration on immigration and turning back, without notification, peoples that had previous to this time had been in United States. Many of our number went to the Charlotte International Airport to protest this deportation of peoples from predominately Muslim countries.

March saw us at the Camden County Boathouse in Pennsauken, NJ to raise money for the teen program of the Camden Neighborhood Center at the 104th Winter Gala!! The Gala will be held this year at the Tavistock Country Club, Haddonfield, NJ, March 10, 2018 at 6 pm. The GNJ United Methodist Women and the GNJ Conference are proud major supporters of this Center that works to offer lunches and Bible study to seniors, daycare for toddlers, and an after-school teen program. A recent addition to their programming is the wonderful, ecumenically sponsored garden plot on their property that raises the vegetables for the lunch program during the summer camps for children of all ages.

Our spring program entitled "Economic Justice" was held at First United Methodist Church in Moorestown, NJ on April 1, 2017. Our UM missionaries Dr. Emmanuel Mefor and his wife Florence were our speakers during the worship. They showed a PowerPoint presentation and video of their work in Zimbabwe. Our speaker for the presentation on Economic Justice was Vicar Serena Rice, former director of the NJ Anti-Poverty Task Force. She discussed the prophetic wisdom of Amos 5: 24, "let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream," and compared this with the behavior of Jesus as described in Matthew. Jesus embodies God's justice in his relationships with others. Matt. 7: 12 "In everything do to others as you would have them do to you."

We co-sponsored Mission "u" with the GNJ Conference, offering 4 courses, including a weekend session at Georgian Court University at Lakewood, NJ July 14-16, and a day session at the Arcola UMC, Paramus July 22. There was also an active youth contingent at Georgian Court. Dean Rev. Dr. Rich Hendrickson ably coordinated the team that brought the school together. Grace Pugh Hubbard and Maria Sottile led us in music and praise. Millie Grey, Assistant Dean, designed a stunning candlelight worship service at Lakewood. The issue of The Missionary Conferences of the United States was one of the workshop topics. The spiritual growth study, living as a Covenant Community by Evy McDonald, was offered at both venues. This study examined the scriptural meaning of covenants with application for the modern church.

Our fall meeting was held October 21, 2017 at the Mission Resource Center in Neptune, NJ where our theme was "Racial Justice." Rev. Vanessa Wilson used the voice of Jerimiah and words from Lamentations 5:1-5 and 19-21 for her sermon entitled "I Am Here, Remember Me?" She discussed her trip to South Africa as part of her Drew Theological training requirement, a student cross-cultural experience. She experienced "Sawubona, Yebo Sikhona," which translates to "I see you, I give you permission to see me." As a descendant of slaves from Africa, this was a very meaningful experience for her. She contrasted the disparity in education, wealth, and criminal justice in South Africa and the United States. Vanessa's group stayed in Johannesburg, but only 20 minutes away in Soweto, there was no running water or indoor plumbing. The ministry of remembering is important, remembering our history. The panel discussion that followed was a discussion on The Charter for Racial Justice. This was

moderated by Janis Rosheuval, former Executive Secretary for Racial Justice with the United Methodist Women. Following lunch, the business meeting of GNJUMW was held, and 6 new officers were installed.

To wrap up the year, 11 officers attended the Leadership Development Days Training in Tempe, AZ, Nov. 17-19, 2017. Pat Schutz (Skylands District Co-President), Yvonne Bouknight, our GNJUMW member of the Program Advisory Group of United Methodist Women, and myself, Kathy Schulz (GNJUMW President), all went out a day early so that we could participate in a training event to help our UMW population in the Conference and the District understand and become better educated to have conversations around "Commission on A Way Forward." This plan was written by the Council of Bishops of the United Methodist Church. It details the "Mission, the Vision and the Scope" in their statement on how the church should expand its awareness to deal with the issue of LGBTQ community and inclusion of these persons in all aspects of the United Methodist Church. This Commission of Bishops will be bringing their report to the Special Session of General Conference in Feb. 2019. Our goal, as United Methodist Women, is to engage 50% of our membership in meaningful and open conversations concerning this issue, which is one of many issues that, over the years, has threatened to divide the United Methodist Church. We are holding these conversations in district and conference events.

Our newest trainee, Betty Sayner, the Skylands District Treasurer, wrote a wonderful summary of her experience at this Leadership Development Days in Tempe. I will quote just a few lines to let you understand the scope and direction of the United Methodist Women: "As I reflect on the time (at the LDD in Tempe, AZ), I don't just miss the palm trees and cactuses! I am left with a powerful image of cardboard boxes that were used to build a big wall. The wall was set up just inside of the conference center where we attended trainings and participated in worship. The boxes had handwritten messages on them that described the walls that have been built up in our world today: roadblocks to citizenship for those who are undocumented, barriers to affordable health care and mental health services, the school to prison pipeline that often exists in communities of color, mass incarceration, white privilege, homophobia, transphobia, islamophobia, obstacles to living wages, a lack of quality maternal and child health care, and impediments to environmental justice. On Sunday morning, this wall that had been built up was dismantled and turned into a table, complete with tablecloth and place settings. The image is a powerful metaphor for the work that United Methodist Women is doing, as they put faith, hope, and love into action to support women, children and youth all around the world. Empowered by education about the walls that exist and what we can do about them, and powered by the generous donations of individuals and local UMW units, walls all over are becoming tables. ...I am grateful for the work of all the United Methodist Women who have come before me and for the hope that UMW gives me about our future."

As I look back over our year in mission, I could not envision a better team of women or a more loyal group of United Methodist Women to work with! We have grown closer to each other and to God on this walk to make the world better and to protect women, children and youth.

We wish to thank Bishop John Schol for his work with us, and Joanne Sullivan for coordinating our visits to the GNJC Mission Resource Center and making sure that all the bells and whistles are working!! We are, as always, so grateful for the musical accompaniment of our spring and fall meetings by Grace Pugh Hubbard, our guardian angel musician!

Submitted by:  
Kathleen Schulz, President

Wesley Theological Seminary 2018

Wesley Theological Seminary, located in Washington, D.C., continues to equip the next generation of Christian leadership for the church and the world. As a United Methodist seminary, we form students to lead innovative ministries while remaining grounded in our biblical and theological traditions.

Whether you are clergy or laity, an alumnus or a prospective student, looking for master's or doctoral work or continuing education or simply deeper biblical knowledge, Wesley wants to support you in your current and future call to ministry. Here are a few ways Wesley can help you grow in faith, wisdom, and ability.

### **Expand your leadership skills**

Wesley's internationally respected **Lewis Center for Church Leadership** is a key resource for cutting-edge church research and disciple-growing strategies for the local church. Under the directorship of the Rev. Dr. F. Douglas Powe, Jr., the Lewis Center's *Leading Ideas* e-newsletter, reaching almost 20,000 people in ministry each week, has launched **its new podcast – *Leading Ideas Talk***. Sign up or listen at [www.churchleadership.com/](http://www.churchleadership.com/)

The **Institute for Community Engagement at Wesley** continues its innovative **online Health Minister Certificate Program** from Heal the Sick to prepare congregations for public health work in their parishes. Some scholarships are available for this program. Contact Tom Pruski at [tpruski@wesleyseminary.edu](mailto:tpruski@wesleyseminary.edu) for more information or to register for future certificate classes.

Wesley also offers opportunities for individual study without pursuing a degree. **The Certificate in Faith and Public Life** explores the foundations of public theology, religious freedom, and civil discourse through graduate courses. For more information, visit [www.wesleyseminary.edu/fpli](http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/fpli).

A **Certificate in Wesleyan Studies** is available online via the **Wesley Theological Seminary Lay Academy**. Topics include United Methodist identity, early church history, Christian ethics, interfaith relations, and the intersection of faith and science. The courses can also be taken for personal education and enrichment. More information can be found at [www.beadisciple.com/wesley/](http://www.beadisciple.com/wesley/).

### **Take your ministry to the next level**

Wesley continues to be a leader in **Doctor of Ministry** programs, offering **practical and spiritually renewing tracks** in theological education. Wesley announces an exciting new 2019 Doctor of Ministry track, in partnership with Wesley House in Cambridge, UK: "Winds of the Spirit and Ministries for a Changing World." Other 2019 tracks will include Church Excellence, Spirituality and Story, a 13<sup>th</sup> Global Asian Church track and Public Engagement: Healing Communal Brokenness and Despair. **Find out more or apply at [www.wesleyseminary.edu/doctorofministry/](http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/doctorofministry/)**.

### **Discover exciting pathways to seminary studies**

Wesley understands the struggle of responsibly accepting your call while being concerned about balancing life, family, ministry and student debt. We are here to help make responding to that call possible. Through our partnership with Shenandoah University and our **new 3+3 Fast Track B.A./M. Div. program**, students enter ministry with less debt after earning their degree in 6 years. **Learn more at [www.wesleyseminary.edu/3+3degrees](http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/3+3degrees)**.

**Wesley's Master of Divinity degree can now be completed via online, weekend, short-term intensive, and weeknight courses in 5 years.** This format is designed to be more accessible to those with busy ministry, work, and/or family commitments throughout the region. Check out upcoming flexible course offerings for summer and fall 2018 at <http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/admissions/try-a-class-3/>

**The new African American Church Studies Master of Divinity specialization** gives contextual preparation for the unique opportunities and challenges our future leaders may encounter in African American churches, while the **Public Theology specialization** allows master's degree students to gain skills for community leadership and advocacy. Wesley continues to offer our 36-hour Master of Arts and a 60-hour Master of Theological Studies to **equip those called to ordained deacon ministries or to other ministries beyond the pulpit.**

**Contact us at (202) 885-8659 or [admissions@wesleyseminary.edu](mailto:admissions@wesleyseminary.edu) about how Wesley's degree programs can equip you for your next step in ministry.**

### **Enrich your congregational outreach and explore new dimensions of ministry**

Through the Wesley Innovation Hub, Wesley is working with **20 local congregations** to design innovative ministries to enrich the religious lives of young adults. **Follow the work and connect with resources at [www.wesleyseminary.edu/wesley-innovation-hub/](http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/wesley-innovation-hub/).** The Wesley Innovation Hub is made possible by a generous grant from the Lilly Endowment.

In a time of polarization, the **Center for Public Theology**, under the leadership of Distinguished Professor of Public Theology Mike McCurry, continues to equip pastors, seminarians, people of faith, and the media to create spaces for civil dialogue at the intersection of religion and politics. The Center also provides events, such as the Wesleyan Political Theology Project, to help faith leaders lead prophetic, open dialogue in their communities. **For more information, visit <http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/ice/programs/public-theology/>.**

The **Luce Center for Arts and Religion** remains the only seminary-based program uniting arts and theology. The Luce Center offers regular classes and workshops with visiting artists. **For information on past and upcoming opportunities visit [www.luceartsandreligion.org](http://www.luceartsandreligion.org).**

### **Stay connected**

Ready to join in our mission? Wesley provides **more than \$2 million dollars annually in scholarships** to our students thanks to the consistent support of graduates, congregations and friends of the seminary. Find out more about how you can be part of the future of Wesley at [www.wesleyseminary.edu/support/](http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/support/).

We invite you to stay in touch through the year and learn more of the latest developments at Wesley by **signing up for our monthly electronic newsletter, *eCalling*, at [www.wesleyseminary.edu/ecalling](http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/ecalling).**

We look forward to continuing to serve you and your community as we seek to live into God's dream together. Blessings to you for a fruitful and faithful Annual Conference.

Submitted by:

The Rev. Dr. David McAllister-Wilson, President

## Young Adult Ministries, Council on

The Council on Young Adult Ministries strengthens the young adult ministry in the local churches and districts of the annual conference. We are excited to report that there are key initiatives and strategic partnerships now in place which will fuel our work and benefit the young adults of Greater New Jersey.

The Council has become connected with the IGNITE movement. In 2017 we partnered with the GNJ Youth Council to assemble a team of over 30 Young Adults from GNJ to form the IGNITE Squad for the annual event in Wildwood, NJ. This was an opportunity for emerging young adult leaders to take on roles of responsibility as well as form new relationships and spiritual fellowship. Also, young adults from across the Conference participated in the IGNITE Leaders Day Training in both 2017 and early 2018. We anticipate continuing to partner with IGNITE to provide more opportunities for GNJ young adults to develop their leadership skills and foster their spiritual growth.

The YA Council will also continue to forge our new partnership with Next Generation Ministries. This new initiative will specifically provide opportunities for young adults to engage in campus and camping ministries. We will find ways to help NextGen achieve its goal of “Vastly expanding the number of well-equipped youth and young adults engaged in expressions of ministry throughout the conference.”

We are also happy to report we will be financially supporting three GNJ young adults’ delegates, Bethany Amey Sutton, Christine LeLache, and Nadiera Young to attend the 2018 Global Young Peoples’ Convocation in Johannesburg, South Africa.

The YA Council will continue to operate within the current GNJ strategic plan (2013- 2018) while moving forward into the new five-year plan beginning in 2019. The new plan calls for some cultural shifts including that we move “FROM concentrating ministry and thinking with current church members TO further extend ministry and thinking to make and engage younger and more diverse generations of disciples.” We are confident that key pieces are now aligned for fruitful young adult ministries in Greater New Jersey, and we will steward and apply our gifts and resources to the work before us.

Submitted by:  
Rev. Blair Goold, Chair

## Youth Council

Youth Council has input with Ignite planning and some of us serve on the Ignite Squad. We worked behind the scenes at the event in many different capacities. We continue to explore thoughts on how we can resource the local church and grow as a team. As NextGen unfolds we will support it by understanding the goals and defining our role within them. We were blessed to support one youth who attended Mission of Peace in Cuba.

Submitted by:  
Deborah Barnett, Chair