

DAILY PROCEEDINGS

DAILY PROCEEDINGS OF THE NINETEENTH SESSION

OF THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF
UNITED METHODISTS OF GREATER NEW JERSEY

May 20-22, 2018

Wildwood, NJ

Sunday, May 20, 2018, 4:00 p.m.

LAITY SESSION

Rosa Williams, Conference Lay Leader, called the Laity Session to order and opened with prayer. Ms. Williams introduced the members of the Lay Leadership Board. Their focus has been to strengthen laity knowledge. The board is ensuring the voice of the laity is heard and that laity are involved and equipped in the Greater New Jersey Conference.

Ms. Williams reviewed her past eight years in her role in the conference. She focused on the 5-Year Plan, which is centered on the five markers of vitality, along with growing new disciples and developing lay leadership.

She reported that the Greater New Jersey Intercultural Task Force completed both individual and collective intercultural competency assessment profiles and created a team and interpersonal development plan. The outcome is to ensure that the task force is competent to perform this work. Over the next several years, the task force is looking to educate others in the conference in conjunction with a "Train-the-Trainer" approach.

Ms. Williams outlined the Laity Development Initiative that was created to develop a lay education plan using a dynamic system of educational excellence to equip laity to be transformational leaders. This plan is scalable for all churches regardless of their size.

Ms. Williams thanked all who coordinate the lay servant classes both on the district and regional level.

Video

A video was shown entitled "A Homeless Man Walks into a Church: What He Did Next Shocked Everyone". It depicts the journey of a homeless man in a church on the same day that Pastor Jeremiah Steepok is to be introduced to his church. In the video, Rev. Steepok challenged the people by stating, "The world has enough people but not enough disciples. When will you decide to be a disciple? Being a Christian is more than something you claim. It's something you live by and share with others."

2019-23 GNJ Strategic Plan Overview

Judy Colorado, Lay Leader from the Gateway North District, member of the Laity Leadership Board and Connectional Table, provided a snapshot of the Strategic Plan. Ms. Colorado opened with a thank you to the laity for their leadership and their many contributions in moving the conference forward.

Ms. Colorado laid out the timeline and activities used to help develop the Strategic Plan. This included many listening sessions and countless hours of research undertaken by the Connectional Table, with an outcome of recommendations to the Strategic Plan. To date, more than 850 people have contributed to this process.

Laity Development Plan

Mr. John Hartman shared the new Laity Development Plan. He reported that the role of the laity in Greater New Jersey has expanded by becoming more recognized and appreciated. The goal of the Development Plan is to grow vital congregations by instructing laity through training and education, supplemented by additional resources and programs.

The substance of this plan is to allow laity to enroll in learning opportunities with a goal of receiving certification credits in lay ministries. This will also cultivate and equip congregations to "Make Disciples who Make Disciples."

Lay Servant Ministry and Lay Leadership Academy

Mr. George Lagos, the Director of the Lay Servant Ministry, provided an overview of the Lay Servant Ministry and the Lay Leadership Academy. He thanked the laity for all the work that they have done for both the local churches and the Greater New

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Jersey Conference. He reviewed the changes to the number of classes, along with the introduction of the Summer Classes in June in both the Skylands and Palisades districts.

Mr. Lagos announced that the graduation for Lay Servant Ministers will be on Saturday, June 2, 2019.

Mr. Lagos outlined the Lay Leadership Academy in how it is mirrored on the 5 markers of Vitality. The tracks are (1) A Closer Walk, (2) Building up the Beloved Community of God, (3) Vital Ministries for Older Adults, (4) Generosity versus Fund Raising, and (5) Digital Strategy for Salvation.

Lay Ministry Recognition

Ms. Williams discussed the Lay Minister Recognition that was held in April of 2018. There were 24 ministries that were recognized. She also encouraged all in attendance to share their ministry that is being done to the glory of God. A short video clip was shown highlighting this year's event.

Conference Recognition

Ms. Williams called Mr. Jay Brown to the podium to recognize him for his continued work for the past eight years in the Certified Lay Ministry (CLM) program with a plaque from the United Methodists of Greater New Jersey and Laity Board.

Mr. Brown graciously accepted the award and left those in attendance with these words: "It is not about the title of being a Certified Lay Minister, it is being a humble lay servant ... Go out there and just give them Jesus."

Rise Against Hunger

Ms. Marilyn Kinelski, from the Northern Shore District, provided an overview of the impact made by Rise Against Hunger and its volunteers. The organization has donated 300,000,000 packages of food to over 70 countries. She stated that the impact of feeding children increases the number of children attending school, reduces illiteracy and hunger and changes the world.

Video

A short video clip was shown highlighting Rise Against Hunger.

Closing Prayer and Blessing

The session closed with a blessing for dinner.

Sunday, May 20, 2018 – 4:00 p.m.

CLERGY SESSION

Bishop John Schol began with words of welcome. Rev. Christina Zito opened the session with prayer. Bishop Schol introduced Bishop Mande Muyombo from the North Katanga Episcopal Region and Bishop Hector Ortiz from the Methodist Church of Puerto Rico. He then announced that it was Rev. Jessica Brendler Naulty's birthday and led the session in singing happy birthday.

QUESTIONS

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

QUESTION AND STATEMENT

When question 29 was presented, a question was raised as to whether moving Rev. Robert Wecht from a full-time appointment to a part time appointment was a voluntary move. Rev. Wecht stated it was involuntary. Rev. Wen-Ling Lai stated that her move from a full-time appointment to a part time appointment was also involuntary. There were no further questions nor discussion.

RECOGNITION OF LEAVING

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Bishop Schol gave thanks to Rev. Frank Davis for his years of service to the GNJ as he steps down as a District Superintendent and he moves to serve as a pastor in another Annual Conference.

RETIREES

Bishop Schol acknowledged all the retirees.

PRESENTATION OF REPORT

The Clergy Report was presented for approval. The report was approved.

FINAL WORDS

Bishop Schol offered words of encouragement in these challenging times by saying all clergy should keep at it. He wants clergy to let the Conference know when things are going well. He encouraged clergy to help each other by sharing and working together. Most of all, don't give up.

BLESSING

Rev. Drew Dyson offered a blessing and the Clergy Session concluded.

Sunday, May 20, 2018, 7:00 p.m.

Ordination

ORDINATION AND COMMISSIONING SERVICE

The Service for Ordination of Deacons and Elders and Commissioning began with the song "Pour Out Your Spirit". B.J. Green and Steven Conaway, from the Nantioke Leni-Lenape tribe, greeted the congregation with a Native American greeting. The clergy processed in to "I Sing the Almighty Power of God".

Bishop John School greeted the congregation with the words; "May the Grace of Jesus Christ be with you." He then offered an opening prayer. Bishop Hector Ortiz from the Methodist Church of Puerto Rico called upon the gathering to reaffirm their faith as he led the Apostles Creed. He then called everyone to remember their baptisms and be grateful.

Ms. Rosa Williams and Rev. Tom Korkuch, on behalf of laity and the Board of Ordained Ministry, presented the candidates to be commissioned and ordained for the ministry of the church. Rev. Eunice Vega-Perez introduced those individuals that were to be commissioned. Rev. Michelle Ryoo introduced the person who would be recognized as an associate member, the person to be ordained as a deacon and those persons to be ordained elders.

Bishop Schol and retired Bishop Alfred Johnson led the candidates through the General Examination.

The scripture read by Ms. Gabrielle Martone, was Psalm 77:14 in English. Ms. Elizabeth Gonzales-Sardinas read John 2:1-6 in Spanish, and Mr. Yoseb Jeon read John 2:7-12 in Korean.

Bishop Schol began his message, titled "Miracles Everywhere," by asking everyone in the congregation to share with their neighbor what one miracle they would like to have happen tonight and then to pray for their neighbor's miracle. Bishop explained that the church needs a new perspective, a new way of looking at and believing in miracles. He prayed for the Holy Spirit to come among the gathering.

Bishop Schol asked who was there tonight expecting a miracle and told the congregation that we need a new perspective. He went on to tell a story of a woman who had been blind in one eye. This woman was at an annual conference where Bishop had been presiding, and by the end of the service her sight had been restored: even her doctor called it a miracle. Bishop Schol admitted he had been skeptical about her healing but realized the need for a shift in perspective. He stated he would never think of an annual conference in the same way again. He affirmed that God can break in everywhere – even at an annual conference!

Bishop Schol reminded the congregation that in the gospel of John miracles are called 'signs,' meaning that God is doing something here. He explained that the Greek word, *dynamis*, is translated as 'miracle' literally means 'power'. He said there is another word, *terata*, used in scripture which means 'wonder'. All are signs and seals of God's mission activity in the world, filled with power and wonder.

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Bishop Schol encouraged the congregation to begin shifting their perspective from the “ordinary” to the “ordinary and holy,” from “ordinary” to “ordinary and extravagant.” He stated that this will take a shift from using “or” to using “and.” He also stated that our perspective is too often about what **we** want to happen, and is focused on the activity, rather than getting the activity focused on God. He encouraged our prayers be about giving people an encounter with God.

Bishop Schol used the image of Jesus turning water into wine to reflect the shift from the ordinary to the “extravagant grace of God,” reminding us that Jesus himself is the extravagant grace of God. Bishop reminded the congregation that when we offer less than our best, when we try to cut corners, in our ministries, we are cheapening the grace of God. He encouraged the congregation to make the most of what they have to offer the extravagant grace of God so others can know God’s grace.

The service then moved into the time of Commissioning. Family and friends were invited to stand where they were for silent prayer during the laying on of hands as each candidate was commissioned.

Provisional Members

Lakesha Renee Grover	Joshua Mularski
HyunHui Kim	Miso Park
Sung Woo Lee	Michael Reed
Erik “Skitch” Matson	Dianna Stone

The service moved into the time of recognition of an Associate Member. Family and friends were invited to stand where they were for silent prayer during the laying on of hands for the Associate Member.

Associate Member

Nancy J. Robinson

The service then moved into the time of examination and ordination of the full members candidates. Family and friends were invited to stand where they were for silent prayer during the laying on of hands as the candidate was ordained.

Ordained Deacon

June Lee Tamburro

Ordained Elders

Daeil Min	Alison VanBuskirk Philip
Tae Youl “Leo” Park	William Bailey Wilson, Jr.
Richard Romero	

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

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

Monday, May 21, 2018 – 8:30 AM

GATHERING

The conference praise team gather the worshippers with songs of praise.

BAR OF THE CONFERENCE

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

Rev. Wiley made a motion to allow John Cardillo, Conference Treasurer and Carolyn Conover, Director of Communications, to speak throughout the conference. The motion passed.

Announcements

Rev. Wiley made the necessary announcements.

OPENING PRAYER

Chad Callahan from St. Peter’s UMC in Ocean City, led the conference in an opening prayer.

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Bishop Schol welcomed and introduced Rosa Williams, Conference Lay Leader.

EPISCOPAL ADDRESS

Bishop Schol opened his episcopal address by reading Psalm 77:14 "You are the God who performs miracles, everywhere." He spoke about the miracles that have occurred in the Conference, telling how the UMC in Union was about to close its doors in six months but they were able to develop a thriving multi-cultural congregation. He spoke about how Camp YDP was growing in attendance and GNJ has developed a new camping, youth ministry and campus ministries called Next Generation.

Bishop Schol told the story of Rev. Heather Valosin, who needed surgery that had a significant chance that she would not survive and if she did not have the surgery she would die within 48 hours. Rev. Valosin had the surgery and not only did she survive but she had another child and a year ago she was ordained.

Bishop Schol gave thanks for and celebrated the Holy Spirit, who breathes power, wonder working power sending GNJ leaders and disciples into the community to stir up faith, hope and justice.

Bishop Schol celebrated the generous giving in our conference. He celebrated that for the eleventh year in a row, GNJC paid 100% of General Church apportionments. He went on to list some of the results of that giving: the seeds of miracles in new congregations; making new disciples in Tanzania; the Ukraine, the Philippines and in GNJ and a scholarship for students at Africa University enabling leader training. Bishop Schol praised Bishop Mande Muyombo for being in the first graduating class of Africa University. He went on to state that GNJ has raised \$17.7 million for Superstorm Sandy relief. Part of this came from foundations, individuals, corporations and Major League Baseball. Bishop spoke about the \$426,000 raised for hurricane relief – half of which will go to Puerto Rico. He told the body that we are developing a relationship with Bishop Hector Ortiz in Puerto Rico and are learning from each other's experiences to help in other disaster relief efforts. Bishop Schol celebrated that in the last five years, GNJ's giving rate has gone from 78% to 88% and thanked everyone for their generosity.

Bishop Schol announced that worship attendance in 2017 had increased due mostly to better connections by congregations with their communities.

Bishop reported that through GNJ's A Future With Hope ministry, 271 homes will be restored by the end of June that had been damaged by Hurricane Sandy. He went on to celebrate that our AFWH organization is working wonders extending our mission so that we are relevant, transformational and impactful. Bishop encouraged clergy to be willing to take risks and be willing to learn from each other.

Bishop Schol talked about the path forward for GNJ, stating that there are five items for leadership to support and pursue. First is to approve the new strategic plan. The second path forward is to continue to grow our intercultural competence. The third path forward is to develop the next generation of disciples. Our fourth path is to approve the 2019 budget that reduces the percentage we apportion churches so that more resources are available to the local church. The fifth path is to approve the Miracles Everywhere Campaign that will raise \$5.2 million to build Hope Centers, make new disciples, fund new congregations and clergy in Tanzania and assist with hurricane recovery.

Bishop Schol went on to speak of the challenges our denomination currently faces, issues such as gender equality and segregated congregations. He stated that GNJ is proud to be diverse in culture, ethnicity and language. Because of this, GNJ has been called to be a leader for our denomination to demonstrate how the church can serve together in the midst of our differences. He spoke about the issue of how there are differences over how we read, understand and interpret scripture. He gave a brief history of the evolution of scripture explaining that difference in understanding has always been a part of the church.

Bishop spoke about the Commission on the Way Forward and the three models they are offering to the Council of Bishops to find a way forward for our denomination. He mentioned the traditional plan, the connectional conference plan and the one church plan, which is the plan recommended by the Council of Bishops. He trusted that, no matter what happens at the 2019 Special Session of General Conference, GNJ will have the character and commitment to rise above the differences, to respect each other and to honor each other's understandings and to work together.

Bishop went on to raise up some of the challenges the church is facing currently within our culture. He spoke on how the world longs for a moral voice, a compass to navigate the problems our society. He listed a list of hashtags now found on Twitter. He encouraged pastors to give prophetic voice to the challenges in preaching and teaching, to be a courageous church to be the body of Christ for the world. He discussed how NJ schools are more segregated than any state public school system in the south even though NJ is the 4th most diverse state in the nation because of how the structure of having 565 municipalities

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causes much of the segregation. He spoke about how GNJ will have the opportunity to vote to affirm GNJ's participation in a lawsuit that can change the future for all students of all backgrounds. He reminded the body that there is no convenient time to work for justice. This is God's time – calling us to be the church of Jesus Christ, not just when it is convenient for us. This is God's time to act. He stated GNJ should be leading the way to end gender and segregation inequalities. He called for GNJ to lead on!

Bishop Schol expressed thanks to GNJ from he and Beverly for having the opportunity to serve here.

LEGISLATION

Segregation of New Jersey Schools

Bishop Schol introduced retired NJ Supreme Court Justice Gary Stein in the audience.

Rev. Clifford Still, chairperson of the Conference Board of Trustees, introduced the Segregation in New Jersey Schools resolution. The following persons spoke to the legislation: Rev. Myrna Bethke, District Superintendent of Gateway South, Rev. Kyu Tae Pak, Chair of the Korean Caucus, Rev. Waleska Trinidad, Chair of the Hispanic/Latino Committee and Kathy Schultz, President of GNJ UMW.

Rev. Still made a motion for the approval of the resolution.

Question of Law

A Question of Law was submitted by Gyuchang Sim:

In reference to a resolution presented in the addendum of the pre-conference booklet on 'Segregation in New Jersey Schools'. Does a bishop, committee(s) or agency(ies) or all combined GNJAC have an authority to make a decision for the United Methodists of Greater New Jersey to join and participate in a lawsuit filed on May 17, 2018 against the State Board of Education and an Acting Commissioner of the State Department of Education between the annual conference for 2017 and 2018?

Bishop Schol took this under advisement. Bishop Schol also explained that while the Board of Trustees and the support of 11 other agencies all unanimously agreed to participate in the lawsuit, it also had to be approved by the Annual Conference, "with belief that GNJ could and would support this, but also the understanding that if you did not, our name would be withdrawn from the law suit. And so based on that it was decided to move forward. ... we wanted approval by this body." If the conference chose not to approve signing on to the lawsuit, then the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference name would be withdrawn from the lawsuit.

AMENDMENT

Creed Pogue moved for approval of an amendment which would state, after the last resolved, "Be it further resolved that the GNJAC authorizes the expenditure of \$1500 from the emerging needs line item as well as a further \$1500 from the emerging needs line item upon a vote of the Connectional Table. Be it further resolved that any further expenditures would only occur after a vote of the Connectional Table and a mail vote of the clergy and laity members of the annual conference that receives a majority of affirmative votes and receive a minimum of 430 affirmative votes. Be it further resolved that any future litigation against either state governments or federal government would require an affirmative vote of the Connectional Table and a mail vote of the clergy and laity members of the annual conference that receive a majority of affirmative votes with a minimum of 430 affirmative votes.

Bishop Schol ruled that the second and third 'Be it further resolved' were out of order with our rules.

PARLIMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. Pogue asked for a parliamentary inquiry about the procedures for a mail vote. Bishop explained that mail ballot can only be done in the case of an emergency and has to be approved by the Council of Finance and Administration. He also explained that a mail vote was looked at and was not possible by our rules and that the conference leadership looked at a special called session but because of the nature of the lawsuit and the requirements of the Book of Discipline a special session of the Annual Conference could not be called.

The motion was made for the approval of the first part of the amendment. The motion passed.

A motion for the approval of the amended resolution was made. The motion passed with only one dissenting vote.

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Bishop Schol thanked Justice Gary Stein who spoke to his personal commitments in the legislation and thanked the conference for its support.

2019-2023 Strategic Plan

Judy Colorado and Rev. Sang Won Doh made a motion for the approval of the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan resolution.

Discussion ensued.

AMENDMENT

Creed Pogue made a motion for an amendment to be added after line 29 on page 21 of the pre-conference booklet: "Lay Servant Ministries - Certified Lay Servants, Lay Speakers and Lay Ministers, expand the ministry of the laity for training for pulpit supply as well as caring, leading, and communicating across the connection for transformational growth." The motion passed.

A motion for the approval of the entire legislation was made. The motion passed. There were no dissenting votes.

Trustee Enabling Resolution

Rev. Clifford Still made a motion for the approval of the Trustee Enabling Resolution. The motion passed.

Nominations Report

Rosa Williams made one change to the Nomination Report, the removal of Chuck Mitchel, and then made a motion for its approval. The motion passed.

MAKING, SHAPING AND ENGAGING PASSIONATE DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST

Bishop Schol introduced, Rev. Junius Dotson, General Secretary of Discipleship Ministries. Rev. Dotson went on to speak of the resources Discipleship Ministries offers.

Rev. Dotson offered a prayer, then made an analogy between Major League Baseball rules and work in the local church. He explained that in Major League Baseball, if you miss first base, it doesn't matter what else you do, nothing after that will count. Dotson stated that making disciples of Jesus Christ is the equivalent to first base in the church. For the local church, there are two dimensions of intentional discipleship: First, personal – to make disciples you must be a disciple. He reminded the body that no one ever graduates from discipleship class because it is an ongoing process. He defined a disciple as someone who knows, grows and shares Jesus and then stated that discipleship begins with one's self. He reminded the body that you cannot teach what you do not know, you cannot model what you do not practice and you cannot lead where you are not willing to go. Your commitment to grow as a discipleship defines how you will lead others. Rev. Dotson then challenged the body to think of this corporately. He stated that we are to do everything we can to provide opportunities to equip and empower people.

Rev. Dotson used the example about how we must show intentional discipleship by reminding the body if you want to build a boat, you don't just round up workers, but you also teach them to yearn for the vast and endless sea. How this applies to the church is that we must be involved in our communities. We need to have a yearning for the people in our communities. He also warned that this takes relationships which is work and often messy.

VIDEO

Rev. Dotson presented a video titled, 'See the People' that explained how discipleship starts with relationship and how they should be authentic, organic and consistent. It reminded the body that rebirth can happen at any time during the church's life cycle.

He emphasized important consistent relationships with people in our communities are one of the most important ingredients for effective discipleship.

Rev. Dotson presented the One Matters Discipleship Award which is awarded to a church that increased from zero baptisms and/or professions of faith to positive numbers and this award includes a \$1,000 award. First UMC of Dover was honored for building relationships and discipling young men in the Holy Hoops program. This program has resulted in 28 new professions of faith in 2017.

Rev. Dotson invited every member of conference to fill out an 'A Miracles Everywhere Card' which were distributed to all attendees. This was to enter into a time of commitment. While the cards were collected, 'I Have Decided to Follow Jesus' was sung.

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Bishop Schol thanked Rev. Dotson for all he does at Discipleship Ministries.

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT MINISTRY

Bishop Schol introduced Gus and Ty, two crisis response dogs, to the conference. He explained they are part of a program at Centenary UMC. They provide emotional support for people during crisis events around the country. The dogs attend worship each week and sit on the laps of the children as well during children's time. The Bishop presented them with a gift of bones.

A FUTURE WITH HOPE CELEBRATION

Bishop Schol celebrated the successes of A Future With Hope and cited many miraculous statistics. He celebrated what has been done in the five years since Hurricane Sandy; 50,000 meals have been prepared by UM churches. 5,000 people were sheltered by United Methodists in the aftermath, 11,000 cleaning buckets were distributed, 3,000 health kits were supplied, and 2,000 homes were mucked out. We had 12,173 volunteers assist in the relief and recovery from 46 states and 2 countries, totaling 303,198 volunteer hours. The estimated cost of that work was \$8,095,413.30. We also received \$998,604 from donations from volunteers. He went on to tell the body that we had support from ecumenical partners as well. The Lutherans, the Salvation Army, the Episcopal Diocese, Christian Public Service and World Renew and we worked with all nine county's long-term recovery groups. UMCOR generously donated \$3,088,224. In total, we raised \$17,552,869. We worked with 271 homeowners to get them back in their homes.

VIDEO

A video was shown of some of the people helped by A Future With Hope. Each expressed how much it meant to have A Future With Hope there for them.

Bruce Hartman, President of Board of AFWH talked about where we're going next. We will be focusing on three places. First is Communities of Hope training, helping churches to identify what their communities need. The second focus will be to open eight to ten Hope Centers. The third focus will be repurposing of under or unused church properties for sustainable community projects. He ended by thanking GNJ for our commitment to this ministry.

Bishop Schol thanked Hartman for all he has done and what he has accomplished in his life. He went on to talk about Hartman's new book 'Jesus and Company' explaining that all donations for 250 books will go to the Miracles Everywhere Campaign.

UM Stewardship Foundation

Bishop Schol introduced Visanth Victor, chair of the United Methodist Stewardship Foundation. Victor explained how the Stewardship Foundation helps us be better stewards of our financial gifts. WesPath is the company chosen to lead our efforts and it invests in a socially responsible way. UMSF also focuses on: Resourcing churches to have successful stewardship campaigns with socially responsible investments and sound financial management, education for planned giving and managing resources, grants and donor advised funds.

Centenary Fund

Bishop Schol introduced Rev. Doug Miller who spoke about the Centenary Fund. Rev. Miller explained that the fund was started in 1857 as part of the centennial celebration of the Methodist Church to aid retired pastors. The Centenary Fund gives \$600,000 each year to the budget of GNJ for maintenance of supplemental health care and the remaining funds are used to assist retired pastors in time of need. Rev. Miller gave his appreciation for all the gifts given to the Centenary Fund.

United Methodist Communities

Bishop Schol introduced Rev. John Callanan to speak about United Methodist Communities. Rev. Callanan explained that the UMC have been a vital missions partner since 1907. It is a faith based, not for profit ministry and is a statewide leader in services for older adults.

VIDEO

Rev. Callanan shared a video about the UM Communities Pilgrimage, a two day pilgrimage to historic UM Churches in NJ, PA, and MD.

Next Generation

Bishop Schol introduced Rev. Brandon Cho to speak about Next Generation Ministries. Rev. Cho spoke about how the Spirit is blowing new wind into the youth ministry with GNJ. He talked about IGNITE, new camping and campus ministries, confirmation day with the Bishop, an online student leader gathering using ZOOM and a think tank summit. He also celebrated two new

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campus ministries pastoral appointments, one at Drew and the other at Rutgers. Rev. Cho informed the body that the GNJ Next Gen website has been designed and launched, and encouraged the body to check it out. The site already has 1,430 names in the database, they are aiming to have 8,000 names. Rev. Cho went on to celebrate ministries of diversity, teaching youth that differences are gifts. He also talked about new ministries at Pinelands and relaunching youth ministries at Aldersgate. Rev. Cho encouraged all to invest in Next Gen Ministries.

SERVICE OF PASSAGE: HONOR RETIREES

Bishop Schol began the Service of Passage by asking the body to sing one verse of "O, How I Love Jesus." Rev. Dr. Regina Hendrickson led the body in the call to celebration and introduced the retirees. She ended by celebrating the 550 years of servant ministry represented by the retirees.

Bishop Schol gave thanks for all the years of leadership the retirees have given to the church. The District Superintendents then anointed the retirees.

Passing of the Mantle

Rev. Michelle Ryoo came forward and introduced the new ordinands. They stood before the retirees.

Bishop Schol then led the ritual of passing the mantle from the retirees to the new ordinands. The retirees anointed the ordinands.

Rev. Eunice Vega-Perez came forward and read the list of the newly commissioned class. The newly commissioned stood before the new ordinands. The mantle was passed from the ordinands to the commissioned candidates. The commissioned candidates were anointed by the ordinands.

Rev. Douglas Goldberg read the list of newly appointed local pastors. They stood before the newly commissioned candidates. The mantle was passed from the commissioned to the local pastors. The newly commissioned class anointed the new local pastors.

Bishop Schol asked Rosa Williams forward. The local pastors passed the mantle to Rosa Williams.

The service ended with singing "Here I Am, Lord".

Announcements

Rev. Wiley made the necessary announcements.

Blessing

Alexis Jones from Kearney and Roselle UMC's gave the blessings.

MONDAY, MAY 21, 2018 – 1:45 PM

Opening Video

The session began with a video about IGNITE ministries for youth, showing scenes from 2017 and presenting the theme for 2018.

Opening Prayer

Charlotte Jansky from the Red Bank UMC opened the session with prayer.

Leadership Address

Bishop Schol invited Rev. Hector Burgos, Director of Connectional Ministries, forward to lead the Leadership address. Burgos introduced the presenters: Rev. Sang Won Doh, Rosa Williams and Rev. Iraida Ruiz de Porras

Rev. Burgos discussed the growth GNJ has made in the five years since setting ambitious goals. We set out to grow from having 14% vital congregations to 41%. We now have 32% of our congregations considered highly vital, making disciples of Christ for the world. He stated that there have been more than fifty new faith communities started as well. Rev. Burgos then spoke of several new ministries that have been started in some of the churches in GNJ.

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Rev. Burgos shared statistics of how 67% of worshipers are in small groups and that 55% are participating in hands-on-missions. He praised God for doing wonders, stating that more of the local church budget is being spent on mission and that GNJ has raised \$5.5 million to support Imagine No Malaria, Sandy recovery work and local church mission projects. \$17.7 million was raised for Sandy recovery through A Future With Hope and \$15.3 million was spent in mission, a 5% increase from when we started our strategic plan.

Rev. Burgos shared how miracles are everywhere, giving examples such as 150 congregations having participated in Team Vital and the new bilingual ministry, Nueva Esperanza, which was started at the Morristown UMC. He praised God because more than 1200 students participated in the IGNITE weekend last year and the GNJ Board of Church and Society created an Immigration Task Force to educate congregations on the issue of immigration. Rev. Burgos celebrated that GNJ raised over \$450,000 towards relief efforts for those impacted by recent natural disasters and that through our Esperanza for Puerto Rico initiative, with the participation of over 150 congregations, more than 65,000 pounds of supplies were sent to Puerto Rico and over \$250,000 has been raised for rebuilding efforts.

Rev. Iraida Ruiz de Porras spoke about the bold and renewed Next Generation initiative for youth leaders. She announced two new campus ministries, one at Drew University, the other at Rutgers New Brunswick campus. She celebrated that our camping ministry at the Pineland Center in Mt. Misery is coming back to life and that the Global Board of Discipleship will be launching the Cultivate Initiative which will provide young people vocational discernment opportunities.

Rosa Williams updated the conference on the progress that has been made towards implementing and integrating intercultural competence. She spoke about the cultural/cross racial training that had taken place in the fall, how this Spring, a component on celebrating diversity was added to the transition workshops and how the Board of Ordained Ministry is working with the General Commission on Race and Religion to assess the level of competency of the board and draft an action plan. Williams told of how the cabinet and staff will begin work on intercultural competence as well as how we are building the leadership capacity to begin the next phase to work with clergy and congregations. She offered a special word of thanks to Rev. Nicole Caldwell Gross and Rev. Juel Nelson who have been leading this initiative.

Rev. Sang Won Doh celebrated the amazing things God is doing and affirmed the new strategic plan that will guide our ministry over the next five years. He explained that his plan builds on the progress we have made, leverages what we have learned, seeks to address the core challenges impacting our ministries, praised it for being a plan that focuses less on numbers and more on shifting ways of being, thinking and acting, and recognizes that transformational leadership within congregations is crucial to fulfilling our mission of making disciples. He encouraged every clergy and all laity to be a part of the plan through their congregations.

Rev. Doh stated that a goal of the strategic plan was to equip 100 clergy and 100 laity leaders who make disciples who make disciples. In order to accomplish this, Rev. Doh explained what shifts must occur over the next five years. We will shift from mostly serving our members to having a missional focus; shift from being single cultural congregations to multicultural congregations; from sharing information through workshops to interacting with and experiencing content to form leaders, and from maintaining buildings to repurposing buildings for regenerative mission. Rev. Doh believes these shifts will allow GNJ to focus on mission, to grow and be more adaptive to challenges and will allow us to be better stewards of the resources available.

Rev. Burgos shared ways to accomplish the new strategic plan. Focus will be on building new faith communities, resourcing our leaders to grow in intercultural competence and focusing on the Next Gen ministries. He listed the resources available to help congregations and leaders that are ready to become vital and more like Christ: Laity Leadership Academy, Coaching, PACE groups, Mosaic Ministries, Clergy Leadership Development Initiative, Team Vital, and Communities of Hope. He encouraged every leader and congregation to use these resources so as the Spirit calls GNJ, we can engage in new possibilities with courage.

Rev. Burgos thanks the conference for the service they do in their communities to witness the love of Jesus Christ.

Bishop John Schol thanked the GNJ leadership team and staff for all they do to witness to the healing and transformative power and love of Jesus Christ in communities and the world.

Offering

An offering was taken for the Miracles Everywhere campaign. Bishop Schol explained how the offering would be used.

LEGISLATION

DAILY PROCEEDINGS

Constitutional Amendment - 1

Bishop John Schol informed the conference that we needed to revote on the Constitutional Amendment listed on page ten in the Conference Addendum.

Lynn Caterson, Conference Chancellor, explained the reason why there is a need to revote on the Constitutional Amendment – 1 and read what had originally been voted on which was incorrect wording.

Tom Lank read the correct language to help the body understand what the members would be voting on at this time.

Rev. Wiley instructed the body on who could vote and how to vote. Bishop Schol led the body through the voting process. The votes were collected for counting.

Miracles Everywhere Campaign Case Statement

Judy Colorado moved for the approval the Miracles Everywhere Campaign resolution.

Bishop Hector Ortiz shared about the work of the United Methodist Church in Puerto Rico after last year's hurricane season. He spoke of the devastation caused by the hurricanes that hit the island and how the United Methodist Church has been helping and serving people in their communities.

Judy Colorado thanked Bishop Ortiz for his work.

Video

A video about Puerto Rico and UMCOR's involvement there since the hurricanes was shown.

Colorado introduced Bishop Mande Muyombo from Tanzania in the North Katanga Episcopal Area. She explained that the Miracles Everywhere campaign will build new connections there.

Bishop Muyombo spoke about how he opposes legislation against women and he provided an update on ministry that was happening in his conference. He also spoke of the need for new congregations, new ministers, programs for the youth and health care services in his conference area.

Colorado thanked Bishop Muyombo. She then introduced Bishop Schol.

Bishop Schol addressed the body, first explaining that although his wife Beverly could not join him today, she is committed to this mission campaign. He explained their conversation about their finances and how they committed to pledging \$42,500 to the Miracles Everywhere Campaign.

Colorado moved to approve the Miracles Everywhere Campaign.

AMENDMENT

Rev. Jessica Brendler Nautly moved for the approval of an amendment to line 15 on page 62 in the preconference journal. She moved to add: "Promote gender equality and justice through education." The motion passed.

The motion for the full legislation passed.

Bishop Muyombo praised GNJ for amendment calling it timely and necessary. Bishop Schol reminded the body that many the conferences in the US failed to pass the amendment as well.

Missional Partnerships With Tanzania and Puerto Rico

Rev. Sang Won Doh moved for the approval of both the Missional Partnership between The Methodist Church of Puerto Rico and the United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey and the Missional Partnership between The United Methodist Church of Tanzania and The United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey. The motion passed.

The official documents were signed by Bishop Schol, Bishop Ortiz and Bishop Muyombo.

Nehemiah Properties, Inc. Statement of Relationship

Rev. Clifford Still moved the approval of the Nehemiah Properties, Inc. Statement of Relationship resolution.

DAILY PROCEEDINGS

AMENDMENT

Gynchang Sin moved for the approval of an amendment requiring adding to line 11 on page 31, "GNJ expects that Nehemiah Property Inc. will follow best practices and not hire individuals of immediate family of GNJUMC leadership or trustees of Nehemiah Property Inc. Immediate family herein includes but not limited to spouse, grandparent, parent, grandchild, child, uncle, aunt, nephew or niece by blood adopted half, step or marriage domicile partner and domicile relatives." The motion passed.

AMENDMENT

Creed Pogue moved for the approval for an amendment to the resolution to state, "It is understood that no church would participate in the Nehemiah Properties, Inc.'s services without a vote of a church conference presided by their District Superintendent." This would be added after line 14 on page 31. The motion passed.

The motion for the full legislation passed.

Conference 5 Year Projected Budget Analysis

Judy Colorado presented the 5-Year Projected Budget Analysis report and moved for its adoption.

DECISION OF LAW

Creed Pogue requested a decision of law regarding the "Church Superconferences":

I am requesting a Decision of Law regarding the "Church Superconferences" on the Conference Calendar at the end of the pre-Conference journal and paragraph 246.4 of the The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, 2016 edition which states:

4. The district superintendent shall fix the time of meetings of the charge conference. ***The charge conference shall determine the place of meeting.*** (boldface and italics added.)

In light of this provision of the Discipline and the fact that there have been no votes by charge/church conferences to locate their conferences anywhere but at their own local church, is it permissible to schedule "Church Superconferences" at other locations, while including district programming?

Bishop Schol explained that he has thirty days to review and make his ruling and then it will be sent to the Judicial Council who will review the bishop's ruling and make their ruling.

The Budget Motion was voted upon and approved.

Shared Ministry Apportionment Formula 2019

Judy Colorado moved for the adoption of the Shared Ministry Apportionment Formula 2019 resolution. The motion passed.

Pension and Health Benefits

Rev. Bill Wilson moved to adopt the Pension and Health Benefits Recommendations resolution. The motion passed.

2018 Health Insurance Guidelines

Rev. Wilson made a motion to adopt the 2018 Health Insurance Guidelines resolution. The motion passed.

Clergy Equitable Compensation 2019

Rev. Christine Day made the motion to approve the Clergy Equitable Compensation for 2019 resolution. The motion passed.

Standards for Parsonages

Rev. Day made a motion to approve the Standards for Parsonage resolution. The motion passed.

Closure of Johnsonburg United Methodist Church

Rev. Steven Bechtold, Superintendent of the Skylands District, made a motion for the approval of the Closure of Johnsonburg UMC resolution. The motion passed.

Closure of Billingsport United Methodist Church

Rev. Bethke, District Superintendent of the Gateway South District, made a motion to approve the resolution to close the Billingsport UMC. The motion passed.

DAILY PROCEEDINGS

Bishop Schol offered a prayer for the congregations of Johnsonburg and Billingsport UMC's.

Historic Sites

Rev. John Callanan made a motion to approve the three resolutions acknowledging Kingwood, Clarksboro Evangelical, and the Union City Emmanuel UMC's as historical sites. The motion passed.

Bishop Schol expressed thanks for Rev. Callanan's leadership and work he does as chairperson of the Archives and History Committee.

Announcements

Rev. Wiley made the necessary announcements.

Closing Prayer

Moselle Jules from the Haddonfield United Methodist Church closed the session in prayer.

Tuesday, May 22, 2018, 8:30 a.m.

GATHERING

The conference band gathered the worshippers with music and songs.

PRAYER

Bishop Schol invited Mr. Haines Hoag from Medford UMC to come forward and offer the opening prayer.

VIDEO

A video was shown showcasing Hope Centers around the conference.

GENERAL BOARD OF CHURCH AND SOCIETY

Bishop Schol introduced Dr. Susan Henry Crowe from the General Board of Church and Society and invited her to speak to the congregation about poverty and how we continue to work to eliminate poverty.

Dr. Crowe thanked the congregation for passing the legislation to end segregation in New Jersey as well as joining in partnership with Puerto Rico and Tanzania. She also thanked Bishop Schol for requesting the 'Faith and Facts' booklet from GBCS.

Dr. Crowe explained the purpose of GBCS as "works of righteousness," working for personal, social and civic righteousness. She went on to speak to the challenges our country faces at this time. The first was the widening income disparity between the rich and the poor. She spoke about how there has been stagnation in wages over the past ten years, contributing to the increase in poverty.

To show how churches can help work to eliminate poverty, Dr. Crowe talked about how several churches in the Dallas area have started the 'Zip Code Project' where they would distribute backpacks filled with school supplies in their zip codes. In doing this, they realized that there were several underlying issues that needed to be addressed, and have now begun new ministries to address those issues. She also spoke about Broadway UMC in Indianapolis who applied for a grant to fight racism.

Dr. Crowe gave one reason as to why there is so much poverty by quoting John Wesley, "One reason why the rich in general have so little sympathy for the poor is because they so seldom visit them. Hence it is that...one part of the world does not know what the other suffers." She noted that this quote reminds us that we are often disconnected from one another in an otherwise highly connected world. She gave several examples of items we typically use that are made by people or children that we don't even realize. She asked the assembly, "When did we start valuing convenience over faithfulness?" She encouraged the conference to go to slaveryfootprint.org to see how many items we may own that have been made by someone in slavery.

Dr. Crowe then spoke to the role of the church and what can we do to "turn the world upside down." She challenged the church to make a shift from one of scarcity to abundance, then to stop seeing those in poverty as problems but to see them as Christ himself, calling us to respond in love. A third action we need to take, she said, is to imagine an economy that works and honors the dignity and work of all people. The fourth purpose of the role of the church, she stated, is to proclaim and affirm the sacred worth of all persons.

DAILY PROCEEDINGS

Dr. Crowe reminded the congregation of our social creed that speaks to working for people who labor and improving the conditions in which they work. She quoted Cornell West stating, "Justice is what love looks like in public". Concluding, she encouraged the conference to work with the immigrant, to be in ministry with those in poverty, with those who have been hurt by the church, to help repair the broken system, and work towards a living wage.

Bishop Schol thanked Dr. Crowe for all her hard work and gave her a gift.

Video

Bishop Schol introduced a video highlighting Lambertville UMC and their soup kitchen as they work to reduce poverty in their community.

READING OF APPOINTMENTS

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

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

Video

Rev. Alfred Day ended the reading of appointments by celebrating the 50th anniversary of the United Methodist Church, showing a video highlighting the progress and emphasis since. He then called all clergy to go to their appointed churches and be truly catholic, evangelical, transforming and creatively adaptive.

Video

Bishop Schol introduced a video on New Faith Communities highlighting the new site of Hope UMC.

RECOGNITION OF CONFERENCE ORGANIZERS

Bishop Schol thanked all the teams that help organize and run the conference. A video highlighting this year's annual conference session was shown.

CENTERING

The Annual Conference choir offered the centering song, "All We Ask".

SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE AND COMMUNION

The Service of Remembrance and Communion opened as Bishop Schol, the cabinet, and the members of the families of those who had died during the preceding year, processed in to "Maker, in Whom We Live". Ms. Shelley Smith offered the greeting and led the Call to Worship.

Terisita Matos-Post read the scripture Joshua 4:1-9 in Spanish, Jennifer Cho Read Joshua 4:19-24 in Korean, and Emad Gerges read 1 Peter 2:4-8 in Arabic.

Rev. Ron Watts offered a sermon for the service, opening with prayer and then sharing the purpose of a stone he had brought with him from his parent's home. He placed it on the floor and explained that it was a witness stone, representing for him, all that they meant to him to make him who he is. He also spoke about the Vietnam War Memorial, another witness stone, which cries out to all visitors to remember those who had given their lives. He spoke about the wailing wall in Jerusalem, how it is also a witness stone.

Rev. Watts shared several memories of his childhood. He noted that when he had revisited the town where he grew up, he discovered how it had changed. He had found an old piece of stone that brought back many memories. Rev. Watts then shared a story of he and his daughter picking up shells on a beach and how he learned from his young daughter that all shells are beautiful. He went on to say that Jesus looks at all of us in the same way. Rev. Watts concluded by reminding the congregation that we are all called to be witness stones and to remember we are called to be living stones for Jesus.

A video was presented, naming all the saints who had been called home to glory in the past year, namely

Wayne H. Ackerman
Robert J. Beyer

DAILY PROCEEDINGS

Herman Bips
David James Bort
Leslie Cole, Sr.
Robert Duncan Sr.
Zoila Margot Fernandez
James Galuhn
Joan Gough
Robert E Grant
Roberta Greiner
James K. Helms
Harvey Hewitt
Karen M. Hoenigsberg
Elbridge T. Holland
Clark Hunt
Ethel Johnson
Bertha Levant
Duncan P. McCallum
Renee McCleary
Marion McVeigh
Charles W. Miller, Jr
Shelly Potter-Abrahamsen
Marilyn Richards
Brenda Myra Scott
Minerva Steelman
Myrtle Stillwell
Donald Stitzinger-Clark
Janet Torgersen
Alberto Valladeras
Johnnie R. White
Gerry Woodlief
Margaret Yeager

Bishop Schol offered a prayer for the saints.

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

Bishop Schol gave the closing prayer and benediction.

LEGISLATION

Recommended Changes to Rule 19

Rev. Dan Gepford presented the Rules Committee recommendation to Amend Rule 19(b) as an alternative to one presented by Mr. Creed Pogue at the last Annual Conference, to address Legislation Proposed to Annual Conference, and moved its approval. The motion passed.

Rev. Jeanette Block moved the following amendment to Rule 19, “to be placed after line 25 or line two on page 55”: “No legislation shall be decided prior to the Annual Conference.” There was a second. Bishop Schol responded saying that her proposed amendment is a referral to the Rules Committee and that the Rules Committee will need to look at that and bring it back to Conference next year.

Amend Rules 64 and 65

Creed Pogue presented a resolution to Amend Rules 64 and 65. Rev. Dan Gepford then presented the Report From Rules of Order Committee, speaking against the Amend Rules 64 and 65 resolution. The Resolution as presented by Mr. Pogue was defeated.

Reports to Annual Conference

DAILY PROCEEDINGS

Rev. David Wiley made a motion to receive the reports on pages 89-133 of the pre-conference Journal and to publish them in the Journal, along with some reports that were received after the deadline for the pre-conference Journal but before the Annual Conference Session, including reports from such organizations as Africa University and United Methodist Seminaries, among others. After this was seconded he pointed out that these are reports, not resolutions, and that the Conference was receiving these reports, not approving them as they report the actions of the various groups, not necessarily actions that are adopted or endorsed by our Conference. The motion passed.

Resolution to End Harm to Youth

Sherri Shumate and her son, Joey, presented the Resolution to End Harm to Youth and made a motion for its approval. The motion passed.

To Facilitate “A Way Forward”

Susan Zahorbenski moved for the approval of the To Facilitate “A Way Forward” resolution.

Amendment

Luana Cook Scott made a motion to amend line 41 on page 66 and line three on page 67 to state “women and men of GNJ”. The motion passed.

The motion for the full legislation passed.

Stay United as One Denomination

No one appeared to present this motion so it was not acted upon.

Resolution for a Gracious Accommodation

Rev. David Wehrle made a motion to approve the Resolution for a Gracious Accommodation.

Motion

Rev. Chris Heckert made a motion to table the Resolution for Gracious Accommodation to honor the process of the Commission on a Way Forward. The motion passed and the resolution was tabled.

Announcements

Bishop Schol announced we packed 30,000 meals for Rise Against Hunger. The GNJ gift shop raised \$12,000 for the Miracle Everywhere Campaign and the through the offering yesterday \$31,632 was collected for the Miracle Everywhere Campaign.

Moments of Privilege

Lynn Caterson, Conference Chancellor, asked for a moment of privilege to speak to the body regarding Nehemiah Properties because so many had approached her with questions. Bishop Schol granted the moment of privilege. Ms. Caterson explained that the agreement is just an agreement. It is not valid if one of the parties does not agree with all the terms of the agreement. Since amendments were made, we are not in an agreement right now since Nehemiah Properties needs to approve the amendments.

Bishop Schol suggested open conversation, stating that a number of issues could have been resolved without the need for a judicial ruling. He assured the congregation that having honest conversations would not affect anyone’s appointment. He also explained that several ordinands might not have been able to be appointed to churches in GNJ, if the rule we asked for from the Nehemiah Properties Resolution was applied to all employment in the Annual Conference. The same applies for conference office staff, some who are related to conference members. The Bishop asked again for conversations so the rules we already have in place can be explained and utilized.

Bishop Schol admitted that the church can get messy and stated that he doesn’t have all the answers to this. He went on to state that he and Beverly have always put the mission of the church before their marriage and do not want to be the issue.

Bishop Schol talked about what an amazing conference this has been. He celebrated some of the resolutions passed, such as how GNJ’s name is on a law suit to end segregation in our schools. We’ve put a plan in place to lower apportionments over the

DAILY PROCEEDINGS

next few years. He praised the worship that has happened. He stated that there's no other place he and Beverly would rather be. Mrs. Schol joined her husband at the podium and they thanked the congregation for all they do.

Bishop Schol concluded by encouraging the conference to go home and keep up the good work, go home and keep doing what God has planned for you, go home and share the same kind of love you experience here, go home and invite people to church, go home and show your pastor some appreciation, go home and show appreciation towards laity, go home and share the love of Christ.

Bishop Schol presented a gift to Rosa Williams, thanking her for her years of service.

The conference adjourned at 1:00 p.m.