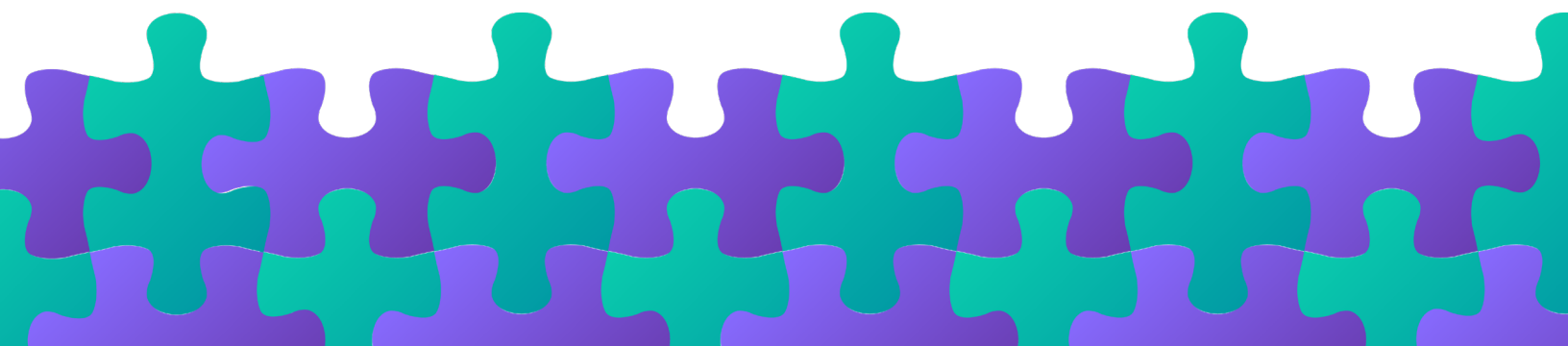


# BELONG

2024 ANNUAL CONFERENCE | MAY 19-21

## PRE-CONFERENCE WORKBOOK

UNITED METHODISTS OF GREATER NEW JERSEY





## THE GNJ DIGEST

UNITED METHODISTS  
OF GREATER NEW JERSEY

Stay up-to-date with all the happenings in the GNJ Conference - from inspiring stories of faith to updates on events and programs.

Don't miss out on this valuable resource for all GNJ Conference members! Sign up now at the link below and receive The GNJ Digest delivered straight to your inbox every week.



[www.gnjumc.org/thegnjdigest/newsletter-signup](http://www.gnjumc.org/thegnjdigest/newsletter-signup)



## WELCOME FROM BISHOP SCHOL

Friends in Christ,

You *belong*. Together we belong to God and to one another. As United Methodists, Romans 12:5 is a cornerstone of our connectionalism. We are interconnected throughout our conference and with congregations around the world. Belonging, our connectionalism as the body of Christ, guides our work together as we prepare for the 25th Greater New Jersey Annual Conference Session on May 19-21, 2024.

This annual conference session we have much to celebrate about our ministry locally and around the world. Our clergy and lay leadership have led our congregations and ministries well and now we pray, listen, think, and discern the next steps for fulfilling our mission to recruit and develop transformational leaders to make disciples of Jesus Christ and grow vital congregations for the transformation of the world. During the session, we will review progress on these and other important initiatives and chart a path forward with possibility and hope. We will give thanks for those who served among us and now share in eternal glory, and we will commission, ordain and elect the next generation of leaders. We will also discuss important business, including the 2025 budget and continuing our work on congregational vitality and sustainability.

To prepare for our time together, I invite you to:

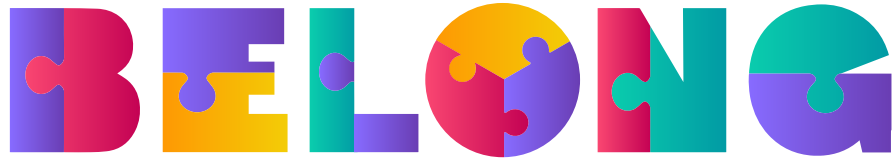
1. Start with prayer. Pray that God will bless our time together and guide our work.
2. Share with your congregation. Use the reports in this workbook to share about our ministries and initiatives.
3. Engage with your congregation the legislation that will be before us.

I look forward to joining with you in holy conferencing as we celebrate our belonging to God and our belonging to one another and move forward following Christ Jesus and the path God continues to set for us.

Keep the faith!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'John R. Schol'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J'.

John R. Schol, Bishop



## ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2024

# AGENDA

### AGENDA FOR SUNDAY, MAY 19

- 1:00 p.m. Open Registration & Fellowship  
Exhibits
- 4:00 p.m. Clergy Executive Session . . . . . Ballrooms  
Laitry Session . . . . . West Hall
- 5:00 p.m. Clergy Dinner . . . . . Ballrooms  
Laitry Dinner . . . . . East Hall
- 7:00 p.m. Commissioning and Ordination Worship . . . . . West Hall

### AGENDA FOR MONDAY, MAY 20 - GNJ

- 7:00 a.m. Breakfast on your own. Group prearranged breakfasts.
- 7:45 a.m. Communion on the Beach . . . . . Convention Center Deck Ocean Side
- 8:30 a.m. Praise and Worship . . . . . West Hall
- 8:45 a.m. Organizing the Conference
- 9:00 a.m. **Business and Legislation:**  
Committee on Episcopacy Report; Sexual Ethics Policy Update [\[PAGE 18\]](#);  
Sexual Misconduct Response Team [\[PAGE 24\]](#); Safe Sanctuaries [\[PAGE 27\]](#);  
A Safer GNJ Amendment [\[PAGE 32\]](#); Moving Forward with "A Safer GNJ" [\[PAGE 33\]](#);  
Amend Conference Rules [\[PAGE 34\]](#); Church Closures [\[PAGE 35\]](#)
- 10:30 a.m. Leadership Address
- 11:00 a.m. Service of Remembrance
- 12:00 p.m. Episcopal Nominees
- 12:15 p.m. Lunch . . . . . East Hall and East Deck  
Bishop's Luncheon with memorial service families
- 1:30 p.m. Workshops
- 2:45 p.m. Praise and Worship . . . . . West Hall
- 3:00 p.m. Episcopal Nominees





- 3:15 p.m.    **Business and Legislation:**  
 MOU for Collaboration [\[PAGE 36\]](#);  
 Strategic Direction [\[PAGE 53\]](#); 2025 Budget [\[PAGE 57\]](#); Nominations Report [\[PAGE 59\]](#);  
 Advanced Specials [\[PAGE 75\]](#); Trustees Enabling [\[PAGE 77\]](#);  
 Minimum Equitable Salary [\[PAGE 78\]](#); Parsonage Standards [\[PAGE 80\]](#);  
 GNJ Arrearage Policy [\[PAGE 84\]](#); A Future With Hope Bylaws [\[PAGE 85\]](#);  
 Affirm GNJ “A Way Forward” [\[PAGE 90\]](#)
- 4:30 p.m.    Episcopal Address
- 5:00 p.m.    Service of Passage with Anointing
- 5:45 p.m.    Adjourn for the Day
- 6:30 p.m.    Dinner for groups and individuals at the convention center (pre-arranged)

**AGENDA FOR TUESDAY, MAY 21 GNJ**

- 7:00 a.m.    Breakfast on your own. Group prearranged breakfasts
- 7:45 a.m.    Communion on the Beach . . . . .Convention Center Deck Ocean Side
- 8:30 a.m.    Praise and Worship . . . . .West Hall
- 8:45 a.m.    Reading the Appointments. . . . .West Hall
- 9:00 a.m.    Episcopal Nominees
- 9:15 a.m.    **Business and Legislation:**  
 Pension and Health Benefits [\[PAGE 92\]](#);  
 Appointments [\[PAGE 99\]](#); Providing a Path of Grace After General Conference [\[PAGE 100\]](#)
- 11:00 a.m.    Closing Worship with Communion

*“...in Christ we, though many, form one body,  
 and each member belongs to all the others.”*  
 Romans 12:5

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## BFW Is Coming! No Cost to You

<b>Event:</b>	GNJ Annual Conference
<b>Date:</b>	Mon., May 20, 2024
<b>Time:</b>	6:00am-10:00am - Fasting Test
<b>Location:</b>	Wildwoods Convention Meeting Rooms 7 & 8
<b>Register by:</b>	5/6/2024



### BFW Overview

**WHAT:** The BFW health screening includes a blood draw and a few measurements such as blood pressure and waist circumference. You'll receive personalized data on 30 health factors.

**WHY:** Earn \$100\*

**REGISTER:** It is **strongly recommended** that you register for this event. Walk-ins are very limited. There are two ways to register:

- **Online:** Log in to your **Virgin Pulse®** account and find **Blueprint for Wellness** under the "Benefits" tab or through **Benefits Access** (for participants).
- **Phone:** 1-855-623-9355  
Employer group:  
**Wespath2024**

**ALTERNATIVES:** If you can't attend the BFW event, you can complete the BFW at a Quest Diagnostics® facility at not cost to you. Registration is required. The **Well-Being Programs FAQs** includes additional ways to complete the BFW if you can't get to this event or a Quest facility.

## Blueprint for Wellness® (BFW) Details

### • Wellness Credits

Earn 20 Wellness Credits for each of seven health measures that meet the American Heart Association's recommended range or are improved over your previous year's BFW results. Seven qualifying health measures = 140 Wellness Credits total. Participants and spouses in HealthFlex can *each* earn **\$100\***—and up to **140 Wellness Credits** depending on results. Earn 150 Wellness Credits before the end of the year and receive an additional \$150\*.

*If you missed the BFW last year, you're still eligible for Wellness Credits for achieving healthy results, and you'll have a baseline next year.*

### • Fast Overnight

Fasting overnight gives the most accurate results. Ask your doctor or other primary care provider (PCP) if it's safe for you to fast.

### • Confidential Results E-mailed and Mailed Directly to You

Share with your PCP.

### • Health Check

Don't forget to take the Health Check to avoid a higher deductible in 2025.

Reasonable alternatives or waivers will be made available for those who cannot achieve recommended or improved measures due to an underlying medical condition. Requests for a reasonable alternative may be made by:

- **E-mail**—[healthteam@wespath.org](mailto:healthteam@wespath.org)

- **U.S. mail**—Wespath Benefits and Investments

Attention: Incentive Request, 1901 Chestnut Avenue, Glenview, IL 60025

*Participation in HealthFlex well-being programs is voluntary.*

*\* Incentive rewards are provided in "Pulse Cash," the "rewards currency" for HealthFlex—you must be enrolled in Virgin Pulse to earn and redeem Pulse Cash. Pulse Cash is delivered straight to your Virgin Pulse account and can be transferred to your checking account or redeemed for gift cards, merchandise or charitable donations. The IRS considers wellness incentives as taxable income. Please consult your tax advisor.*

# GREETING FROM THE CONFERENCE SECRETARY

Dear Annual Conference Lay and Clergy Members,

Welcome to the 2024 Greater New Jersey Annual Conference! We look forward to returning to the Wildwood Convention Center, May 19-21, 2024. We look forward to gathering for worship, business, and fellowship!

This 2024 Pre-Conference Workbook will serve as a valuable resource for you to use as an active member of the 2024 Annual Conference Session. Please have it available as you attend the Conference. As an alternative, the Pre-Conference Workbook is available online and can be downloaded on the GNJ website. Included in these pages are reports, legislation and nominations received for consideration at the Annual Conference. We have included all legislation submitted by the deadline of January 15, 2024.

If this is your first Annual Conference as an active member, there are resources to support you in engaging and following the activity of annual conference. The Rules of Order, Name Badge and Voting chart, and “How to Understand Parliamentary Procedures” (2017 PCW) will assist you following the business of the Annual Conference. We hope the workbook will be helpful as you share with your congregation and join in the worship, business, fellowship, and celebration at the 2024 Greater New Jersey Annual Conference.

The 2024 GNJ Conference begins with badge distribution at the welcome desk starting at 1:00pm on Sunday, May 19 at the Wildwoods Convention Center, Wildwoods, NJ. Please see the Agenda in this booklet or online for the complete conference schedule.

I look forward to greeting you as we gather for Holy Conferencing to address the business of the conference, fellowship together and celebrate the ways that we Belong, in this season, for God’s purpose to love one another and be the hands and feet of Jesus in the world.

In Christ,

Rev. Shelley S. Smith

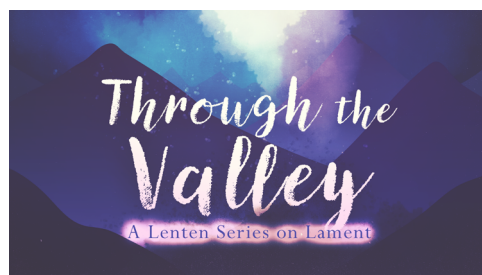
Conference Secretary



# BREAKTHROUGH

*Breakthrough Worship Series is the support system for both clergy and laity to develop engaging worship and move their congregations forward on the path to vitality. It is designed to provide easy-to-use best practices and worship tools so congregations can spend less time preparing the details and focus on what really matters: preaching the gospel to make disciples of Christ for the transformation of the world.*

## 2024 WORSHIP SERIES AVAILABLE NOW:



## 2024 WORSHIP SERIES COMING SOON:



## EACH SERIES INCLUDES:

*Worship Resources, Preaching Resources, Small Group Resources, Creative Graphics, Song & Hymn Suggestions, Videos, and much more!*

**[BREAKTHROUGHSERIES.ORG](https://breakthroughseries.org)**





# IGNITE CONFERENCE

**OCTOBER 11-13, 2024**

**IGNITENJ.ORG**

# WORKSHOPS

## **FRESH EXPRESSIONS OF CHURCH**

**LED BY: MICHAEL BECK**

Across the United States, amid a Christian landscape that looks and feels like a desert of decline, God is up to something. Inherited congregations, with long histories, are experimenting with cultivating “fresh expressions” of church. A fresh expression is a form of church for our changing culture, established primarily for the benefit of those who are not yet part of any church. Join Michael Beck, a leading practitioner and scholar, to learn how your team can get started.

## **BUILD, PAINT AND NAME A BIRDHOUSE FOR CAMP & RETREAT MINISTRY**

**LED BY: APRYL MILLER & THE CAMP AND RETREAT MINISTRY TEAM**

Come to this interactive mission workshop where you will build, paint and name a birdhouse for Camp & Retreat Ministry and learn more about our opportunities for Camp & Retreat Ministry for children, youth, adults and older adults across EPA&GNJ.

## **EMBODIED SERENITY: MINDFUL MOVEMENT & BREATHWORK**

**LED BY: ALYSSA RUCH, JESSICA “JESS” CURTIS**

Invest in your well-being and join us for a time of self-discovery, relaxation, and rejuvenation. Unplug from Annual Conference and reconnect with the tranquility that resides within you. This experience in mindful chair-based movement and breathwork is open to participants of all levels and abilities.

## **FOUNDATIONS FOR HEALTHY TEAMS**

**LED BY: SHELLEY SMITH, LISA DEPAZ**

An effective team or committee commits to a combination of key practices that contribute to its success in fostering a positive space for developing ministry and achieving goals. Attendees will engage in practices that invite positive team culture.

## **GENERATIVE AI AND THE FUTURE OF CHURCH MINISTRY**

**LED BY: JAMES LEE**

Generative AI tools like ChatGPT and Midjourney are now all the craze - they're everywhere and everyone is talking about them. But with new things comes change -- and change can be scary. This workshop navigates the history and evolution of AI, explores its ethical considerations and limitations, and dives into practical applications for ministry, from worship preparation to multimedia content creation. Be sure to bring your computer, and join us to demystify AI and discover how it can enrich your ministry's impact.



## AWARDS



### 2024 HARRY DENMAN EVANGELISM AWARD: JACK SCHARF

Jack Scharf is a Certified Lay Minister and a member of the Morristown UMC for the past 45 years and has served under seven different senior pastors of the church. At the Conference level he has served as a Lay Delegate, a member of the Conference's Administration and Finance Committee, and as a member and President of the Centenary Fund and Preachers' Aid Society. He has also served as a faculty member of the Lay Leadership Academy and as lead faculty for the Lay Servant Certification Program. At the District level he has served as the Lay Leader of the Skylands District and as a member of the District Committee on Ministry. He is a graduate of Drew Theological School and holds a Masters in Theological Studies (MTS) degree and has served as Vice President of the Drew Theological Alumni Association. He has served as a Conference Coach for various performance initiatives for approximately 20 different churches and currently performs 10 different church financial audits per year.

Jack Scharf is an evangelist. He freely shares his faith journey with his local church, his community, his denomination, and even the world. In sharing his own story of how Jesus transformed his life, he brings others to know and claim that story for themselves.

It is his kindness and caring heart that are his strongest evangelism tool. Through those qualities he builds relationships where people want to know more about his faith and how he has overcome so many challenges and is able to be the person he is today. God uses Jack Scharf to share the radical message of Jesus Christ that people matter.



### HELENOR ALTER DAVISSON AWARD: MARY BLAND

As a member of Christ Church United Methodist, Mary serves on numerous committees and participates in many ministries and activities throughout the Paterson, NJ community.

Mary's achievements and contributions through Christ Church are numerous. She is the President of the United Women in Faith. She is a member of the Church Choir, CCUM Scholarship Committee, and GriefShare Ministry. She is a Communion Steward, Worship Leader, and Certified Lay Servant. Mary also serves on the Board of Trustees. In addition to these contributions, Mary joyfully reaches out in service to the community through organizations including the Paterson Alliance, Public School #13, Servant's Heart, and Star of Hope Ministries. She also participates in the weekly distribution of Fresh Produce to the community and the weekly church prayer group and the monthly citywide prayer group.

Mary serves as the secretary on the Board of New Direction CDC of Christ Church.

She is also the Lay Member to the Annual Conference, where she has participated in the choir, served on the COSROW's Committee, and on the Superintendency Committee.




LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

## LEADERSHIP ACADEMY USES *TEACHABLE* ONLINE COURSES TO TRAIN CHURCH LEADERS

EPA&GNJ's Leadership Academy has launched its first online courses for training church leaders, using Teachable, one of the nation's top online learning management systems. The multimedia, fully accessible digital platform enables creation and hosting of a variety of instructor-led courses using videos, quizzes, text and PDF files. Five initial courses are available—the most recent being a trio of basic courses for Church Councils, Trustees and Staff-Parish Relations Committees.

[EPAUMC.ORG/LEADERSHIP-ACADEMY](http://EPAUMC.ORG/LEADERSHIP-ACADEMY) | [GNJUMC.ORG/LEADERSHIP-ACADEMY](http://GNJUMC.ORG/LEADERSHIP-ACADEMY)

**INTRODUCTION TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES** Pt. 2  
PRESENTED BY CHARLES SOPER



**THE BASICS: STAFF-PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE**

WITH REV. EVELYN KENT-CLARK  
& REV. SANG WON DOH



**INTRO TO CHURCH COUNCIL**

WITH REV. JENNY SMITH WALZ



[EPAUMC.ORG/LAPI](http://EPAUMC.ORG/LAPI)

[GNJUMC.ORG/LAPI](http://GNJUMC.ORG/LAPI)



Registration opens soon.



LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

**PREACHING INSTITUTE**

# NAME BADGES AND VOTING RIGHTS

Badge Color	Affiliation	Voting Rights
Yellow ¶602.4 ¶602.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elected Lay Member, At Large Member Youth-Young Adult Elected Member Diaconal Minister, Deaconess</li> <li>Home Missioner under GNJ, appointment, GNJ Lay Leader</li> <li>District Lay Leader, GNJ Director of Lay</li> <li>Servant Ministries, GNJ UWF President, GNJ UMM President</li> </ul>	<p>May vote on all matters except granting or validation of license, ordination, reception into full conference membership, or any question concerning the character and official conduct of ordained ministers.</p> <p>Lay members who are elected members of the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry and Committee on Investigation can vote on all matters of ordination, character and conference relations of clergy.</p>
Red ¶602.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full connection (Elder and Deacons)</li> </ul>	May vote on all matters except election of lay delegates to General/Jurisdictional/Central conferences.
Blue ¶602.1c	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Associate Members (<i>Associate Members that are elected members of the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, have the right to vote at clergy session on matters of ordination, character and conference relations of clergy.</i>)</li> </ul>	May vote on all matters except constitutional amendments and matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy.
¶602.1b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provisional Members (<i>under appointment to a pastoral charge who have completed educational requirements towards ordination</i>)</li> </ul>	May vote on all matters of the annual conference, except constitutional amendments, and matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy.
¶602.1d	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full Time/ Part Time Local Pastors (<i>under appointment to a pastoral charge who have completed course of study or an M.Div. degree and have served a minimum of two consecutive years under appointment before the election</i>)</li> </ul>	May vote on all matters except constitutional amendments and matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy. <i>(Licensed Local Pastors that are elected members of the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, have the right to vote at clergy session on matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy)</i>
Green ¶602.1b ¶602.1c	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provisional Members (<i>under appointment to a pastoral charge who have not completed educational requirements toward ordination</i>)</li> <li>and Affiliated Members</li> </ul>	May vote on all matters except constitutional amendments, election of clergy delegates to the General/Jurisdictional/ Central Conferences and matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy.
¶602.1d	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full Time/ Part Time Local Pastors (<i>under appointment to a pastoral charge who have not completed course of study or an M.Div. degree</i>)</li> </ul>	May vote on all matters except constitutional amendments, election of delegates to the General/Jurisdictional/ Central Conferences and matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy.
White ¶320.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retired Local Pastors</li> </ul>	May attend with voice, but not vote.
Teal ¶602.9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visitors</li> <li>Student Pastors (from other conferences), Lay Missionaries, Members of Other Conferences</li> <li>Interim Supply Pastors</li> </ul>	No vote and no voice unless granted on the floor.
Pink	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GNJ Staff Members</li> </ul>	No vote and no voice unless granted on the floor.
Purple	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Official Guest and Episcopal Staff</li> </ul>	No vote and no voice unless granted on the floor.
Orange	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Non-Voting Youth</li> </ul>	No vote and no voice unless granted on the floor.



# HOW TO UNDERSTAND PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES

To Do This...	You Say This...	Interrupt Speaker?	Second Needed?	Motion Debatable?	Amendable?	Vote Needed?
<b>SECONDARY MOTIONS IN ORDER OF PRECEDENCE</b>						
Adjourn	"I move to adjourn"	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Recess	"I move we recess until..."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Suspend debate w/o calling for a vote	"I move that we table"	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
End Debate	"I move the previous question"	No	Yes	No	No	2/3 Majority
Limit Debate	"I move debate be limited to . . ."	No	Yes	No	Yes	2/3 Majority
Postpone to specific time	"I move to postpone this matter until . . ."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Have matter studied further	"I move we refer this matter to . . ."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Amend a motion or substitute	"I move to amend by ..." or "I move to substitute..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Postpone Indefinitely	"I move to postpone indefinitely"	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
<b>INCIDENTAL MOTIONS GROW OUT OF THE BUSINESS THE CONFERENCE IS CONSIDERING</b>						
Correct error in parliamentary procedure	"Point of Order"	Yes	No	No	No	Chair rules
Obtain advice on parliamentary procedure	"I raise a parliamentary inquiry"	Yes	No	No	No	Chair rules
Request information	"Point of information"	Yes	No	No	No	None
<b>MAIN MOTIONS AS TOOLS TO INTRODUCE NEW BUSINESS</b>						
Introduce business	"I move that . . ."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Take up matter previously tabled	"I move we take from the table . . ."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Reconsider matter previously voted	"I move we reconsider . . ."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority

# LEGISLATION

## SEXUAL ETHICS POLICY UPDATE

**Whereas:** The Greater New Jersey Annual Conference has not updated its sexual ethics policy since 2009;

**And whereas,** research has grown and awareness has been heightened significantly around incidence of sexual misconduct;

**And whereas,** the current policy does not reflect the heightened awareness, knowledge, and education that has been gained as a society since 2009;

**And whereas,** the following policy is proposed as an updated policy to be adopted as the official sexual ethics policy of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference:

**CLERGY/LAITY SEXUAL MISCONDUCT, ABUSE AND HARASSMENT POLICY FOR THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF GREATER NEW JERSEY**

*All references to the Book of Discipline are in the 2016 edition. Paragraph numbers are for easy reference and may change with future editions of The Book of Discipline. Unless there are substantive changes to the content of the Discipline, the Policy will be updated to reflect the current Book of Discipline as editorial changes without the need to re-approve the Policy. Future name changes of the United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey will also be updated as editorial changes.*

**I. Context**

For the purpose of this policy, we will use “ministry leader” to refer to all ordained, commissioned, consecrated members of the Annual Conference, licensed local pastors, youth pastors, supply pastors and Certified Lay Ministers.

**II. Purpose**

Ministry Leaders are in a position of great trust, power and responsibility. This provides the opportunity for unique relationships of grace and caring. While most ministry leaders remain faithful to their vows and their covenant with God and the church, there are ministry leaders who sometimes violate the trust given them. Sexual misconduct is one grave violation of this trust. We also acknowledge that laypersons can engage in acts of sexual misconduct, abuse and /or harassment. This policy seeks to address the abuse of power by all ministry leaders and laity who engage in sexual misconduct, abuse, and/or sexual harassment. (See Section IV for definitions)

Incidents of sexual misconduct, abuse, and/or harassment have been reported in United Methodist Churches, agencies, and institutions. It is both the ethical and legal responsibility of the Annual Conference to ensure that there are mechanisms for addressing grievances in these matters. The intent of this document is to provide guidance to both laity and ministry leaders of the Annual Conference, and to the local churches contained therein regarding ministry leader /lay sexual misconduct, abuse, and/or harassment.

It is our hope, as the people of Christ, that this policy will serve to guard against inappropriate behavior and be a guide for our community of faith as we seek to handle grievances should sexual misconduct, abuse, and/or harassment occur.

### 1 III.Theological Foundation

2 All persons are created by God. In the Genesis stories, as in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, it is  
 3 affirmed that we are created in the image and likeness of God. God values human life, intending all women, men,  
 4 and children to have worth and dignity in all relationships with God and others. God calls us into a covenant  
 5 with each other as children of God and as the body of Christ. The scriptures remind us that Jesus was sent into  
 6 this world so that we might experience whole relationships with each other and God. “There is neither Jew  
 7 nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”  
 8 (Galatians 3: 28 RSV)

9

10 We affirm that our human bodies are good gifts from God and our sexuality is an integral part of our humanity.  
 11 Healthy sexuality, and appropriate expressions of it, are derived from the goodness of the gift. As children of  
 12 God, we are holy in Christ and created equal. Wherever one member of the body of Christ is injured, physically,  
 13 emotionally or spiritually, the whole body is injured. Sexual misconduct, abuse, and/or harassment is an  
 14 exploitation of power and abuse of position that uses sexuality as an excuse and distorts the relationships and  
 15 blessedness of relationships and the upbuilding which God desires for humanity. It is sinful behavior.

16

17 One who repents for sinful behavior is promised forgiveness. However, discipline should be distinguished from  
 18 forgiveness. A ministry leader guilty of sexual misconduct needs and may receive forgiveness and be offered  
 19 avenues for redemption and change. Forgiveness, however, does not excuse one from responsibility to the  
 20 community and accountability for the brokenness caused by one’s behavior. The church must still take steps to  
 21 protect the people of God.

22

### 23 IV. Definitions

24

#### 25 *Sexual Misconduct*

26 It is sexual misconduct when a person within a ministerial role of leadership (pastor, educator, counselor, youth  
 27 leader or other position of leadership) engages in sexual contact or sexualized behavior with a congregant,  
 28 client, employee, student, staff member, co-worker, or volunteer within the ministerial relationship. (1996 *Book*  
 29 *of Resolutions*, pp. 128-132, 2008 *Book of Resolutions* p.134, 2012 *Book of Resolutions* p. 134, 2016 *Book of*  
 30 *Resolutions* p.775)

31

32 Examples of ministerial relationships:

- 33 • Pastor/member of church
- 34 • Supervisor/church employee
- 35 • Youth pastor/youth
- 36 • Sunday School teacher/student
- 37 • Pastor/student intern
- 38 • Pastoral counselor/counseled

39

40 Examples of sexualized behavior or sexual contact:

- 41 • Displaying sexually suggestive visuals
- 42 • Making sexual comments or innuendos about one’s own or another person’s body
- 43 • Touching another person’s body, hair, or clothing
- 44 • Invasion of privacy: intruding into someone’s personal space or engaging in activities that violate their  
 45 privacy in a sexualized manner
- 46 • Persistent and unwelcome propositions or advances for sexual activities
- 47 • Touching or rubbing oneself sexually in the presence of another person
- 48 • Kissing; fondling; sexual intercourse
- 49 • Sexual coercion: using pressure, manipulation, or force to make someone engage in sexual activities  
 50 against their will

1 While these are examples of sexualized behavior, this is not an exhaustive list.

2

3 This understanding is equally applicable in the context of ministries in which there are no “parishioners” but  
4 there is a community which acknowledges the authority of the ministry leader or lay worker as a spiritual leader  
5 or other ministries in which the ministering person serves a community much wider than the membership of the  
6 local congregation.

7

8 At the core of this definition of sexual misconduct is the abuse of power and trust that occurs when a ministering  
9 person initiates or allows sexual behavior with someone who is in a relationship of trust and/or dependence.  
10 Sexual misconduct breaks a sacred trust. Any such sexual misconduct is a violation by the ministering person who  
11 then bears the responsibility for his/her behavior.

12

### 13 *Sexual Harassment*

14 Sexual harassment is any unwanted sexual advance or demand, either verbal or physical that is reasonably  
15 perceived by the recipient as demeaning, intimidating, or coercive. Sexual harassment must be understood as an  
16 exploitation of a power relationship rather than as an exclusively sexual issue. Sexual harassment includes, but  
17 is not limited to, the creation of a hostile or abusive working environment resulting from discrimination on the  
18 basis of gender. (2016 *Book of Discipline* ¶161.II.J., p.114)

19

20 Suggested guidelines for determining hostile environment:

- 21 • Is the behavior sexual in nature or gender specific?
- 22 • Is the behavior unwelcome?
- 23 • Is the behavior severe or pervasive enough so that it creates an environment which interferes with one’s  
24 ability to work, get an education, or participate in ministry?

25

26 Sexual harassment also includes the development or attempted development of a sexual or romantic  
27 relationship between a ministry leader or lay worker and a person with whom he/she has a ministerial  
28 relationship, when that is an unwanted or inappropriate relationship.

29

### 30 *Sexual Abuse*

31 Sexual abuse is a sexual invasion of the body by force. Sexual abuse may be: rape, sexual assault, sexual violence,  
32 incest, indecent exposure, statutory rape, indecent assault, and aggravated indecent assault. Sexual abuse is  
33 also an internal assault, a deliberate violation of emotional integrity, and a hostile and degrading act of violence.  
34 (2016 *Book of Discipline* ¶161.II.I., p.113)

35

### 36 *Domestic Violence*

#### 37 **Domestic Violence Policy**

38 It is not enemies who taunt me—I could bear that: It is not adversaries who deal insolently with me—I could  
39 hide from them. But it is you, my equal, my companion, my familiar friend, with whom I keep pleasant company.  
40 Psalm 55: 12-14a NRSV.

41

42 The Psalmist captures the feeling of many persons who experience domestic violence: the pain of being betrayed  
43 and injured by a loved one.

44

#### 45 **What is Domestic Violence?**

46 Any abusive, violent, coercive, forceful, or threatening act or word inflicted by one member of a family or  
47 household on another can constitute domestic violence.

48

49 The United Methodist Church affirms the sacredness of all persons and their right to safety, nurture and care.  
50 It names domestic violence and sexual abuse as sin and pledges to work for their eradication. 2008 *Book of*



1 *Resolution*, p.59. Thus, we recognize domestic violence as an immoral act and a chargeable offense for both  
 2 ministry leaders and laity. (2016 *Book of Discipline*, ¶ 2702.1 and ¶ 2702.3)

3  
 4 We celebrate God's gift of intimacy, the image of God in each person, the inherent right of each person to health,  
 5 wholeness, and safety, and we commit ourselves to working toward the elimination of domestic violence.

## 7 **V. Standards for Clergy Conduct**

8 A. Ministry leaders related to the Annual Conference are always accountable for the ways they respond  
 9 to persons who ask their ministerial assistance and over whom they have authority. Any breach of this  
 10 ministerial relationship, ministerial responsibility, and ministerial authority is abusive and unethical.

11 B. Ministry leaders often relate to persons who are fragile and vulnerable, and therefore must exercise  
 12 special care:

13 1. That ministry leaders are psychologically, emotionally, and spiritually healthy.

14 2. That there has been proper and adequate preparation and education as well as adequate  
 15 continuing education for providing appropriate help for those under their care.

16 3. That they seek counsel, advice, and supervision.

17 C. Ministry leaders sexual misconduct, abuse, and/or harassment places an unfair and unavoidable burden  
 18 on the person who experienced sexual misconduct. It is in the best interest of the entire church to inform the  
 19 laity concerning appropriate standards of ministerial conduct.

20 D. Ministry leaders self-discipline requires self-awareness and takes for a standard of ethics those implied  
 21 and described in the vows of ordination and consecration. (2016, *Book of Discipline*, ¶301-¶369) Personal  
 22 integrity and mature professional conduct are a part of every ministerial relationship. This prohibits any  
 23 sexual behavior with a parishioner, colleague, staff, or client entrusted to his or her sacred care outside the  
 24 bonds of marriage.

25 E. All ministry leaders have the responsibility for developing healthy and ethical relationships with other  
 26 persons. All ministry leaders shall participate in sexual ethics training provided by the annual conference and  
 27 approved by COSROW a minimum of once per quadrennium.

28 F. When ministry leaders are providing professional pastoral counseling to persons in their church or  
 29 community, it is understood that they shall keep appropriate standards of professional behavior and  
 30 boundaries in that relationship.

31  
 32 It is also recommended that ministry leaders seek supervision for their counseling by a certified counselor  
 33 supervisor to ensure that proper counseling relationships are maintained.

## 35 **VI. Standards for the Conduct of Laity**

36 Within the United Methodist connection, lay persons are also called to a standard of conduct which stands  
 37 against sexual misconduct, abuse and/or harassment as outlined in 2016 *Book of Discipline* ¶2702.3. Laity have  
 38 the responsibility for not creating hostile environments as a result of sexual harassment, abuse and/or sexual  
 39 misconduct against ministry leaderspersons or other laity.

## 41 **VII. Honoring Perceptions of Reality**

42 We understand that intentions and perceptions are not always the same. It is our policy to fully investigate a  
 43 person's perception of the truth of their experience if/when sexual harassment, abuse, and/or misconduct are  
 44 reported.

## 46 **VIII. Confidentiality**

47 The primary purpose of this policy is to encourage and support persons who experience sexual harassment,  
 48 abuse, and/or misconduct to report such incidents, by providing a process that protects them from intimidation  
 49 and preserves their dignity. We recognize that there also may be occasions when persons are falsely charged  
 50 with sexual harassment, abuse and/or misconduct. Appropriate confidentiality will be maintained whenever a

1 complaint is made. Occasionally, information will need to be shared for the safety and protection of individuals  
2 within Greater New Jersey and the broader community.

3

#### 4 **IX. Sexual Misconduct Response Team**

5 The United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey provides the following support system to assist any  
6 individual who has a concern about an issue of sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, or sexual abuse with the  
7 church. The Response Team can be vital in support of congregations throughout the healing process. Teams also  
8 provide education to help understand the nature of sexual misconduct by a faith leader. The Response Team  
9 is not involved in any judicial or Disciplinary processes that involve a legal resolution of a situation. *Anytime*  
10 *a substantiated report of sexual misconduct is made, the Sexual Misconduct Response Team (SMRT) shall be*  
11 *notified.*

12

13 The response team can be deployed across the conference for situations including but not limited to:

- 14 • Ministerial or ministry leader's sexual misconduct
- 15 • Laity sexual misconduct directly involving the congregation or ministry setting
- 16 • Sexual abuse of a church member at a church camp or other church-affiliated event
- 17 • Any other instances as requested by the bishop, the bishop's representative, the alleged individual  
18 harmed, the church involved, or the alleged perpetrator.

19

20 The focus of response teams is to support individuals who have experienced trauma and assist with healing.  
21 Response teams are charged with providing support, prayer, and encouragement for individuals harmed, families  
22 of the alleged individual harmed, the alleged perpetrator and their family, and the church community impacted  
23 by a complaint.

24

- 25 1. We urge all related institutions/agencies in the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference to identify and  
26 train Response Teams to serve within their organization.
  - 27 1. Training will be provided by the annual conference a minimum of once yearly, for all response  
28 team members, and open to all members of the annual conference.
  - 29 2. Training will include the Do No More Harm curriculum and training to be developed and  
30 implemented yearly by COSROW and in conjunction with the GNJ Leadership. All training shall  
31 be approved by COSROW prior to being advertised to the conference membership and response  
32 team members.
  - 33 3. Topics to be covered in annual training shall include at minimum:
    - 34 1. Counseling 101
    - 35 2. Maintaining healthy interpersonal boundaries
    - 36 3. Power dynamics of abuse
    - 37 4. Responding well to individuals and congregations that have experienced abuse
    - 38 5. Sacred trust
    - 39 6. Secondary trauma
    - 40 7. Self-care
    - 41 8. Spiritual guidance
    - 42 9. Trauma-informed care
    - 43 10. Walking with the accused
- 44
  - 45 2. Each local church will receive posters produced by the annual conference in conjunction with COSROW  
46 that shall be hung in the bathroom(s). These posters will have a brief statement on sexual misconduct, sexual  
47 harassment and sexual abuse and will provide the ways to contact the Sexual Misconduct Response Team  
48 and ways to file a complaint if a person feels they have experienced sexual misconduct.

49

50

1 **X. Process**

2 The United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey will adhere to the following steps when a complaint of  
3 sexual misconduct, harassment or abuse is brought to the attention of a District Superintendent or the  
4 resident Bishop:

- 5 1. A letter shall be provided to both the complainant and the accused at the time they first contact or are  
6 contacted by the District Superintendent. (2016 *Book of Discipline*, ¶1362)
- 7 2. Limit all media responses on behalf of the Church/Conference to the Bishop or the Bishop's designate.
- 8 3. If the complainant chooses to file a written complaint, the process will proceed as indicated in the 2016  
9 *Book of Discipline*, section XVI ¶1362.
- 10 4. A complainant has the option of following church policy and discipline when bringing a complaint of  
11 sexual misconduct against a ministry leader member. They also have the option of seeking legal advice  
12 and filing charges. These additional options shall be communicated both in writing and verbally to the  
13 person bringing the complaint.
- 14 5. Any incidence of sexual abuse in which the person who experienced sexual abuse is a minor is a  
15 crime and must be handled according to the Safe Sanctuaries policy of the church. Anyone within the  
16 church who becomes aware of a child abuse issue is morally obligated—and for ministry leader, legally  
17 required—to take steps necessary in the attempt to prevent further harm to the child. If an incident of  
18 child abuse occurs involving a church employee or volunteer within the church building or at any church  
19 activity, or if a minor brings forth a complaint of sexual abuse it must be reported to the local authorities.  
20 The United Methodist Church understands all ministry leaders and lay leadership to be considered  
21 mandated reporters of suspected abuse.
- 22 6. The United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey recognizes that accusations of misconduct of a  
23 sexual nature can be harmful to the whole congregation. The Greater New Jersey Annual Conference  
24 will provide support to the church affected by these accusations by providing guidance from the Sexual  
25 Misconduct Response team and counsel.

26  
27 **For Your Information**

28 If you feel that you have experienced ministry leader sexual misconduct, abuse, and/or harassment and wish to  
29 find peace, justice, healing, and resolution, please contact:

30  
31 Any of the District Superintendent's Offices

32 The contact information for each of the District Superintendent's Offices can be found here: <https://www.gnjumc.org/gnj-districts/>

33  
34  
35 OR The Bishop of The United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey

36 <https://www.gnjumc.org/about-gnjumc/leadership/>

37  
38 **Therefore, be It Resolved That:** The Greater New Jersey Annual Conference adopt this policy as the formal  
39 updated sexual ethics policy of the annual conference.

40  
41 **Rationale:** The Greater New Jersey Annual Conference has not updated this policy since 2009, and this update  
42 enhances the current policy to bring it into alignment with knowledge gained since this policy was last updated.

43  
44 **Submitted by:** Marissa van der Valk (COSROW chair)

45  
46 **To be presented by:** Krystal Woolston

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49  
50

## SEXUAL MISCONDUCT RESPONSE TEAM

**WHEREAS:** The Greater New Jersey Annual Conference does not currently have a functioning trained response team to assist individuals, and churches when sexual misconduct is discovered.

**AND WHEREAS,** research has shown responding well to sexual misconduct reduces levels of harm to individuals and churches and lessens liability;

**AND WHEREAS,** the following policy is proposed to guide the establishment of a Sexual Misconduct Response Team (SMRT):

Guiding Principle:

*The Book of Discipline* allows for the use of a Response Team to provide pastoral care when handling and following up on a complaint or other traumatic experience in a ministry setting. The cabinet in consultation with an experienced practitioner shall select “persons with qualifications and experience in assessment, intervention, or healing to assist during the supervisory response” (§1362.1b). These roles include, but are not limited to, individual support for the accused and the complainant, and a working team to facilitate communication with and support for the congregation and families or others who are affected. The bishop and Cabinet are mandated to “provide a process for healing within the congregation, annual conference, or other context of ministry...” as part of the supervisory response (§ 362.1f) and judicial process (§12701.4c) (GCSRW, 2022).

Purpose of the Response Team:

The Response Team can be vital in support of congregations and individuals who have experienced sexual misconduct throughout the healing process. Teams also provide education to help understand the nature of sexual misconduct by a faith leader. The Response Team is not involved in any judicial or disciplinary processes that involve a legal resolution of a situation. Bishops and/or district superintendents may employ a Response Team whenever a congregation and individuals experience trauma related to sexual misconduct.

The response team shall be deployed across the conference for situations including but not limited to:

- Ministerial or clergy sexual misconduct
- Laity sexual misconduct directly involving the congregation or ministry setting
- Sexual abuse of an individual at a church camp or other church-affiliated event
- Any other instances as requested by the bishop, the bishop’s representative, the alleged individual harmed, the church involved, or the alleged perpetrator.

The focus of response teams is to support individuals who have experienced trauma and assist with healing. Response teams are charged with providing support, prayer, and encouragement for individuals harmed, families of the alleged individual harmed, the alleged perpetrator and their family, and the church community impacted by a complaint.

Recruitment of Team Members:

Response Teams should include an equal number of laity and clergy to reflect the gender, racial/ethnic, geographic, and age diversity of the congregations and constituent groups within an annual conference. Team members should be chosen and formally nominated through the nominations process and voted on at each annual conference session. Team members shall be identified in the following ways:

- Each district superintendent identifies by December 31st each year, 4-6 individuals within their district that can serve; once identified, the district superintendent confirms the willingness of the individual to serve.
- Any current team member is also given an opportunity to nominate individuals.

- 1 • Nominations should be rotating based on a 3 year cycle so there is always someone who knows and
- 2 keeps institutional memory
- 3 • 2 coordinators- one acts as case manager and one acts as administrator and communicator
- 4 Once team members are identified and voted in, a list is developed of all contact information for
- 5 any year and whom each is willing to walk with (victim, perpetrator, families, and church members);
- 6 not all team members have to be willing to work with all individuals. This list will be kept by the 2
- 7 coordinators and the annual conference office.

8

9 Team members must:

- 10 • Complete training prescribed by the Annual Conference in conjunction with COSROW and approved by
- 11 COSROW on a yearly basis.
- 12 • Complete and pass a background check every three years
- 13 • Have the skills, maturity, and passion for responding to trauma
- 14 • Be available to travel on short notice throughout GNJ.
- 15 • Present at one cabinet meeting per year, new clergy orientations, and a highlight at Annual Conference
- 16 for both clergy and laity yearly about the purpose of the response team

17

18 Training for the Response Team

- 19 • Training will be provided by the annual conference a minimum of once yearly, for all response team
- 20 members, and open to all members of the annual conference.
- 21 • Training will include the Do No More Harm curriculum and training to be developed and implemented
- 22 yearly by COSROW and in conjunction with the GNJ Leadership. All training shall be approved by
- 23 COSROW prior to being advertised to the conference membership and response team members.
- 24 • Topics to be covered in annual training shall include at minimum:
- 25 • Counseling 101
- 26 • Maintaining healthy interpersonal boundaries
- 27 • Power dynamics of abuse
- 28 • Responding well to individuals and congregations that have experienced abuse
- 29 • Sacred trust
- 30 • Secondary trauma
- 31 • Self-care
- 32 • Spiritual guidance
- 33 • Trauma-informed care
- 34 • Walking with the accused

35

36 Deployment of Response Team:

- 37 • Deployed at the bishop’s discretion to a local ministry setting and/or;
- 38 • Deployed at the request of an individual or church impacted.
- 39 • If deployed via request of individual or church community, the episcopal office will be notified of
- 40 request and deployment
- 41 • If deployed to a local church, the team will host separate small group meetings with staff, SPRC, and
- 42 members of the congregation.
- 43 • At no time will the name of the alleged individual harmed be disclosed to prevent secondary harm
- 44 to the individual.
- 45 • A minimum of 1 meeting will be required with a church or faith community after a complaint is filed
- 46 against a church leader.
- 47 • The purpose of these meetings is to address healing in the aftermath of misconduct or trauma
- 48 • Dates for follow-up meetings will be set to meet again with each group if requested.
- 49 • A focus will be made on transparency while keeping confidentiality.

50

- 1 • Response Team Members shall also be deployed as an individual support person for any individual
- 2 (alleged victim or alleged perpetrator) involved in a sexual misconduct complaint.
- 3 • Response Team members will be able to make recommendations for appropriate care and response to
- 4 congregations, the cabinet, and the bishop when deemed appropriate and necessary by the Response
- 5 Team.

6  
7 Care of the Response Team:

- 8 • Co-chairs will debrief with the team after each interaction with an individual or congregation.
- 9 Debriefing is critical and is an opportunity for team members to share thoughts, feelings, and ideas
- 10 about each meeting.
- 11 • Ongoing learning opportunities for the Response Team, including team building, keeping skills sharp,
- 12 and staying up-to-date on potential conference needs.
- 13 • The coordinator(s) set up meeting times and help determine resources to offer educational and
- 14 spiritual growth for the team.

15  
16 **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:** The Greater New Jersey Annual Conference shall establish the GNJ  
17 Sexual Misconduct Response Team; The Greater New Jersey Annual Conference shall nominate at the 2024  
18 Annual Conference two co-chairs to serve during 2024 year to plan and organize the team to include a budget,  
19 resources, plan trainings, and establish fuller policies and procedures internal to the team; The Greater New  
20 Jersey shall nominate members to the Sexual Misconduct Response Team in 2024 to serve starting in July 2025;  
21 The Greater New Jersey Annual Conference shall provide funding for 2024 for any necessary training for the  
22 co-chairs and COSROW members to fully develop final training and guidelines for the Response that will start  
23 in 2025; The Greater New Jersey Annual Conference shall included a budget line for the Sexual Misconduct  
24 Response Team to develop a budget for the training, travel, and response costs of the response team for 2025.

25  
26 **Rationale:** When sexual misconduct is handled through trauma-informed practices, and with care for all  
27 involved, healing is more likely, and liability is lessened. Developing a team that can respond well when sexual  
28 misconduct complaints are initiated will help Greater New Jersey to be a beacon of hope and healing for those  
29 impacted by sexual misconduct, and lessen Greater New Jersey’s liability when sexual misconduct happens

30  
31 **Submitted by:** Marissa van der Valk (COSROW chair)

32  
33 **To be presented by:** Krystal Woolston

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1 **SAFE SANCTUARY LEGISLATION**

2 **Approved 6.2005; Updated 3.2019.**

3 Updated November 2022

4 Updated January 2024

5 The Safe Sanctuaries team will present updated/amended legislation at every yearly annual conference session.

6 The Conference will work with COSROW and other conference resources to create and implement a Sexual Misconduct Response Team to work with churches, survivors, alleged abusers, etc. to support and care for everyone involved if and when a situation arises. This team creation should be completed and implemented by the Annual Conference 2025.

7 The Board of Ordained Ministry will ensure that all clergy serving under appointment have a background check (as assigned by the Board of Ordained Ministry) completed and on file with the Conference Office via Ministry Safe and that there is an additional background check completed every three years.

8 The Cabinet shall also require Clergy to participate in the Professional Ethics Development Program. Clergy must complete the first round of PEDP by the end of 2024, and then once a quadrennium following.

9 The following policies shall apply to **all programs** dealing with children, youth (under 18), and vulnerable adults: (these definitions come from *Safer Sanctuaries: Nurturing Trust within Faith Communities*, and have been expanded through workshopping with the Annual Conference, GNJ COSROW members, and other professionals)

10 *The definitions listed below are what will be used as standard understandings of children, youth, and vulnerable adults.*

11 *Child: refers to anyone under the age of eighteen<sup>1</sup> Youth: any persons from 13 and 17<sup>2</sup>*

12 *Vulnerable adults: A person whose ability to protect themselves from violence, abuse, or neglect is significantly impaired through social, physical, or mental disability or illness. This includes persons who are experiencing homelessness, undocumented persons, persons who have just graduated from the foster system, persons who are in active addiction, and individuals who may be considered vulnerable due to permanent impairments and/or acute situations.*

13 <sup>1</sup> Page 178 in Safer Sanctuaries

14 <sup>2</sup> Page 179 in Safer Sanctuaries

15 Personnel policies for all ministries and missions within the conference and the local church shall require

- 16 • The GNJAC Safe Sanctuaries approved children/youth/vulnerable adult application form, an incident report form, and screening procedure for all staff and volunteers both long-term and occasional.
- 17 • a background check is required for all ministry workers, lay, and clergy through Ministry Safe.
- 18 • Ministry Safe will also be used for all prevention training. The minimum requirement is the Sexual Abuse Prevention Training. Churches/Ministry Leaders can add other trainings based on the needs of the mission/ministry.
- 19 • volunteer workers, regular or occasional, shall be regular attendees of a local congregation for at least six months before being allowed to supervise such programs or serve as a leader within a program (ie, Sunday School, etc)<sup>3</sup>
- 20 • If at any point a ministry worker (clergy or laity) has an incident (examples are but not limited to, criminal activity, Driving under the influence charges etc.) that would change their background check they are to immediately report it to the pastor of the local church if they are laity, and the pastor would



- 1 then immediately report to their DS. If a clergy person has an incident, they are to immediately report
- 2 to their District Superintendent(DS). Failure to do so would subject the person to an investigation.
- 3 • the cost of all background checks is to be paid by the church, board or agency requesting them.

4

5 **Screening forms and background checks:**

6 Clergy shall have their background checks completed through Ministry Safe, and take the Abuse Prevention

7 Training through their local church’s Ministry Safe account. Those in extension ministry or not serving the local

8 church shall work with the Safe Sanctuaries Coordinator for the conference to have their Abuse Prevention

9 Training completed through GNJAC’s Ministry Safe Account. This should be completed every three years, and at

10 the start of a new appointment.

11

12 All screening forms and background checks for laity wishing to work and/or volunteer with children, youth, and/

13 or vulnerable adults shall be as follows:

- 14 a. They shall be reviewed by the Chairperson of the Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee, the super-
- 15 visor (Ministry Lead) of the prospective employee(s) or volunteer(s) and the pastor
- 16 b. screening forms and background checks shall be maintained in the confidential personnel files of the church
- 17 after the termination of any employee or volunteer for a minimum of 20 years and are not to be deleted
- 18 from the Ministry Safe database.
- 19 c. these screening and background checks shall be required of all persons unless a more stringent check is re-
- 20 quired to satisfy the standards of a licensing agency

21

22 **Local Church Requirements:**

23 All Local churches are required to have a certified Safe Sanctuaries policy in compliance with the Conference

24 Legislation, Policy Template, and Standards set by the Annual Conference. Safe Sanctuaries policies shall be

25 reviewed/updated every year by the Local Church Administrative Council and certified by the Annual

26

27 <sup>3</sup> This recommendation comes from page 88 of Safer Sanctuaries.

28

29 Conference Safe Sanctuaries Coordinator every other year. The certificate should be placed at a visible place for

30 parents and visitors to see. Additionally, the compliance and adoption of the Safe Sanctuaries Policy by a local

31 church shall be reported through a written question to be answered as a part of the Church Conference Report.

32

33 All programs at the local church shall be clearly differentiated between those which are church operated and

34 those which are non-church-operated.

35

36 Basic Standards Assumed: The following are basic assumptions made as they relate to local church programs for

37 children, youth, and vulnerable adults.

- 38 1. All buildings in which such programs are housed shall have any necessary “certificates of occupancy”.
- 39 2. All groups conducting such programs shall have the necessary certificates of insurance for both liability and
- 40 workers’ compensation. They shall be displayed as required by law.
- 41 3. All such programs shall conform to Federal and State wage and tax laws for employees.
- 42 4. All Churches, if they have programming for youth, children, or vulnerable adults that require an overnight
- 43 stay, will have a policy in place for safeguarding and caring for folks in those situations.
- 44 5. If Churches are to be in a relationship with youth, children, or vulnerable adults who self-identify in the
- 45 LGBTQIA+ community, they will have policies and procedures outlining how to keep youth/children/
- 46 Vulnerable adults safe, cared for, and protected in both physical and emotional security.

47

48 The United Methodists of Greater New Jersey, through the Conference Children, Youth and Young Adult

49 Coordinator and the Conference Media Center shall resource local churches with materials, persons, training

50 opportunities, and guidelines for establishing effective measures that will reduce the risk of emotional, physical



1 or sexual abuse of children and youth in the local church.

2

3 Each district within GNJ shall designate persons who will, in partnership with GNJ, develop and implement  
 4 measures that will reduce the risk of child /youth abuses in the local church. The resource Safer Sanctuaries:  
 5 Nurturing Trust within Faith Communities (published April 2023) shall be the model by which churches shall  
 6 develop their policy, and each policy while unique to each local church setting, shall contain at least the following  
 7 six measures (additional measures may be necessary depending on ministry context):

8 1. Screening, selection, and annual training of all paid and volunteer workers with children, youth,  
 9 and vulnerable adults.

10 a.Ministry Safe will be the program used by GNJAC Churches to run background checks  
 11 and training.

12 2. Supervision procedures, including Sunday School, youth group, overnight programming, etc. in-  
 13 cluding the Two-Adult Rule (There must always be at least two unrelated screened adults), Five-Years  
 14 Older Rule (The youngest screened adult working with youth/children/vulnerable adults must be at  
 15 least five years older than the eldest person in the program/event/etc.), and safeguards for ministry  
 16 contexts

17 3. Reporting allegations of abuse.

18 a) The policy spells out who and how to report suspected abuse (includes state reporting  
 19 phone numbers)

20 b) The Policy requires that any knowledge or suspicion of child abuse be reported to the  
 21 DCCPP hotline in NJ/NY/PA

22 c) The Policy states that only the Pastor is authorized to speak to media on behalf of  
 23 the congregation when there is an allegation of abuse.

24 d) Policy requires notification of Ministry Leader and Pastor

25 e) Policy requires notification of District Superintendent when allegation or suspicion of  
 26 abuse occurs

27 f) Policy requires removal of the child to a safe setting

28 g) Policy requires removal of alleged abuser

29 h) Policy requires calling 911 only in cases when the child is in immediate danger h.

30 i) Policy requires a written record of all steps taken in response to allegation

31 j) Policy includes a report form for suspected incidents of sexual or physical abuse

32 5. Education of the entire congregation about the policy yearly.

33 6. Annual review of the policy by the Church Council. Every other year, the reviewed policy must be sub-  
 34 mitted for certification to the GNJ Safe Sanctuaries Coordinator.

35 7. Volunteer Application and an Incident Reporting form to be used within ministry settings must be  
 36 submitted to the GNJ Safe Sanctuaries Coordinator for approval. Examples of these forms can be  
 37 found in the Safer Sanctuaries book.

38

39 The United Methodists of Greater New Jersey shall set the last Sunday in September as SAFE SANCTUARIES  
 40 SUNDAY and GNJ shall supply resources for worship for this Sunday.

41

42 Definition of Terms:

43

44 Child: In the United States, this term is commonly used to identify anyone age eleven or younger. Youth:  
 45 Anyone not a “child” and under eighteen (age of legal majority).

46 Adult: Anyone who has reached the age of legal majority and is no longer in high school.

47

48 Vulnerable person: A person whose ability to protect themselves from violence, abuse, or neglect is  
 49 significantly impaired through social, physical, or mental disability or illness. This includes persons who are

50

1 experiencing homelessness, undocumented persons, persons who have just graduated out of the foster  
2 system, persons who are in active addiction.

3  
4 Paid staff person: Someone paid by the church, overseen by the staff/pastor-parish relations committee,  
5 and screened according to the church's Safe Sanctuary policy and any additional required personnel  
6 screening.

7  
8 Unscreened adult: Someone who has not been screened. The individual may work in a room with two  
9 screened adults or screened-paid staff persons. They should never be alone with children, youth, or other  
10 vulnerable people. Unscreened adults may or may not be church members. The use of unscreened adults  
11 should be an exception rather than normal practice. Rare exceptions may be made in consultation with the  
12 pastor in charge in special situations.

13  
14 Screened adult: A volunteer who has gone through the screening process involving a criminal background  
15 check, reference check, interview, and risk reduction training. These people may or may not be members,  
16 but they must be regular attendees and active in the church for at least six months.

17  
18 Youth helpers: People under the age of eighteen who are assisting with child or youth activities. They can  
19 assist with activities but should not be considered adult volunteers and should always be supervised. Youth  
20 helpers should be at least three years older than the children or youth they are helping. A youth helper  
21 will normally be considered "unscreened." It is recommended that before Youth Helpers participate in an  
22 activity as a helper, they are given some training in regards to bathroom usage, the rule of three- meaning  
23 that there will never be two people together- there must always be two adults with a child.

24  
25 Roamer: A Safe Sanctuaries trained/screened adult leader who meets the minimum age requirements as  
26 defined in this policy and moves throughout the facility to provide additional oversight and supervision  
27 during activities.

28  
29 Ministry supervisor: A screened individual, staff, or volunteer, responsible for a particular ministry with  
30 oversight of the leaders in that ministry.

31  
32 Physical abuse: Violent, non-accidental contact that results in injury. This includes, but is not limited to,  
33 striking, biting, or shaking. Injuries include bruises, fractures, cuts, and burns.

34  
35 Sexual abuse: Any form of sexual activity with a child/youth/any other vulnerable person, whether at the  
36 church, at home, or in any other setting. The abuser may be an adult or another minor.

37  
38 Emotional abuse: A pattern of intentional conduct that crushes a child's/youth's/other vulnerable person's  
39 spirit and attacks his/her self-worth through rejection, threats, terrorizing, isolating, or belittling.

40  
41 Neglect: When a person with responsibility for a child, youth, or other vulnerable person fails to care for  
42 that individual's physical and/or emotional needs.

43  
44 CHURCH PROGRAMS/NON-CHURCH PROGRAMS AS RELATED TO INSURANCE: Programs  
45 relating to children, youth and vulnerable adults are covered under the GNJ Property and Casualty  
46 Insurance Program so long as they are church-operated. That is, the church must have control over  
47 starting and stopping the operation, hiring or firing the employees and the management of the day-to-  
48 day operations. The decision to operate a program, as described above, should be a matter of record  
49 in the meeting minutes of the Administrative Board or Board of Trustees of the local church. The non-  
50 church program is not covered by the GNJ insurance and the church should be sure that these non-

1 church programs carry a minimum of \$1,000,000 General Liability Insurance and are covered by Workers'  
 2 Compensation insurance. Certificates of these insurance coverages should be requested and received by  
 3 the church annually. GNJ and the local church should be named as additional insureds on these policies.  
 4 The employees of the church-operated childcare centers are covered under the Workers' Compensation  
 5 Program and as such should be reported on the annual Workers' Compensation salary audit of the local  
 6 church.

7  
 8 SCREENING FORMS: Screening forms for use with volunteers are designed to assist the local church in  
 9 gaining information on persons who are applicants for working in church programs with children, youth  
 10 and vulnerable adults. Their use is designed to enhance the protection of those who participate in the  
 11 programs.

12  
 13 BACKGROUND CHECKS: As with the screening forms, background checks are designed to protect those  
 14 individuals involved in the programs offered by the church to children, youth and vulnerable adults.

15  
 16 **Submitted by:**  
 17 Gabrielle Corbett, Safe Sanctuaries Coordinator.  
 18 GNJ Cabinet  
 19 GNJ Committee on the Status and Role of Women (COSROW)

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## A SAFER GNJ AMENDMENT

I move to reconsider the amendment I offered, and which was approved, at the 2023 Annual Conference and I propose the following in its place.

**WHEREAS**, at the May 2023 Annual Conference, the below amendment to “A Safer GNJ” passed: Rev. Brenda Ehlers offered an amendment to page 53, line 36, to read: “GNJ shall offer trauma-informed care to survivors of previous complaints, including, but not limited to reimbursement for post-traumatic stress treatment as recommended by COSROW.” The amendment was voted on and approved.

**WHEREAS**, the GNJ conference staff need clarification about the following language in the amendment in order to implement it:

“... as recommended by COSROW” refers to the document cited in the same paragraph, GCOSROW’s “Do No Harm -A Complaint Process Guide” which is attached, and as such, is to serve as a guide for trauma-informed care that annual conferences may implement.

“Survivors of previous complaints” refers to complainants who have previously been identified as survivors and their complaints happened prior to this legislation which elsewhere provides trauma-informed care for survivors. As such, this amendment is meant to cover those whose cases were not dismissed because of unsubstantiated allegations and those who are considered complainants - those who have had their complaint processed through the Conference complaint process, or through the secular justice system.

**WHEREAS** at the time of passage, neither the initial resolution nor my amendment was reviewed by the Council of Finance and Administration (CFA),

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, the conference adopts the following replacement amendment:

As part of a trauma-informed response to complainants of sexual misconduct as defined above, care from a licensed professional - trained and skilled to address issues specific to the assault - to complainants who have not had such care otherwise paid through insurance or other reimbursement, will be paid by the Conference through reimbursement or direct pay to the licensed provider.

**Submitted by:** Brenda Wheeler Ehlers

## MOVING FORWARD WITH “A SAFER GNJ”

**WHEREAS**, “A Safer GNJ” resolution was adopted by the 2023 Annual Conference, and

**WHEREAS**, the resolution was amended to include “GNJ shall offer trauma-informed care to survivors of previous complaints, including, but not limited to reimbursement for posttraumatic stress treatment as recommended by COSROW.” and

**WHEREAS**, previous obstacles shared publicly at the 2023 Annual Conference session may have had a chilling effect on other victims and survivors coming forward to get the help they need; and

**WHEREAS**, transparency to the Annual Conference while maintaining individual confidentiality is important; so, therefore

**BE IT RESOLVED**, That the Connectional Table and COSROW work together to create an online portal for victims and survivors of sexual abuse perpetrated by GNJ laity leaders and clergy members to come forward so they may get the help they need and perpetrators may be called to account; and further be it

**RESOLVED**, That the Connectional Table and the Council on Finance and Administration annually report to Annual Conference the number of individuals who came forward and the expenditures for treatment and healing.

### **RATIONALE:**

GNJ has among the earliest legislation submission deadlines in the Jurisdiction. In the interim, this resolution is amended to reflect more recent events.

It is impossible to know whether any of the obstacles presented in the situation which came to the attention of the GNJ Annual Conference last year may have had a chilling effect on other victims and survivors. We should take the opportunity as a Conference to take positive steps in a public fashion to create a sense of trust and safety for other potential victims and survivors to come forward with their experiences of abuse.

**Submitted by** Creed Pogue

## MODIFICATION TO THE CONFERENCE RULES

**WHEREAS** Revision to Rule 19b) by addition of the ability to have CFA and the Conference Chancellor, along with CORR and COSROW, review ALL proposed submissions prior to printing in the Pre-conference Journal. CFA will determine any financial impact and the Chancellor will review the Resolution to determine if any would be ruled “out of order” The determinations of these reviews will be presented to the maker of the submission so that he/she can submit revisions prior to publication in the Pre-Conference Journal. If the maker of the submission refuses to make the suggested changes, the suggestions made will be printed next to the Resolution in the Pre-conference Journal.

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the 3rd and 4th sentence of Rule 19b) be modified as follows:

The Conference Secretary shall promptly submit all submissions to the following: to CORR and COSROW for review for explicit or implied bias; to CFA to insure than anything impacting finances is noted; to the Rules Committee if the submission affects the Conference Rules; and to the Chancellor to determine if the submission is out of order.

The remainder of Rule 19b) remains the same.

**RATIONALE:** CFA should review ALL submissions in order to be fully enlightened as to its intent and not require the Conference Secretary to make this determination. The Conference Chancellor should give the submitter a heads up if something is going to be ruled out of order so that a correction can be made and all submissions in the Pre-conference Journal will be able to be considered by the Conference.

**Submitted by:** Vicki Brendler, chair, GNJ Committee on the Rules of Order

1 **CHURCH CLOSURES**

2  
3  
4 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference expresses its thanksgiving for all the blessings  
5 made possible by the clergy and laity who have contributed to the ministry and mission of the following  
6 congregations:

7  
8 Calvary United Methodist Church, Kearny, NJ

9  
10 Long Branch United Methodist Church, Asbury NJ

11  
12 Magnolia United Methodist Church, Magnolia, NJ

13  
14 Zion United Methodist Church, Dividing Creek, NJ

15  
16 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, in keeping with the provisions of Paragraph 2549.2b of the Book of *Discipline*, 2016  
17 edition, the congregations are discontinued, and the assets of the church are transferred to the Trustees of the  
18 Greater New Jersey Annual Conference.

19  
20 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that in keeping with the provisions of Paragraph 229 of the Book of the *Discipline*,  
21 2016 edition, the remaining members of the church may be transferred to a United Methodist Church of their  
22 choice.

23  
24 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that through its budget fund distribution percentages for the sale of property,  
25 Greater New Jersey Annual Conference distribute net proceeds after all outstanding loans and other obligations  
26 owed to Greater New Jersey Annual Conference or any other creditor shall be repaid upon the sale of the  
27 property, and liquidation of any other assets.

28  
29 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, in keeping with provisions of Paragraph 2549.4 of the Book of *Discipline*, 2016  
30 edition, all deeds, records, legal papers and other official documents shall be maintained in permanent  
31 safekeeping with the Conference Commission on Archives and History.

32  
33 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the remaining funds from the sale of the church after all debt and obligations  
34 have been paid will be disbursed according to the legislation as approved by the January 2021 Greater New  
35 Jersey special annual conference.

36  
37 **Submitted by**  
38 The Greater New Jersey Cabinet

1 **MOU COLLABORATION**

2  
3  
4 **A Memorandum of Understanding Relating to EPA&GNJ Collaborative Partnership**

5  
6 We honor that throughout our history our Methodist connection has been nimble in responding to the  
7 changing conditions around it, expanding and changing patterns of ministry in times of growth, contracting and  
8 reorganizing in times of decline in order to effectively meet the missional needs in the present. This flexibility  
9 has been a key to our missional success. We further recognize that due to the factors around disaffiliation and  
10 declining membership in general that this is a time for reorganizing and for embracing new and creative forms of  
11 ministry collaboration to keep our focus on moving our mission forward. We also acknowledge that any change,  
12 but especially change that occurs rapidly, may create feelings of anxiety, fear, grief and increased sense of stress.  
13 The information and strategies framed in this MOU are to help us begin to map pathways to a vibrant future in a  
14 challenging time. We believe that collaboration between EPA&GNJ is already helping us be nimble in responding  
15 to our changing environment and we hope that this protocol will become an effective tool for helping us navigate  
16 the changes we expect to face in the near future and enable us to move our mission forward with hope and  
17 vitality as we embrace new Episcopal leadership and a potentially revised denominational structure.

18  
19 **WHEREAS**, EPA and GNJ are collaborating together in ministry,

20  
21 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that Eastern PA and Greater New Jersey conferences, agencies and staff use the  
22 following MOU to guide decision-making, budgeting and mission and ministry.

23  
24 **Background**

25 A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is an agreement between two or more organizations that governs  
26 their collaborative efforts. The Memorandum outlined below is between the Eastern Pennsylvania Annual  
27 Conference (EPA) and the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference (GNJ) about how decisions will be made about  
28 collaborative mission and ministry done jointly by the two conferences in the areas of ministry, administration  
29 and financing for joint projects.

30  
31 **Why Collaborate**

32 We believe we are called as the body of Christ and Wesleyans to serve in connection with one another and live  
33 as a community of believers who represent Christ to one another and the world. We are formed as God’s people  
34 to serve the congregations, communities, and world collaboratively whenever possible to maximize resources  
35 and efforts for the mission. The collaboration will assist each conference to thrive and grow in recruiting and  
36 developing transformational leaders to make disciples of Jesus Christ and grow vital congregations for the  
37 transformation of the world.

38  
39 **How and When Was the Collaborative Effort Started**

40 This collaborative effort began when the Northeastern Jurisdiction (NEJ) who elects and assigns bishops in 2022  
41 assigned EPA&GNJ the same bishop. These new relationships were formed among seven of the ten conferences  
42 in the NEJ<sup>1</sup>. EPA&GNJ and the other five conferences who also were in new relationships were encouraged to  
43 explore and develop affiliations or collaborative efforts. This was done in preparation for what is anticipated to  
44 be even fewer bishops throughout the denomination and in the NEJ. Presently there are seven bishops serving  
45 in the NEJ and in 2024 the General Conference will decide the total number of bishops around the world which  
46 may see a total of 5-7 bishops in the NEJ requiring all 10 NEJ conferences to be in collaborative relationships.

47  
48 If there is a further reduction of bishops in the NEJ, the NEJ Conference also scheduled to meet in 2024 will  
49 determine the conferences that will work together under one bishop.

50



1 Regardless of the number of bishops and the alignment of conferences, due to the pandemic and disaffiliation,  
 2 things will be different in The United Methodist Church and for EPA&GNJ.

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 5  
 6  
 7  
 8

God is doing a new thing!  
 Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?  
 God is making a way in the wilderness  
 and streams in the desert. -Isaiah 43:19

9 **Who and How Was the MOU Prepared**

10 This MOU was developed and prepared by a joint task force of EPA&GNJ involving 15 elected and staff leaders  
 11 from each conference and was reviewed and approved by CFA and the Connectional Table of both conferences. It  
 12 involved a survey of both conferences, Zoom and in person feedback sessions, and the affected agencies of both  
 13 conferences working together.

14  
 15 **This MOU seeks to:**

- 16 A. Identify the principles that will guide the ongoing collaboration between EPA and GNJ and
- 17 B. Summarize the current state of our efforts at collaboration after 18 months of effort.
- 18 C. Describe the ongoing evolution of the collaboration.

19  
 20 While the principles spelled out in the MOU guiding our efforts at collaboration will stay constant, the specifics of  
 21 the collaboration will evolve over time making the MOU a living document.

22  
 23 **A. Principles that will guide the ongoing collaboration between EPA & GNJ:**

24 When decisions are made with respect to collaboration in the areas of mission, ministry, administration, and  
 25 finances we will ask ourselves the following questions in order to better guide our decision-making:

- 26 1. Will collaboration allow the mission, ministries, and goals of EPA & GNJ to be achieved more  
 27 effectively together than individually?
- 28 2. Will by collaboration, the impact of our personnel, property and financial resources be utilized more  
 29 effectively to achieve our individual missions and potentially even reduce costs for each conference?
- 30 3. Will the long-term capacity and sustainability of each conference be enhanced? At a minimum  
 31 preserved?
- 32 4. Will the values of United Methodism and the values of the two conferences be honored and  
 33 preserved? (See Appendix 1 for details on our values).
- 34 5. Will the collaboration assist each conference to thrive and grow in recruiting and developing  
 35 transformational leaders to make disciples of Jesus Christ and grow vital congregations for the  
 36 transformation of the world?

37  
 38 **B. Collaborative Ministries, Staffing & Finances:**

39 **1. What ministries of EPA&GNJ will we carry out together initially?**

40 The present collaborative ministries of EPA&GNJ are listed in Appendix 2 for information. These  
 41 ministries were identified by the EPA and GNJ agencies working together to determine what could be  
 42 done better together.

43  
 44 Collaborative ministries will change from time to time when needs, circumstances and finances change.  
 45 The agencies that oversee the particular ministries are responsible for the ongoing monitoring and  
 46 evaluation of the effectiveness of the ministries to achieve the mission and goals of EPA&GNJ. For  
 47 further clarity and information, in Appendix 2 each ministry area lists the agencies responsible by  
 48 *The Book of Discipline* for the different ministries. The responsible agency of each conference shall be  
 49 consulted and approve any of the ministries to be eliminated or added to the collaboration work of  
 50 EPA&GNJ.

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The Connectional Table for programmatic ministries, the Council of Finance and Administration (CFA) for finance and administration ministries, and the Cabinet for appointments and oversight of clergy and lay leadership and congregational ministries of each conference shall each be updated by the respective agencies and provide ongoing guidance and feedback.

**2. What and how will staff be deployed?**

Each annual conference shall approve its budget and within those budgets is compensation for staff. While staff may work collaboratively or on collaborative EPA&GNJ ministries, EPA staff will be compensated through the EPA payroll and GNJ staff will be compensated through the GNJ payroll. Reimbursement from one conference to another conference is addressed under finances.

For informational purposes, the present staff working together or on collaborative ministries are listed in Appendix 2. This will change from time to time with the approval of each conference’s Human Resources agency in consultation with the extended cabinet representatives and CFA of each conference.

**3. How will financial decisions be made and administrated?**

The principle for financial decisions is that no conference will profit at the expense of the other. Likewise, all savings will be shared equitably between the conferences as befits the church of Christ. Our goal is to support and engage missionally together in the spirit of Connectionalism.

Programmatic and Administrative costs will be shared based on the ratio of congregations in each conference. The Chief Financial Officer (CFO)/Treasurers and Director of Connectional Ministry (DCMs) will jointly make this decision and when in question will consult with the CFA chairpersons of both EPA and GNJ.

Staffing costs will be reimbursed based on the added cost of collaborating staff whose costs were explicitly agreed to be shared by the two conferences. These expenses correspond to incremental costs of collaboration incurred by the two conferences and do not include staff already hired by the individual conferences whose services they have freely decided to share with the other conference. For more details, see the Added Cost Table in Appendix 3.

In order to monitor the full extent of the collaboration and the value received by both conferences by collaborating, all staff positions compensated through apportioned/billed funds will be evaluated each year, and the percentage of each person’s job spent on work for the other conference determined and aggregated. For more details on this calculation see the informational table below and the staffing chart for further information in Appendix 3.

**C. Ongoing evolution of the collaboration:**

**1. Communication:**

Collaborating ministries, projects and services will be communicated through the collaborating or individual communication vehicles of both EPA&GNJ. EPA&GNJ will have access to one another’s communication vehicles.

**2. When and how will the effectiveness of the collaboration be evaluated?**

A yearly report will be made to each annual conference session and quarterly reports will be provided to the appropriate governance bodies for the area it oversees. These reports will include progress, challenges, next steps, and budgeting.

The MOU itself will be reviewed and updated each year by each participating CFA and Connectional Table. Each CFA shall report any changes to the collaborative work to their annual conference session. If a CFA believes it is

1 not in the best interest to continue in the collaboration, they shall recommend to the annual conference session  
 2 discontinuance and the annual conference shall vote to continue or discontinue the relationship.

3

4 If the NEJ realigns the Episcopal Areas so that EPA&GNJ do not share a bishop the MOU Taskforces will  
 5 reconvene with the episcopal leadership of the two conferences to discuss if and how EPA&GNJ will continue to  
 6 collaborate. Should EPA&GNJ continue to share a new episcopal appointment, the Chairpersons of the Taskforce  
 7 and/or Connectional Table will meet with the new bishop and the chairs of CFA, the CFO’s, the DCM’s, the Deans  
 8 of the Cabinet and other appropriate leaders to discuss the MOU and next steps for the collaboration.

9

10 **3. Participation in the Collaboration:**

11 If other annual conferences want to share in one or more of the collaborative initiatives, how will this be  
 12 reviewed, and decisions made for the inclusion of other annual conferences?

13 Additional annual conferences may join the collaborative partnership by vote of the current CFAs and  
 14 Connectional Tables and a vote by the joining CFA, Connectional Table and annual conference session.

15

16 **For further information**, governance and management decision-making is further described in Appendix 3.

17

18 **Submitted by:** GNJ MOU Taskforce

**Informational Appendixes**

- 1. Values of United Methodism . . . . . **APPENDIX 1: PAGE 40**
- 2. Ministries and staff identified by  
     EPA&GNJ agencies to collaborate together . . . . **APPENDIX 2: PAGE 40**
- 3. Financial Models. . . . . **APPENDIX 3: PAGE 43**
- 4. Shared Ministries and Services . . . . . **APPENDIX 4: PAGE 45**
- 5. Decision-making and Governance. . . . . **APPENDIX 5: PAGE 52**

# APPENDIX 1

## For Information Only Appendix 1

### Values of United Methodism

#### United Methodist Values

Grace - God’s grace is sufficient for salvation and is offered to all through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Extending God’s grace - Grace is extended through the sacraments of communion and baptism to adults, youth, and children, inviting all people into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and by practicing the Wesleyan means of grace.

The Bible – The Bible is the primary authority and revelation for salvation and holy living, and is interpreted through tradition, reason, and experience.

Personal and social holiness – United Methodists grow spiritually and are accountable for witness, service, and doing justice in the world.

Connectionalism - United Methodists are connected through a web of congregations and organizations that share a common mission, doctrine, apportioned financial mission support, itineracy, and holy conferencing.

Diversity and Inclusion – United Methodists welcome, include, and involve all people in the life of the church guided by the scriptures, doctrine, and Wesleyan Way of the church.

# APPENDIX 2

## For Information Only Appendix 2

### Specific Areas of Ministry and Service and Staffing

#### Staffing

The following organizational chart shows both the EPA&GNJ staff positions. Blue are the EPA staff and green are GNJ staff that are not directly engaged in collaborating ministry and services. Gold represents the collaborating staff.

The following are staff involved in collaborative projects. It indicates if their work is focused in EPA or GNJ or both EPA&GNJ.

EPA Focused	EPA&GNJ	GNJ Focused	Hired by
<b>Superintending/Regional Administration/Leadership &amp; Congregational Development/HR</b>			
	Bishop		Both
	Director of Human Resources		GNJ
	Assistant to the Bishop (Leadership Development)		EPA

	Assistant to the Bishop (Administration)		GNJ
	Executive Administrative Assistant		Both
4 Superintendents		6 Superintendents	
2 Associate Superintendents		4 Associate Superintendents	
	Regional Manager		GNJ
2 Regional Administrators		2 Regional Administrators	
	Resource Manager		GNJ
	Breakthrough Coordinator		GNJ
<b>Connectional Ministries/Discipleship/Camp &amp; Retreat Ministry/Ignite/Youth</b>			
	2 Connectional Ministry Directors		1 each conf
	4 Camp & Retreat Ministry Directors		EPA
	2 Next Gen Staff		Both
	Hispanic Ministry Coordinator		EPA
	Prison Ministry Coordinator		EPA
	Connectional Ministries Manager (Scholarships and Grants)		GNJ
<b>Communications</b>			
	Director		Both
	Editorial Manager		EPA
	Video Producer		GNJ
	Graphic Designer		EPA
	IT and Web Specialist		GNJ
	Communications Administrator		GNJ
<b>Data Base</b>			
	CFO/Treasurer		EPA
	Missional Data Specialist		GNJ
	Missional Data Administrator		EPA
<b>Benefits</b>			
	Insurance and Benefits Manager		GNJ
Benefits Specialist		Benefits Specialist	

The staff strategize, plan and carry out collaborating ministry and services through the following teams. These teams existed prior to collaboration and met on these regular cycles. They now meet together as one team.

- Cabinet – the district superintendents and the bishop meet twice a month and weekly during the appointment season.
- Extended Cabinet – the cabinet and executive staff. Both EPA&GNJ extended cabinet meet individually and once together every month.
- Extended leadership – executive staff and management staff meet once a month to report about progress on projects and ministries.

- Episcopal Office Team – meet weekly to review work and projects.
- Communications Team – meet weekly to review work and projects.
- Regional Administrative Team - meet weekly to review work and projects.
- Leadership Development Team – meet monthly to review work and projects.
- Data Base Team – meet weekly to review work and projects.
- Benefits Team – meet weekly to review work and projects.

### **Communication**

Collaborating ministries, projects and services will be communicated mutually through the collaborating or individual communication vehicles of both EPA&GNJ. EPA&GNJ will have access to one another's communication vehicles.

### **Evaluation**

A yearly report will be made to each annual conference session and quarterly reports will be provided to the appropriate governance bodies for the area it oversees. These reports will include progress, challenges and next steps and budgeting.

### **Participation**

The MOU will be reviewed and updated each year by each participating CFA and Connectional Table. Each CFA shall report any changes to the collaborative work to their annual conference session. If a CFA believes it is not in the best interest to continue in the collaboration, they shall recommend to the annual conference session discontinuance and the annual conference shall vote to continue or discontinue the relationship.

Additional annual conferences may join the collaborative partnership by vote of the current CFAs and Connectional Tables and a vote by the joining CFA, Connectional Table and annual conference session.

APPENDIX 3

For Information Only

Appendix 3

The MOU team developed three models that could be used to share costs of collaboration between the two conferences.

- Model 1 – Is the “All Collaborative Staff” method that is accounting focused and allocates the cost of ALL staff involved in collaborative work to the two conferences;
- Model 2 – is a subset of the “All Collaborative Staff” method and only allocates the cost of Staff working 100% on collaborative work at the current time;
- Model 3 – is called the “Added Cost” method and takes a different approach. It views the two conferences as mission partners and only allocates explicit incremental costs incurred on account of collaboration. So, if staff are already employed by one conference and are able to provide collaborative service to the other conference, this service is viewed as a sharing of a gift rather than a cost to be allocated.

The CFAs of GNJ and EPA independently reviewed the above different methods for assessing the cost and reimbursements for staff involved in the collaboration.

The EPA CFA voted to adopt the Model 3 (“Added Cost” method).

The GNJ CFA voted that Model 1 (“All Collaborative Staff” method) be adopted and model 3 (“Added Cost” method) be used for payment purposes; this would be re-evaluated every three years.

The Informational Table evaluates every staff position and the percentage of the staff role dedicated to the collaboration and that percentage of staff compensation be shared by both conferences.

The Added Cost Table evaluates the increased costs to a conference as EPA and GNJ collaborate, and a conference is reimbursed for any cost increase it incurs because of the collaboration. This model also evaluates every staff position and assesses increased compensation because of the collaboration.

Informational Table Model 1: All Collaborative Staff			Added Cost Table Model 3: Added Cost		
	EPA	GNJ		EPA	GNJ
Staff Considered	14	27	Staff Considered	2	7
Staff Comp	352,464	1,068,643	Staff Comp	54,014	301,436
EPA Payment to GNJ <sup>1</sup>	(716,179)	716,179	EPA Payment to GNJ <sup>1</sup>	(247,422)	247,422
Current EPA payment to GNJ <sup>2</sup>	(205,454)	205,454	Current EPA payment to GNJ <sup>2</sup>	(205,454)	205,454
Additional payment to GNJ	(510,725)	510,725	Additional payment to GNJ	(41,968)	41,968
Cost to hire staff w/o collaboration <sup>3</sup>	364,667	424,063	Cost to hire staff w/o collaboration <sup>3</sup>	364,667	424,063
Collab gain/(loss) <sup>4</sup>	(351,512)	1,140,242	Collab gain/(loss) <sup>4</sup>	117,245	671,485

<sup>1</sup> The amount EPA to reimburse GNJ.

<sup>2</sup> The amount EPA currently is paying GNJ.

<sup>3</sup> In some cases, open positions were not hired and assumed under the collaboration. For example, GNJ had an open graphic/web designer open but rather than hiring a new person, the collaboration is using the EPA designer. EPA is not hiring a database manager or a staff person to provide this work. This is a savings to GNJ and EPA. There are positions like this in each conference.

<sup>4</sup>The EPA Payment to GNJ line plus the cost to hire staff w/o collaboration.

The following formula will be applied.

1. Conference A staffing cost increase

2. Minus Conference B staffing cost increase.
3. Net increase to be paid to the other conference.

The CFO/Treasurers each year shall prepare both tables and each year the CFAs of EPA and GNJ will review, approve and add to each conference proposed budget to be approved by each annual conference.

Model Details:

Staff doing collaborative work highlighted in yellow.

EPA				GNJ			
Title	% of Job Collaborating			% of Job Collaborating			Title
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	
Bishop (Housing)	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	Bishop (Housing)
CFO/Treasurer	30%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	CFO/Treasurer
Director of Connectional Ministries & Assistant to the Bishop	30%	56%	0%	50%	50%	50%	Director of Communications
District Superintendent	10%	0%	0%	20%	44%	0%	Director of Connectional Ministries
District Superintendent	10%	0%	0%	10%	0%	0%	District Superintendent
District Superintendent	10%	0%	0%	10%	0%	0%	District Superintendent
District Superintendent / Dean of the Cabinet	10%	0%	0%	10%	0%	0%	District Superintendent
				10%			District Superintendent / Dean of the Cabinet
				10%			District Superintendent / Regional Team Leader
Finance Manager	0%		0%	10%			District Superintendent / Regional Team Leader
Accounting Support Associate	0%		0%	50%	50%	25%	Assistant to the Bishop
Benefit Specialist	0%		0%	20%		0%	Associate Superintendent
Editorial Manager	50%	50%	0%	20%		0%	Associate Superintendent
Graphic Designer	50%	50%	0%	20%		0%	Associate Superintendent
Hispanic/Latino Ministries Coordinator (P/T)	20%		0%	0%		0%	Controller
Prison Ministries Coordinator (P/T - volunteer)	20%		0%	50%	49%	0%	Director of Human Resources and the Regional Support Team
				20%		0%	Director of Leadership Development / Associate Superintendent
Accounting Support Associate (P/T)	0%		0%				
Hospitality Services Coordinator	25%		0%	30%		0%	Connectional Ministries Manager
Missional Data Administrator	50%	50%	50%	25%		0%	Insurance and Benefits Manager
Next Generation Ministries Coordinator (P/T)	20%		0%	0%		0%	Property Manager
Regional Administrator	0%		0%	50%	50%	13%	Regional Manager
Regional Administrator	0%		0%	30%		17%	Resource Manager
				0%		0%	Accountant
				0%		0%	Benefit Specialist
				50%		0%	Breakthrough Coordinator (P/T)
				50%	50%	50%	Episcopal Executive Admin Assistant
				50%	50%	50%	Missional Data Specialist
				50%	50%	0%	IT & Web Specialist
				30%		0%	NextGen Program Specialist
				50%	50%	0%	Video Producer
				0%		0%	Accounting Administrator / Accounts Receivable
				0%		0%	Accounting Operations Assistant
				50%	50%	0%	Communications Administrator
				30%		0%	Connectional Ministries Administrator (P/T)
				0%		0%	Finance, Benefits, & Property Administrative Assistant
				0%		0%	Hospitality & Events Coordinator
				0%		0%	NextGen Aldersgate Caretaker (P/T)
				0%		0%	Regional Administrator
				0%		0%	Regional Administrator
Total Compensation \$'s	\$352,464	\$248,490	\$54,014	\$1,068,643	\$694,648	\$301,436	
Net Payment Due				716,179	446,158	247,422	
Payments to GNJ already in EPA's 2024 Budget				205,454	205,454	205,454	
Net Incremental				\$510,725	\$240,704	\$41,968	



## APPENDIX 4

### For Information Only Appendix 4 Shared Ministries and Services

#### Episcopal Office

##### Shared Ministry and Services

- Lead the strategic direction.
- Plan, schedule and carry out preaching engagements, activities, meetings and travel of the bishop.
- Oversee and resolve congregational conflict, church closings and complaint process.
- Annual conference planning and preparation.
- Appointment preparation.
- Reports for general and jurisdictional conferences.
- Correspondence.
- Staff worship.
- Coordination of staff meetings.
- Clergy personnel files.
- Staff management.

##### Decision-Making

- Both EPA&GNJ committees on episcopacy and the NEJ committee on episcopacy provide support and feedback to the bishop.

#### Cabinet

##### Shared Ministry and Services

- Strategic direction for the districts and regions
- Appointments
- Clergy and congregational assessment.
- Clergy development and support.
- congregational development.
- Administration
- District/regional committees

##### Decision-Making

- Strategic direction by each annual conference.
- Management decisions are made by the cabinet.

#### Communications

The EPA&GNJ communications team operates as a single, collaborative team that serves EPA, GNJ, and EPA&GNJ communications needs.

##### Shared Ministry and Services

- EPA & GNJ Digests
- EPA & GNJ social media platforms (Facebook, X(Twitter), Instagram)
- EPA & GNJ Website
- NEWSpirit Newspaper

- Email Marketing & Management (MailChimp)
- Photography and video production (SmugMug, YouTube, Vimeo, video production studio)
- Podcasting
- PR and crisis communications
- Regional communications support
- IT support (GCFA, all staff)
- Zoom support
- Communications, design, and marketing execution for:
  - Leadership Academy
  - Pathways
  - Breakthrough
  - Mosaic
  - Journey of Hope / Ending the sin of racism
  - Annual Conference(s)
  - IGNITE Conference
  - Any capital campaigns
  - Camp & Retreat Ministry Promotion

**Decision-Making**

- For overarching strategy and major initiatives: Director of Communications supervised by the Bishop and in collaboration with respective extended cabinets.
- Management decisions are made by the Director of Communications.

**Clergy Recruitment**

EPA & GNJ will work together to advance clergy recruitment efforts in both annual conferences for the purpose of achieving the strategic goal of identifying and helping to develop 40 new potentially full-time clergy by 2026.

**Shared Ministry & Services**

- Recruitment at major seminaries, including Drew University, Princeton Seminary, Palmer Theological Seminary, Lancaster Theological Seminary, Moravian.
  - In person/virtual visits
  - Development of communication and promotional materials, website, etc.
  - Application process and follow up
  - Create and maintain recruitment database for potential placements/applicants.
  - Mosaic Cohort
  - Youth & college internships
  - Cabinet recruitment and assignments/appointment process
  - Intentional recruitment of black, indigenous people of color per GNJ A Journey of Hope and EPA A Path towards Wholeness commitments
- Strategic conversations with key stakeholders to identify best practices in the following:
  - Mentoring
  - Candidacy
  - Recruitment
  - Assignments/Placements

**Decision-Making (Reporting Boards)**

- Cabinet (EPA & GNJ)
- Board of Ordained Ministry (EPA & GNJ)
- Next Generation Ministries (GNJ)
- Connectional Table (EPA & GNJ)
- CFA (EPA&GNJ)

**Lay and Clergy Leadership Development**

**Shared Ministry and Services**

- Leadership Academy Workshop Development
  - o Together EPA&GNJ are developing courses to support lay and clergy development.
- Leadership Academy Catalogue
  - o An online catalogue that will enable EPA&GNJ to access available courses (2024).
- Leadership Seminar Clergy Cohorts
  - o Three cohorts are currently being facilitated by EPA&GNJ leaders and offered to clergy across EPA&GNJ: Foundational Cohort; Cross-Racial, Cross-Cultural Cohort & Stewardship Cohort.
- Lilly Preaching Grant Administration
  - o EPA&GNJ will build a preaching academy to develop preaching for clergy and strengthen SPRC and local church support of preaching.
- ENGAGE
  - o EPA&GNJ lead clergy are provided a 1:1 member of the superintending team for reflection, coaching and resourcing.
- Local Pastor School Registration Process (Both conferences offer a licensing school)
  - o Registration is provided through Arena
- Lay Servant/Christ Servant Minister (CSM)/Certified Lay Minister (CLM) Registration Process (Both conferences offer lay training programs)
  - o Registration is provided through Arena

**Decision-Making (Reporting Board)**

- EPA&GNJ Boards of Laity
  - EPA&GNJ Boards of Ordained Ministry
  - Connectional Table

**Congregational Development and Regional Resourcing**

Congregational Development is the work that we undertake to help congregations be the best they can be. We resource congregations to fulfill their mission by providing tools to unlock ministry potential through Pathways, supporting vital preaching through Breakthrough, and providing congregations seed money for new ministries and initiatives through the Congregational Grant Program.

**Shared Ministry and Services**

- Pathways (Already in process)
  - Pathways offers your congregation a process to grow to be healthy and fruitful. Pathways resources offer the tools to create a plan to take the next faithful steps in mission and ministry and mobilize leaders and disciples to transform the world.
- Breakthrough Worship Series Resources (Already in process)
  - Breakthrough is a resource designed to provide easy to use best practices and worship series so that EPA&GNJ congregations can re-tune their worship, spend less time preparing the details and focus on what really matters – preaching the gospel to make disciples of Christ for the transformation of the world.
- Grant Process (Already in process)
  - EPA uses a comprehensive grant process for all grants
  - GNJ uses two processes: Congregational Development and Community Outreach Grants
- Explore best Practices for New Church Starts (Long-term goal)
  - Get a definition of “New Church Starts” – New churches, relocations/resurrecting, etc.
  - In 2024 we hope to start this work, including plans for funding.
  - In 2025 we hope to begin planting churches.

**Guiding Agencies.**

- Connectional Table
- Regional Superintending Teams (EPA&GNJ)

**Regional Administration**

**Shared Ministry and Services**

- Appointments
- Church conferences
- Support for district superintendents, clergy, and churches
- Continual development of policies and processes for administrative work that relates to the regional team, cabinet, and churches
- Coordination and organization of district/regional meetings and events
- Electronic files maintenance

**Decision-Making**

- Management decisions made by Regional Manager, supervised by the Director of EPA & GNJ Regional Support Team and in collaboration with respective cabinets

**Ending the Sin of Racism**

**Shared Ministry and Services**

- Journey of Hope/A Path towards Wholeness Facilitation & Congregational Plans. Started January 2023.
  - EPA&GNJ’s commitment to ending the sin of racism as outlined in A Path Towards Wholeness (EPA) and A Journey of Hope (GNJ) contains a commitment to develop

congregational plans to end the sin of racism. Pathways offers congregations a process to grow to be healthy and fruitful. Part of this growth to health involves a plan for each local church to end the sin of racism. Pathways resources offer the tools to create a plan to take the next faithful steps in mission and ministry and mobilize leaders and disciples to transform the world.

- Plans for Equity in Shared Ministries. Started in 2022.
  - Equity in shared ministries involves a recalculation of shared ministries and billables payments based on the median household income of the community surrounding the congregation.
- Implicit Bias Review Policies and Procedures
  - Implicit Bias Review includes:
    - Review all agency policies, procedures and rules for explicit or implicit racial biases and racism and recommend changes to the appropriate bodies to ensure racially just, inclusive and equitable policies and rules.
    - Review all submitted annual conference legislation to ensure it does not include implicit or explicit bias against Black, Indigenous, People of Color.
    - Review all current Conference training materials to ensure that ending racism is included and bias, explicit and implicit, are not present in the material.
    - EPA&GNJ COSROW and CORR will work together to create 1 set of Policies and Procedures to be followed for the review each year. January 2025.
    - Each conference will do their own review of all reports and legislation to the Annual Conference Session.
- Strengthening Ethnic Congregations (2024)
  - EPA&GNJ will explore best practices to strengthen ethnic congregations. Focus will be on coaching and congregational plan development.
- Leadership Seminar Cohort for Cross-Racial (Ethnic) Cross-Cultural Appointments
  - This is a yearly cohort group to support pastors and congregations in CRCC Appointments
- Leadership Academy Module for Ending the Sin of Racism
  - The Leadership Academy will include courses for individuals to learn and grow in their ability to end the sin of racism.
- Quarterly Progress Reports to EPA&GNJ CORR
  - These include an update on the 5 Keystone Measures which EPA&GNJ are working towards: Financial Investment, Implicit Bias Review, Diversity in Leadership, Strengthening Ethnic Congregations and Congregational Plans

**Decision-Making** (*Reporting/Monitoring Board/Agency*)

- EPA&GNJ Commission on Religion and Race (CORR)
  - Will solicit and receive feedback from other Conference agencies and caucus groups.

**Benefits**

**Shared Ministry and Services**

- Shared staffing and data base to accomplish the following.
- Enroll clergy and lay staff into appropriate benefit plans as eligible.
- Ensure local church billing for benefit and billed funds are accurately entered and processed.
- Enroll and monitor appointments and benefits through Wespah.

- Establish and communicate the GNJ Blended Rate (Single rate per eligible clergy) and the EPA Composite Rate (Tiered rate based on AGTP formula)
- Provide joint training events for benefit programs, retirement, and Annual Elections.
- Create a joint Benefits module for Leadership Academy.
- Troubleshoot and offer one on one support to clergy and local church and conference staff.
- Provide support for the Appointment Process.
- Attend and support both Boards of Benefits.

**Decision-Making**

- Staff management, work and procedures – CFO/Treasurer of EPA and CFO/Treasurer of GNJ
- Policies, programs and direction – each board of pension and benefits for their respective programs.

**Outcome**

- Shared workload and collaboration
- Shared training
- Shared best practices

**Data Base**

**Shared Ministry and Services**

- Joint database
- Aligned chart of accounts
- Aligned reports
- Elimination of duplicate registration records
- Shared contact lists
- Shared best practices
- Shared support services
- Shared software training
- Leading the way to best data services and financial platform
- Streamlined efficiency over data management practices and reporting.
- Deliver reporting for better analysis by conference leaders and local churches.

**Decision-Making**

- Budgeting, Conference CFA’s
- Software strategy decisions, EPA CFO with input from GNJ CFO’s, Director of Communications, EPA & GNJ DCM’s, and Bishop

**Human Resources**

**Shared Ministry and Services**

- Development and implementation of the policies and procedures of the employee handbook
- Hiring
- Onboarding
- Appraisals
- Termination

- Staff development and training programs
- Immigration support for pastors

#### **Decision-Making – who and how decisions will be made**

- CFA/HR Body

#### **Management and staff work**

- Hiring
- Appraisals
- Termination
- Staff development and training programs
- Immigration support for pastors
- Onboarding
- Team building

### **Discipleship**

#### **Shared Ministry and Services**

- Youth Discipleship Calendar
  - A year-round program calendar including the IGNITE Conference, summer camp and retreat ministry, as well as additional programs so that local churches have well-balanced, year-round opportunities for young people in their church and community.
- Camp and Retreat Ministry
  - Camp & Retreat Ministries involves not only the quality management of EPA's four remarkable sites, but also the diverse, enriching programs and dedicated staff and volunteers who truly define them as ministries. Each of these beautiful, blessed oases are what they rightly claim to be: "God's place apart, transforming lives." Camp and Retreat Centers are owned and operated by EPA
- IGNITE Conference
  - A high impact, life-changing weekend for youth in grades 6 to 12, offering high energy worship, relevant messages from nationally known speakers, and interactive exhibits and workshops.
- Collaborative Youth Groups
  - Bring together several or more churches that are located nearby one another geographically to plan and gather a youth group.

#### **Decision-Making (Reporting Board)**

- EPA Camp and Retreat Ministry Board oversees the camp and retreat centers
- Next Generation Ministry Board oversees the IGNITE Conference and GNJ finances invested
- Conference Council on Youth Ministry
- Conference Council on Young Adult Ministry



## APPENDIX 5

**For Information Only**  
**Appendix 5**

**Decision-Making**

There are two types of decisions, governance and management, that must be made to effectively carry out the collaborating mission and ministry.

1. **Governance Decisions** – the bodies that provide oversight. Both EPA&GNJ have oversight bodies; these oversight bodies include the annual conference sessions and the agencies authorized by The Book of Discipline to oversee administrative and programmatic ministries. These groups have responsibility for the following areas.
  - a. Strategic direction that includes but is not limited to the mission, broad goals and key program strategies. (Annual Conferences)
  - b. Administrative policies. (CFA for finance and administration, Board of Pension and Benefits for benefits, Board of Trustees for property, and Episcopacy Committee for episcopal office and residence)
  - c. Receiving and evaluating reports and providing feedback to ensure progress toward the desired programmatic outcomes. (program agencies)
  - d. The budget. (prepared by CFA and approved by annual conference)
  - e. Election of officers and members. (Nominations Committee and election by Annual Conference)

Whenever there is a governance decision concerning a collaborating ministry or service, it must be approved by the appropriate governance body in both EPA&GNJ.

**Management Decisions** – the day-to-day decisions and carrying out the strategic direction, policies and budget. Management is primarily carried out by paid and volunteer staff.

The staff strategize, plan and carry out collaborating ministry and services through the following teams. These teams existed prior to collaboration and met on these regular cycles. They now meet together as one team.

- Cabinet – the district superintendents and the bishop meet twice a month and weekly during the appointment season.
- Extended Cabinet – the cabinet and executive staff. Both EPA&GNJ extended cabinet meet individually and once together every month.
- Extended leadership – executive staff and management staff meet once a month to report about progress on projects and ministries.
- Episcopal Office Team – meet weekly to review work and projects.
- Communications Team – meet weekly to review work and projects.
- Regional Administrative Team - meet weekly to review work and projects.
- Leadership Development Team – meet twice a month to review work and projects.
- Data Base Team – meet weekly to review work and projects.
- Benefits Team – meet weekly to review work and projects.

## 1 STRATEGIC DIRECTION

2  
3  
4 **WHEREAS**, past GNJ strategic direction has born fruit and progress toward our mission; and

5  
6 **WHEREAS**, United Methodists of Greater New Jersey (GNJ) are committed to increasing the percentage of vital  
7 congregations from 48% to 60%, an ambitious goal that focuses on the five ministries/markers of vitality: worship,  
8 small groups, mission, stewardship and making new disciples, and

9  
10 **WHEREAS** we are making progress as an Annual Conference on goals and key strategic ministry initiatives as  
11 demonstrated by the following:

- 12 • 65 clergy and 45 lay congregational leaders have been identified as leaders who make disciples
- 13 who make disciples
- 14 • 33 Congregations moved from one band size to the next, despite the pandemic
- 15 • 14% to 48% vital congregations in 10 years
- 16 • \$4.1M investment through the Journey of Hope to end the sin of racism
- 17 • 25 Ethnic congregations are being strengthened
- 18 • Over 50% of Board and Agency chairpersons are people of color
- 19 • Over 100 facilitators trained with Fearless Dialogues
- 20 • Completed Implicit Bias Review of all policies and procedures

21  
22 And;

23 **WHEREAS**, God wants to continue working through GNJ's passionate disciples, vital congregations and  
24 transformational leaders so that miracles of healing and transformation continue to occur across GNJ and around  
25 the world; and

26  
27 **WHEREAS**, the Extended Cabinet and Connectional Table, along with the Strategic Direction Team, have been  
28 leading GNJ in a planning process to develop a new strategic direction for EPA&GNJ

29  
30 **WHEREAS** the proposed Strategic Direction builds on the progress of GNJ and joint work with our sister  
31 conference, Eastern Pennsylvania, creates a stronger unified direction and casts a bold vision and sets strategic  
32 priorities.

33  
34 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the 2023-2026 Strategic Direction be adopted and carried out and that each  
35 year of the Direction's implementation a report be presented to the Annual Conference session on the progress,  
36 challenges and necessary modifications.

37  
38 **Submitted by:**

39 The GNJ Connectional Table

40 GNJ Extended Cabinet

**The United Methodists  
of Eastern Pennsylvania and Greater New Jersey**

*God has plans for your future, a future with hope.*

-Jeremiah 29:11 (paraphrased)

*Christ gave to the church leaders their responsibility, to equip God’s people  
for the work and ministry of building up the church, the body of Christ.*

- Ephesians 4:11-12 (paraphrased)

*Jesus said when you serve others through mercy and justice ministries, you serve me.*

Matthew 25:35 (paraphrased)

**EPA&GNJ Strategic Direction**

Recruit and Develop Transformational Leaders

**Purpose/Mission of EPA/GNJ Elected Leadership and Staff**

Recruit and develop transformational leaders to make disciples of Jesus Christ and grow vital mission congregations for the transformation of the world.

(Based on the mission of The United Methodist Church)

The elected leadership and staff of EPA/GNJ serve the congregations by developing transformational leadership.

*Christ gave to the church leaders and their responsibility is to equip God’s people  
for the work and ministry of building up the church, the body of Christ.*

Ephesians 4:11-12

**Purpose/Mission of A United Methodist Congregation**

Make new and deepen the faith of all disciples to be loyal to Christ through their prayers, presence and participation in the church, and to engage in ministries of witness, mercy and justice in the world.

(Based on the membership vows of The United Methodist Church)

*A congregation builds up the body of Christ to serve in the world.*

**Goals**

1. Create a culture of call to pastoral ministry.  
Outcome – 40 new potential full-time appointees<sup>1</sup> by 2026.
2. 1,500 leaders per year participate in the Leadership Academy.  
Outcome – 60% of our congregations will meet the vitality markers<sup>2</sup> by 2026.
3. Train 150 facilitators to assist congregations to end the sin of racism.  
Outcome - 250 congregations engaging to end the sin of racism (Journey of Hope<sup>3</sup>) by 2026.
4. Equip 100 leaders to lead their congregations into the community.  
Outcome – 35 Hope Centers<sup>4</sup> by 2026.
5. Equip 300 leaders to lead their congregations to financial health.  
Outcome – financially healthier congregations and connectional shared ministry giving to 91% and billings to 95% by 2026<sup>5</sup>.

**Strategies** to meet our goals.

- 1 1. Comprehensive Leadership Development that deepens faith, increases understanding, equips for the  
2 practice of ministry and nurtures healthy leaders.
  - 3 a. Pathways - planning that assists a congregation to develop a plan in one or more of the following  
4 – vitality, sustainability, ending the sin of racism, community engagement.
  - 5 b. Engage – a staff person assigned to every lead pastor and every congregation for planning,  
6 coaching, consultation and cohort groups
  - 7 c. Leadership Academy - develop the core competencies and skills of congregational leaders  
8 and clergy for leading congregations and ministries to make disciples and grow vital mission  
9 congregations for the transformation of the world.
- 10
- 11 2. Developing young leaders
  - 12 a. Grow the faith and number of youth in our congregations through camping, retreats, IGNITE and  
13 youth leader training.
  - 14 b. Provide opportunities for young leaders to develop their gifts.
- 15
- 16 3. Regional approach that creates superintending teams to relate, support and coach clergy and  
17 congregational leaders to health and vitality and reach our goals.
- 18
- 19 4. Grow congregational giving through stewardship campaigns and communication.
- 20
- 21 5. Affiliate ministries and administration that will help EPA&GNJ to recruit and develop more  
22 transformational leaders.

23

24 **Values** that guide our leadership and ministry

- 25 • *Christ-Centered*: the unbreakable and unifying source of our faith and hope.
- 26 • *Compassionate and Just Servanthood*: a shared expression of our Wesleyan heritage.
- 27 • *Diversity, Equity and Inclusion*: a true reflection of the all-welcoming reign of God.
- 28 • *Innovative and Risk-Taking*: a bridge to what is next.
- 29 • *Excellence*: a gospel imperative for greater impact in the world.
- 30 • *Collaborative*: Wesleyan connectionalism that recognizes we are stronger together.

31

32 **Cultural Shifts** that create a healthier EPA&GNJ

- 33 • FROM a church that focuses inward on its members and clergy  
34 TO a relevant mission that connects with the people in the community, particularly younger and more  
35 diverse generations of new disciples of Jesus Christ.
- 36
- 37 • FROM maintaining congregations and their buildings  
38 TO working with congregations to strategically utilize buildings for regenerative mission.
- 39
- 40 • FROM depending exclusively on Shared Ministries (apportionments) for mission and ministry  
41 TO cultivating new sources of income to grow mission and ministry.

42

43 **Defining Who and What of The Mission**

- 44 • *Transformational leader*: Whole, resilient disciple leading from our values to greater outcomes.
- 45 • *Disciple*: Committed follower of Jesus living in personal and social holiness
- 46 • *Vital Mission Congregation*: Builds up the body of Christ to serve the world.
- 47 • *Transformed World*: Just, inclusive communities reflecting the reign of God on earth.

48  
49  
50

Endnotes

1 A potential appointee is an individual who has responded to a call to be a clergy person in the church as a local pastor, provisional member or full member and is in process with a district committee on ministry or the board of ordained ministry.

2 Presently 25% of EPA congregations have met the markers for vitality and 50% of GNJ congregations. Vital congregations cultivate a deeper relationship with God and meet people’s deepest need through five vitality ministries.

1. Worship cultivates a deeper relationship with God and births hope for living. Marker – grow by one worshiper over a 3-year period.
2. Small groups cultivate growth and deeper relationships with God and one another. Marker – 60% of worshipers in a small group experience.
3. Mission through hands on justice and mercy ministries cultivates purpose. Marker – 50% of the worshipers participate in hands on mission in the community.
4. Witness and faith sharing demonstrate our meaning and significance through Jesus Christ. Marker – 1 new profession/reaffirmation of faith for every 20 worshipers in a given year.
5. Giving generously, extends our purpose, significance and making a difference for God. Marker – 18% of a congregation’s budget is giving to mission.

3 Journey of Hope is a plan and process to assist the EPA&GNJ and congregations to ACT (Aspire, Comprehend, Transform) to end the sin of racism. Presently 100 facilitators are trained in EPA&GNJ. Congregations are just beginning to develop plans.

4 A Hope Center is a robust community outreach ministry in partnership with community organizations and the people of the community to develop the community and meet human need. Presently EPA&GNJ have 27 Hope Centers. Hope Center models include the following,

- Camp Y.D.P., a licensed childcare, after-school enrichment program, and summer day camp, serves low-income families.
- The Crisis Room provides food, clothing, emotional support, and rent and utility assistance to marginalized families.
- Pathways to Prosperity works to eliminate generational poverty through job training and financial education.

5 Generous giving sustains the mission of congregations, EPA&GNJ and the global mission of The United Methodist Church. Presently EPA is giving at 83% shared ministry apportionments and 92% billings, and GNJ at 90% and 94% respectively.

1 **2025 BUDGET LEGISLATION**

2  
3 **2025 Budget Legislation**

4  
5 Whereas the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference’s mission is to *recruit and develop transformational leaders to make*  
6 *disciples of Jesus Christ and grow vital congregations for the transformation of the world by:*

- 7
- 8 • Creating a culture of a call to pastoral ministry with 40 new candidates for full-time appointees by 2026.
  - 9 • Enabling 1,500 leaders per year to participate in the Leadership Academy so 60% of our congregations will meet the vitality markers by 2026.
  - 10 • Training 150 facilitators to assist 250 congregations participate in ending the sin of racism by 2026.
  - 11 • Equipping 100 leaders to lead their congregations into their communities with the plan to create 35 Hope Centers by 2026.
  - 12 • Equipping 300 leaders to lead their congregations to financial health so that shared ministry giving will increase to above 91% and billings collection will increase above 95% by 2026.

13  
14  
15 Therefore, be it resolved that GNJ adopts the 2025 budget in order to achieve our mission; the 2025 budget will:

- 16
- 17 1. Consolidate all billings to congregations, GNJ ministry and mission, administration and property, and general church apportionment budgets.
  - 18 2. Apportion congregations on their total spending as inputted by the congregation in its statistical reports excluding capital expenditures, mission giving and paid apportionments.
  - 19 3. Apportion all congregations except for the Journey of Hope Congregations at 15.2%, of which 12.5% is for GNJ Shared Ministry and 2.7% for general church apportionment.
  - 20 4. Apportion Journey of Hope congregations at the rate set through the Journey of Hope Plan.
  - 21 5. Support six district superintendents.
  - 22 6. Allocate \$177,750 from property sales to the budget. The remaining property sales will be invested according to GNJ policy.
  - 23 7. Includes income from the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of the UMC in the amount of \$257,319 (in monthly equal installments) towards the cooperative efforts undertaken to jointly further mission and ministry by the two conferences (Memo of Understanding).
  - 24 8. Draw 5% from designated funds according to policy to support the budget.
  - 25 9. Provide monthly statements to congregations which include the following.
    - 26 a. The total apportionment to the congregation for GNJ Shared Ministry.
    - 27 b. The total apportionment to the congregation on behalf of the general church.
    - 28 c. Direct billings to the congregation from GNJ, which include but is not limited to, blended rate for active healthcare and incremental contributions for self-elected benefits (health, dental, vision, and health reimbursement accounts) for active pastors/lay employees, workers compensation, property insurance, Boys Scouts of America settlement contribution (as approved at the May 2022 Annual Conference) and back payments for past billings.

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37 Be if further resolved that GNJ as a commitment to its Journey of Hope will give from end of the year budget surplus, if it exists, up to 100% to two General Apportionment funds: Black College and Africa University.

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39 Submitted by:

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42 Vasanth Victor, President, Council of Finance and Administration

**2025 Consolidated Spending Budget**

	<b>2025 Budget</b>	<b>Approved 2024</b>
<b>Income</b>		
GNJ Shared Ministry Apportionment	6,233,966	6,490,011
GNJ portion of General Church MEF	55,194	59,725
Local Church Billing Revenue	15,278,540	14,483,992
Centenary Fund	647,000	596,000
Designated Funds	835,685	452,643
Property Sale Revenue	177,750	711,000
Grants and Donations	148,753	181,735
Registrations	207,750	372,050
EPA MOU Contribution	257,319	-
MRC Staff Health Contributions	180,000	113,401
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>24,021,956</b>	<b>23,460,557</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
<b>Personnel</b>		
GNJ Staff	5,165,267	4,987,876
Clergy Benefit Billings	8,103,452	8,108,428
Retiree Health Insurance	1,446,902	1,530,142
<b>Total All Personnel</b>	<b>14,715,621</b>	<b>14,626,447</b>
Leadership Development	269,944	329,575
Congregational Development	646,750	684,750
Mission and Justice Ministries	1,100,350	1,105,578
Agency Budgets	88,000	50,950
Administration	471,960	429,210
Communications	333,655	509,000
Property	6,394,748	5,715,639
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>24,021,029</b>	<b>23,451,148</b>
<b>Net surplus / (deficit)</b>	<b>927</b>	<b>9,409</b>
<b><u>General Church Apportionments</u></b>		
Apportionment Base	58,987,922	62,262,477
General Church Apportionment \$'s	1,589,144	1,770,571
General Church Apportionment %	2.7%	2.8%



1 **NOMINATIONS REPORT**

2 **COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS**

3 (Those to be elected since last session of Annual Conference)

4 **Nominations to Individual Leadership and Board, Agencies, and Committee Membership**

5 **Council on Youth Ministries ¶649:**

6 **Class of 2029**

7 Rosie Eun Young Pang (C), Chair

8 **Council on Young Adult Ministries ¶650:**

9 **Class of 2030**

10 Zachary Holder (L), Chair

11 **Class of 2033**

12 Irwin Jules (L)

13 **Board of Global Ministries ¶633:**

14 **Class of 2023**

15 Jennifer Cho (C), Chair

16 **Committee on Ethnic Local Church Concerns**

17 **¶632:**

18 **Class of 2030**

19 Latasha Milton (C), Chair

20 **Commission on Communications ¶646:**

21 **Class of 2032**

22 Ben Lee (C)

23 **Commission on Status and Role of Women**

24 **¶644:**

25 **Class of 2032**

26 Isabel Quezada (C), Chair

27 **Class of 2033**

28 Constance Squire (C)

29 **Commission on Religion and Race ¶643:**

30 **Class of 2032**

31 Timothy Merrill (L)

32 Debra De Vos (C)

33 **Commission on Small Church Membership**

34 **¶645:**

35 **Class of 2030**

36 Bethany Summers (L)

37 **Class of 2032**

38 Anthony (Tony) Mensah (L)

39 **Committee on Disability Concerns ¶653:**

40 **Class of 2030**

41 Heather Fizur (L)

42 **Class of 2031**

43 Cricket Denton (C)

44 **Committee on Parish and Community**

45 **Development ¶633.5:**

46 **Class of 2031**

47 Debbe Barnett (C)

48 **Committee on Native American Ministries**

49 **¶654:**

50 **Class of 2031**

Diana Pearce (C)

**Committee on Rules of Order:**

**Class of 2031**

Doug Fontenello (L)

**BOARD, AGENCIES AND COMMISIONS ORGANIZED BY THE BOOK OF DISCIPLINE**

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**Board of Ordained Ministry ¶635**  
**Term 1 (2028)**  
 Gabrielle Corbett (C)  
 Pauline Kang (C)  
 Alison Van Buskirk Philip (C)  
 Jennifer Smith-Walz (C)  
 John Inverso (C)  
 Dr. Linda Ross (C)

**Administrative Review Committee ¶636**  
**Term 1 (2028)**  
 Gina Hendrickson (C)  
 Kil Jae Park (C)  
 David Tillisch (C)  
 John DiGiamberardino (C)

**Committee on Episcopacy ¶637 – Chair**  
**Term 1 (2028)**  
 Chris Heckert (C)  
 Gina Hendrickson (C)  
 Rupert Hall (C)

**Committee on Investigation of a Clergy Member ¶2703.2**  
**Term 1 (2028)**  
 Doug Baitinger (C)  
 Hyunsook Song (C)  
 Vanessa Wilson (C)  
 Joseph Jueng (C)  
 Pauline Kang (C)  
 David LuDuc (C)

**Committee on Investigation of a Diaconal Minister ¶2703.3**  
**Term 1 (2028)**  
 Minho Cho (C)  
 Juel Nelson (C)  
 Onay Lopez (C)  
 Josh Schuster (C)  
 Donald Stevens (C)  
 Gary Frieze (C)  
 Elouise Hill Challenger (C)  
 Cameron Overbey (C)

**Council on Finance and Administration ¶611-618**  
**Class of 2030**  
 Edwin Jenkins (L)  
  
**Class of 2031**  
 Jaki Fanelli (L)  
 Jisun Nam (C)

**Board of Trustees ¶640 and 2512**  
**Class of 2031**  
 Charlene Williams-Gungil (L)  
 HyunHui Kim (C)  
  
**Class of 2030**  
 HyunHui Kim (C)

**Board of Pension ¶639**  
**Class of 2029**  
 Elouise Hill-Challenger (C), Chair  
*(Pending the Board of Pensions’ approval)*

**Class of 2030**  
 Sung Hyuk Kim (C), Vice-Chair  
*(Pending the Board of Pensions’ approval)*

**Class of 2032**  
 Jesse Ruch (C)  
 Brian Robinson (C)  
 Joseph Jueng (C)  
 Greg Crawford (L)

**Committee on Episcopacy ¶637:**  
**Class of 2032**  
 Blair Goold (C)  
 Kathryn Johnson (L)

**OTHER CONFERENCE AND AFFILIATED AGENCIES**

- Next Generation Ministries, Inc.** Scott Bostwick (C)
- Class of 2031** Robert (Bob) Dietz (L), Chair
- Zachary Holder (L)
- Eun Young “Rosie” Pang (C)
- United Methodist Stewardship Foundation of New Jersey**
- Centenary Fund and Preachers Aid Society** **Class of 2032**
- Class of 2032** Chris Heckert (C)

**OTHER BOARDS THAT SUBMIT NOMINATIONS TO THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

**United Methodist Communities – Board of Directors**

Class of 2025	Class of 2026	Class of 2027	Class of 2028	Class of 2029
Karen Barch (u)	Gavin Stobie (2)	Jana Purkis-Brash (2)	Doug Fullman (2)	Ed Carll
Joseph Zigler (u)	Brian Roberts	Betty Brown-Joynes	Ross Griffith	Devine Park

**The Pennington School – Board of Trustees - Board Slate (January 2024)**

- Chair: Peter Tucci ’79 P’16 ’16
- First Vice Chair: Michael Jingoli ’85 P’11 ’15
- Second Vice Chair: The Reverend Dr. David C. Mertz
- Secretary: Jason Ridings ’05

Class of 2023	Class of 2024	Class of 2025	Class of 2026
Matthew Pauls	Lou Denton	David Long	Jordan Gray
Stephen Tan	Michael Jingoli	William Oldsey	Dennis Keating
Peter Tucci	Dan Mahony	Judith Rosenberg	John Biddiscombe
Erich Stegich	Brenda Martini O’Loughlin	Steve Silberman	Lisa Espinoza
Jack Green	Julie Wulf	Soopakij “Chris” Chearavanont	Jae Hyeok Heo
Jian “Jim” Wang	Celeste Jackson		Min Soo Kim
	Katherine Rosa		Swati Navani
	Jason Ridings		

- Head of School: Dr. William Hawkey
- Resident Bishop: Bishop John Schol
- Central District Superintendent: Ronell Howard
- The Rev. Dr. Virginia Cetuk
- The Rev. Dr. Donald Medley
- The Rev. Dr. David C. Mertz
- Alumni Association President: Jacob Levy
- Parents Association Co-President: Vandana Bhanote

**The Wesley Foundation Board at Princeton**

Chair: Robert Marks

David Lehmkuhl	Robert Marks
Kate Hillis	Herb Mertz
Ronell Howard	Erik Matson
Jennifer Smith Walz	Jessica Winderweedle

- Ex-Officio: Jenny Smith Walz
- District Superintendent: Ronell Howard

**METRO HIGHLANDS REGION**

**Meadowlands – Rev. William M. Williams, III**

District Lay Leader: David Yamoah

**Board of Church and Location ¶2519**

BOD: Shall have no less than 6 no more than 9 members. Divided into three classes. One-third elected annually.

Class 2025			
Name	Prescott Butler (Chair)	Mike Ernst	Judy Karius
Lay/Clergy	Clergy	Laity	Laity
Start Date	1-Jul-22	1-Jul-22	1-Jul-22
Race	Black/AA	White/Anglo	White/Anglo
Age	50+	50+	50+
Class 2026			
Name	Thomas Korkuch	Kristine Melius	Ebo Nkrumah
Lay/Clergy	Clergy	Clergy	Laity
Start Date	1-Jul-23	1-Jul-23	1-Jul-23
Race	White	White	Black/AA
Age	58	45	50+

Class 2027			
Name	Eileen Hirsch	Peggy Holder	Hee Young Lim
Lay/Clergy	Laity	Clergy	Clergy
Start Date	1-Jul-24	1-Jul-24	1-Jul-24
Race	White/Anglo	Black/AA	Asian/Korean
Age	50+		47

**Committee on District Superintendency ¶669**

BOD: Shall have 11 members, including the district lay leader, and 2 persons appointed by the district Superintendent. At least 3 clergy and 7 laypersons.

	Clergy	Laity
Name	Jeff Markay	Petronella Linson
Start Date	1-Jul-22	1-Jul-24
Race	White/Anglo	Black/AA
Age	57	60+
Name	Prescott Butler	Sue Borgan
Start Date	1-Jul-23	1-Jul-23
Race	Black/AA	White/Anglo
Age	65	60+
Name	Juyeon Lee	Zachary Holder
Start Date	1-Jul-23	1-Jul-23
Race	Asian/Korean	Black/AA
Age	41	Young Adult

	Clergy	Laity
Name	Corinne Arthur	Rolando Santiago, Jr.
Start Date	1-Jul-23	1-Jul-22
Race	Black/AA	Hispanic/Latino
Age	72	Young Adult
Name		Eunice Lee
Start Date		1-Jul-23
Race		Asian/Korean
Age		45
Name		Beverly Alexis
Start Date		1-Jul-23
Race		Black/AA
Age		60+

Ex-officio: Bishop, John Schol

**District Committee on Ordained Ministry ¶666**

BOD: Members nominated annually by the Superintendent. At least 3 laypersons and 6 clergy, a representative from the Board of Ordained Ministry and the District Superintendent.

	Clergy	Laity
Name	Kil Jae Park	
Start Date	1-Jul-22	
Race	Asian/Korean	
Age	57	
Name	<b>Gabrielle Corbett (chair)</b>	Sandra Cook-McKnight
Start Date	1-Jul-22	2-Jul-22
Race	W/W	Black/AA
Age	30	60+
Name	Jin Kook Kim	Joanna Pearnich
Start Date	1-Jul-23	1-Jul-22
Race	Asian/Korean	Hispanic/Latina
Age	42	45-60
Name	Gary Frieze	
Start Date	1-Jul-22	
Race	W/W	
Age	60+	

	Clergy	Laity
Name	Hee Young Lim	
Start Date	1-Jul-22	
Race	Asian/Korean	
Age	46	
Name	Amanda Hemenetz	
Start Date	1-Jul-22	
Race	W/W	
Age	41	
Name	Elouise Hill-Challenger	
Start Date	1-Jul-24	
Race	Black/AA	
Age	62	
Name	Janice Sutton Lynn	
Start Date	1-Jul-22	
Race	W/W	
Age	59	

District Director of Lay Servant Ministries: Diana Yamoah

District Disaster Response & Poverty Task Force Coordinator: Adrian Mendoza & Schuyler Berdan

District Youth Coordinator: Zachary Holder

**Skylands – Rev. Eunice Vega-Perez**

District Lay Leader: Barbara Miller

**Board of Church and Location ¶2519**

BOD: Shall have no less than 6 no more than 9 members. Divided into three classes. One-third elected annually.

Class 2024			
Name	Ellen Bechtold	Jeanette Zayac	Joyce Mcknight-Young /
Lay/Clergy	Clergy	Clergy	Laity
Start Date	24-Jul	24-Jul	24-Jul
Race	W	W	AA
Age	65+	31-65	65+

Class 2025			
Name	Pedro Pillot		Byungil Ahn
Lay/Clergy	clergy		Clergy
Start Date	24-Jul		24-Jul
Race	L		A
Age	31-65		31-65
Class 2026			
Name	Carla Constantino	<b><u>Paul Zorn/</u></b> <b><u>chair</u></b>	
Lay/Clergy	Clergy	Clergy	
Start Date	24-Jul	24-Jul	
Race	W	W	
Age	31-65	65	

**Committee on District Superintendency ¶669**

BOD: Shall have 11 members, including the district lay leader, and 2 persons appointed by the district Superintendent. At least 3 clergy and 7 laypersons.

	Clergy	Laity
Name	<b><u>Marissa van der Valk</u></b>	Seon Ah Ahn
Start Date	24-Jul	24-Jul
Race	W	Korean
Age	31-65	31-65
Name	Dennis Chung	Kim Burse
Start Date	24-Jul	24-Jul
Race	Korean	W
Age	65+	31-65

	Clergy	Laity
Name	Mary Bland	Amy Garrett
Start Date	24-Jul	24-Jul
Race	W	W
Age		65+
Name	Barbara Miller	Meekyung Choi Kim
Start Date	24-Jul	24-Jul
Race	W	A
Age	60+	31-65
Name	Patricia Fermin	Erica Munoz
Start Date	24-Jul	24-Jul
Race	AA	W
Age	31-65	31-65

1 **District Committee on Ordained Ministry ¶666**

2 BOD: Members nominated annually by the Superintendent. At least 3 laypersons and 6 clergy, a  
 3 representative from the Board of Ordained Ministry and the District Superintendent.

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	Clergy	Laity
Name	Pauline Kang	Ignace Conic
Start Date	24-Jul	24-Jul
Race	Asian/Korean	African American
Age		31-65
Name	Brian Neville	Seon Ah Ahn
Start Date	24-Jul	24-Jul
Race	W	Korean
Age	31-65	31-65
Name	Miso Park	Lee Haase
Start Date	24-Jul	24-Jul
Race	Korean	W
Age	31-65	31-65

	Clergy	Laity
Name		Barbara Miller
Start Date		24-Jul
Race		W
Age		31-65
Name	Luana Cook-Scott	Nancy Carver
Start Date	7/1/2024	7/1/2024
Race	W	W
Age	31-65	31-65
Name	JogIn Lee	
Start Date	7/1/2023	
Race	Korean	
Age	31-65	

21 **District Poverty Task Force**

	Clergy	Laity
Name		
Start Date		
Race		
Age		

	Clergy	Laity
Name	Megan Mead-Bracknell	
Start Date	24-Jul	
Race	W	
Age	31-65	

30 **District Director of Lay Servant Ministries:** Cara Quick

32 **District Disaster Response Coordinator:** Scott Matt

34 **District Youth Coordinator:** Jackie Pillot



**Raritan Shore – Rev. Sang Won Doh**  
 District Lay Leader: Douglas Fontenello

**Board of Church and Location ¶12519**

BOD: Shall have no less than 6 no more than 9 members. Divided into three classes. One-third elected annually.

Class 2024			
Name	Douglas Fontenello	Tracy Estes (Chair)	Derrick Doherty
Lay/Clergy	Lay	Lay	Clergy
Start Date	1/1/2022	1/1/2022	7/1/2022
Race	W	W	W
Age	A	A	A

Class 2025			
Name	Sang Hoon Choi	Steven Yeske	Kirk Huber
Lay/Clergy	Clergy	Lay	Lay
Start Date	1/1/2022	1/1/2022	7/1/2022
Race	A	W	W
Age	A	SA	SA
Class 2026			
Name	Kevin Davis	Kevin Helsby	Barry Smith
Lay/Clergy	Clergy	Lay	Lay
Start Date	1/1/2022	1/1/2022	7/1/2024
Race	W	W	W
Age	A	A	SA

**Committee on District Superintendency ¶669**

BOD: Shall have 11 members, including the district lay leader, and 2 persons appointed by the district Superintendent. At least 3 clergy and 7 laypersons.

	Clergy	Laity
Name	Jennifer Cho	Tracy Allen
Start Date	1/1/2022	1/1/2022
Race	A	AA
Age	SA	A
Name	Victor Franco	Peter Espeut
Start Date	1/1/2022	1/1/2022
Race	W	AA
Age	A	A
Name	Chuck Coblentz	Douglas Fontenello
Start Date	1/1/2022	1/1/2022
Race	W	W
Age	A	A

	Clergy	Laity
Name	Isabel Quezada	Jim Silkensen
Start Date	1/1/2022	1/1/2022
Race	H	W
Age	SA	SA
Name		Ken Helsby
Start Date		1/1/2022
Race		W
Age		A
Name		Nicholas Tonzetich
Start Date		1/1/2022
Race		W
Age		A
Name		
Start Date		
Race		
Age		

Ex-officio: Bishop, John Schol

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**District Committee on Ordained Ministry ¶666**

BOD: Members nominated annually by the Superintendent. At least 3 laypersons and 6 clergy, a representative from the Board of Ordained Ministry and the District Superintendent.

	Clergy	Laity
Name	Alison Van Buskirk Philip (Chair)	Beth Crawford
Start Date	7/1/2022	1/1/2022
Race	W	W
Age	A	A
Name	Cameron Overbey	Linda DeLukey
Start Date	1/1/2022	1/1/2022
Race	W	W
Age	A	A
Name	Benjamin Lee	
Start Date	1/1/2022	
Race	W	
Age	A	
Name	Kevin Davis	
Start Date	1/1/2022	
Race	W	
Age	A	

	Clergy	Laity
Name	Yoseb Jeon	
Start Date	7/1/2024	
Race	A	
Age	A	
Name	Hyun Hui Kim (Registrar)	
Start Date	7/1/2022	
Race	A	
Age	A	
Name	Gina Yeske	
Start Date	1/1/2022	
Race	W	
Age	SA	
Name	Christina Zito	
Start Date	2/16/2023	
Race	W	
Age	SA	

**District Poverty Task Force**

	Clergy	Laity
Name		
Start Date		
Race		
Age		
Name	Federico Quezada	
Start Date	1/1/2022	
Race	H	
Age	SA	

	Clergy	Laity
Name	Marco Depestre	
Start Date	1/1/2022	
Race	H	
Age	SA	
Name		
Start Date		
Race		
Age		

**District Director of Lay Servant Ministries:** Donald Schultz

**District Disaster Response Coordinator:** Kevin Davis

**District Youth Coordinator:**

**COASTAL PLAINS REGION**

**CENTRAL – Ronell Howard**

**District Lay Leader: Judy Di Cecco**

**Board of Church and Location ¶2519**

BOD: Shall have no less than 6 no more than 9 members. Divided into three classes. One-third elected annually.

Class 2023			
Name	<u>John Taylor III</u>	Jim Conway	Rupert Hall
Lay/Clergy	Laity	Laity	Clergy
Start Date			
Race	W	W	AA
Age	>65	31-65	>65

Class 2024			
Name	Charles Soper	Keith Sheppard	Jesse Ruch
Lay/Clergy	Clergy	Laity	Clergy
Start Date			
Race	W	W	W
Age	31-65	65+	>31
Class 2025			
Name	Michael Wright	Dennis Poane	
Lay/Clergy	Laity	Laity	
Start Date			
Race	AA	W	
Age	31-65	31-65	

**Committee on District Superintendency ¶669**

BOD: Shall have 11 members, including the district lay leader, and 2 persons appointed by the district Superintendent. At least 3 clergy and 7 laypersons.

	Clergy	Laity
Name		Judy Di Cecco
Start Date		
Race		W
Age		65+
Name	Erik Matson	Patricia Love
Start Date		
Race	W	AA
Age	<31	>65

	Clergy	Laity
Name	Jessica Stenstrom	
Start Date		
Race	W	
Age	<31	
Name	Wade Jackson	
Start Date		
Race	W	
Age	31-65	

Ex-officio: Bishop, John Schol

**District Committee on Ordained Ministry ¶666**

BOD: Members nominated annually by the Superintendent. At least 3 laypersons and 6 clergy, a representative from the Board of Ordained Ministry and the District Superintendent.

	Clergy	Laity
Name	Jenn Smith-Walz, Chair	Julie Dixon-Thomas
Start Date		
Race	W	AA
Age	31-65	65+
Name	Karen Murray, Co-Registrar	Jeneene Reduker
Start Date		
Race	W	W
Age	31-65	31-65
Name	Samuel Park (BOOM)	Emmet Bivins
Start Date		
Race	Asian	AA
Age	31-65	65+
Name		Fred Muller
Start Date		
Race		A
Age		65+
Name	Richard Romero	
Start Date		
Race	H	
Age	31-65	

	Clergy	Laity
Name	Evan Dodge, Co-Registrar	
Start Date		
Race	W	
Age	31-65	
Name	Sunny Shim	
Start Date		
Race	Asian	
Age	31-65	
Name	Jonathan Campbell	
Start Date		
Race	W	
Age	31-65	
Name	Jessica Stenstrom	
Start Date		
Race	W	
Age	31-65	
Name	Anna Gillette	
Start Date		
Race	W	
Age	31-65	

**District Poverty Task Force**

	Clergy	Laity
Name	Waleska Trinidad	Judy Di Cecco
Start Date		
Race	H	W
Age	31-65	65+

	Clergy	Laity
Name	Ruppert Hall	
Start Date		
Race	AA	
Age	>65	

**District Director of Lay Servant Ministries:** Laura Jaskot (W, 31-64)

**District Disaster Response Coordinator:** Karen Nyby

**District Youth Coordinator:** Cricket Denton

**Delaware Bay - Glenn Conaway**  
 District Lay Leader: Terri Ganderton

**Board of Church and Location ¶2519**

BOD: Shall have no less than 6 no more than 9 members. Divided into three classes. One-third elected annually.

<b>Class 2023</b>			
Name	Neil Neal	Paul Graham	Walt Mander
Lay/Clergy	Lay	Lay	Clergy
Start Date	1/1/2022	1/1/2022	1/1/2022
Race	W	W	W
Age	61	65	65+
<b>Class 2024</b>			
Name	Walt Kellen	Joann Goldsborough	Ron Sandmeyer
Lay/Clergy	Clergy	Lay	Lay
Start Date	1/1/2022	1/1/2022	1/1/2022
Race	W	AA	W
Age	75		50
<b>Class 2025</b>			
Name	Jay Brown	Mike Bill	Jim Neiland
Lay/Clergy	Lay	Clergy	Lay
Start Date	1/1/2022	1/1/2022	1/1/2022
Race	AA	W	A
Age		42	45

**Committee on District Superintendency ¶669**

BOD: Shall have 11 members, including the district lay leader, and 2 persons appointed by the district Superintendent. At least 3 clergy and 7 laypersons.

	Clergy	Laity
Name	Steve Herman	Brian Mickle
Start Date	1/1/2022	1/1/2022
Race	W	W
Age	62	40
Name	Tiffany Murphy	Terri Ganderton
Start Date	1/1/2022	1/1/2022
Race	AA	W
Age		52
Name	David Strope	Cynthia Mosley
Start Date	1/1/2022	1/1/2022
Race	W	NA
Age	58	

	Clergy	Laity
Name	Shelley Smith	Elwood Breon
Start Date	1/1/2022	1/1/2022
Race	AA	W
Age	68	62
Name	Steve Elliott	Dawn Flitcraft
Start Date	1/1/2022	1/1/2022
Race	W	W
Age	50	50
Name	Sandra Callahan	
Start Date	1/1/2022	
Race	W	
Age		

Ex-officio: Bishop, John Schol

**District Committee on Ordained Ministry ¶666**

BOD: Members nominated annually by the Superintendent. At least 3 laypersons and 6 clergy, a representative from the Board of Ordained Ministry and the District Superintendent.

	Clergy	Laity
Name	Jim Bolton	Belinda Hall
Start Date	1/1/2022	1/1/2022
Race	W	AA
Age	63	60
Name	Carol Davies	Janet Holdcraft
Start Date	1/1/2022	1/1/2022
Race	NA	W
Age	62	
Name	Javier Barroso	
Start Date	1/1/2022	
Race	Hispanic	
Age	40	
Name	Doug Goldsborough	Sally Durham
Start Date	1/1/2022	1/1/2022
Race	AA	Hispanic
Age	72	

	Clergy	Laity
Name	Chuck Mitchell	Ralph Skeels
Start Date	1/1/2022	1/1/2022
Race	W	W
Age	45	
Name	John Inverso	
Start Date	1/1/2022	
Race	W	
Age	48	
Name	Walt Kellen	
Start Date	1/1/2022	
Race	W	
Age	75	
Name	Tom Lank	
Start Date	1/1/2022	
Race	W	
Age	46	

**District Poverty Task Force**

	Clergy	Laity
Name	Jack Fosbenner	Cynthia Mosley
Start Date	1/1/2022	1/1/2022
Race	W	NA
Age	60	65+

	Clergy	Laity
Name	Ricardo Ramos	
Start Date	1/1/2022	
Race	Hispanic	
Age	31-65	

**District Director of Lay Servant Ministries:** Creed Pogue

**District Disaster Response Coordinator:**

**District Youth Coordinator:**

**Cape Atlantic – Jana Purkis-Brash**  
 District Lay Leader: Carolyn Pendleton

**Board of Church and Location ¶2519**

BOD: Shall have no less than 6 no more than 9 members. Divided into three classes. One-third elected annually.

<b>Class 2023</b>			
Name	<u>Jonathan Johnson</u>	Chris Antolini	
Lay/Clergy	Laity	Laity	
Start Date	2020	2020	
Race	W	W	
Age	65+	65+	
<b>Class 2024</b>			
Name	Mark Gibson	Lyssette Perez	
Lay/Clergy	Laity	Clergy (FE)	
Start Date	2021	2021	
Race	W	H	
Age	31-65	31-65	
<b>Class 2025</b>			
Name	Tom Novack	Allen Maddox	Nicole Troast
Lay/Clergy	Clergy (PL)	Laity	Clergy (PL)
Start Date	2022	2022	2022
Race	W	AA	W
Age	31-65	31-65	31-65

**Committee on District Superintendency ¶669**

BOD: Shall have 11 members, including the district lay leader, and 2 persons appointed by the district Superintendent. At least 3 clergy and 7 laypersons.

	Clergy	Laity
Name	<u>Rosario Quinones</u>	Carolyn Pendleton
Start Date	<b>2023</b>	2014
Race	<b>H</b>	AA
Age	<b>65+</b>	65+
Name	Ginnie Keiser (RL)	Meredith Neeley
Start Date	2022	
Race	W	W
Age	65+	65+

	Clergy	Laity
Name	Hey Young Nam Horton	James Baker
Start Date	2022	
Race	A	W
Age	31-65	31-65
Name	Doug Spencer	Normary Rodriquez
Start Date	2022	
Race	W	H
Age	65+	31-65
Name		Carl Henry
Start Date		2022
Race		AA
Age		31-65

Ex-officio: Bishop, John Schol



**District Committee on Ordained Ministry ¶666**

BOD: Members nominated annually by the Superintendent. At least 3 laypersons and 6 clergy, a representative from the Board of Ordained Ministry and the District Superintendent.

	Clergy	Laity
Name	<u>Dr. Linda Ross</u>	
Start Date	2014	
Race	W	
Age	31-65	
Name	Dr. Robert Williams	
Start Date		
Race	W	
Age	65+	
Name	David Ledford III	Alma Matos
Start Date	2022	2022
Race	W	H
Age	31-65	65+

	Clergy	Laity
Name	<b>Sean Lee</b>	Carolyn Pendleton
Start Date	<b>2023</b>	
Race	<b>K</b>	AA (BOOM rep)
Age	<b>31-65</b>	65+
Name	Glenn Scheyhing	
Start Date		
Race	W (Mentor coord)	
Age	31-65	
Name	<b>Gerri Ridings</b>	
Start Date	<b>2023</b>	
Race	<b>W</b>	
Age	<b>31-65</b>	
Name	Erik Hall	
Start Date	2021	
Race	W	
Age	31-65	
Name	<b>Wil Wilson</b>	Michelle Lee
Start Date	<b>2023</b>	2022
Race	<b>W</b>	A
Age	<b>31-65</b>	31-65

**District Poverty Task Force**

	Clergy	Laity
Name		<u>David Dorfman</u>
Start Date		2020
Race		W
Age		31-65
Name		
Start Date		
Race		
Age		
Name		Amy Charleston
Start Date		
Race		W
Age		31-65

	Clergy	Laity
Name		Emily Bruley
Start Date		
Race		W
Age		31-65
Name		Joe Neidinger
Start Date		2010
Race		W
Age		31-65
Name		Allen Maddox (Asbury AC)
Start Date		
Race		AA
Age		31-65

- 1 **District Director of Lay Servant Ministries:** Janice Betts
- 2 **District Disaster Response Coordinator:** George Lagos
- 3 **District Youth Coordinator:**
- 4 **Mission Central Coordinator:** Rev. Nicole Troast
- 5
- 6 **Submitted by:** David Yamoah, Nominations Chairperson

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1 **CONFERENCE ADVANCED SPECIALS**

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4 **Be It Resolved** that the 2024 Session of the Greater New Jersey Conference designates the following  
5 ministries and institutions as Conference Advance Specials for the 2025 conference year (without restricting in  
6 anyway a local church’s ability to support other mission work):

7  
8 **Be It Further Resolved** that the Executive Committee of the Connectional Table be authorized to make any  
9 additions and deletions to the Conference Advance Specials list based upon recommendations of the Conference  
10 Board of Global Ministries.

11  
12 **C.A.M.P. YDP** (Community Association with a Ministry to People Youth Development Program) CAMP YDP  
13 offers various youth programs along with recreational and enrichment-based curriculum to foster appropriate  
14 relationship building, engage the youth through fun and safe team building projects, and provide a space where  
15 students feel safe and have a sense of belonging. Provides pre-school, after-school and summer programs  
16 for children aged 5 - 14 and their families, mainly on the north side of Paterson. The program runs throughout  
17 the year. As an organization, we are committed to work as a “partner” within the community. A stimulating  
18 and nurturing environment is provided. Total care is available as well when schools are not in session with  
19 transportation available to pick up children from certain schools.

20  
21 **Centenary Fund/Preachers Aid Fund** **The Centenary Fund and Preachers Aid Society was established in 1857.**  
22 **The purpose of the fund is to provide maximum assistance in times of need for the support of retired clergy,**  
23 **surviving spouses and dependent children of deceased clergy who have served in GNJ.** Supporting retired  
24 clergy and spouses.

25  
26 **Christian Outreach Project** provides no-cost home repairs to persons in need in the northwest area of our  
27 Conference. Participants are made up of high school youth and adult volunteers. In addition to home repairs,  
28 participants engage in morning devotionals, singing, worship services and recreational activities.

29  
30 **CUMAC/ECHO** works to alleviate hunger and its root causes for those in need in Paterson, Passaic County and  
31 northern NJ. CUMAC has a Pantry feeding 3,000+ monthly. Our Depot warehouses over 2 million pounds of food  
32 annually for a network of about 40 partner feeding programs. This Community Food Coalition (CFC) distributes  
33 food while also screening clients for member pantries. We advocate at the local and state level on behalf of CFC  
34 clients. CUMAC also has a Community Closet that offers clothing & household items; Pathways to Work imparts  
35 job skills and hands-on experience; Place of Promise is a supportive housing program for chronically unhoused  
36 individuals; and our seasonal projects for school supplies, holiday gifts and other items for area children in need.  
37 All our programs rely heavily on volunteer and financial support from the community.

38  
39 **First Friends of New Jersey and New York** **Upholds the inherent dignity and humanity of immigrants who**  
40 **are impacted by the immigration enforcement system. This program provide compassion and hope through**  
41 **connections with volunteers dedicated to helping them survive detention, gain freedom and rebuild their**  
42 **lives.** With the expansion of detention centers in New Jersey, the need to provide advocacy, research and social  
43 services to detained and released detainees has increasingly grown.

44 This program provides a link to the outside world by providing toll free lines (English & Spanish) in five different  
45 detention facilities where thousands of individuals are detained, and through visiting individuals in detention.  
46 Our Pen-pal Program allows volunteers who cannot visit to write to detainees.

47  
48 **Immigration Law & Justice of the Delaware Valley (ILJDV) provides immigrants with free legal services,**  
49 **education, and advocacy for a variety of immigration issues.** It is a ministry that works with people God calls us  
50 to work with: the immigrant or what the Bible referred to as the stranger in both the Old Testament and Gospels.

1 New Jersey is a state of immigrants. Unique to this ministry is that three conferences, Peninsula Delaware,  
 2 Eastern Pennsylvania, and Greater New Jersey, will pool resources to serve together to support immigrants in  
 3 the Southern New Jersey, Philadelphia and Delaware Region. It will provide volunteer compassion ministry and  
 4 professional legal services. Greater New Jersey has long provided such services to clergy and laity, particularly in  
 5 Northern New Jersey. This ministry will provide services in Southern New Jersey, particularly to persons with the  
 6 lowest incomes.

7

8 **The Neighborhood Center is breaking the cycle of poverty by offering Academic, Athletic, and Arts programs**  
 9 **for children and teenagers. This program provides a safe and fun space for children and teens to engage in**  
 10 **activities that challenge them. This program** has served the Camden community since 1913. This community  
 11 center provides a healthy and nutritious lunch six days a week, day care, an after-school program, and an evening  
 12 teen program. We focus on a two-generation approach to lift families out of poverty. Our commitment is to  
 13 provide a safe space for Academic achievement, Athletic accomplishment, and a flourishing Arts program. Our  
 14 hope and vision for the next century of service is to create a “community living room.”

15

16 **Pennington School** A college preparatory institution affiliated with the Methodist Church, reflecting the  
 17 principles espoused by John Wesley and core values of Honor, Virtue, and Humility. Students experience an  
 18 environment where talents and values are forged for making a positive difference in the world. We provide half  
 19 scholarships for diversity of students in grade 6 to 12.

20

21 **Ranch Hope/Victory House is a leader in fostering environments that transform lives empowered through**  
 22 **Christ-centered love and compassion.** Ranch Hope provides ministry to at risk boys ages 9 to 16 ½ and Victory  
 23 House provides services to at risk girls between the ages of 14–18 years. We are faith-based and provide  
 24 learning environments for youths and teenagers whose need can best be met through experiences outside their  
 25 homes. They can obtain or regain their long-term academic, behavioral, and spiritual focus in our residential  
 26 setting. Counseling, housing and recreation is offered, as well as spiritual guidance, time to attend chapel  
 27 services and Bible study. We are licensed by the New Jersey State Department of Children and Families.

28

29 **The Maker’s Place** is an initiative of the United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey. The Maker’s Place is  
 30 a diaper bank and resource center in Trenton, New Jersey. This program distributes free disposable diapers for  
 31 families with children at our “Diaper Depot,” and work with families and institutional partners to promote the  
 32 strengths found in diverse and inclusive community. The goal is to connect neighbors in Trenton with neighbors  
 33 in central New Jersey and beyond, by opening a neighborhood resource center that empowers underrepresented  
 34 populations in our capital city. The Maker’s Place is a site for local mission and ministry. Starting with initiatives  
 35 centered around food and families, The Maker’s Place will cultivate transformative relationships that help people  
 36 build bridges out of poverty and create a multiethnic and economically diverse community hub where all people  
 37 can experience the wide welcome of God.

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39 **Submitted by:** Isabel R. Quezada

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## TRUSTEES ENABLING RESOLUTIONS

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church hereby ratifies, approves, and confirms actions taken by the Conference Board of Trustees since the last Annual Session.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that if subsequent to this Annual Session of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church and prior to the 2025 Annual Session, any property, real or personal, that is conveyed or transferred to the Annual Conference by any church or other person, firm, partnership, or corporation, the Board of Trustees is hereby authorized and empowered, in its discretion, provided that the same be approved by the Bishop and Cabinet, to refuse to accept, or accept and then sell, transfer, lease or convey any such real or personal property for such price and at such time or times and upon such other terms and conditions as the Board of Trustees of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church shall determine; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the proper officers of the Board of Trustees of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church be and hereby are authorized in the name and on behalf of the Conference, to execute and deliver the Conference deed of conveyance or instrument of transfer and all other instruments and documents to implement and carry out the purpose and intent of the herein resolution and to affix the corporate seal of the Conference thereto; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the President or Vice-President or Treasurer of the Corporation is hereby fully authorized and empowered to transfer, convey, endorse, sell, assign, and deliver, any and all stock, bonds, evidence of interest and/or indebtedness and all other securities, corporate or otherwise, now, or hereafter standing in the name or owned by this Corporation and to make, execute and deliver, any property to effectuate the authority hereby conferred; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that whenever there shall be annexed to any instrument of assignment and transfer, executed pursuant to and in accordance with the foregoing resolution, a certificate of Secretary or of an Assistant Secretary of this Corporation in the office at the date of such certificate shall set forth these resolutions and shall state that these resolutions are in full force and effect, then all persons to whom such instrument with the annexed certificate shall thereafter come, shall be entitled without further inquiry or investigation and regardless of the date of such certificate, to assume and to act in reliance upon the assumptions that the shares of stock or other securities named in such instrument were therefore duly and properly transferred, endorsed, sold, assigned, set over and delivered by this Corporation, and that with respect to such securities the authority of these resolutions and of such officers is still in full force and effect; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that after this Annual Session of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church and prior to the 2025 Annual Session, the Board of Trustees of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference is hereby authorized to acquire or dispose of all staff housing including but not limited to District parsonages, Director of Connectional Ministries, Camping Staff, Episcopal Residence and Treasurer's residences, as in its discretion, it may deem necessary and advisable and inaccordance with The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church. The Conference Board of Trustees is hereby authorized and empowered to enter into such contracts of sale and such other documents as may be necessary to effectuate the sale, transfer, or purchase of such properties. Such properties, real or personal, may be sold or acquired from any person or persons, firm, partnership, or corporation upon such terms and conditions as the Board of Trustees of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church shall determine; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the proper officers of the Board of Trustees of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church are hereby empowered and authorized to execute all such deeds,

1 mortgages, notes, bonds, and other documents necessary to implement the purchase or sale of such conference-  
 2 owned properties; and

3

4 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Board of Trustees of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference of The  
 5 United Methodist Church, be and are hereby authorized to act on behalf of the Annual Conference in any and all  
 6 lawsuits or legal actions in which the Annual Conference is named.

7

8 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Board of Trustees of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference of The  
 9 United Methodist Church, be and are hereby authorized to enter into such agreements and  
 10 arrangements as necessary for the repurposing of real properties held by the annual conference for the purpose  
 11 of long-term investment or economically viable ministry opportunities. This work shall be done in concert with  
 12 the Council of Finance and Administration and the District Board on Church Location and Building in which the  
 13 real property exists.

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15 **Submitted by:** Reverend Mathew J. Enzler, Chair, Board of Trustee

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## MINIMUM EQUITABLE SALARY 2025

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26 **WHEREAS** The Commission on Equitable Compensation in seeking to support quality pastoral leadership to help  
 27 United Methodists of Greater New Jersey to grow in all areas of vitality recommends the following:

28

29 **BE IT RESOLVED** THAT the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference adopt the following recommendation for  
 30 required minimum salary for persons under full-time appointment in the local church effective January 1, 2024.

31

32 a. Elder and Deacon in Full Connection: \$56,070

33 b. Provisional and Associate Members: \$52,120

34 c. Full Time Local Pastor: \$49,320

35

36 Any changes in clergy ministry salaries related to a change in clergy status through ordination, commissioning or  
 37 licensing in 2023 will become effective as of January 1, 2025.

38

39 Though not mandatory for 2025, local church Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committees are strongly encouraged  
 40 to consider a minimum of \$300 per year of service increment above the basic minimum compensation up to  
 41 a maximum 15 years. Years of service are determined by the number of full-time years (or equivalent) fully  
 42 completed prior to January 1, 2025.

43

44 These salaries apply to clergy (elder and deacon in full connection, provisional elder and deacon, associate  
 45 members and local pastors) serving in full-time appointments in the local church. The years of service for each  
 46 clergy can be found on the Clergy Service Record at Wespeth (General Board of Pension and Health Benefits). In  
 47 calculating years of service, time on leave of absence is not counted in accumulated years of service. Part time  
 48 equivalencies are to be included.

49

50 For purposes of pension credit and years of service calculations, the minimum equitable salary for ¾ time

1 pastoral appointments shall be  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the required minimum in the pastor's cash salary. The minimum equitable  
 2 salary for  $\frac{1}{2}$  time pastoral appointments shall be  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the required minimum. All appointments less than  $\frac{1}{2}$   
 3 shall be considered  $\frac{1}{4}$  time appointments, and salaries shall be determined by the District Superintendent in  
 4 consultation with the pastor and the local church S/PPRC.

5

6 Each pastor's salary is determined by the local church or charge in consultation with the District Superintendent  
 7 provided that the required minimum salary is met. In determining a recommendation for salary, each Staff/  
 8 Pastor Parish Relations Committee shall take into consideration the pastor's years of experience, education,  
 9 leadership ability, health and dental coverage, social security, family needs, and comparable salaries of other  
 10 professionals in the community.

11

12 All full-time pastors shall be provided with a parsonage that meets parsonage standards adopted by GNJ or an  
 13 equitable housing/rental allowance as part of their total compensation package.

14

15 All full-time pastors shall have an accountable reimbursement expense line item in the church budget to cover  
 16 mileage for pastoral work, continuing education, and other professional ministerial expenses as allowed by the  
 17 IRS. The reimbursable amount shall be at least \$2,500. For churches receiving Equitable Compensation support,  
 18 their accountable reimbursement should not exceed \$2,500.

19

20 Vacation Policy:

21 All pastors regardless of full or part time status shall be entitled to receive the following vacation per  
 22 appointment year:

23

24 4 weeks (including 4 Sundays) of vacation consistent with the average work week; with 5 weeks (including 5  
 25 Sundays) after 10 years of full-time or equivalent part time service consistent with the Clergy Service Record.

26

27 Vacation time shall not be cumulative from year to year. Time spent in leadership responsibility in conference/  
 28 district activities shall not be considered vacation time. This includes Course of Study, Local Pastors Licensing  
 29 School, Camps, Annual Conference related Ministries, and other education and renewal as required by the Book  
 30 of *Discipline* (§1350.2).

31

32 As the recommendations for the Basic Minimum Salary for GNJ have been below the level of inflation for the  
 33 past three years, this year's recommendation is taking a step to bring clergy salaries closer to the actual level of  
 34 inflation since COVID. The 5% increase recommendation is made seeking to balance the equity of salaries for  
 35 clergy while keeping in mind that a larger increase would put a heavier burden on the local church finances.

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37 **Submitted by:** Steven Bechtold

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1 **2024 PARSONAGE STANDARDS**

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3  
4 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the following recommendation be adopted as the standards for parsonages for GNJUMC  
5 effective July 1, 2024.

6  
7 Responsible Group in the Church

8 *The Book of Discipline* does not mandate a parsonage committee; however, it is strongly recommended  
9 that each local church which has responsibility for a parsonage form a parsonage committee. The  
10 committee will follow-up to assure timely resolution of parsonage problems affecting the health and  
11 safety of the pastor and/or pastor’s family (much like a landlord). The chairpersons of the S/PPRC, Board  
12 of Trustees and the pastor shall make an annual review of the church-owned parsonage to assure proper  
13 maintenance and up-keep. (§258.2 g(16) and §2532.4).

14  
15 The cost of housing, whether in the form of a parsonage or in the form of a housing allowance, shall not be  
16 determined on the basis of race, color, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, marital status,  
17 age, or disability.

18  
19 Standards for Existing Parsonages

20 All parsonages shall meet local requirements for a Certificate of Occupancy. It is the responsibility of the  
21 Board of Trustees of the Local Church to be familiar with these requirements. If a church is unable to meet  
22 these requirements, they should be in contact with the District Superintendent as soon as possible.

23  
24 Health and Safety Standards

- 25 1. Parsonages shall be supplied with effective HVAC systems. With the increased health issues due to
- 26 climate change and related increased health issues, adequate cooling is an essential consideration. Specific
- 27 health concerns shall be addressed with local congregations.
- 28 2. The septic or sewer system shall be fully functional and meet the needs of the parsonage family.
- 29 Maintenance of septic systems is the responsibility of the church.
- 30 3. In parsonages where there is a well, the local church is responsible for testing of water on a periodic
- 31 basis consistent with local health codes for rental properties.
- 32 4. The local church shall perform radon testing is to be done periodically consistent with E.P.A. standards
- 33 and local requirements.
- 34 5. Parsonages shall be tested periodically for lead paint and asbestos. Abatement of these is the
- 35 responsibility of the local church.
- 36 6. Drive and walkways shall be hard surfaced.
- 37 7. Minimally acceptable outside light for safety to illuminate walkways and driveways
- 38 8. One fire extinguisher in kitchen and one extinguisher outside of the furnace room. There shall be at least
- 39 one extinguisher per floor level. All fire extinguishers, smoke detectors and Carbon Monoxide detectors are
- 40 to be in compliance with local code requirements for rental properties and certificate of occupancy.
- 41 9. Parsonage electrical service shall conform to the current National Electrical Code.

42  
43 Furnishings, Equipment and Services:

- 44 1. Living room and family room furniture.
- 45 2. Dining room furniture.
- 46 3. Kitchen appliances including stove, refrigerator with separate freezer compartment, exhaust fan, and
- 47 dishwasher.
- 48 4. Furnishings for special rooms such as sun porch, den, etc. that may be different from one charge to
- 49 another.
- 50 5. Laundry equipment – automatic washer and dryer.

- 1 6. Standard television connection or equivalent such as streaming services (providing at least 30 channels/
- 2 basic cable package), high speed internet service fast enough to support streaming where available, and
- 3 one telephone line (cell or land line). As churches/parsonages are located in a variety of geographical
- 4 areas, we encourage discussion at the local church level to provide comparable communication services
- 5 and cost saving measures such as bundling of services.
- 6 7. Floor coverings (solid surfaces are preferred).
- 7 8. Functioning window shades and blinds, or curtains/drapes.
- 8 9. Closets or free-standing storage units in each bedroom.
- 9 10. Trash cans. In municipalities where garbage pickup is not part of the tax base and is billed to the
- 10 parsonage, that local church is responsible to pay for this service.
- 11 11. Suitable equipment for lawn care and snow removal corresponding to the size and condition of lawns/
- 12 driveways/walkways and/or appropriate lawn/plowing services.
- 13 12. A study for the pastor in either the parsonage or church building. Office furnishings shall include a
- 14 desk, desk chair, minimally acceptable shelving for the pastor’s library, additional chairs, and a locking filing
- 15 cabinet.
- 16 13. Parking space for a minimum of one (1) car shall be provided.

17

18 Additional Suggestions

- 19 1. Electrical service to be inspected every five (5) years by a licensed electrician
- 20 2. Roof inspection every five (5) years
- 21 3. Energy audits every five (5) years

22

23 Responsibility

- 24 1. Each pastor is responsible for:
  - 25 a. Furnishings for as many bedrooms as the family needs
  - 26 b. Personal items such as television, vacuum cleaner, small appliances, dishes, glassware, flatware,
  - 27 cleaning tools, wastebaskets, and decorative accessories
  - 28 c. The following regular maintenance
    - 29 i. Routine cleaning
    - 30 ii. Floor maintenance
    - 31 iii. Trash disposal and recycling
  - 32 d. It is expected that the pastor shall provide tenant (renters) insurance to cover property loss and
  - 33 personal liability.
  - 34 e. Restitution for any damage beyond normal wear and tear.
  - 35 f. At the time of a move, the current pastor shall remove all personal items and furniture from the
  - 36 parsonage and property and shall leave the parsonage in a “broom clean” state. The cost for removal
  - 37 of furnishings and personal property not previously agreed upon with the church will be met by the
  - 38 pastor. Pastors are responsible for cleaning and disinfecting all surfaces such as kitchen counters,
  - 39 appliances and cabinets, bathroom fixtures, and church owned furniture that has been used by the
  - 40 parsonage family during their time in the parsonage.
- 41 2. Each charge shall provide:
  - 42 a. Utilities – heat, electric, gas/oil, sewage, cable, internet and basic telephone, as well as any
  - 43 property taxes or HOA fees that are assessed to the parsonage.
  - 44 b. Maintenance for all parsonage equipment
  - 45 c. Basic furniture for all rooms except the bedrooms (see above)
  - 46 d. Funds for the repair of the parsonage and its maintenance should be allocated and allowed to
  - 47 accumulate so that continuing care and major repairs can be made when needed.
  - 48 e. At the time of a move, the church is responsible for cleaning and preparing the parsonage for the
  - 49 new pastor and her/his family. This includes washing or dry-cleaning curtains and drapes, cleaning
  - 50

1 window blinds, shampooing carpets and/or washing floor coverings, washing windows, cleaning  
 2 disinfecting garbage cans, doorknobs, etc.  
 3 f. Congregations and pastors are expected to follow the guidelines of the state and the CDC with  
 4 regard to effective and proper cleaning procedures of parsonages at the time of a pastoral change.  
 5 The most updated information for cleaning and disinfection is available on the CDC website at  
 6 <https://www.cdc.gov/>.

7 3. Miscellaneous

8 a. The parsonage is the pastor’s home for his/her tenure in that church or charge. S/he has,  
 9 therefore, the responsibility to care for the home and its furnishings from damage by pets or people  
 10 and, if it is damaged, to return the home to a condition equal to that when s/he received it to use. If  
 11 an item of furniture is damaged beyond repair, s/he is obligated to replace it.

12 b. The right of the pastor to own furniture and equipment cannot be challenged. However, if s/he  
 13 does own furniture and goods that s/he wishes to use in the parsonage, and parsonage furnishings  
 14 have to be stored, s/he should make every effort to store it properly so it is in good condition and  
 15 does not suffer damage from being in storage. The site or method of storage for any church owned  
 16 furniture shall be determined by mutual agreement between the pastor and the Board of Trustees.  
 17 The pastor assumes financial responsibility for the storage of any unused furniture.

18 c. The pastor’s family shall be permitted to purchase an all-electronic vehicle (EV) or a plugin hybrid  
 19 and charge it at the parsonage. The expense of the charger and any electrical improvements to the  
 20 parsonage are the sole responsibility of the pastor’s family. All improvements to the parsonage must  
 21 be approved by the local church board of Trustees and must meet all applicable local codes. Before  
 22 purchasing the said vehicle, the pastor’s family and the appropriate committees in the church must  
 23 negotiate how the increased electrical expenses will be handled.

24 d. We recommend that in addition to the required written reports filed annually with the Church  
 25 Conference paperwork, there be a complete video/photo inventory of all church-owned furnishings  
 26 in the parsonage. The inventory and all videos and photos should be updated annually as needed.

27 e. It is the responsibility of the Parsonage Committee to be acquainted with the parsonage and,  
 28 after a new pastoral appointment is made, meet with the incoming parsonage family to discuss  
 29 the minimum acceptability of housing and furnishings, and to meet annually thereafter with the  
 30 parsonage family.

31 f. At the time of a new pastoral appointment, the chairs of the S/PPRC and the Board of Trustees, the  
 32 current pastor and the incoming pastor will walk through the parsonage together for inspection and  
 33 planning. It is recommended to utilize the Church Conference parsonage inspection report as a guide.

34 g. In order to respect the privacy of clergy and families, the church has a responsibility to make an  
 35 appointment and secure the approval of the pastor or an adult member of the household prior to  
 36 visiting the parsonage at any time.

37 h. Given the great differences in housing costs throughout GNJ, a church and/or pastor who wishes  
 38 to provide for a housing allowance rather than providing a parsonage must take into consideration  
 39 comparable housing costs for that community to set an appropriate allowance that provides for the  
 40 pastor and his/her family needs. Churches and pastors exploring this option must be in conversation  
 41 with the District Superintendent at the very beginning of these considerations to understand the  
 42 implications for future appointments, and the Disciplinary requirements for potential sale of an  
 43 existing parsonage if applicable.

44 4. Multiple Church Appointments and Clergy Couples

45 a. In appointments where a clergy person is appointed to more than one church and a parsonage  
 46 is provide by one of the churches, the utility expenses (heat, water, and electric) will be divided  
 47 equally between the churches. Any capital improvements and maintenance on the parsonage are the  
 48 responsibility of the church that owns the parsonage.

49 b. In cases of clergy couples when the couple resides in the parsonage of one of the appointments,  
 50 the utility expenses will be divided equally between the appointments provided that housing is

1 considered as a part of the compensation package for each of the clergy. In situations where both  
 2 persons in a clergy couple are utilizing their respective parsonages, each church will provide utilities  
 3 for their own pastor.  
 4

5 Standards for Parsonages (Purchasing or Building a New Parsonage)

- 6 1. All parsonages shall meet local requirements for a Certificate of Occupancy.
- 7 2. The District Committee on Church Location and Building must be consulted in developing plans for all
- 8 purchases or construction of a new parsonage.
- 9 3. All newly constructed or newly purchased parsonages shall be in full compliance with the Book of
- 10 *Discipline*. Consideration shall be made for those with handicapping conditions.
- 11 Provide on the ground-floor of a newly constructed parsonage: (1) one room that can be used as a
- 12 bedroom by a person with a disability; (2) a fully accessible bathroom; and (3) fully accessible laundry
- 13 facilities (§2544.4d)
- 14 4. Churches considering selling their current parsonage and purchasing a new one need to explore property
- 15 tax implications as well as leans on the property that may need to be considered in potential financing.
- 16

17 Option 1

- 18 1. The use of maintenance-free materials in building and in finishing and furnishing, thus contributing
- 19 towards keeping maintenance costs lower.
- 20 2. The following room requirements:
 

21 a. Living Room/Family Room	b. Dining Room
22 c. Kitchen	d. Study
23 e. Baths (2)	f. Bedrooms (3)
- 24 3. A minimal electrical service of 200 amperes
- 25 4. A garage of a size to accommodate 2 cars, plus room for storage of lawn mowers, bicycles, tools, garden
- 26 equipment, ladders, paint supplies, etc.
- 27 5. Space to store large articles of furniture/equipment
- 28 6. The use of materials meeting the most energy efficient standards for insulation and windows
- 29 7. Careful consideration should be given in choosing the location of the parsonage. This consideration
- 30 might include the distance from the church, accessibility from main streets of the community and the
- 31 church, the neighborhood and its future, and the community itself and its future growth.
- 32

33 Option 2

- 34 1. The standards of Option One would apply with consideration by the church of purchasing, leasing,
- 35 renting a townhouse or condominium. This option would be negotiated by the District Superintendent,
- 36 the local charge and the pastor following consultation with the District Committee on Church Location and
- 37 Building
- 38 2. The purpose of this option is to provide an alternative to the “traditional” church parsonage for ministry
- 39 in special situations. Allowing for the wide variety of townhouse/condo choices, it is difficult to recommend
- 40 a single standard for such settings.
- 41

42 Appeals

43 Appeals by the churches or pastors on any of the above provisions should be made to the District  
 44 Superintendent who has the final authority to interpret and implement the foregoing standards.  
 45

46 **RATIONALE:** This annual recommendation sets forth the minimum standard for church owned parsonages that  
 47 is to be shared with the Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee, the Board of Trustees, and if applicable, the  
 48 Parsonage Committee in each church to provide for the safety and health of the pastor’s family.  
 49

50 **Submitted by:** Steven Bechtold

## GNJ ARREARAGE POLICY 2024

**WHEREAS** *The Book of Discipline* requires each annual conference adopt an arrearage policy,

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Greater New Jersey Conference adopt the following arrearage policy for Clergy Salaries:

1. In the event that the local church treasurer becomes aware that the church will be unable to provide to the pastor full payment of a regularly scheduled salary, or housing allowance installment, or pension payment, or health insurance payment, the church treasurer shall immediately notify both verbally (within 24 hours) and in writing (within 3 days) the Pastor, the Lay Leader, and the Chairs of S/PPRC, Finance, Trustees, and the Church Council or equivalent of the impending arrearage. Upon receipt of such notice, the Chair of S/PPRC and/or the Pastor shall immediately notify the District Superintendent and congregation of the impending arrearage. It is the pastor's responsibility to keep copies of all such written notifications, and to provide additional written confirmation to the District Superintendent when an arrearage has taken place. Failure to document salary or benefit arrearages may result in a loss of compensation.

2. Upon receipt of notice of a pending arrearage, the Chair of S/PPRC shall meet with the Pastor, Lay Leader, and Chairs of Finance, Trustees, and the Church Council to discuss the financial situation and seek remedies to prevent an arrearage from occurring. Consistent with *The Book of Discipline* ¶624, such remedies cannot include a reduction in the Pastor's compensation until the beginning of the next Conference year.

3. If after consultation among these leaders it becomes apparent that the church may be facing a long-term financial crisis, the Chair of S/PPRC shall notify in writing the Pastor, congregation and District Superintendent to consider potential solutions including but not limited to developing a payment plan so that the pastor receives full payment of compensation, full benefit payments are made by the end of the fiscal and/or appointment year. The District Superintendent may refer this to another appropriate resource person to work with the church towards resolution of the situation.

4. If the local church is already receiving a subsidy grant, the District Superintendent or designee will determine if all subsidy grant funds allocated to the church were used to pay the pastor's salary.

5. It is the responsibility of the pastor to provide evidence of an arrearage by providing documentation such as: Treasurer's Reports, Charge Conference reports, check stubs, etc.

6. The statute of limitations for any salary arrearage is one year from the date of the initial arrearage. However, once an appointment ends the Pastor no longer has claim on the local church for compensation funds (¶342.4).

**RATIONALE:** The Arrearage Policy is designed to assure that clergy are receiving the salary approved by the Charge/Church Conference and, if not, to provide intervention by the local church and GNJ to determine next steps.

**Submitted by:** Steven Bechtold

1 **AFWH BYLAWS**

2  
3  
4 A FUTURE WITH HOPE, INC.  
5 A NON-PROFIT CORPORATION CORPORATE BYLAWS

6 Adopted-Jan 2, 2013 | Modified-May 28, 2015 | Modified-May 22, 2017 | Modified-April 4, 2018

7  
8 **ARTICLE I: ORGANIZATION AND PURPOSE**

9 A Future with Hope, Inc., (the Corporation), is a non-profit corporation organized under the laws of the State  
10 of New Jersey established for charitable purposes, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to  
11 organizations qualifying under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code (or the corresponding section  
12 of any future Internal Revenue Code).

13  
14 A Future With Hope, Inc. (“AFWH”) was organized in 2012 to provide relief and recovery following Superstorm  
15 Sandy. Superstorm Sandy was the second worst storm in US history and left 2 million households without  
16 power and damaged a very large number of homes. AFWH was organized to provide immediate relief  
17 following the storm that included temporary and day shelter, home muck out, feeding programs, and clothing.  
18 It also was organized to provide case management, volunteer management and home repair/replacement  
19 including new modular homes. AFWH has already repaired or built more than 250 homes, housed and utilized  
20 more than 11,000 volunteers from 33 states and raised more than \$16 million dollars. It also recognized  
21 and set aside funds for rebuilding communities and the community development ministry. Today AFWH is  
22 completing its recovery ministry and expanding into community development ministry.

23  
24 AFWH’s community development activity may focus in three areas:

- 25 1. Engaging congregations and communities in Communities of Hope training. Communities of Hope trains  
26 congregations and communities in strategic planning, community organizing, systemic change, and  
27 working inter-culturally. At the end of the training, each Community of Hope team has a community  
28 strategic plan to guide its work.
- 29 2. Developing, overseeing and resourcing Hope Centers. Hope Centers are congregations and community  
30 centers affiliated with GNJ that identify and provide needed services within a community.
- 31 3. Leading community economic development projects that include housing development and repurposing  
32 church buildings.

33  
34 **ARTICLE II: OFFICES**

35 The principal office of the Corporation will be located at 205 Jumping Brook Road, Neptune, NJ 07753.  
36 The Corporation may have such other offices within the State of New Jersey as the Board of Trustees may  
37 determine or as the affairs of the Corporation may require.

38  
39 The Corporation shall have and continuously maintain a registered office and a registered agent whose office  
40 is identical to the registered office. The registered office may be, but need not be, identical with the principal  
41 office, and the address of the registered office may be changed from time to time by the Board of Trustees.

42  
43 **ARTICLE III: MEMBERS**

44 The Corporation shall have no members, but it shall be managed by a Board of Trustees. **ARTICLE N: BOARD**  
45 **OF TRUSTEES**

46  
47 **SECTION I:** The affairs and activities of the Corporation have been governed and managed by a Board of  
48 Trustees consisting of up to fifteen voting members (“Elected Trustees”). The Board of Trustees determines to  
49 reduce the maximum number of Elected Trustees to twelve and not less than six, all of whom shall be entitled  
50 to vote and who shall serve without compensation. In order to achieve the reduction of Elected Trustees,



1 beginning with the Class of 2021 of Elected Trustees, there shall be four Trustees elected instead of five and  
2 this process shall continue annually until the number of Elected Trustees reaches twelve.

3  
4 Paid employees of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference (“GNJ”) may serve as Trustees. GNJ’s Bishop  
5 (or his designate) will be included as one of the 12 members of the Board (the full composition of the board  
6 entitled the “Board”) with voice and vote. The GNJ Treasurer will be an ex officio member of the Board with  
7 voice but without vote.

- 8  
9 a. Quorum. The quorum at any duly called meeting shall consist of those voting members attending.  
10 b. Vote. An affirmative vote of a majority, but not fewer than three, of the Trustees present shall be  
11 required for approval of any action requiring the approval of the Board.

12  
13 SECTION 2: The Corporation is independent legally and structurally from GNJ as well as from any other legal  
14 entity associated with the United Methodist Church.

15  
16 All Elected Trustees will be elected by GNJ upon nomination by the GNJ Nominating Committee as provided  
17 in Article VII Section I. The Board of the Corporation shall nominate candidates to the GNJ Nominating  
18 Committee who shall put them in nomination to the GNJ Annual Meeting. Only AFWH may nominate board  
19 members.

20  
21 The Board shall be entitled to add Trustees to the Board during the mid-year for the purposes of(a) increasing  
22 the number of Trustees on the Board up to twelve members; and/or (b) to replace a Trustee including due to  
23 that Trustee’s death, disability, resignation, removal by the Board for any cause, or due to that Trustee’s failure  
24 to attend three Board Meetings in a row. For any such mid-year selection, the Board shall consult with the GNJ  
25 Nominations Committee about the interim appointments and that Board member must then be elected by  
26 GNJ at its next Annual Conference in order to continue to serve on the Board.

27  
28 SECTION 3: Elected Trustees will be elected to serve initially for a three-year term or until their successors are  
29 elected. Upon completion of their terms, elected Trustees are eligible for re-election to additional three-year  
30 terms. Founding board members may serve a fourth term to build continuity.

31  
32 Elected Trustees will be assigned to one of three classes such that each year, the terms of approximately one-  
33 third of the Elected Trustees will expire requiring either their re-election or replacement, unless a change in  
34 the composition of the Board has been approved. A Trustee may serve a maximum of three terms and then  
35 rotate off the Board for at least one year. If a Board member is elected to fulfill an unexpired term of another  
36 Board member, the remainder of that term will constitute one term.

## 37 38 ARTICLE V: OFFICERS

39 SECTION 1: The President shall be the principal executive officer of the Corporation  
40 and shall preside at all General and Special Meetings of the Corporation. The President is empowered to  
41 perform all duties incident to the office of President, subject, however, to the direction of the Board of  
42 Trustees as hereinafter provided. The President shall be an ex-officio member of all committees.

43  
44 SECTION 2: The Vice President shall preside at all General and Special Meetings of the Corporation in the  
45 absence of the President and shall perform such other duties as the President or the Board of Trustees may  
46 assign from time to time.

47  
48 SECTION 3: The Secretary shall be responsible for the minutes of all General and Special Meetings of the  
49 Corporation, keep a register of the names and addresses of all members, see that all notices are duly given in  
50

1 accordance with the provisions of these By-laws or as required by law and perform all other duties incident to  
2 the office of Secretary.

3  
4 SECTION 4: The Treasurer of the corporation shall be the treasurer of the GNJ. The Treasurer shall have  
5 charge of and custody of, and be responsible for, all funds of the Corporation, receiving, acknowledging  
6 and depositing all money and property given to the Corporation in the appropriate bank account(s). At the  
7 direction of the Board of Trustees, the Treasurer pays all lawful bills, keeps records of all funds received and  
8 disbursements made, making such records available for review by the Board and performing all other duties  
9 incident to the office of Treasurer.

10  
11 SECTION 5: The Board of Trustees may designate such other officers as it may deem necessary. All officers  
12 (“Officers”) shall serve without compensation.

13  
14 SECTION 6: The officers of the Corporation shall be elected by majority vote (but not fewer than four) of the  
15 members present at the Annual Meeting which will be the first quarterly meeting of the year and shall hold  
16 office for one year or until their successors have been elected, whichever is later.

17  
18 SECTION 7: Any officer elected by the Board of Trustees may be removed by the Board of Trustees whenever  
19 in its judgment the best interests of the Corporation would be served thereby, but such removal must be  
20 conducted in compliance with state law.

21  
22 SECTION 8: A vacancy in any office because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification or otherwise, may  
23 be filled by the Board of Trustees for the unexpired portion of the term.

24  
25 SECTION 9: Contracts executed on behalf of the Corporation shall be executed by the President or Vice  
26 President and attested to by the Secretary or Assistant Secretary.

## 27 28 ARTICLE VI: EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMITTEES

29 SECTION 1: The Board of Trustees may create an Executive Committee consisting of no fewer than three and  
30 no more than five Board members drawn from the following: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer  
31 and other Trustees. The Executive Committee shall be empowered to conduct the day to day activities of the  
32 Corporation in furtherance of its general purposes as set forth herein and in its Certificate of Incorporation  
33 and all amendments thereto. Minutes shall be taken at all Executive Committee meetings and shall be  
34 provided to the Board at each board meeting.

35  
36 SECTION 2: The Board may establish such other Committees consisting of Trustees as it may deem necessary  
37 or desirable for the governance of the Corporation.

## 38 39 ARTICLE VII: MEETINGS AND OTHER MEANS OF CONDUCTING BUSINESS

40 SECTION 1: General Meetings for the transaction of corporate business shall be held at least three times  
41 a year unless the Board otherwise determines. The Board shall set the date for the Annual Meeting of the  
42 Corporation at which time the Officers shall be elected and Trustees shall be nominated for the new term. Any  
43 Trustee, if unable to attend a meeting may vote on any matter by written proxy secured at or prior to a vote  
44 on such matter. Such written proxy shall be filed with the minutes of the meeting.

45  
46 SECTION 2: Special Meetings may be called by the President or any three members of the Board between  
47 General Meetings whenever it is deemed necessary for the Board to meet. Notice of the meeting will be  
48 given at least two days prior thereto by written notice delivered personally by mail, email or facsimile to each  
49 Trustee. Any Trustee may waive notice of any meeting except where a Trustee attends for the express purpose  
50 of objecting to the transaction of any business because the meeting was not lawfully called or convened.



1

2 SECTION 3: The Board may act without a meeting if, prior or subsequent to such action, each Trustee is  
3 notified and a majority of the Trustees shall consent to such action and confirm such consent in writing.

4

5 SECTION 4; A Trustee may participate in a meeting of the Board by means of a telephone conference call or  
6 any other means of communication by which all persons participating in the meeting are able to hear each  
7 other. Voting on any manner may be done by email ballot and email ballot.

8

#### 9 ARTICLE VIII; AMENDMENTS

10 Changes to by-laws articles I, II, III, N, VIII, XII, and XVI, must be approved by GNJAC in addition to the AFWH  
11 board. All other by-laws may be amended by the Board at any of its meetings by the vote of two-thirds of all  
12 Trustees in favor of the amendment, provided that a written notice of a proposal to amend the By-laws is sent  
13 out to all Trustees not less than ten days in advance of the meeting date.

14

#### 15 ARTICLE IX: CHECKS, NOTES, DRAFTS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

16 SECTION 1; The Board of Trustees may authorize any officer or officers, agent or agents of the corporation in  
17 addition to the officers so authorized by these By-Laws, to enter into any contract or execute and deliver any  
18 instrument in the name of and on behalf of the corporation, and such authority may be general or confined to  
19 specific instances.

20

21 SECTION 2; All checks, drafts, or orders for the payment of money, notes or other evidences of indebtedness  
22 issued in the name of the corporation, shall be signed by such officer or officers, agent or agents of the  
23 corporation and in such manner as shall from time to time be determined by resolution of the Board of  
24 Trustees. In the absence of such determination by the Board of Trustees, such instruments shall be signed  
25 by the Treasurer or an Assistant Treasurer and countersigned by the President or a Vice President of the  
26 corporation.

27

28 SECTION 3; All funds of the corporation shall be deposited from time to time to the credit of the corporation  
29 in such banks, trust companies or other depositories as the Board of Trustees may select.

30

31 SECTION 4; No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of or be distributable  
32 to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the Corporation shall be authorized  
33 and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services actually rendered and to make payments and  
34 distributions in furtherance of its exempt purposes. No substantial part of the activities of the corporation  
35 shall consist of the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the  
36 corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any  
37 political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office.

38

39 Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the corporation shall not carry on any other activities  
40 not permitted to be taken or carried on (1) by an organization exempt under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal  
41 Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, or the corresponding section of any future United States Internal  
42 Revenue Law, or (2) by a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(c) (2) of the  
43 Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, or the corresponding section of any future United States Internal  
44 Revenue Law.

45

#### 46 ARTICLE X: FISCAL YEAR

47 The fiscal year of the corporation shall begin on the first day of January and end on the last day of December  
48 in each year.

49

50

1 ARTICLE XI: FINANCIAL STATEMENTS, BOOKS AND RECORDS

2

3 SECTION 1: The Board shall designate an independent accountant who shall be a CPA to prepare and submit  
 4 at least annually an audited financial statement consisting of a balance sheet and statement of revenue and  
 5 expenses, copies of which shall be provided to the Board and to the Treasurer of GNJAC. The accountant  
 6 shall also prepare and submit any further statements required by the Corporation or by any appropriate  
 7 governmental agency.

8

9 SECTION 2: The Corporation shall keep correct and complete books and records of account and shall also keep  
 10 minutes of the proceedings of its members and Board of Trustees, and shall keep at its registered or principal  
 11 office a record giving the names and addresses of the members entitled to vote. All books and records of the  
 12 corporation may be inspected by any member, or his or her agent or attorney, for any proper purpose at any  
 13 reasonable time.

14

15 ARTICLE XII: DISSOLUTION

16 In the event of the dissolution of the Corporation or the winding up of its affairs, or other liquidation of its  
 17 assets, the property of the Corporation shall not be conveyed to any organization created or operated for  
 18 profit or to any individual and all assets remaining after the payment of the debts of the Corporation shall  
 19 be conveyed or distributed only to a tax exempt organization (or organizations) created and operated for  
 20 nonprofit purposes similar to those of the Corporation, provided, however, that the Corporation shall at all  
 21 times have the power to convey any or all of the property to the United Methodist entity (“the Successor  
 22 Organization”) entitled under *The Book of Discipline* of The United Methodist Church.

23

24 If pursuant to the preceding paragraphs, this Corporation’s assets are to be distributed to the Successor  
 25 Organization, but on the date of the proposed distribution, the Successor Organization is no long in existence  
 26 or does not qualify for exempt status under 501(c ) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding  
 27 section of any future federal tax code, the assets of this Corporation shall be transferred, conveyed, and  
 28 distributed to such other United Methodist related organization(s) as may be specified in, or provided for,  
 29 under a Plan of Distribution adopted by this Corporation; provided, however that in any event, each such  
 30 distribute organization shall be exempt under the provisions of 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the  
 31 corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

32

33 ARTICLE XIII: CONFLICT OF INTEREST

34 The Trustees, officers, agents and employees of this Corporation shall be subject to, and comply with, all  
 35 requirements pertaining to conflicts of interest standards/rules etc., including, those of GNJAC.

36

37 ARTICLE XIV: INDEMNIFICATION

38 To the greatest extent permitted by N.J.S.A. ISA: 3-4(d), the Corporation shall indemnify all Trustees, officers  
 39 and corporate agents. The Corporation shall purchase and maintain liability insurance for all trustees and  
 40 officers.

41

42 ARTICLE XV: WAIVER OF NOTICE

43 Whenever any notice is required to be given under the provisions of the New Jersey Nonprofit Corporation  
 44 Act or under the provisions of the articles of incorporation or the bylaws of the Corporation, a waiver thereof  
 45 in writing signed by the person or persons entitled to such notice, whether before or after the time stated  
 46 therein, shall be deemed equivalent to the giving of such notice.

47

48

49

50

1 ARTICLE XVI: FORCE AND EFFECT OF BY-LAWS AND COMPLIANCE WITH GNJAC REQUIREMENTS

2 These By-laws are subject to the provisions of the New Jersey Nonprofit Corporation Act (State Act) and  
 3 the Certificate of Incorporation and The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, as well as other  
 4 applicable laws and regulations as any of these may be amended from time to time.

5  
 6 Certification

7 I certify that these Bylaws were duly authorized by the “A Future With Hope, Inc.” Board on July 12, 2023 and  
 8 modifications approved by the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference on \_\_\_\_\_ 2024.

9  
 10 **Submitted by:** Niurca Louis

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 12  
 13  
 14  
 15  
 16  
 17  
 18  
 19  
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 22  
 23

24 **AFFIRM GNJ “A WAY FORWARD”**

25  
 26  
 27 **WHEREAS**, in 2019, the Greater NJ annual conference adopted “A Way Forward” at a special session of the  
 28 annual conference in response to the 2019 special session of the general conference of The United Methodist  
 29 Church;

30  
 31 **AND WHEREAS** the 2024 General Conference of The United Methodist is meeting in session in April/May of  
 32 2024;

33  
 34 **AND WHEREAS** the Greater NJ annual conference has an opportunity at this session to reaffirm our values and  
 35 commitment to building an open, inclusive church;

36  
 37 **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Greater NJ annual conference reaffirm its adoption of “A Way Forward”  
 38 and communicate this commitment to the NEJ episcopacy committee and the NEJ college of bishops;

39  
 40 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Greater NJ annual conference specifically reaffirm its acceptance of the calls  
 41 to leadership as named in the original “A Way Forward” report, specifically outlining GNJ’s commitment to:

- 42  
 43 1. Continue to resource congregational leaders to make disciples and grow vital congregations to transform  
 44 the world.  
 45 2. Shepherd all congregations into the future recognizing our diversity of culture, ethnicity and belief.  
 46 3. Create sacred space for congregations to thrive in their context.  
 47 4. Seek to eliminate harm to the people in our communities and congregations.  
 48 5. Care for youth in our congregations and in our communities, who face discrimination, hatred and harm  
 49 because of their sexuality and gender identity. Death by suicide is significantly higher among LGBTQ youth  
 50 than among their heterosexual and cisgender counterparts. The Team calls all congregations to be sensitive

- 1 and alert to the needs of youth in our congregations and community and to use the resources for
- 2 LGBTQ youth found at [gnjumc.org/protecting-children-and-youth/end-harm-to-youth](http://gnjumc.org/protecting-children-and-youth/end-harm-to-youth).
- 3 6. Make available trained facilitators to assist interested congregations with conversations about
- 4 ministry with LGBTQ persons and to develop covenants about ministry with the LGBTQ community
- 5 as well as other missional commitments that empower contextual ministries of justice, mercy and
- 6 peace.
- 7 7. Engage someone to coordinate and resource the covenanting process for congregations.
- 8 8. Make training and coaching available, particularly in congregations where there are differences
- 9 concerning human sexuality, so that each person can see that others matter just like they do.
- 10 9. Provide a web page for congregations to communicate that they are a welcoming congregation
- 11 who affirms the full inclusion of LGBTQ people so that people from the community, especially
- 12 LGBTQ people, can locate a congregation to worship with and participate in ministry.;

13  
 14 Further be it resolved that the Greater NJ annual conference recognize the courage of Bishop Schol,  
 15 the GNJ cabinet, local churches, laity, clergy, and the board of ordained ministry who have made the  
 16 following commitments:

- 17
- 18 1. Bishop Schol’s prayerful declaration that he will not forward for trial any charges arising out of
- 19 the ministry of LGBTQ+ clergy or any clergyperson’s ministry with the LGBTQ+ community.
- 20 2. The principled decision of the Board of Ordained Ministry to disregard sexual orientation or
- 21 gender identity as a basis for recommending candidates for ministry, and
- 22 3. The Spirit-led witness of local churches and clergy who will create covenants for ministry with
- 23 the LGBTQ+ community, while recognizing the courageous leadership of churches and pastors who
- 24 have been engaged in this ministry for years.

25  
 26 **Rationale:** Regardless of the actions of the 2024 General Conference, the Greater NJ annual conference  
 27 remains committed to the full inclusion and full participation of LGBTQIA+ individuals in The United  
 28 Methodist Church.

29  
 30 Further, with Bishop Schol’s coming retirement, the reaffirmation of our previous commitments will  
 31 clearly communicate to jurisdictional leadership and the college of bishops our expressed and stated  
 32 values as an annual conference.

33  
 34 **Submitted by:** Drew A. Dyson & Ginny Cetuk Samuel

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1 **PENSION AND HEALTH BENEFITS**

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4 **Be it resolved** that the Past Service Annuity Rate for January 1, 2025, to December 31, 2025, be set at \$764 per  
5 approved service year prior to January 1, 1982.

6  
7 **Be it further resolved**

- 8 1. That effective January 1, 2025, the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference will continue to sponsor CRSP for  
9 full-time, three-quarter time and one-half time clergy and continue to sponsor UMPIP for those clergy in  
10 one-quarter time appointments.  
11 2. That contributions for January 1, 2025, to December 31, 2025, for the Clergy Retirement Security Program  
12 for full-time and less-than-full-time (¾-time & ½-time) clergy and for Conference sponsored UMPIP Plan for  
13 ¾-time clergy, be set at 14% of plan compensation. The percentage includes 5% for administrative costs and  
14 7% uncollectable fees.  
15 3. That contributions for January 1, 2025, to December 31, 2025, for the Comprehensive Protection Plan be  
16 set at 3.4% of plan compensation for full-time and ¾-time ordained clergy, and for Conference Sponsored  
17 UMLife Options for ½-time ordained clergy to be set 2.2% of plan compensation. That local churches may  
18 sponsor ¼-time ordained clergy and ¾-time part-time local pastors in UMLife Options. The percentages for  
19 CPP and UMLifeOptions includes 5% for administrative costs and 7% uncollectable fees.  
20 4. That the starting date for retirement payments for new retirees commences July 1, 2024, unless otherwise  
21 stated.  
22 5. That clergy participants in the Conference Health Insurance Plan who have expenses associated with the  
23 adoption of a child will be reimbursed up to \$10,000 per child upon the presentation of the necessary  
24 documentation.  
25 6. The Greater NJ Annual Conference (the "Conference") adopts the following resolutions relating to rental/  
26 housing allowances for active, retired, terminated, or clergypersons in disabled status<sup>1</sup> of the Conference:

27  
28 **Be it resolved** that an amount equal to 100% of the pension, severance, or disability payments received from  
29 plans authorized under *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church* (the "*Discipline*"), which includes  
30 all such payments from the Wespath Benefits and Investments, during the period July 1, 2024 through June  
31 30, 2025, by each active, retired, terminated, or clergypersons in disabled status<sup>2</sup>, who is or was a member of  
32 the Conference, or its predecessors, be and hereby is designated as a rental/housing allowance for each such  
33 clergyperson; and

34  
35 That the pension, severance, or disability payments to which this rental/housing allowance designation applies  
36 will be any pension, severance, or disability payments from plans, annuities, or funds authorized under the  
37 *Discipline*, including such payments from Wespath and from a commercial annuity company that provides an  
38 annuity arising from benefits accrued under a Wespath plan, annuity, or fund authorized under the *Discipline*,  
39 that result from any service a clergyperson rendered to this Conference or that an active, a retired, a terminated,  
40 or a clergyperson in disabled status<sup>3</sup>, of this Conference rendered to any local church, annual conference of the  
41 Church, general agency of the Church, other institution of the Church, former denomination that is now a part of  
42 the Church, or any other employer that employed the clergyperson to perform services related to the ministry  
43 of the Church, or its predecessors, and that elected to make contributions to, or accrue a benefit under, such a  
44 plan, annuity, or fund for such an active, a retired, a terminated, or a clergyperson in disabled status<sup>4</sup>, pension,  
45 severance, or disability plan benefit as part of his or her gross compensation.

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48 1 \* As determined by Conference policies and procedures and Insurance Guidelines

1 NOTE: The rental/housing allowance that may be excluded from a clergy person’s gross income in any year for  
 2 federal (and, in most cases, state) income tax purposes is limited under Internal Revenue Code section 107(2),  
 3 and regulations there under, to the least of: (a) the amount of the rental/housing allowance designated by  
 4 the clergy person’s employer or other appropriate body of the Church (such as this Conference in the foregoing  
 5 resolutions) for such year; (b) the amount actually expended by the clergy person to rent or provide a home in  
 6 such year; or (c) the fair rental value of the home, including furnishings and appurtenances (such as a garage),  
 7 plus the cost of utilities in such year. Each clergy person or former clergy person is urged to consult with his or  
 8 her own tax advisor to determine what deferred compensation is eligible to be claimed as a housing allowance  
 9 exclusion.

10

11 That clergy retiring before July 1, 2024, be reimbursed for one-time moving expenses up to \$5,000.00 incurred  
 12 while moving from church-owned housing to personal housing. This reimbursement is limited to actual moving  
 13 expenses, not to include moving company packing costs. Clergy are required to make every effort to obtain three  
 14 bids to the Board of Pension & Health Benefits prior to final approval and provide supporting documentation of  
 15 proof of payments when submitting the reimbursement request. The same benefits and restrictions shall also  
 16 apply to a surviving spouse moving out of the parsonage upon the death of a pastor while in active service in the  
 17 Annual Conference, and to those entering disability status\* (see Insurance Guidelines).

18

19 That the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits be authorized to make modifications to the current  
 20 Insurance Plan as the health care market demands. In addition, modifications to the Plan that could reduce  
 21 premium costs to local churches and Annual Conference are to be studied and enacted as the Board determines  
 22 appropriate. These changes might include increased participant deductibles, co-payments, greater use of generic  
 23 medications, and other avenues of cost saving and sharing. Such changes will be subject to prior review of CFA  
 24 and the Cabinet.

25

26 That the Guidelines for Health Insurance Participation be approved and upon approval printed in the 2024  
 27 Conference Journal and Yearbook.

**For information only:**

1. That Rev. Robert Wecht and family be granted Conference paid health benefits upon becoming Medicare eligible.
2. That the following members of the former Southern Conference be included in terms of eligibility for conference-paid health benefits. Specifically, the following persons, upon becoming annuitants with at least 10 years of service, will be eligible for Conference-paid health benefits: Mildred E. Bender, J. Evans Dodds, Nicholas Connolly, Daniel Gueh, William R. Hess, and Charles D. Mitchell.
3. That Robert L. Webster and family be eligible for Conference-paid health benefits upon retirement and receiving an annuity.
4. That Rev. Patricia Bruger’s actual years of appointment and service at CUMAC/ECHO, INC. from June 16, 1995, through retirement be fully credited for the purpose of calculation of service year credits to determine allocation of pro-rated health insurance premium payment responsibility upon retirement.
5. That the following clergy be subject to five years “under appointment through the Conference immediately prior to retirement” to meet eligibility requirements for health benefits in retirement, rather than the seven years as approved at the 2011 Annual Conference meeting (Paragraph 3 under Eligibility, p. 365 of the 2011 Conference Journal). Specifically, the following persons, if, at the time of retirement, meet all other eligibility requirements for health insurance in retirement, shall be granted under this provision: Rev. Vena Murphy, Rev. William Jacobsen, Rev. Christina Zito.

**Submitted by:** Rev. Jennifer Cho, Chair of Board of Pension & Health Benefits

**2024 Health Insurance Guidelines, Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits**

The mission of the Conference Health Insurance Plan (the Plan) is to provide primary health insurance coverage to full-time full, provisional and associate ministerial members and full-time local pastors of the Annual Conference and to eligible full-time lay employees.

The Plan is a Medicare Advantage Plan health insurance coverage for retirees enrolled in both Medicare Parts A & B. For those who have retired early and are not yet eligible for Medicare, primary health insurance coverage is through the same plan as those in active ministry. The Plan is a non-vested current benefit for active and retired pastors and lay employees.

**I. ELIGIBILITY**

**1. Clergy Eligibility:**

- 1) Active clergy under full-time Episcopal appointment to serve a local church including Elders, Deacons, Local Pastors, Associate Members, and Provisional Members
- 2) Those under full-time appointment as district superintendents, clergy staff members of Conference councils and boards, treasurers, bishop’s assistants, or directors of parish development, general evangelists and campus ministers for whom the Conference provides pension contribution to the Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) who are:
  - a full elder or associate member (other than a missionary) (Book of Discipline ¶344.1a(1))
  - or an ordained clergyperson from another annual conference or another Methodist denomination (Book of Discipline ¶344.1a(1), ¶346.1)
  - an ordained clergyperson from another denomination if not covered by the group health plan of the denomination to which he/she belongs. (Book of Discipline ¶344.1a(1), ¶346.2)
- 3) Enrollment in the Active health insurance plan must be completed within 31 days of appointment.
- 4) Waiving coverage in the Plan - Contact the Benefits Specialist for required documents. Documents must be completed and returned within enrollment deadline periods:
  - within 31 days of initial eligibility; or
  - once per year during the Conference open enrollment period for the following January 1; or
  - within 31 days of an open enrollment period for a spouse’s plan; beginning January 1, 2016.
  - see PREMIUM PAYMENT RESPONSIBILITY – ACTIVE for Waived Coverage Fees.
  - a) Participant must certify that:
    - The plan is through a former employment or a spouse’s current or former employment. Proof of such coverage is required.
    - The plan is not a marketplace plan. Under these guidelines and marketplace rules, Full-time clergy are ineligible for any Premium Tax Credit.
  - b) Re-admittance to the plan is during any open enrollment period, or within 31 days of a Special Enrollment event (loss of other coverage, employment status change, divorce, death of a spouse, or gain a dependent).
- 5) Clergy in any category under Episcopal appointment to full-time service in an Extension Ministry [¶344.1a(3)(4); 344.1b; 344.1d; 331.1a,b; 326.1; 331.8; 346.1; 346.2], may enroll in the Plan within 31 days of initial appointment. Late enrollments are permitted only during the Annual Election Period or in the case of a Special Enrollment event - loss of other coverage, employment status change, divorce, death of a spouse, or gain a dependent.



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- 6) Part-time clergy in any category are not eligible for coverage through the Plan.
- 2. **Ministerial members who are placed on Medical Leave status by the Conference** shall continue enrollment in the Plan regardless of whether they are eligible for Medicare disability benefits. The Conference Plan remains primary until the participant becomes eligible for Medicare due to disability, at which time the Conference Plan becomes secondary to Medicare. Beginning January 1, 2016, participants obtaining Medicare due to disability, may choose to remain in the Active Health Plan as their secondary insurance, or to enroll in the United HealthCare Retiree Plan (Medicare Advantage Plan). The premiums for ministerial members on Conference Medical Leave (and their enrolled family) will be paid by the Conference with Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits funds.
- 3. **Clergy in Retired Status** may be in the Plan if they were under full-time appointment for 20 years and appointed full-time through the Conference for the last 10 years with annuity credit immediately prior to retiring; *provided, however, that:*
  - (a) Clergy in retired status may also be in the plan if they retired on or before July 1, 2021 (provided that their participation shall be subject to the provisions of Part II and III below);
  - (b) Clergy in retired status may also be in the plan (subject to the provisions of Part II and III below) if:
    - i. they retired after July 1, 2021,
    - ii. they were at least 62 years old as of July 1, 2021, and
    - iii. they had at least 15 but less than 20 years of full-time appointment, *provided that, Such retirees must pay such additional premiums or charges as may be established annually by the Board of Pensions and Health Benefits. Retired individuals under age 65 will remain on the Active Medical plan until age 65.*
  - (c) Clergy in retired status may also be in the plan (subject to the provisions of Part II and III below) if:
    - i. they retired after July 1, 2021,
    - ii. they were at least 62 years old as of July 1, 2021,
    - iii. they had at least 7 but less than 15 years of service of full-time appointment; provided that, *1. Such retirees must pay 100% of any and all fees, charges, premiums and other requirements for participation established by the Board of Pensions and Health Benefits; and Such retirees under this paragraph (c) also shall not receive any financial credit or contribution toward the cost of the Plan. Retired individuals under age 65 will remain on the Active Medical plan until age 65.*

Retired participants and spouses aged 65 and over are required to carry Medicare Part A and Part B in order to be eligible for Conference insurance in retirement. Monthly premium for Part A if any, and for Part B is a personal expense. A Retiree (and eligible dependents) not enrolling (waiving coverage) in the Plan at the time of retirement, or who left the plan as a retiree, may enroll during any open enrollment period, or within 31 days of a Special Enrollment event (including but not limited to voluntary or involuntary loss of coverage) (refer to Clergy Eligibility #1, subparagraph 1d). For dependent eligibility, see #5 under "Eligibility."

- 4. Any of the following **lay persons** are eligible to enroll in the Plan upon application within 31 days of hire. Late enrollments are permitted only during the Annual Election Period as allowed by the Plan, or in the case of a Special Enrollment Event - loss of other coverage, employment status change, divorce, death of a spouse, or gain a dependent.
  - (a) Lay employees of the Conference or any of its subsidiary agencies working a minimum of 1,560 hours annually (30 hrs. per week)
  - (b) Full-time (minimum of 1,560 hours annually) lay employees of any church in the Conference that adopts the program, completes a Salary Paying Unit Sub-Adoption Agreement and whose church enrolls a minimum of 75% of its full-time lay employees.



- (c) Retired lay employees of the Conference, local churches, Conference-affiliated UM institutions, the Episcopal office, units of the Conference whose lay employees are not on the Conference payroll and the surviving spouse of such employees, may participate in the Plan provided they have received or will receive a UMPIP benefit from Wespath Benefits and Investments through their salary-paying unit and if they were employed full-time for 20 years and employed full-time through the Conference for the last 10 years with immediately prior to retiring *provided, however, that:*
- (d) Lay employees in retired status may also be in the plan if they retired on or before July 1, 2021 (provided that their participation shall be subject to the provisions of Part II and III below);
- (e) Lay employees in retired status may also be in the plan (subject to the provisions of Part II and III below) if:
  - i. they retired after July 1, 2021,
  - ii. they were at least 62 years old as of July 1, 2021, and
  - iii. they had at least 15 but less than 20 years of full-time appointment; *provided that:*
    - 1. *Such retirees must pay such additional premiums or charges as may be established annually by the Board of Pensions and Health Benefits.*
- (f) Lay employees in retired status may also be in the plan (subject to the provisions of Part II and III below) if:
  - i. they retired after July 1, 2021,
  - ii. they were at least 62 years old as of July 1, 2021,
  - iii. they had at least 7 but less than 15 years of service of full-time appointment, *provided that:*
    - 1. *Such retirees must pay 100% of all fees, charges, premiums, and other requirements for participation established by the Board of Pensions and Health Benefits; and*
    - 2. *Such retirees under this paragraph (c) also shall not receive any financial credit or contribution toward the cost of the Plan.*

5. **Dependents eligible for coverage** in the Conference Plan are limited to the spouse, children who are qualified adult dependents (Active Plan only), and children who are under age 26 (Active Plan only). Dependents may be added only during the Annual Election Period as allowed by the Plan, or in the case of a Special Enrollment event - loss of other coverage, employment status change, divorce, death of a spouse, or gain of a dependent. If an annuitant marries (remarries), coverage of spouse and/or children may be available and premium for dependents is at the retiree’s expense.

**II. PREMIUM PAYMENT RESPONSIBILITY – ANNUITANTS**

The Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits shall establish rates of premiums for the participants, based upon the premiums charged by the insurance carrier(s).

Unless it has already been stated above under Eligibility, the Conference shall pay the premiums for all eligible enrolled annuitants of the Conference, lay or ministerial, from appropriate funds.

- A. A Clergy person aged 65 or older, becoming an annuitant after July 1, 2021, who has 20 full-time approved years with annuity credit in (CRSP), the Clergy Retirement Security Program (includes prior plans), with Wespath Benefits and Investments, shall receive health insurance coverage under the Plan. Monthly premium for Part A if any, and for Part B (both required) is a personal expense.
  - 1. Annuitants age 65 or older who retired on or before July 1, 2021 shall continue to pay and be responsible for a percentage designated by the Board for each year short of 20 full-time years of service. The 2023 percentage will remain at 5%. The percentage will be reviewed annually by the Board.
- B. **A lay person age 65 or older**, who has received or will receive a UMPIP benefit after July 1, 2021, who has 20 full-time approved years of employment with participation in UMPIP, the United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (includes prior plan), of Wespath Benefits and Investments, shall receive health insurance coverage under the plan. Monthly premium for Part A if any, and for Part B (both required) is a personal expense.

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1. A lay retired participant age 65 or older who retired on or before July 1, 2021 shall continue to pay and be responsible for a percentage designated by the Board for each year short of 20 years of full-time service. The 2023 percentage will remain at 5%. The percentage will be reviewed annually by the Board.

C. The Active premium for an **annuitant under the age of 65 commencing benefits**

1. Eligible annuitants under the age of 65 who retired on or before July 1, 2021 shall continue to pay and be responsible for the annual fixed amount determined in the year of retirement until the annuitant reach age 65. Premium payment for those that have less than 20 years of full-time service shall continue to pay 5% for each year short of 20 years of full-time service. Annuitants paying for the annual percentage for which they are short of 20 years of full-time service are subject to annual increase set by the Board of Pensions.
2. Eligible annuitants under the age of 65 who retired after July 1, 2021 shall pay the amount equal to the actual plan premium rate set by Wespith Benefits and Investments until the annuitant reach age 65. The plan is subject to annual increases.
3. Eligible annuitants who retired after July 1, 2021, *and*, as of July 1, 2021, were at least 62 years old and had at least 15 but less than 20 years of full-time appointment, see Part I paragraph 3(b) or 4(e).
4. Eligible annuitants who retired after July 1, 2021, *and*, as of July 1, 2021, were at least 62 years old with at least 7 of service but less than 15 years net credited service under full-time appointment, see Part I paragraph 3(c) or 4(f).

- D. **Extension Clergy serving approved Conference Advance Specials** in the geographic bounds of the Annual Conference who are not eligible to enroll in the Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) will be credited, solely for the years appointed to that Advance Special, with actual years of appointment and service to the Conference, for the purpose of calculation of service year credits to determine allocation of pro-rated premium payment responsibility upon retirement.

**III. PREMIUM PAYMENT RESPONSIBILITY – PRE-ANNUITY RETIREES**

The Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits shall establish rates of premiums for the participants, based upon the premiums charged by the carrier.  
For those who have retired early and are not collecting an annuity, the retired enrollee is responsible for the full Active premium payment until they reach annuity age.

**IV. PREMIUM PAYMENT RESPONSIBILITY – ACTIVE**

The Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits shall establish rates of premiums for the participants based upon the premiums charged by the carrier.  
Unless it has already been stated above under Eligibility, the Conference shall pay the premiums for all enrolled active participants, lay or ministerial, from appropriate funds, except that:

- A. Each church shall pay the premium(s) or Waived Participation Fee(s) (which is equal to the blended premium) of each of its full-time appointed clergy (including clergy spouse and dependent children if enrolled) who are either a full, provisional, or associate member of the Conference or a local pastor.
  1. The salary paying unit shall also be responsible for remitting premium for its lay employees who are enrolled in the Plan.
  2. Plan participants are to pay the amount of their share of the premium in excess of the premium credit provided by the HealthFlex Exchange default plan selected by the BOPHB. The local church will deduct the funds from the participant’s compensation and remit the participants’ share to the Annual Conference on a monthly basis.

- 1  
2 B. Each eligible enrollee, whose fees are not paid as provided above, shall pay his or her own premiums  
3 either directly or with employer participation. In every case, the individual enrollee is responsible for  
4 seeing that payment of his or her own premium is made if the party with PRIME responsibility fails to  
5 make the payment.

6 **V. CONTINUATION OF COVERAGE AFTER CERTAIN EVENTS**

- 7  
8 **A. Voluntary and Involuntary Termination** - If a person’s participation in the Plan ceases due to voluntary or  
9 involuntary termination of Conference membership or employment or discharge or removal from the  
10 Annual Conference, Continuation Coverage for health insurance may be available through application to  
11 HealthFlex.  
12  
13 **B. Loss of Dependent Status** - If a dependent’s participation in the Plan ceases due to divorce or to attaining  
14 the limiting age, Continuation Coverage may be available through application to HealthFlex.  
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16 **C. Medical Leave** - See #2 under Eligibility.  
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18 **D. Leave of Absence** (§353 and §354) - Clergy placed on voluntary leave of absence (personal, family, or  
19 transitional) or involuntary leave of absence may continue in the Plan for a period of twelve months,  
20 provided they pay the premiums. Continuation Coverage for up to an additional 12 months may be  
21 available through application to HealthFlex. Leave of absence is not an appointment, causes a break in  
22 appointment years, and does not accrue annuity credit towards health benefits in retirement.  
23  
24 **E. Sabbatical Leave** (§351) Clergy placed on sabbatical leave may continue in the Plan for a period of twelve  
25 months, provided they pay the premiums. Continuation coverage may be available through application to  
26 HealthFlex. Sabbatical leave is not a break in appointment years for the purposes of health benefits in  
27 retirement.  
28  
29 **F. Death** - Surviving spouses of clergy members are subject to the same rules (see Eligibility Guidelines #1  
30 and 3) as the clergy member. Surviving spouses of lay employees of the Conference and District offices  
31 are subject to the same rules (see Eligibility Guideline #4 c) as the lay employee.

32 **VI. ADMINISTRATION**

33 All concerns, issues, requests, etc., relating to premiums, benefits, coverage (including voluntary termination of  
34 coverage, additions, or deletions to policies) and benefits at retirement must be “in writing” from the Plan  
35 participant to be considered official. Such correspondence, concerns, or requests for changes in coverage must be  
36 sent to the Plan Administrator or his/her designated coordinator. Commitments or resolutions of issues must come  
37 in writing directly from the Plan Administrator or his/her designated coordinator.

38 The Benefits Officer and Administrator for the Conference Plan is the Chief Financial Officer/Conference Treasurer.  
39 The Benefits Officer shall be a member of the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits without a vote.  
40 He/she shall be responsible for promptly enrolling all eligible persons, for collecting all amounts due from churches,  
41 agencies or individuals for participation in the Plan, for arranging for their prompt deposit in a Conference account,  
42 for checking all billings from the Insurance Carrier to certify their completeness and accuracy and for making proper  
43 remittances on schedule for the Plan; and such Officer shall delete from the Plan any enrollee whose premium is not  
44 paid by the end of the month for which the premium is due. Termination is effective the first day of the month for  
45 which no payment has been received.

46 Submitted by,  
47 Rev. Jennifer Cho, Chair, Board of Pension and Health Benefits  
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2 **APPOINTMENTS**

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4 **WHEREAS** Clergy and laity desire to be in connection for support and ministry

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6 **BE IT RESOLVED** that a full and complete appointment list shall be provided to each member attending Annual  
7 Conference and not solely to those clergy and congregations receiving a new appointment.

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9 **Rationale** being a complete list will allow clergy and laity to have information to engage in ministry together until  
10 the publication of the conference journal.

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12 **Submitted by:** Jeanette Block

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1 **PROVIDING A PATH OF GRACE AFTER GENERAL CONFERENCE**

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4 **WHEREAS**, GNJ’s legislative submission deadline is among the earliest in the Jurisdiction; and

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6 **WHEREAS**, General Conference in Charlotte won’t meet until April 23rd; and

7  
8 **WHEREAS**, Annual Conference meets 16 days after the adjournment of General Conference but new legislation  
9 can only be submitted with the prior approval of Conference leadership which limits the opportunity for broader  
10 perspectives; and

11  
12 **WHEREAS**, some may feel the time has come to start on a new path because:

- 13 • General Conference decided to make major changes to items like ordination standards and chargeable
- 14 offenses which may go beyond what traditionalists or conservatives feel are tolerable OR
- 15 • General Conference may leave the current Disciplinary standards and enforcement in place which may
- 16 go beyond the long-held aspirations of progressives or revisionists OR
- 17 • General Conference may end in a complete muddle leaving many across all spectrums feeling that the
- 18 time has come for new wineskins; and

19  
20 **WHEREAS**, Rule 39 does provide the opportunity for legislation to later be amended with the approval of  
21 Conference; so, therefore,

22  
23 **BE IT RESOLVED** That the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference adopt the following policy:

- 24 • After October 1, 2024 local congregations that feel the need to separate for issues of conscience
- 25 should have a vote of their church council (or equivalent) to request their District Superintendent to
- 26 add to the agenda of their church conference the question of their future direction
- 27 • A sixty percent vote to separate at that church conference shall allow the local church to move forward
- 28 with the separation process
- 29 • Churches will be responsible for the 2024 and 2025 Shared Ministries and Billings
- 30 • Churches will also be responsible for paying back any Conference loans or past-due billings or
- 31 forgiveness of prior billings over a five-year period after separation from Conference is approved
- 32 • The 2025 Annual Conference will be asked to approve the requested separations

33  
34 **Rationale:** The legislative submission deadline being among the earliest in the Jurisdiction makes it difficult for a  
35 broad spectrum of Conference to respond to various issues including actions/inactions by General Conference.

36  
37 It may be possible that a number of local congregations from varying perspectives may feel as an issue of  
38 conscience that they should separate from the Conference.

39  
40 Rule 39 provides the opportunity for withdrawal or alteration of a resolution presented to Conference so this is a  
41 place-holder pending the results of General Conference 2024

42  
43 **Submitted by:** Creed Pogue

# REPORTS

## 2025 BUDGET

### Income Details

	<u>2025 Budget</u>	<u>2024 Budget</u>
<b>GNJ SHARED MINISTRY</b>		
Apportionment Base	58,987,922	62,262,477
GNJ Shared Ministry Percent	6.3% to 12.5% (wt. avg. 12.0%)	6.3% to 12.5% (wt. avg. 12.0%)
Total Apportioned Shared Ministry	7,084,052	7,459,783
Anticipated Giving rate	<u>88%</u>	<u>87.0%</u>
Net GNJ Shared Ministry	<u>6,233,966</u>	<u>6,490,011</u>

Apportionment Base – the total spending of all congregations minus a congregation’s mission spending, shared ministry giving, and capital expenditures. For the 2025 budget, the 2023 statistics were used to calculate the Shared Ministry Apportionment base

GNJ Shared Ministry Percent - on October 5, 2020, GNJ courageously passed a historic legislation, A Journey of Hope (JOH), based on its commitment to end the sin of racism and create a more racially just, inclusive, and equitable church. As part of the JOH, GNJ set a new *Shared Ministry Percentage* for local churches based on the income level of the community where the church is located. In 2025, the Shared Ministry percentage for local churches will be between 6.3% and 12.5%, depending on the average income level of the community.

Anticipated Giving rate – on average the percentage of Shared Ministry given by congregations. In 2013 the average giving was 78% and in 2022 it was 90%. Over the years GNJ congregations have made great progress in their stewardship and giving to Shared Ministry. For 2025 budget, 88% is used to hold flat to the 2023 actual.

### GNJ PORTION OF GENERAL CHURCH MINISTERIAL EDUCATION FUND (MEF)

Total Ministerial Education apportionment	250,883	274,596
GNJ Portion %	25%	25%
GNJ Portion	62,721	68,649
Anticipated Giving rate	<u>88%</u>	<u>87%</u>
Net GNJ MEF Portion	<u>55,194</u>	<u>59,725</u>

### LOCAL CHURCH BILLING REVENUE

Assumed collection rate *	95%	94%
Healthcare blended rate	24,200	23,400
Health & Dental	5,736,541	5,663,674
Pension	3,132,644	3,335,465
Property / Workers Comp	<u>6,409,355</u>	<u>5,484,854</u>
	<u>15,278,540</u>	<u>14,483,992</u>

\* 2025 budget held flat to 2023 actual

### CENTENARY FUND CONTRIBUTION

	<u>647,000</u>	<u>596,000</u>
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**Income Details**

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b><u>Budget</u></b>	<b><u>Budget</u></b>
<b>DESIGNATED FUNDS (excluding operating reserve)</b>		
Forecasted 2024 year-end balance	19,962,557	11,811,136
Exclude 2024 deposits	(3,248,865)	(2,758,275)
Net eligible for disbursement	16,713,692	9,052,861
Disbursement %	5%	5%
Designated funds disbursement	<u>835,685</u>	<u>452,643</u>
<b>PROPERTY SALES REVENUE</b>		
Forecasted 2025 total sales income	3,850,000	3,850,000
Allocated to budget %	4.6%	18.5%
Allocated to budget	<u>177,750</u>	<u>711,000</u>
Additional property sale proceeds beyond the above amount to support the budget (“investable proceeds”) will be deposited into the approved designated funds as follows:		
Harvest Mission Fund	2%	
Strategic Disciple Making	2%	
Pension & Benefits Operational	1%	
Retiree Health	20%	
Property Operational	75%	
<b>GRANTS AND DONATIONS</b>		
Misc. grants	25,000	25,000
UM Communities Rent	34,753	30,000
Episcopal Office	89,000	126,735
	<u>148,753</u>	<u>181,735</u>
<b>REGISTRATIONS</b>		
Annual Conference *	104,100	277,500
Local Pastor School	5,000	5,000
Certified Lay Minister Course	2,100	2,100
Lay Servant Ministries Courses	5,800	6,200
Regional Resourcing	6,000	-
BOOM Candidate Process Income	3,500	-
Bishop's Convocation	81,250	81,250
	<u>207,750</u>	<u>372,050</u>
* Reduction is offset by lower expense		
<b>EPA MOU Contribution *</b>	<u>257,319</u>	<u>-</u>
* Note, 2024 budget had \$37.7K in "Episcopal Office" & \$85.3K netted in personnel expense		
<b>MRC Staff Health Contributions</b>	180,000	113,401
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<u><u>24,021,956</u></u>	<u><u>23,460,557</u></u>

Personnel	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b><u>Budget</u></b>	<b><u>Budget</u></b>
<b>GNJ STAFF</b>		
Salary	3,599,247	3,515,758
Benefits	1,353,660	1,275,385
Travel, Meals & Continuing Ed	157,360	146,734
GNJ elected leadership & staff development	55,000	50,000
	<u>5,165,267</u>	<u>4,987,876</u>
<b>CLERGY BENEFITS BILLINGS</b>		
Congregations' Clergy and Lay Health & Dental	5,474,699	5,484,708
Congregations' Clergy and Lay Pension	2,628,753	2,623,720
	<u>8,103,452</u>	<u>8,108,428</u>
<b>RETIREE HEALTH INSURANCE</b>		
Retirees under 65 (Healthflex plan)	443,563	545,100
Retirees over 65 (United plan)	1,137,187	1,114,992
Retirees income (only from those who do not qualify for maximum benefit because of years of service)	(133,849)	(129,950)
	<u>1,446,902</u>	<u>1,530,142</u>
<b>TOTAL PERSONNEL</b>	<u><u>14,715,621</u></u>	<u><u>14,626,447</u></u>



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**Leadership Development**

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b><u>Budget</u></b>	<b><u>Budget</u></b>
<b>BOARD OF LAITY</b>		
Board Ministry Expenses	1,600	3,600
<b>LEADERSHIP ACADEMY</b>		
Certified Lay Ministry Training	2,100	2,100
Lay Servant Expenses	5,800	4,900
RIM Expenses	8,500	10,000
Local Pastor Licensing School	8,000	7,000
Leadership Academy Development and Workshops	35,000	40,000
Mission School	4,250	4,250
Bishops Convocation	85,000	115,000
A Journey of Hope; training, internships, ministry	25,000	25,000
	<u>173,650</u>	<u>208,250</u>
<b>BOARD OF ORDAINED MINISTRY (Discernment of Clergy)</b>		
Adm/General Exp.	500	500
Candidate Process Expenses	2,500	-
Board Meeting Expenses	500	500
Background Checks	5,000	5,000
BOOM Retreats/Interviews	10,000	20,000
Psych. Evals.	16,000	18,000
Special Training (includes Intro to Ministry)	2,000	8,500
DCOM Expenses	1,500	2,000
Fellowship/Orders	1,000	1,000
Cont. Ed: individual and group (includes RIM Retreat)	500	2,000
Career/Family Counseling	-	500
	<u>39,500</u>	<u>58,000</u>
<b>MINISTERIAL EDUCATION</b>		
Course of Study/Scholarships	35,000	35,000
Continuing Education: Individual and group	20,194	24,725
	<u>55,194</u>	<u>59,725</u>
<b>TOTAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT</b>	<u><u>269,944</u></u>	<u><u>329,575</u></u>

**Congregational Development**

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b><u>Budget</u></b>	<b><u>Budget</u></b>
<b>CLERGY, LAITY, CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT</b>		
Regional Resourcing	40,000	45,000
Breakthrough	4,250	4,250
Bishop's Retreat with those to be ordained and commissioned	4,500	4,500
<b>CABINET</b>		
Leadership/Congregational Dev Grants	125,000	150,000
Strategic Disciple Making Fund Grants	77,000	78,000
Mosaic Grants	12,000	12,000
Circuit Elders	180,000	160,000
Recruitment	0	0
Equitable Clergy Compensation Grants	134,000	158,000
Strategic Clergy Salary Support Grants	70,000	73,000
<b>TOTAL CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b><u>646,750</u></b>	<b><u>684,750</u></b>

**Mission & Justice Ministries**

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b><u>Budget</u></b>	<b><u>Budget</u></b>
Community Outreach Grants	220,000	200,000
Disaster Response	2,000	2,000
Justice for Our Neighbors	-	-
Rise Against Hunger	-	-
Tanzania Pastors School GNJ Travel	14,000	12,000
Journey of Hope Consultant	-	-
Journey of Hope Equity Grants	571,806	566,728
Next Gen	152,544	184,850
NEJ Conference	30,000	30,000
Drew School of Theology	100,000	100,000
NJ Interfaith Coalition	10,000	10,000
	<b><u>1,100,350</u></b>	<b><u>1,105,578</u></b>

**Agency Budgets**

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b><u>Budget</u></b>	<b><u>Budget</u></b>
Board of Global Ministries	100	100
Board of Church and Society	100	100
Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry	25,000	25,000
Board of Discipleship	100	100
Commission on Archives and History *	41,000	6,000
Commission on Christian Unity	250	500
Commission on Religion and Race	500	500
Commission on Small Membership Church	100	100
Commission on Status and Role of Women	2,650	100
Committee on Disability Concerns	100	100
Committee on Ethnic Local Church Concerns	250	500
Korean American Plan	15,000	15,000
Strengthening the Black Church	1,000	1,000
Hispanic Plan	1,000	1,000
Committee on Native American Ministry	100	100
Council on Young Adult Ministry	-	-
Council on Youth Ministry	-	-
United Methodist Men	250	250
United Methodist Women	-	-
Connectional Table	500	500
	<u>88,000</u>	<u>50,950</u>

\* 2025 includes \$35K additional approved by CFA (\$30K for PT archivist, \$5K for supplies)

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**Administration**

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b><u>Budget</u></b>	<b><u>Budget</u></b>
Superintending Admin Expenses	54,800	54,800
Episcopal Office Admin Expenses	15,500	13,500
Audit	20,000	20,000
Chancellor and legal work	100,000	100,000
Postage/Supplies	13,000	13,000
Conference Secretary	11,250	10,750
Active Clergy moving expenses	15,000	15,000
Conference Journal	30,910	30,910
Information Technologies	103,300	103,300
Copier lease/usage	36,700	36,700
Processing fees (payroll, banking, credit cards) *	45,000	18,750
CFA/BOP Board Expenses	1,500	2,500
Other Administration	25,000	10,000
	<u>471,960</u>	<u>429,210</u>

\* Higher banking fees are being offset by incremental interest on accounts

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**Communications**

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b><u>Budget</u></b>	<b><u>Budget</u></b>
Annual Conference Session *	268,500	443,500
Relay	31,155	31,500
Photography	6,000	6,000
Tanzania translation services	5,000	5,000
Hosting/Licensing Fees	-	-
Website Maintenance/Updates	3,000	3,000
Studio/Equipment Maintenance	20,000	20,000
	<u>333,655</u>	<u>509,000</u>

\* Reduction is offset by lower income

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**Property**

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b><u>Budget</u></b>	<b><u>Budget</u></b>
<b>CONGREGATIONS' PROPERTY INSURANCE &amp; WORKERS COMP</b>	6,127,420	5,277,911
<b>GNJ MRC PROPERTY</b>		
Maintenance	61,000	70,000
Utilities	58,900	62,800
Cleaning Service	35,400	51,000
Phone	20,100	16,600
Property Insurance	20,000	10,568
Misc. Expenses	1,000	8,000
	<u>196,400</u>	<u>218,968</u>
<b>SUPERINTENDENT PARSONAGES</b>		
Maintenance *	30,000	17,700
Utilities	37,100	33,200
Property Insurance	3,828	2,860
	<u>70,928</u>	<u>53,760</u>
<b>CLOSED CHURCH PROPERTY MAINTENANCE &amp; REPAIRS **</b>	<u>-</u>	<u>165,000</u>
<b>TOTAL PROPERTY</b>	<u>6,394,748</u>	<u>5,715,639</u>

\* Maintenance increase driven by addition of Episcopal Residence

\*\* Closed church maintenance removed from budget as these expenses are not paid through Shared Ministry; expenses are covered when property is sold and "Net Proceeds" then invested in Designated Funds per our policy.

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**General Church Apportionments**

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b><u>Budget *</u></b>	<b><u>Budget</u></b>
World Service	725,310	876,737
Ministerial Education	250,883	274,596
Black College	100,075	126,899
Africa University	22,396	28,529
Episcopal	357,516	352,043
General Administration	122,582	107,970
Interdenominational Cooperation	10,382	3,796
	<u>1,589,144</u>	<u>1,770,571</u>

\* Pending General Conference approval of the budget

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**Next Generation**

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b><u>Budget</u></b>	<b><u>Budget</u></b>
<b><u>Next Gen Income:</u></b>		
Reserve Interest (Aldersgate Proceeds)	25,000	25,000
Camping	-	-
Youth Activities	98,500	83,500
Total Income	<u>123,500</u>	<u>108,500</u>
<b><u>Next Gen Expenses:</u></b>		
Personnel	109,044	110,850
Operations	-	-
Camping	36,000	26,000
Youth Activities	131,000	156,500
Total Expenses	<u>276,044</u>	<u>293,350</u>
Next Gen Surplus/(Deficit) *	<u>(152,544)</u>	<u>(184,850)</u>

\* See "Mission & Justice Ministries" budget

2023 GNJ Schedule of Properties Sold

Property Name	Net Proceeds		Due to GNJ (1)	Net Cash	CMA Average (2)	Listing Price	Buyer's name	Buyer's relationship with GNJ
	Gross Sales Price	(HUD)						
Viola UMC: 161 Viola Road Suffern, NY 10952	\$1,325,000	\$1,220,603	\$4,716	\$1,225,319	\$1,175,000	\$1,325,000	Lev Teen Center	N/A
St Matthews UMC273-280 S Orange Ave, Newark- NJ	\$500,000	\$466,422	(\$108,658)	\$357,764	\$387,500	\$350,000	Renaissance Assembly of God	N/A
Stratford UMC-122 Union Ave, Stratford NJ	\$540,000	\$508,897	(\$10,479)	\$498,418	\$540,000	\$535,000	Pure Land Budhist Association	N/A
Center Grove UMC-2182 Cedarville rd, Millville NJ	\$110,000	\$102,345	(\$37,734)	\$64,611	\$130,000	\$135,000	God the Father Church	N/A
Mt Fern UMC- 443 Quaker Church rd, Randolph NJ	\$2,100,000	\$1,966,376	(\$492,592)	\$1,473,784	\$2,350,000	\$2,300,000	HSAPSS NJ Non Profit	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,575,000</b>	<b>\$4,264,643</b>	<b>(\$644,747)</b>	<b>\$3,619,896</b>				

2023 Operating Budget Cash Usage

\$1,185,000

Budgeted Investment

\$2,665,000

Net Cash Invested  
Investment allocation per 2023 budget:

\$2,434,896

- Retiree Health Fund
- Harvest Mission Fund
- Strategic Disciple Making Fund
- Property Operational Reserve
- Property Redevelopment Fund

\$2,240,104  
\$48,698  
\$48,698  
\$48,698  
\$48,698

92%  
2%  
2%  
2%  
2%

\$230K miss to budget driven predominantly by Mt. Fern's higher than usual "due to GNJ" from an outstanding mortgage, legal costs to resolve reverter issue, and billings owed.

(1) Due to GNJ = past due billings, maintenance/repair work completed and/or initial investment (in conference purchased parsonages/buildings)

(2) CMA = Competitive Market Analysis completed by a licensed realtor

# GNJ FUND ROLL FORWARD

GNJ General Ledger Fund Balance Roll Forward 2022 - 2023					
		<b>2023 (Unaudited)</b>			
		<u>Opening Balance</u>	<u>YTD Receipts</u>	<u>YTD Disbursements</u>	<u>Ending Balance</u>
<u>GNJ Designated Funds</u>					
Operating Reserve Fund		435,215	26,020,304	23,962,662	2,492,858
<u>Mission and Ministry Funds</u>					
Harvest Mission Fund		61,463	155,719	251	216,930
Strategic Disciple Making		61,463	509,336	443	570,355
Episcopal Office Fund		117,553	10,482	365	127,670
<u>GNJ Funds to Other Organizations</u>					
St. John's Native American Historic Preservation Fund		1,072,242	95,610	3,333	1,164,518
Next Gen Ministries Fund		1,173,612	104,643	3,648	1,274,607
<u>Benefits Funds</u>					
Pension And Benefits Operational Fund		587,103	2,114,352	2,693	2,698,762
Retiree Health Fund		3,885,917	4,687,332	13,791	8,559,458
<u>Property Funds</u>					
Property Operation Fund		61,463	56,388	209	117,642
Property Redevelopment Fund		61,463	56,388	209	117,642
Superintendent Housing Fund		771,819	68,822	2,399	838,241
Episcopal Residence Maint Fund		598,088	53,331	1,859	649,559



<b>GNJ General Ledger Fund Balance Roll Forward 2022 - 2023</b>				
	<b>2023 (Unaudited)</b>			
	<u>Opening Balance</u>	<u>YTD Receipts</u>	<u>YTD Disbursements</u>	<u>Ending Balance</u>
<b><u>GNJ Restricted Funds</u></b>				
<b>Mission and Ministry Funds</b>				
Hurricane Ida Relief Fund	68,429	42,632	23,067	87,993
UMCOR - Hurricane Ida Relief Fund	658,381	526,449	580,796	604,034
Mosaic Ministries Fund	911,430	168,081	82,653	996,858
Tanzania - Miracles Campaign Fund	478,358	130,146	43,877	564,627
Lily Grant Fund	734,014	27,840	379,216	382,639
<b>Trustees - Donor Restricted</b>				
Project Nurture (Broad Street Millville) Fund	232,096	-	-	232,096
Goldsmith Estate Fund - 3rd Party	30,000			30,000
Deaconess Endow Fund Balance	10,000			10,000
Estate Funds (Drew & Kimble)- 3rd Party	133,177	14,764	-	147,941
Conf Scholarship Restricted Fund Balance	118,915			118,915
Glading Restricted Fund Balance	10,000			10,000
Seese Restricted Fund Balance	34,767			34,767
Goorley Restricted Fund Balance	5,000			5,000
Urban Scholarship Restricted Fund Balance	30,000			30,000
Kappler Restricted Fund Balance	20,000			20,000
Fullman Memorial Perm Restricted Fund	4,500			4,500
Augustin-Smith Endowment Fund	100,000			100,000
Nancy Belsky Perm Restricted Fund	6,365			6,365
Bard Trust - 3rd Party	120,182	13,689	-	133,872
Horner Trust - 3rd Party	67,828	8,068	-	75,895
<b>Trustees - without Donor Restricted</b>				
Goldsmith Estate Fund Balance	460	4,040	-	4,500
Deaconess Accumulated Income Reserve	47,310	7,602	-	54,912
Estate Funds - Drew/Kimble/Friedrich	122,874	29,260	-	152,134
Conf Scholarship Fund Balance	(18,989)	13,368	-	(5,620)
Glading Trust Fund Balance	14,054	3,191	-	17,245
Maddock Trust Fund Balance	143,460	19,030	-	162,490
Seese Scholarship Fund Balance	(3,001)	4,214	-	1,213
Goorley Fund Balance	6,511	1,527	-	8,038
Urban Scholarship Fund Balance	19,619	6,582	-	26,201
Kappler Scholarship Fund Balance	(2,663)	2,300	-	(363)
Ethel Snyder/Inez Irons Book Fund Balance	48	6	-	54
Frances Nelson Scholarship Fund Balance	20,775	2,358	3,000	20,132
Phyllis Jane Stetser Scholarship Bal	1,323	176	-	1,499
Fullman Memorial Temp for Sustentation	1,791	834	-	2,625
Augustin-Smith Fund	(8,691)	12,112	-	3,421
Nancy Belsky Temp Rest Fund	820	953	-	1,774

<b>GNJ General Ledger Fund Balance Roll Forward 2022 - 2023</b>					
		<b>2023 (Unaudited)</b>			
		<u>Opening Balance</u>	<u>YTD Receipts</u>	<u>YTD Disbursements</u>	<u>Ending Balance</u>
<u>GNJ Affiliate Funds</u>					
<b>Mission Partners</b>					
Centenary Fund	10,972,631	1,580,898	653,977	11,899,552	
The United Methodist Foundation	158,151	238,685	256,587	140,249	
A Future with Hope	112,376	472	2,614	110,235	
<b>Other Affiliates</b>					
Ministerial Education (GCFA) Fund	111,885	64,672	49,667	126,890	
Youth Service Fund Reserve	3,025	-	3,025	-	
Christian Ed Sunday Fund	18,615	35	4,025	14,625	
Disability Awareness Sunday Fund	1,074	-	1,074	-	
Comm of Native American Min. Fund	58,289	8,173	4,040	62,421	
New Spaces -Dinner Church	13,731	(13,731)	-	-	
National Hispanic Plan	77,117			77,117	
GNJ Korean Partners in Ministry	9,394			9,394	
Skylands District Union	855	(855)	-	-	
Palisades District Union	11,913	(3,913)	8,000	-	
Northern Shore District Union	1,558	(1,558)	-	-	
Capital District Union	1,100	(1,100)	-	-	
Raritan Valley District Union	14,713	(5,713)	9,000	-	
Cape Atlantic District Union	1,741	(1,741)	-	-	
Delaware Bay District Union	225	(225)	-	-	
Gateway North District Union	9,345	(9,345)	-	-	
Conference Grants	10,000	(10,000)	-	-	
Friends of Old Estellville Methodist Church	44,781	764	150	45,395	
Educational Society	161,923	1,262	8,513	154,672	
Bright Spots	7,394	(7,394)	-	-	

## A FUTURE WITH HOPE

### ***Hurricane Ida Road to Recovery***

Through the generous support of UMCOR we launched our program in January 2023, and our team of disaster case managers began outreach to households in impacted counties. To date we have screened over 350 households and have opened ninety cases. We have recovered sixty-two households, repaired twenty-five homes, and engaged twenty volunteers in our mission.

Our strong partnerships with The Red Cross, United Way of Northern New Jersey, The Salvation Army, Compass82 and NJVOAD have proved invaluable in providing referrals and financial and community resources.

Greater New Jersey United Methodists have been generous with their support. John Bishop, Tom O’Hearn, Alyssa Ruch, Rev. Jesse Ruch, and Karen Nyby serve faithfully on our internal unmet needs table. Bound Brook UMC has provided clients with access to their thrift store, the Pennington UMC mission team made gift baskets to share with recovered homeowners, Emergency Response Team members cleaned out two damaged homes to prepare them for repairs, and Dianne McGrath, certified lay servant, has assisted a homeowner with organizing her disaster related paperwork.

These quotes from our clients expressing their gratitude illustrate the impact that GNJ UMC has had on their lives.

“I would like to share my experience with United Methodists and its work team, especially Andy, disaster case manager, the person who helped me. Since due to Hurricane Ida, I lost my cars and many household things. When I lost all those things, I had to spend my savings to be able to buy what I lost, in the process I fell behind on rent payments. Everything was accumulating, and that is when I applied for help with the United Methodists and received the help I needed. Thank you very much United Methodists and Andy Chan for your help.” – Ida Survivor

“The support and assistance your organization, and particularly my disaster case manager, provided to our family have been nothing short of quality of life changing. We are so thankful to your generosity and Andy’s dedication. We can never fully express how grateful we are for the lifeline your organization extended to us during our time of need.”- Ida Survivor

“Having someone to help me advocate for my family has been a must. I’ve had to contact several different agencies to get anywhere with my case. Each case is different, having a case manager is a must, especially for those who have trouble advocating for themselves.”- Ida Survivor

“My disaster case manager, Bianca, has been an angel, getting me rental assistance, furniture, new appliances, and making everything so much easier,” she said. “I’m grateful for everything she did. It felt like someone had my back and I wasn’t alone. She made it easier to overcome and feel normal again.”- Ida Survivor

At the end of 2023, the GNJ Ida Recovery team is the only disaster case management team and funder still working in New Jersey. We have much work yet to do and intend to reach our recovery goals by the end of 2024.

We are grateful to everyone who has graciously donated to GNJ for Ida Recovery and UMCOR who generously supports disaster recovery.

### ***Hope Centers***

A Future With Hope counts twenty-seven Hope Centers across GNJ and is in the process of onboarding one additional one. This year twelve Hope Centers received GNJ Community Outreach grants with one Hope Centers applying for and receiving their first CO grant. Hope Centers requested funding to start new initiatives, expand on existing missions, and support ongoing work.

Hope Centers engage communities in many ways:

- Legal and emotional support for immigrants
- Food insecurity

- Home repair for those without resources
- Programming to end generational poverty
- Support for the unhoused
- Early childhood education, childcare, and support for new parents
- Youth mentoring programs

The Journey of Hope work to dismantle racism has been shared with Hope Centers, and they will begin to develop plans in context with their communities next year.

Site visits to Hope Centers were suspended in 2020 due to logistical and health concerns. Site visits will resume in 2024, and Alyssa Ruch has begun scheduling those site visits.

We are excited about Hope Centers' work toward sustainable change and look forward to new ones joining next year.

Submitted by Andrea Wren-Hardin

## BLACK METHODISTS FOR CHURCH RENEWAL (BMCR)

Black Methodists for Church Renewal gathered on ZOOM for an Advent Bible Study. Pastors: Jay Brown, Karline Dubuisson, Ralph Terrell, Rupert Hall were the presenters. The Theme for learning were Restoration, Preparing the Way, Rejoicing and Receiving God's Hope. At the end of the Study, Church Historian, Eddie Rothmaller provided a Kwanzaa lecture and drum presentation at the Mt. Zion Wesley United Methodist Church, Deptford, New Jersey.

Also, Mt. Zion Wesley United Methodist Church in collaboration with the Jericho New Sharon Civic Association and the BMCR leadership Team acknowledged the Veterans of the United States Armed Forces on November 12, 2023.

The program began with a dinner (1:30 – 2:30) for veterans, their families, and friends of the community. The local Veterans of Foreign Wars and American Legions attended the dinner and Worship Service.

During the Worship Service Rev. Dr. John E. Randall and other leaders acknowledged the 12 listed African American Civil War Veterans buried in the historical Jericho Odd Fellows Cemetery.

James Tillman	Civil War Veterans, Co. 24 Ch Regt. Colored Troop
Samuel Moore	Civil War Veteran, Co.K. 8 <sup>th</sup> U.S., Colored Infantry
Frank Kersey	Civil War Veteran, Support Halllo. 1, 10 <sup>th</sup> U.S. Colored Infantry
James B. Robinson	Civil War Veteran, U.S. Navy
J. Dorsey	Civil War Veteran
John Williams	Civil War Veteran, Co. B 25 Regt. (Misc. Gloucester County Cemetery Vol.1)
Alex Baily	Company A. 43 U.S. Colored Troop
James Cooper	Pvt World War I
John Deblas	Co. Div 41772
Joseph Dorsey	Co. E. 22 Regt LNF.S.C.T.
Kato Robinson	Civil War

(Gloucester County Veterans Cemetery Inscriptions, Vol.2 1981).

Over 35 Certificate of Acknowledgment were handed to Veterans related to the Jericho community. In addition, the Historical Society of Gloucester County provided funds to develop and distribute a brochure of the Veterans of Jericho.

The BMCR Annual Day -Turning Point United Methodist Church, Trenton New Jersey on February 24, 2024.

Submitted By

John Randall, Rupert Hall

## BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION MINISTRIES

### Report of the Board of Higher Education and Ministries of the Greater New Jersey Conference

*The Board of Higher Education and Ministries (BHEM) has mandates and responsibilities listed under ¶1634 in The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church and is the leadership development agency of The United Methodist Church. “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)*

*“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)*

The Board of Higher Ed aims to promote and award scholarships to GNJ students aspiring to attend Methodist colleges and universities to fulfill their call to mission and ministry in youth ministry, outreach, mission, service, and a call to pastoral leadership.

In June of 2023 we said goodbye to our outgoing chairperson, Rev. Iraida Ruiz de Porras, who has faithfully led this board for the past few years and welcomed Rev. Catherine Jordan-Latham into the role of Chair.

We continue to navigate the merger relationship between the Educational Society (ES) and GNJ Board of Higher Education (GNJBHEM) established in 2021. For 2023, ES awarded two scholarships to support seminary students, totaling \$8500. GNJBHEM awarded one scholarship to support a continuing college student, totaling \$3000.

The scholarship application for GNJBHEM is an online process. The GNJ Connectional Ministries’ administrator submits the completed applications electronically to our agency. Board members meet via Zoom to complete the process and award the scholarships. Five areas considered by the agency team are financial need (FASFA), grade point average (official school transcript), letters of reference, an essay from the student, and a mission and ministry statement describing the student’s service in ministry and outreach for a possible total of 25 points.

The number of Higher Education scholarship funds available for students continues to decrease as investments have given low returns and two of the endowment-based scholarships were depleted of their funds. This lack impacts the amount available to be awarded to students who apply.

Our boards commitment is to continue encouraging new relationships with congregations and college campuses, especially with students who are active members of communities pursuing careers inspired by mission and ministries and those who have a personal call to ministry. Currently we are working with Next Generation Ministries and their new chairperson to effectively support our campus ministers and grant funded programs. Again, low funds continue to limit how much financial support we are able to give.

Your continued prayers and support for our campuses, ministers, chaplains, faithful and dedicated board members, and our conference youth and leaders will be greatly appreciated!

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Catherine Jordan-Latham, Chair

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

### Report to The Annual Conference

The board of trustees follows all disciplinary requirements when disposing property and may use any or all of the following.

1. A licensed realtor.
2. Multiple Listing Service (MLS).
3. Contacting interested parties or churches in the area.
4. Contacting developers in the area.
5. Contacts made with the property staff
6. A price set in consultation with the realtor and approved by the board of trustees.
7. When a sale price is offered lower than the asking price, final sale price is approved by the board of trustees.

When a property is sold to another United Methodist Church, or an individual or organization affiliated with GNJ, an appraisal is developed using comparable properties in the area to set a price that will maximize income for the mission and ministry of the conference except in some cases when the property is sold or donated to another United Methodist Church. When a sale is made or the property donated, all disciplinary mandates are followed and the trustees review the sale to ensure that the sale or donation is in the best interest of the GNJ mission.

The following schedules are included in the pages following this report:

- 2023 GNJ Schedule of Properties Sold listing the details of the property sold during 2023, including how the net proceeds were invested in accordance with the budget and GNG Designated Fund policy and procedure.
- Report of Current Holdings as of 1/3/24 listing properties currently available for sale, problematic properties (challenging to sell), rentals and other.

In other business, the Trustees:

- In consultation with our insurance brokers Sovereign Insurance Group, the Board of Trustees voted to continue to use Church Mutual Insurance for the group insurance program which includes property, management liability (Directors & Officers), workers compensation and umbrella policies.
- In consultation with outside counsel and Bishop Schol, the conference settled two sexual abuse lawsuits which included total payments of \$965K. We pray for the survivors.
- Are in the process of researching solar and EV chargers for the MRC.
- Met with two firms looking at a partnership for redevelopment of properties, as we try to strategize long term economic sound ministry opportunities on these properties as well as repurposing the properties for investment purposes.

Submitted by,

Mathew Enzler, Chair, Board of Trustees

# BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY



Boston University School of Theology

## BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Your partnership, prayers, and support are a cherished gift as BUSTH seeks to serve the church and the world! In a year like 2023, BUSTH's commitments to equip transformational leaders for peace and justice are all the more necessary and significant. We are hopeful and vigilant in our continued partnership with you.

### NEWS:

- **Students:** Our academic year 2023-24 entering class was among our most diverse, with 86 new students enrolling, 34% of whom are international students.
- **Faculty:** In September we welcomed visiting [faculty member](#) David Anderson Hooker, Visiting Associate Professor of Religion and Conflict Transformation. Two new faculty searches are underway—an Assistant Professor of Religion and Society and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Professor of Religion and Black Studies.
- **Expanding Online Programming:** BUSTH's first fully online master's degree—the Master of Religion and Public Leadership (MARPL)—continues to expand after welcoming its first students in fall 2022. MARPL seeks students who wish to be prepared for leadership roles that creatively engage the challenges of public life. Learn more at [bu.edu/sth/marpl](http://bu.edu/sth/marpl).
- **Faculty Research:** Associate Dean Cristian De La Rosa received a Lilly Parenting Grant for \$1.25 million. Our faculty members published more than 75 books, scholarly articles, op-eds, and book reviews during 2023. Many were interviewed by media publications for their work on academics and activism, fat liberation, caring for creation, responding to congregational trauma, and the spread of Christianity in Africa. Selected stories can be found at [bu.edu/sth/research/faculty-research/](http://bu.edu/sth/research/faculty-research/).
- **Scholarships:** We continue to offer free tuition to UMC-registered candidates for ordained ministry and leadership fellowships that support students in ethnic, gender, and sexuality studies. New funds include the Research & Teaching Fund and Affirmation & Empowerment Fund. We have newly endowed funds for DEI, Theology & the Arts, and Doctor of Ministry.
- **Accreditation and Curriculum:** BUSTH received a renewed full and unqualified listing by the University Senate of the United Methodist Church. BUSTH is concluding a curriculum review for the MDiv and MTS programs which will launch in fall 2024.
- **Online Lifelong Learning:** BUSTH offers online courses for professional and spiritual enrichment of religious leaders. Recent offerings include “Sustaining Spirits while Empires Crumble” and “Preaching Mark with Different Voices.” To learn more, visit [bu.edu/sth/oll](http://bu.edu/sth/oll).
- **Development:** Recent accomplishments include endowing the Faith and Ecological Justice Fund, and new funding for student scholarships and academic programs.

### COMMITMENT TO JUSTICE and COMPASSION:

- BUSTH's Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion offers webinars on timely inclusion efforts, such as “[Increasing Participation of Students of Underrepresented Backgrounds](#).”
- This year's [Lowell Lecture](#) topics explore the role and responses of theological education for the challenges of today with lectures from Rev. Dr. Ted Smith (fall) and Dr. Keri Day (spring).
- Work continues to improve accessibility, sustainability, and responsible investing as written in our 2030 Strategic Plan. BUSTH is the first certified Green School at BU and is active in the Green Seminary Initiative.

With faith and gratitude,  
G. Sujin Pak, Dean



## CABINET REPORT

Romans 12:5 reminds us of who we are as United Methodists, *“In the same way, though there are many of us, we are one body in Christ, and individually we belong to each other.”*

Though we are many, we are one body, and we belong to each other. This verse speaks to our United Methodist connectional system and how we live it out. As a Cabinet we have experienced this belonging in many ways this year.

Collaboration with the EPA District Superintendents has been a blessing. We pray together, discern together, strategize together, and we belong to each other. We work as a team in appointment making for both Annual Conferences so that local churches have pastoral leadership to meet missional needs and grow in vitality.

We are experiencing belonging to each other in our Regional Teams. Each region sets goals so that we are making progress in our mission to recruit and develop transformational leaders to make disciples of Jesus Christ and grow vital mission congregations for the transformation of the world. The whole team: District Superintendents, Associate Superintendents, and Assisting Elders work together to coach and resource pastors and congregations to grow vital mission congregations that are:

1. Offering inspiring and life-changing **worship**,
2. Connecting believers through **small groups**,
3. Organizing and leading followers of Jesus Christ into the community for **hands on mission for mercy, justice, and witness**,
4. Training people to share their faith to **make new generations of disciples** of Jesus Christ, and
5. Teaching and inspiring **generous giving**.

This year GNJ Directors of Resourcing had a title change to Associate Superintendents. This title better reflects the changing mission and leadership roles of these GNJ staff members. Much like the relationship associate pastors have with lead pastors in serving local churches, Associate Superintendents have supported District Superintendents at the district and regional levels to recruit and develop transformational leaders and grow vital congregations. Revs. Kate Monahan, Sammy Arroyo, Gina Yeske and Juel Nelson are our valued Associate Superintendents.

In partnership with Associate Superintendent Kate Monahan through Mosaic Ministries and seminary recruitment we are making progress in our goal to recruit and develop transformational leaders. Since its formation 8 years ago, Mosaic Ministries has partnered with more than 25 churches in GNJ to become teaching congregations that have shaped over 40 seminary students, some of whom have gone on to serve as pastors in GNJ congregations. We appreciate Kate being intentional about recruiting seminary students who are passionate about serving God and God’s people. We celebrate those who now belong to GNJ and give thanks to God for their passion in ministry.

The Cabinet is seeing growth in vitality for congregations who invest in Pathways for Fruitful and Healthy Ministry. Another way we see belonging to each other is through connectional ministry.

Associate Superintendent Gina Yeske assists pastors and congregations in how to begin their Pathways journey. Pathways offers congregations a process to grow to be healthy and fruitful. Pathways resources offer the tools to create a plan to take the next faithful steps in mission and ministry and mobilize leaders and disciples to transform the world. We encourage congregations to prayerfully consider this resource to build on what is going well in ministry, and align mission, goals, activities, people, and money to be our best for God.

EPA/GNJ pastors currently serving in Urban congregations, Superintendents, and Associate Superintendents gathered for an Urban Summit to have conversation and strategize about connecting the EPA/GNJ strategic direction with urban opportunities to strengthen urban congregations and ministry. Next steps will be to

determine areas of focus and setting a course to move forward.

One way for all GNJ congregations to stand with and support ministry in our urban centers is to engage in Pathways: Journey of Hope. We remember we belong to each other and we can all commit to a Journey of Hope. Associate Superintendent, Sammy Arroyo is currently working with those who are being trained as facilitators to guide congregations on their Journey of Hope.

Essential to the mission of GNJ are leaders who have healthy boundaries and professional ethics. Training in Professional Ethics is a way that we bring accountability to the relationship of belonging to each other. The Cabinet supports the team that has developed Professional Ethics Training for appointed clergy and assigned laity in understanding ethics and making healthy and appropriate decisions. Associate Superintendent Juel Nelson is guiding the development of training in the following three areas: Sexual Ethics, Financial Ethics, and Safe Sanctuaries.

Even as the Bible reminds us that we belong to each other, United Methodists in Greater New Jersey and across the denomination sometimes struggle with what it means to be connectional. As we celebrate collaboration and growth in vitality there are also differences that divide us as the body of Christ, and yet, God calls us a vision where we all belong. We continue to navigate challenges around disaffiliation, theological differences, inequities for urban congregations and striving to end the sin of racism. Nevertheless, we hold steadfast to our faith knowing that God's presence guides us as we navigate these challenges together.

The Cabinet team is in a season of transition as we prepare to say goodbye to Bishop Schol as he moves to retirement. We are thankful for the ways in which Bishop Schol has been preparing us for a smooth transition. We are grateful for Bishop Schol's leadership over the years. We pray God's blessing on Bishop Schol and Beverly as they move into this new season of life.

Submitted by

GNJ Superintendents

## CENTENARY FUND AND PREACHERS' AID SOCIETY (CFPAS)

### Report to 2024 Annual Conference

The Centenary Fund and Preachers' Aid Society was established by charter granted in 1857, which was amended in 2000 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 remains 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 GNJ Annual Conference.

The primary way the Fund continues to meet this purpose is by contributing towards the cost of providing retiree healthcare for retired Elders and their spouses. In 2023 the committee worked prudently towards our stated goal and was able to contribute \$575,000 to GNJ in support of retiree health care. The \$575,000 represents approximately 5% of the market value of the fund as of yearend. Through the generous giving and prudent efforts of many since 2004 the Fund has contributed over \$9 million for this stated 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. Several such grants were submitted, reviewed and approved, as per the goals established for the Fund. During 2023 the Fund allocated a total of \$60,000 for clergy emergency grants. Further information and Grant application forms can be found on the Conference's.

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. During the COVID period, receipts have fallen below historical levels, and the Committee has committed to re-invigorate efforts and awareness of the Fund to further support giving. To do so, we have partnered with the Stewardship Foundation and the Communications Committee to develop new communications and outreach to our churches and communities. We hope and pray that you and your local church will consider continuing your support in 2024 to help us strengthen the Centenary Fund with your tax-free donations. By doing so, The Centenary Fund and Preachers Aid Society will be there 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 for your continued support, your generous donations are well appreciated by the Committee and all retirees!

Submitted by,

Robert (Bob) Dietz

Chair

Centenary Fund and Preachers' Aid Society

## CFA REPORT

### REPORT FROM CFA TO ANNUAL CONFERENCE:

The Council of Finance and Administration recognizes that our congregations continued to face challenges in 2023. In addition, eight congregations chose to leave our denomination.

Both matters require our continued prayer for God's guidance and wisdom as we seek to navigate the resulting financial complexities.

#### Financial Report:

The annual conference remains thankful for the leadership of pastors and the generosity of our congregations during 2023.

Members of CFA, GNJ leadership and the boards and agencies of GNJ met to increase the understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing GNJ. Our expenditures will continue to be prioritized on those that will further the GNJ mission and strategy, i.e. to develop and recruit inspirational leaders which, with God's blessing, will lead towards improved church vitality.

CFA has been working through the financial ramifications of the Memo of Understanding for collaboration between GNJ and EPA. We believe that this effort will benefit both conferences by allowing us to better achieve our combined strategic objectives and to utilize our resources more effectively towards that purpose.

In respect to the annuitant health care liability (also referred to as retiree health care liability), the model and policies & procedures set in 2021 remain in practice. Centenary Fund contribution in 2023 was on budget at \$575K. Combined with \$2.2M for property sales and \$2.0M from disaffiliated churches, our long-term strategy to achieve our funding targets is on track.

In response to a referral to CFA coming out of the May 2023 Annual Conference, the committee reviewed the proposal to waive the Annual Conference fees for retired pastors. After a thorough discussion at a special CFA meeting in December 2023, CFA approved setting the registration fee for retirees at one-half the set rate for other attendees; retirees cover all other costs of attending the conference. For example, if the standard registration fee is \$80, retirees would only have to pay \$40. They will, however, have to bear the costs of accommodations like everyone else. While there was some recollection of such a practice being in place before the 2023 conference, we were not able to find any formal legislation and/or approved policy which authorized this practice at that time.

Here are the financial highlights for 2023:

- A total of \$8.3M was given through shared ministries by our congregations. We had projected that we would receive \$8.4M; so we received 1% (-\$0.1M) less than what we projected.
- A total of \$12.7M was received for billings from our congregations. We had projected that we would receive \$12.5M; so we received 1% (+\$0.2M) more than what we projected.
- 366 of our congregations gave 100% of shared ministry in 2023 as compared to 376 of the same group of churches in 2022.
- 416 of our congregations gave 100% of their billings in 2023 as compared to 420 of the same group of churches in 2022.
- 66 of our congregations contributed a higher percentage of their shared ministry assessments and 47 congregations gave a higher percentage of their billings in 2023 than they did in 2022.

We also continue to celebrate our A Journey of Hope Plan actions to address inequities in shared ministry and billings for lower income communities. While the overall collection rate for these churches declined, 10 of the 66 were able to contribute a higher percentage of Shared Ministry and 4 a higher percentage of billings.

With respect to General Church Apportionment payments, the Annual Conference voted that GNJ would pass through whatever the churches paid toward GCFA apportionments. In 2023, GNJ paid 86% of the amounts apportioned for the seven GCFA funds. As previously decided, each of the funds received the same percentage of what was apportioned for the fund.

Property sales in 2023 were slightly below budget, with gross proceeds of \$4.6M and net proceeds totaling \$3.6M (vs. \$3.85M budgeted).

Property sale details:

- \$4.6M in property sales in 2023.
- \$0.31M toward closing costs (legal fees, property transfer fees, etc.)
- \$0.64M toward maintenance and other costs prior to selling, past billables & initial investment in the case of conference owned property. Note, these expenses were unusually high which drove the miss in budget, as the Mt. Fern property had a mortgage (\$157K) and reverter clause where heirs to a portion of the property received \$157K of the proceeds.
- \$1.185M of net proceeds from property sales was allocated toward the 2023 budget as approved by Annual Conference
- \$2.4M of net proceeds from property sales was allocated toward designated funds as directed by the Annual Conference which was \$0.2M million less than projected.

Respectfully submitted by:

Vasanth Victor  
CF&A President

## CHRISTIAN OUTREACH PROJECT REPORT

### Christian Outreach Project A New Jersey Non-Profit Corporation

The Christian Outreach Project seeks to provide free home repairs and renovations for those people in northwest New Jersey who do not have the means to pay. Youth and adult supervisors donate their caring and skills while learning and growing in the process. For one week in June/July, teams from churches around the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference gather at the Camp Hoover Girl Scout Facility in Stillwater, NJ for a week spent in Christian fellowship providing home repairs during the day and participating in camp activities in the evening. Participants start each day with a time for reflection and prayer. After breakfast, they pack bag lunches and set out in work crews for job sites. While working on homes, many youth have the opportunity to interact and learn from their home owners. After work, participants enjoy dinner provided by local churches and return to camp for evening activities, singing, and worship.

In 2023, COP had a successful summer program. We had 63 participants from 10 area churches that were able to repair and renovate homes for 12 families in need in Morris, Sussex, & Warren Counties during the last week of June. We are looking forward to, and planning for, our 2024 program that runs from 6/23/24-6/29/24.

COP is funded by cash and in-kind donations, fees paid by volunteer participants, and support from the United Methodist Church. COP is a Greater New Jersey Annual Conference Advance Special as well as A Future with Hope - Hope Center. The Christian Outreach Project is recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) corporation. Donations are tax deductible as allowable by law. Federal Tax ID 26-1832341.

# COMMISSION ON ARCHIVES AND HISTORY REPORT

## Archives & History Report to GNJAC 2024

In 2023, our major achievements have involved developing policies and procedures to govern the functioning of the commission. The highlight of this effort was developing a job description for a part-time archivist and securing CF&A approval to hire someone to fill this crucial role. During this process, CF&A requested answers to a number of key questions. We drafted a detailed response and also solicited response from our Archives and History colleagues across the UMC Connection. As many of the responses identified information that can benefit a wider audience within GNJC, a summary of our report is submitted here. For a detailed description of the programs and resources we make available, please see our Commission on Archives and History (CAH) report to GNJAC 2022 on pages 268-271 of the 2022 Conference Journal, the corresponding report in the 2023 Journal when available, and or by accessing the CAH webpage on the GNJC website (<https://www.gnjumc.org/about-gnjumc/our-history-and-values/archives-history/archives-history-resources/>).

### What is informative vs. historical value?

All documents have informational value. The real question is whether the information has enduring and evidential value (EEV). Each record has a specific life cycle that varies according to the EEV values. A memo about Friday's coffee break has informational value, but its life cycle ends after Friday's break. An archivist would look at that and say there is no EEV for retention or archiving despite its sparse informational value. The memo served its purpose and has no further ramifications for evidential value. Hence, the document has served its purpose and should be disposed of.

The United Methodist Church has an open records policy as defined in the BOD. Minutes, reports, and correspondence (in whatever format), such as GNJUWF or Connectional Table, Conference Offices, have all the criteria according to EEV and must be archived. The annual journal has credible historical value, but office records are also needed for research or legal questions should the need arise. The archival records not only give evidence but context as well.

The General Commission on Archives and History (GCAH) publishes guidelines for managing the records of the annual conference and local churches, which we follow as a commission and post a link to on the GNJ conference website <http://www.qcah.org/resources/managing-records-of-the-annual-conference-and-local-church>. GCAH's guideline identifies which records are to be transferred to the archive and creates a schedule for said office to run more smoothly.

Then there is the legal question regarding evidence that is contained in records for the annual conference. Courts will consider a higher evidential value if proper retention is deposited in an archive. The main reason is once records are in an archive, they are not being edited or tampered with, which gives a better probability of winning a lawsuit. This is true for both physical and digital records.

Communication departments often use records in an archive to better explain content in their news releases and announcements. The recent Bishop Carcano trial news releases heavily depended on the General Commission on Archives and History's holdings to show how rare it is for a bishop to be convicted in a church trial. For example, most corporations rely heavily on their archives for promotional and display purposes.

### Examples of Historical Records (representative examples-not an exhaustive list):

- Vital statistics records (births/baptisms, marriages, deaths/funerals)
- Confirmation and Church membership records
- Incorporation papers, property deeds, legal papers, and Trustees ledgers
- Methodist Episcopal Circuit Steward's records and Conference Journals
- Church histories, photos, programs and bulletins of historical celebrations and significant events
- Charge conference books – which have Pastor's Reports and Lay Leader's Reports (with summarized annual program information), records of church officers, membership information and financial records
- Minutes and publications of conference commissions, committees, boards, and agencies

- Genealogical information and Sermon manuscripts
- Selective artifacts (on a space available basis)

The Annual Conference is required by the Discipline to preserve the records of closed congregations. The Commission on Archives and History is the official repository for closed church and annual conference records of the United Methodist Church and its predecessors.

As a result, the GNJC archival collection is primarily composed of closed church records. Many of our documents relate to vital statistics, legal papers, photos, and church histories. We have one complete collection of historic conference journals from GNJC's predecessor conferences. We have selected film and video holdings from SNJ. We have a few local church Charge Conference booklets. We have one small, partial but notable sermon manuscript collection from Clark Hunt, a prominent preacher from the Newark Annual Conference, which relates to justice and civil rights issues from the 1960's.

Certain records must have both a reference and record copy for research and archival standards. The annual conference journal is an example. Otherwise, one copy, such as department correspondence, is kept, which stresses the need for a safe place, such as an archive for future requests.

#### **Examples of Information:** (representative examples-not an exhaustive list)

- Bulletins – a small, representative sample of bulletins might be considered worth preserving to document the style and culture of worship during a particular period – but we do not have the space to save every bulletin
- Bank and monthly financial statements – certain financial documents have tax or legal implications, which must be retained per our retention guidelines. But most bank statements and financial registers have little historical value, especially when year-end or conference year financial summaries exist. When financial statements reach their life-cycle end, they need to be shredded.
- Unidentified photos – certain historic images of the church buildings, property and events are appropriate to save, but large quantities of unidentified photos usually have negligible value. However, only a trained archivist has the training and experience to cull the records to reclaim any existing space appropriately.
- Bibles, hymnbooks, and other books – If a bible belonged to a prominent historical figure like Francis Asbury, it would have enduring and intrinsic value, but the vast percentage of bibles have no historical value. If a Bible has genealogical information, the page or pages containing that information would be appropriate to save.

#### **What will be digital vs. paper?**

Recently, the State of New Jersey declared that digital information can be considered a record copy with the caveat that the original physical copy is kept as a backup. This is the current policy of GCAH. Born-digital records need to be saved in archivally approved formats. If the digital records are not formatted correctly, there is little chance that the files can be opened with future software or have long-term storage capabilities with existing hardware. The cost of a digital repository, on-site or in the cloud, will negatively impact the annual conference budget. But more of that later in this report.

**Paper: The ideal archival standard for preserving historical records is co-currently and will be, in the foreseeable future, paper.** Depending on how the documents are stored dictates the life span. Physical records stored in an archive with proper temperature, humidity, dew point, archival boxes, and folders can last a few centuries. To date, there is no long-term reliable digital storage medium that does not significantly degrade over time, requiring constant monitoring and grandfathering to new storage devices. Every time a non-archival digital format is updated/changed, files can easily become unstable to various degrees. Therefore, paper, or other physical formats will remain a preferred archival standard for historical and legal records for an archive.

**Digital: Digital storage is the norm for digital and born-digital information** (documents, spreadsheets, video, audio, and web-based information, etc.) and for legal records that can easily be scanned that only need to be retained for a period of time dependent on obsolete hardware and software. An example is type A and B connectivity flash drives. Computers, with other related external hardware, will no longer have the native



capability to read the files. New hardware is only installing type C connectivity. A contemporary example is new iPhones' that can only be charged with type C cables.

Digital storage is also highly valuable for making historical records widely accessible while doing minimal damage to the original paper records. In this latter capacity, digitization supports and enhances the preservation of historic and legal paper records.

### **Are we thinking differently about what/how we're archiving?**

**The General Commission on Archives and History (GCAH) has published standards for UM Archives.** Two of our current commission members (Mark Shenise & Kevin Dusenbery) are archivists who work for GCAH. Our commission follows the GCAH guidelines as appropriate for GNJC. We regularly evaluate our practices and readily embrace GCAH initiatives and guidelines.

Our request to hire an archivist with archives training and experience is consistent with the needs and insight into the increasing importance of digital preservation for the future. Plus, the new archivist will be able to restructure the repository to meet the needs of the annual conference in real-time. Also, a trained archivist will be able to utilize the near future digital programs being created by GCAH to allow greater public access to GNJ archives records. The request is also rooted in the awareness that our previous volunteer archivists did not possess the willingness or expertise to move our collection management processes forward at the pace the commission wanted and needs to embrace. We need to seriously embrace digital archival capacity which is what we are seeking to do via our request to hire a part-time archivist.

We see the need to be able to capture and store current born-digital records. The new archivist can on a quarterly basis archive the annual conference website through an account with Archive-It (Internet Archive) for future research. To accomplish these feats of information sharing will require yearly increases in the GNJCAH budget. Other examples would include the records of conference officers, committees, boards, and agencies. Now we have a poor level of compliance by conference leadership for archiving official conference records. We would like to create an educational program and a consistent process. Yet, we do not have the archival space to collect those as paper records and our current capacity for engaging in digital preservation is limited to small projects. We believe developing a strong digital strategy will be the key to consistently capturing appropriate born-digital and digitally created records, especially those of conference leadership.

We anticipate that embracing digital capabilities will significantly reduce the rate of expansion of our paper archival collection and will serve to allow the increase of access to information while protecting original historical documents. GCAH is in the process of developing guidelines for digital archival processing and preservation which we will share when they become available. We, therefore, need a trained archivist to conserve our current paper, film, and digital documents, our physical artifacts, and our future digital repository.

### **How much space is needed?**

We currently have access to 1100+ cubic feet of archival shelf and floor space in the vault at the Methodist History Center on the campus of Drew University in Madison, NJ. We believe that with careful stewardship of the contents of our collection, our needs are secure for the immediate future. If church closures continue escalating, we would be more comfortable having an additional 500 cubic feet of storage space. An archivist could appraise and cull duplication or non-essential records to open up much-needed space if more space is not available.

### **Is this better outsourced?**

The answer depends upon the types of records. Our paper collection is partially outsourced already. The collection is stored in the climate-controlled (temperature and humidity) and fire-safe vault at the Methodist Archives and History Center on the campus of Drew University in Madison, NJ. It can be accessed in person through the Reading Room in the Methodist Center or, temporarily, by contacting Frances Lyons at [flyons@qcah.com](mailto:flyons@qcah.com) (in the absence of our archivist). But this is only a short-term courtesy extended to us by GCAH because it takes away the time Frances has for GCAH requests. Housing our collection in the Archives and History Center vault is a cost-effective approach, as the \$3,000.00 annual donation that we make to GCAH to cover the use of



that space is far less expensive than if we were to secure comparable, climate-controlled, and fire-safe space in another location. Yet, if we were to move the archives to a new space, the archivist could manage the move with as little downtime as possible.

For digitizing the entire collection, the answer would be, “No.” It would be cost and time prohibitive to digitize our entire collection. Archivists do not recommend whole scale digitization for a number of reasons including the cost and time required. Not all documents have evidential information which warrants such blanketed scanning. It would also increase the cost for digital storage and viewing. For digitizing small projects, the answer is also, “No.” The commission owns an archival quality scanner, and we believe that small projects can be done more cost effectively in-house, as we did successfully recently with the Clark Hunt Sermon Manuscript Collection.

For larger projects, we expect various forms of outsourcing to be necessary. For example, in 2014 we collaborated with Ancestry.com which digitized our pre-1970 vital statistics records for free in return for being able to post our information on-line. As a result, those records are now widely accessible and are heavily utilized. We have received enough additional records since that project was completed that we envision undertaking another such effort once we have a new archivist to oversee it.

We also would like the financial resources to utilize a digital “Crawler” subscription that routinely archives our conference website at designated intervals. However, it would be cost prohibitive to outsource all of our digital needs. We are proposing the idea of hiring an archivist because we believe that route is far less expensive than outsourcing all our needs and because we believe that having the knowledge in-house to oversee those digital processes is the best way to go.

### How often are people asking for archives materials to be retrieved?

**Patterns of GNJC Archival Collection Usage** (in order of frequency of usage):

1. **Vital Records** – our collection is regularly accessed by persons seeking verification of birth, baptismal, and wedding records for various reasons
2. **Genealogy Searches** – persons seeking family and local church information
3. **Conference Trustees** – property deeds and corporate records per legal matters
4. **Local Churches** – researching their church history
5. **Outside researchers** – who use our primary source materials for research projects

### Accessibility of preserved GNJC information:

- **Pre-1970 closed church vital statistics** records posted on Ancestry.com
- **Post 1971 closed churches vital statistics** are only accessible at the archives, which requires the archivist or librarian to enter the vault and pull records out of the boxes to respond to an inquiry
- **Deeds, incorporation documents, Circuit Stewards Books, handwritten Trustees’ ledgers and Minutes, paper records and photographs** are only accessible at the archives, which requires the archivist to enter the vault and retrieve records out of the boxes to respond to an inquiry
- Various **Historical Society and commission journals** from **NNJ and SNJ and Rev. Clark Hunt Sermon Manuscript Collection** are posted and easily accessible digitally on **Internet Archive (IA)**.

### Frequency of Usage/Access of our GNJC Archival Collection:

- **100-150 Search requests per year** for our physical collection
- **367,000 accesses and 170,00 searches** per year online on Ancestry.com
- **100 -200 searches** per year on Internet Archive.

### How can we educate our churches to begin proactively thinking about this and digitizing what they have?

**What tools/resources do they need?** When GCAH establishes the UMC standards for digital archiving, we will need to make those guidelines readily available. We currently post an information retention schedule on CAH page of the GNJ conference website. GCAH will be creating new guidelines centered on digital records after the 2024 General Conference. Beyond that, what we will truly need is backing from the Bishop and conference leadership to make that initiative a priority for local congregations.

As a hedge against future loss of physical records, we would like to see congregations digitize their historic documents and provide the commission with a digital record in the appropriate archival format of those documents now. Unfortunately, many closed church records have not been properly saved and preserved in our GNJ collection. For example, we are missing the last membership register (vital statistics) for the Barnegat UMC, which closed in 2014. We believe being proactive and encouraging congregations to preserve their historic documents digitally will increase the percentage of documents we are able to preserve.

Most congregations will only need access to a scanner and appropriate software that meets the requirements for archival digital storage. An example is purchasing Adobe Acrobat Standard, which can convert PDF documents into PDF/A format. Congregations with a large volume of records may need to outsource their digital preservation.

### **Feedback Summary from Connectional CAH Colleagues:**

- Paper documents remain the core of their collections
- The more advanced archival programs have full, shared, or part-time archivists
- Those commissions are actively increasing their digital archival capabilities to conserve digitally born records as a supplement to and not a replacement of their paper archival collections.
- For legal purposes, digital files of legal documents must be backed up by paper originals

### **What are the costs relating to supporting the archives?**

Our CAH budget has been able to be kept low because our commission has operated efficiently. However, we anticipate increased costs in the near and ongoing future related to hiring an archivist, developing our capacity for identifying, capturing, and preserving digital information, and increasing digital storage and costs for archival supplies.

The reason that our budget has been able to be so low for so long is that we have been operating very efficiently. We had a retired layperson who served as a volunteer Archivist since we merged conferences. We also had a steady source for free archival supplies, which greatly lowered the amount of conservation supplies (acid-free boxes and folders, etc.) which we had to order directly. And we have posted many of our records online in various forms, so much of our material can be accessed remotely without us having to provide reference services to retrieve those materials. Also, housing our collection in the vault at the Methodist Archives Center at Drew is a cost-effective strategy that reduces the need for more expensive alternatives which would be incurred if we had to create comparable archival storage space in other ways. That arrangement also insures that the collection is maintained in a temperature and humidity controlled and fire safe repository and that the collection is accessible to researchers through the staff at the Reading Room of the Methodist Archives Center.<sup>1</sup>

However, we no longer have a volunteer capable of serving as an archivist by themselves and have been unable to recruit a replacement using our personal networks or by advertising in the GNJ Digest. We believe we need to hire a part-time archivist to stabilize our collection going forward. Further, due to organizational changes beyond our control, we are losing access to free supplies. We will need to regularly order archival supplies going forward, which will considerably raise our supply costs. Also, due to the absence of an archivist and the dramatic increase in church closures, we now have over 70 cubic feet of unprocessed received materials. With a new part-time archivist, that person can immediately appraise current and future transfers and donations for archival value. Disaffiliation, combined with the need to embrace digital archival capacities make it paramount to secure a part-time archivist. As a result, we believe that we need to look seriously at hiring a part-time archivist for up to 15-20 hours per week (.4 to .5 FTEs) to process, maintain and improve the collection.

**GNJCAH Current Archival Needs Summary:** We must hire a part-time archivist to advance our existing records collection and embrace digital archival capabilities. We believe that strategy is far more cost-effective than large-

<sup>1</sup> Our verbal records storage arrangement with the Methodist Archives and History Center only covers the use of their vault shelf space and allows their staff to access our records to make them available to researchers, but the arrangement does not include any records processing, which our former archivist, previously did solely by himself. He typically worked one to two full days per month, but that was when we only received a few boxes of new material per year. Now that we have a mass of unprocessed material and are faced with an increasing volume of new material, we need to process materials more quickly and are confronted by limitations in our storage space.

scale outsourcing of digitization. We need increased funding to secure archival supplies, hardware, and software. We need increased archivist hours to process the new 70+ cubic feet of closed church records that we have already received, and also to process the increase in materials we are projected to receive in the near future.<sup>2</sup> We also need the new archivist to assess our entire collection and cull unnecessary duplicates and items that do not fit within the scope of our collection to be good stewards of our mission and to conserve our archival storage space. Left unchecked, the increased volume of records received will shortly exceed the capacity of our vault space. Additionally, we also need to develop a consistent process for securing the records of conference offices, agencies, commissions, and committees and local church charge conference records<sup>3</sup>

The estimated annual Archival Financial Costs for 2024 equals \$46,000 (\$30,000 for a Part-time archivist<sup>4</sup> and \$10,000 for supplies and expenses in addition to our current \$6,000 budget).

Respectfully Submitted by:

The Rev. John D. Callanan  
Chair, GNJC Commission on Archives and History

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2 In 2023 GNJAC closed 11 churches and approved up to 8 congregations to disaffiliate. We expect the number of church closures to continue at a high rate for the foreseeable future.

3 The Commission on Archives and History is the Discipline-designated legal repository for all historic and legal records of the Annual Conference and closed local churches. Currently, with the exception of closed church records, we seldom receive records from conference officers, agencies, or committees, and rarely receive local church charge/church conference records, which are rich in annual program and financial information. We need to improve our ability to preserve these records, increase conference officer and entity compliance with doing so, and secure the storage space needed to accommodate those records.

4 A conservative estimate of the salary rate needed to secure a part-time archivist is \$30,000.00 per year. In our Metro-New York, New Jersey and Philadelphia region the starting salaries for range from \$60,000.00 to \$70,000.00 per year. Perhaps a student in a MLS or ML&IS program could be hired for less, but we are in a very competitive market and a very tight, competitive, period in terms of employment.

## COMMISSION ON EQUITABLE COMPENSATION REPORT

The responsibilities of the Commission on Equitable Compensation as outlined in ¶625.2 of the 2016 Book of Discipline are four-fold: 1) To recommend conference standards for pastoral support; 2) To administer funds used in base compensation supplementation; 3) To provide counsel and advisory material on pastoral support to district superintendents and committees on pastor-parish relations; and 4) submit an arrearage policy to be adopted by the annual conference.

The Commission has wrestled with the definition of what equitable means. While our recommendations seek to keep some balance between clergy within the conference, when the level of education required for ministry, the hours required for effective service to the church, years and quality of that service, and the levels of compensation for other professionals is considered, equity takes on a different understanding. The struggle continues to be the ability of congregations to meet that financial obligation, especially in the light of the increasing costs of health insurance required for full-time local church appointments. We are very aware that when base compensation increases, the financial requirements for full-time can result in more part-time appointments. That then must be balanced with a pastor's ability to support themselves and their families, including paying off student loan debt from salaries that continue to be at a relatively low level.

The Commission is acutely aware that increased financial requirements at the local church puts additional stress on the pastor who is often in the place of having to guide a congregation facing financial uncertainties. This raises great concern about the health and full support of our clergy beyond compensation. While this is not specifically the responsibility of the Commission to resolve, we lift this up as a concern that needs ongoing conversation and decision making within local church Staff Parish Relations Committees and church leadership.

We are please to report that Greater New Jersey Conference Average Compensation increased by 3.0% for 2024, however GNJ still remains 3.6% lower that the DAC (Denominational Average Compensation), though we are in one of the most expensive areas for living within the U.S. For the coming year, the commission is recommending a 5% increase in the Basic Minimum Salary for 2025. While this is above the current inflation rate and COLA Increase for 2024 which stand at 3.14% and 3.20% respectively, the basic minimum salary over the four years has been below the rate of inflation including one year when there was no increase due to COVID-19. The commission is seeking to make up some of the difference so the basic minimum will come closer to matching the longer-term inflation rate.

While the Commission is charged in the Discipline with approving Equitable Compensation grants, this has been in the hands of the Cabinet and Extended Cabinet, a practice that is in use in a number of annual conferences. We have received a report on the use of these funds and are monitoring how these funds match the goals of the Journey with Hope. We continue to advocate for the use of budgeted Equitable Compensation funds to support salaries for our ethnic and language specific churches where the economic circumstances of the community cannot support full time ministry.

The annual conference approved a resolution from the floor last May to examine and gather information concerning moving costs and policies. The commission has been assigned this work, though it does not fall within the Disciplinary mandate. What we have discovered so far is that there are a number of policies already in place but are found in different documents. Our goal is to bring these together, as well as to gather information about moving companies that have been used by our churches and parsonage families. Cost comparisons, however, are very difficult to measure as these vary so much from situation to situation. Our goal is to complete this project by the time of the Annual Conference session in May.

The Parsonage Standards continue to lift up the importance of health and safety concerns. The standards specifically address the need for local churches to test and abate issues for lead paint and asbestos. As the parsonage is the property of the local church, and not the pastor, trustees and/or parsonage committees need to be proactive in keeping the home safe for pastors and their families. In addition to this, environmental changes and the increase of health issues requires churches to seriously look at both heating and cooling systems in their parsonages.

My thanks to the members of the Commission on Equitable Salary for their time and energy in our work together on behalf of United Methodists of Greater New Jersey. I am grateful for the commitment that each Commission member has made to do our work thoughtfully and with excellence.

**Submitted by:** Steven G. Bechtold, Chair

## COMMITTEE ON NATIVE AMERICAN MINISTRIES

The CoNAM continues to strive to identify members with Native American ancestry. Information on current NA issues has been gathered and placed on the GNJ CoNAM webpage, located in the web pages of GNJ UMC. Such topics have included Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and the role the Methodist Church played in establishing Indian Boarding Schools. Eleven campers from Greater NJ met with Native American Methodists from all over the United States at Silver Lake, upstate New York for the NA International Caucus. We continue to offer presentations for churches who like to know more about St. JOHN UMC, the church of the Lenape, in Bridgeton. We are beginning to partner with EPA CoNAM for joint activities.

**Submitted by:** Cynthia Mosley, Interim Chairperson, GNJ CONAM

## DREW UNIVERSITY THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL

**Report to the 2024 GNJ United Methodist Annual Conferences**

**Rev. Edwin David Aponte, PhD, ThD (honorary)**

**Dean and Professor of Religion & Culture**

Drew University Theological School educates and mentors pastors, preachers, deacons, activists, teachers, thought leaders, and change agents for ministry and service in the church and society. Drew Theological School is diverse in theology, vocations, age, as well as racial, ethnic, national, and international identities. Many Drew students are just beginning their ministry, while others come to graduate theological education with prior ministry experience. The latter reflects a growing trend among all theological schools in the United States and Canada. Drew holds in-person classes in Madison, New Jersey, several classes meet exclusively online, while other meet in hybrid fashion, i.e., partially online, partially in-person. This is also the case with chapel worship which originates in Seminary Hall, but also is live-streamed so that students around the world participate. Drew Theological School is a global seminary with a global student population serving the worldwide church.

In Fall 2023 Drew Theological School welcomed 104 new students in all degree programs, with total student enrollment (by head count) growing from 364 students in Fall 2021 to 407 in Fall 2023 semester. Enrollment of international students at Drew increased from 120 students in Fall 2021 to 169 students in Fall 2023. This number includes students who are studying full-time in the U.S.A. on a student Visa, students who are studying online from their home country, and students in the South Korean Cohort of the Doctor of Ministry program.

Drew's interdisciplinary degree programs provide real-world apprenticeships, promotes adaptive leadership skills, and encourages innovation through team-taught core courses as well as a variety of electives that integrate theological disciplines and faith practices. The Drew faculty's shared values are infused across all aspects of the teaching and learning: 1) a commitment to anti-racism; 2) gender and sexual-identity equality; 3) eco-sustainability and environmental justice; and 4) interfaith understanding and cooperation. Drew Theological School has an increase in United Methodist students, additionally, Drew has many United Methodist Global Fellows pursuing further education for ministry. UMC graduates are serving in conferences across the United States, and especially within our nearby regional United Methodist conferences of Greater New Jersey, Eastern Pennsylvania, and New York Annual Conference.

## DUKE DIVINITY SCHOOL

Duke Divinity School can attest to the work of God’s Spirit to usher us into a season of hope and continued faithfulness to the mission and calling to serve the church, academy, and the world. In 2023, the Duke University president and provost appointed Dean Edgardo Colón-Emeric for a full five-year term. In his Opening Convocation sermon, he stated: “This year marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of my ordination in the United Methodist Church. This is the school that prepared me. Today, I give God thanks for still allowing me to serve as a minister of the gospel and I renew the vow I made when I was installed as dean. By the grace of God and en conjunto with you, I will uphold this school’s ‘commitment to God and the people of God, to the highest standards of academic excellence, and to this university.’”

In the next three years, we will celebrate a number of centennial milestones: Duke University and The Duke Endowment (2024), the 17<sup>th</sup> centennial of the Council of Nicaea (2025), and Duke Divinity School (2026). As a foretaste of those occasions to reflect and celebrate, we have had two important milestone celebrations in 2023. The Office of Black Church Studies (OBCS) commemorated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, an occasion to rejoice in all that God has done through OBCS to bless our Duke Divinity community and to extend the gifts from the Black Church to the whole church. As just one example of the impact and influence from OBCS, the Rev. Dr. Cynthia Hale (D’79) received Duke University’s Distinguished Alumni Award in recognition of her outstanding contributions in ministry and service.

The Hispanic House of Studies (HHS) celebrated its quinceañera (15<sup>th</sup> anniversary), another opportunity to have our hope buoyed by God’s work in our midst. HHS was created by the Divinity School, with support from The Duke Endowment, to support the formation of ministers to Hispanic/Latinx congregations and communities in the North Carolina and Western North Carolina Annual Conferences and beyond. These efforts are not confined to a limited silo but extend throughout our academic and ministerial programs. For instance, we now offer the “Rediscovering the Heart of Methodism” course in Spanish on Divinity+, an online resource that is widely available for ministers and congregations.

This fall, we welcomed 215 entering students from 35 different states as well as new community members who hold either primary or secondary citizenship in 16 other countries including Canada, Chile, China, Finland, Germany, India, Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, Peru, Russia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Syria, and Zimbabwe. The Master of Divinity program gained 104 new students, with 54 residential students and 50 in the hybrid program. The Master of Arts in Christian Practice enrolled 13 new students; the Doctor of Ministry, 22; Master of Theology, 11; Master of Theological Studies, 29; the Doctor of Theology welcomed five new students to campus, and five special students enrolled. The Certificate in Theology and Health Care welcomed 11 residential students to campus and 15 in the hybrid program. Across all degree programs at the Divinity School, 31 percent of the incoming class identified as a race or ethnicity other than white. Black students made up 21 percent of all students; Latinx students, seven percent. Fifty-four percent of students in the incoming class identify as female. There were 25 denominations represented in the M.Div. entering class, with 26 percent affiliated with the United Methodist Church. Baptists made up 10 percent of the incoming students; Anglican or Episcopal students, 10 percent; and nondenominational students, 12 percent.

Duke Divinity School continues to invest in pathways to support Methodist leadership and pastoral formation. Divinity+ launched the Church Administration series focused on developing practical skills for church leaders. More than 1,000 learners have enrolled in the first two courses, “Theology and Time Management” and “Strategic Management.” We inaugurated the Certificate in Chaplaincy, designed to prepare students to provide spiritual care in a variety of settings such as hospitals, hospice, prisons, higher education, and the military. The certificate can be earned as part of the residential M.Div., Th.M., and M.T.S. degree programs.

The school has also welcomed new leaders who bring their gifts to the work of advancing the mission to serve Christ and the church. Two houses have appointed new directors: the Office of Black Church Studies is led by the Rev. Dr. Eric Lewis Williams (D’05), assistant professor of theology and Black Church Studies; and the Anglican Episcopal House of Studies has named the Very Rev. Timothy Kimbrough (D’83), Jack and Barbara Bovender Professor of the Practice of Anglican Studies. Key members who have joined our staff team include Anita



Lumpkin, executive director of enrollment management; and the Rev. Sarah Belles, a Duke Divinity alumna and ordained elder in full connection with the Western North Carolina Annual Conference, as the director of student life.

Several new programs demonstrate Duke's sustained commitment to connecting with churches and ministers. With gratitude to funding from the Lilly Endowment, the Divinity School has launched the Transformative Preaching Lab to prepare creative, culturally competent preachers who can reach audiences in effective and engaging ways. It will expand preaching training for students in the hybrid modality of the M.Div. program with new courses and preaching laboratories along with new capacities to explore and engage digital tools for community worship and preaching. The Transformative Preaching Lab also provides new opportunities for formation in trauma-informed preaching and preaching in immigrant communities, issues that are especially salient in communities across the country and around the world.

The Theology, Medicine, and Culture initiative has launched the Mental Health Track for Christian mental health practitioners as part of its Certificate in Theology and Health Care. This hybrid certificate program offers spiritual and theological formation for mental health clinicians in a range of disciplines. The research and programming from other Duke Divinity initiatives, including Theology, Medicine, and Culture; Duke Initiatives in Theology and the Arts; Leadership Education at Duke Divinity; and Thriving Rural Communities, continue to provide numerous opportunities to bear witness to God's creativity, compassion, and care for communities and congregations.

Duke Divinity School continues to be grateful for our ongoing participation in The United Methodist Church and partnership with this annual conference. We look forward to our ongoing work with you as we join the leading of God's Spirit in the task of preparing people for Christian ministry. To learn more about Duke Divinity School, please visit our website at [www.divinity.duke.edu](http://www.divinity.duke.edu).

Respectfully submitted by Edgardo Colón-Emeric  
Dean of Duke Divinity School

## FIRST FRIENDS OF NEW JERSEY & NEW YORK



Since its founding in 1997, First Friends of New Jersey and New York has upheld the inherent dignity and humanity of immigrants whose lives have been impacted by the immigration enforcement system. We provide compassion and hope to both detained and non-detained immigrants through connections with volunteers dedicated to helping them navigate new and overwhelming systems and processes.

### **Helping Immigrants Survive Detention**

A volunteer-based organization, we strive to reduce detained people's isolation and provide compassion and hope through in-person and virtual visitations, a telephone hotline, commissary funds, bonds, resettlement assistance upon release, as well as individual and system-level advocacy.

### **Helping Immigrants Gain Freedom through Advocacy**

To help immigrants obtain their freedom, First Friends advocates for the release of detained immigrants, the complete elimination of immigration detention, and the disentanglement of the immigration enforcement and criminal legal systems. We work from an abolitionist principle that refuses to accept that incarceration and punishment is the only way to deal with human beings who have made mistakes. Through these efforts, First Friends works to remedy the systemic racism that has led to the disproportionate representation of BIPOC immigrants in ICE detention centers and to reduce the arrest-to-deportation pipeline that has such a disproportionate impact on these same communities.

### **Helping Immigrants Rebuild Their Lives**

To help previously-detained immigrants and new arrivals rebuild their lives, First Friends can provide financial support for transportation, rent and utility assistance, cash assistance for food and clothing, referrals to legal and other service providers; and accompaniment to immigration court hearings and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) check-ins.

### **First Friends Accomplishments in 2023**

In 2023, First Friends made 280 deposits into detained Friends' commissary accounts, enabling them to supplement their diets and purchase personal hygiene supplies and stationery. Seventy one individuals and families (approximately 230 people total) have received gift cards for food and other emergency needs, including medicines, diapers, and infant formula. Over this time,



First Friends also provided rental assistance to 22 individuals and families and temporary housing to two immigrant families. First Friends paid bond for five detained Friends, freeing them from detention to return to or settle into new communities as they awaited the outcome of their immigration cases. Over 200 newly-arrived immigrants and their families received referrals and assistance from First Friends through our dedicated hotline. Over the course of the year, First Friends supporters, volunteers, and staff also participated in over 20 actions (in-person and virtual) aimed at advocating for one or a combination of the following: 1. the closure of the Elizabeth Detention Center; 2. the passage of the NJ Values Act; 3. the passage of the New Way Forward Act / enactment of executive branch policy recommendations; 4. the rejection of the appropriation of additional funds for ICE or Customs and Border Protection (CBP); 5. a rejection of additional restrictions on access to asylum.

# IMMIGRATION LAW & JUSTICE OF THE DELAWARE VALLEY (ILJ DV)

(Formerly Justice For Our Neighbors of the Delaware Valley)

## Report to GNJAC 2024

Immigration Law & Justice of the Delaware Valley is a community-run multifaith collaborative that supports and defends the rights of immigrants by providing immigration legal services and educational resources to help families and individuals navigate the American legal system. We seek to provide affordable and accessible legal services for all. Immigrants in the community - specifically, those vulnerable immigrants who have experienced violence or the threat of violence – benefit from our services. Our clients include single mothers, adolescents who have been abused, abandoned, or neglected by their parents, individuals who have faced political persecution, victims of domestic abuse and crimes in the United States, and individuals from countries like Haiti and Venezuela whose governments are in such a state of dysfunction that the United States has deemed it unjust to return people to those countries.

We engage in justice and mercy ministries by serving the most vulnerable in our communities: single mothers, victims of torture and abuse, individuals whose own nations have failed them, children abandoned, abused and neglected by their parents. This justice work in turn transforms the world: when individuals' needs for legal services are met, they are free to focus on themselves, their children, their families, and their own communities.

ILJ DV is a proud GNJ Hope Center and United Methodist immigration ministry supported by three annual conferences – GNJ, Eastern PA, and Peninsula-Delaware. Previously, we held clinics in New Jersey, Delaware, and Eastern Pennsylvania. With our small staff of one attorney, one part-time DOJ Accredited Representative, and a network of dedicated volunteers at churches in the area, we held clinics at five different sites in Bridgeton (First and Trinity UMCs), Pleasantville (Oasis UMC), Hammonton (Con-Vivir Wellness Hub), and Millville (Trinity First Hope Center). Through our clinics we have provided either a consultation or full legal representation to over 350 individuals since September 2022 alone. The overwhelming majority of our services were provided at no cost or at a fraction of the cost of a private attorney.

Due to the overwhelming need – backlogs in immigration can stretch up to a decade, and immigration courts around the country are facing a backlog of 3 million cases, currently – ILJ DV reached caseload capacity this year and has paused our clinics and intakes. We are extremely grateful for the support of the GNJ UMC and the Community Outreach Program, which has helped us provide impeccable legal services to many of our clients.

Should you have questions, please reach out to Alexis Duecker, Executive Director, at [alexis@iljdv.org](mailto:alexis@iljdv.org). Wishing you a happy and healthy 2024 from everyone at ILJ DV!

# IMPLICIT BIAS COMMITTEE

## Review Report for GNJ 2024 Annual Conference Session

GNJ is committed to ending the sin of racism in our work together as clergy, laity and with the people that we serve in our communities. With the adoption of the Journey of Hope Plan in our 2020 Session, our Conference began moving towards this goal. The process of reviewing GNJ's Policies and procedures, along with all legislations to the Annual Conference is an important piece of this working together to ending the sin of racism.

The review process is led by the Commission on Religion and Race (CoRR) and the Committee on the Status and Role of Women (COSROW) and is supported by members of our conference's Board of Church and Society, and the Committee on Local Ethnic Church Concerns. Each year we seek to grow in our understanding of what is Implicit Bias and how it impacts our coming together as a Conference, and our decision making. To support our team, the office of the Director of Connectional Ministries provided an Implicit Bias online training offered by the General Commission on Religion and Race to all committee members.

This year there were two rounds of Implicit Bias due to a large number of reports and legislation submitted. Each piece of documentation submitted for review is given careful consideration by our team. Our goal is to provide feedback to the authors prior to their inclusion in the Pre-Conference Workbook.

To complete our work, these are the steps we followed:

- 1– Agencies and committees submit their reports to the Conference Secretary and GNJ's Communication's Team.
- 2– The Implicit Bias Review Team distributes the reports and legislations to its members for review. Each document is reviewed by at least 2 members of the committee.
  - Once the documents are reviewed, they are returned to the authors if there are any comments or need for clarification.
- 3– After the first review, the committee meets to discuss any issues presented during the review and to distribute the second round of documents.
- 4– Final copies with revisions are sent to our Conference Secretary for inclusion in the Pre-Conference Workbook.

The implicit bias review committee was formed to assure that reports, legislation, and resolutions presented for distribution to the annual conference be devoid of implicit or explicit statements of bias, discrimination, or disrespect of diversity and inclusion.

This year the implicit bias team received a report from the Bishop, which contained a serious breach of confidentiality. Based on this, the implicit bias team is instituting the following guidelines regarding reports and legislation.

### **Guidelines for Reports Content Safety**

*All written reports for the annual conference must adhere to a standard of content safety, avoiding the inclusion of harmful materials. Reports should be professional, ethical, and considerate of the potential impact on readers.*

1. **Legal and Ethical Compliance:**
  - All content must comply with applicable laws and regulations.
  - Ensure that the report adheres to ethical standards, avoiding any content that could be considered defamatory, discriminatory, or otherwise harmful.
2. **Protection of Personal Information:**
  - Ensure that any personal information included in the report adheres to privacy laws and regulations.
  - Obtain consent when necessary and refrain from sharing unnecessary personal details.
3. **Avoidance of Offensive Language and Imagery:**

- *Refrain from using offensive language, profanity, or inappropriate humor.*
  - *Avoid the use of graphic or disturbing imagery that may cause distress or discomfort.*
4. **Respect for Diversity and Inclusion:**
- *Avoid content that may be offensive, discriminatory, or harmful to individuals or groups based on attributes such as race, gender, religion, nationality, disability, sexuality or any other characteristic.*
5. **Consideration for Mental and Emotional Well-being:**
- *Be mindful of the potential impact of the report on the mental and emotional well-being of the audience.*
  - *Refrain from including content that could be triggering or distressing without proper context and warnings.*
6. **Accurate and Verifiable Information:**
- *Present accurate and verifiable information in the report.*
  - *Avoid spreading misinformation or engaging in any form of disinformation.*

As a committee we are committed to our own personal growth in understanding the impacts of implicit and explicit bias in our ministries. We encourage our agencies and those writing reports to also seek to grow in this understanding. We are pleased to see how each year we are advancing on this goal.

This report was written in collaboration with all members of the committee and respectfully submitted by:

Rev. Miso Parks, Chair of the CoRR

Rev. Marissa van der Valk, Chair of COSROW

## LAITY BOARD REPORT

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. (Isaiah 41:10)

The Mission of the Laity Board is to equip the laity to have partnership with the clergy, to work with the Conference to grow transformational leaders, and to provide opportunities for growth of the laity. The Board provides opportunities to equip the laity through the Lay Servant Ministries classes, Leadership Academy, Laity Session at the Annual Conference, and Lay Ministry Recognition. The Board also works in partnership with the United Women in Faith, United Methodist Men, and Youth and Young Adults for the development of those ministries. Laity Board engages the congregations through a culture of learning to equip, encourage and fulfill God's purposes in their spiritual growth. We celebrate the outstanding performance of the Laity through our annual Lay Ministry Recognition Award.

In 2023 we partnered with Breakthrough Worship Series to develop resource materials for the celebration of Laity Sunday.

The Leadership Academy offers variety of courses that will enhance the mission and ministry of our congregations, as we encourage the laity to grow in their spiritual development.

The Laity Board participated in the entry level ethics training program which has been implemented by GNJ to aid the appointed clergy and assigned laity in understanding ethics and in the ability to make healthy and appropriate decisions. This is the outcome of GNJ Safe Sanctuaries legislation which requires the Conference to provide Safe Sanctuary Ethics, Sexual Ethics & Financial Ethics training to the appointed clergy and assigned laity.

OBJECTIVES of the Laity Board:

*The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church 2016, ¶1631 states that the Board should:*

- To foster an awareness of the role of the laity both within the local congregation, and through the ministries in the home, workplace, community and world in achieving the mission of the Church; to develop and promote programs to cultivate an adequate understanding of the theological and biblical basis for lay life and work among the members of the churches of the annual conference.
- To develop and promote stewardship of time, talent, and possessions within the annual conference in cooperation with the conference council on ministries or other appropriate conference bodies.
- To provide for the training of laity and lay leaders in partnership with clergy through the Leadership Academy to promote change and identity opportunities in mission with new ideas and methods to reach more for Jesus Christ.
- To provide support and direction for the ministry of the laity on the local, district, and annual conference levels and to promote observance of Laity Sunday.
- To provide organization, direction and support for the development of local churches.

Laity Board Important Goals:

- 1) The Leadership Academy will continue to create a culture of learning in which laity throughout the Annual Conference will have the opportunity to become engaged, equipped and empowered to be effective partners with the clergy and with each, to lead the church and reach out to the community as disciples of Jesus Christ. In 2023, 38 persons successfully completed the Basic Lay Servant class, 120 completed the Advanced Lay Servant class, and 10 persons completed the Certified Lay Minister course. The Lay Ministries classes are now offered both in-person and online.
- 2) We continue our commitment to Diversity in Leadership as expressed in the Journey of Hope, to work towards increasing the percentage of people of color in leadership positions. For 2 years in a row, we have met our goal of more than 50% of board and agency chairpersons being people of color.
- 3) The Laity Board will continue to ensure that lay representation at Annual Conference 2021-2024 is equal in membership in accordance with the GNJAC Rules of Order/ Book of Discipline. New Quadrennial "At-Large Members" will apply online and agree to be faithful to process as well as commit to attend Annual Conference and report back to local congregation.
- 4) The Laity Board will continue to celebrate the ministry of faithful laity with a format called "Lay Ministry

Recognition.” This program recognizes a person or group that has been creative and innovative in transforming lives and making disciples of Jesus Christ. This is for the purpose of resource sharing and encouraging congregations in their ministries. This program will be reviewed on a yearly basis.

- 5) Laity Board will work with the Connectional Ministry Team and District Superintendents to ensure Christian leaders are offered vital and vibrant educational programs.
- 6) The Laity Board will work collaboratively with all boards, committees, agencies, and the conference leadership to support the strategic goals of GNJ and align its work to advance the Journey of Hope plan and other aspects of GNJ’s strategic plan.

Submitted by: Dr. David Yamoah, Chair Board of Laity & Conference Lay Leader

# MOVING COMMITTEE REPORT

2024 GNJ Annual Conference Session

Moving can be both exhilarating and challenging, and our goal is to ensure that each clergy transition within the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference is as smooth and positive as possible.

In this report, we outline best practices for clergy moves. Afterward, we list the GNJ Fiscal Policies and Procedures for Moving Expenses, as included in CFA's Policies and Procedures. Finally, we present our recommendation: not hire a Conference Moving Coordinator, but rather the creation of additional resources for our clergy's convenience.

## Best Practices for Clergy Moves

### 1. Pastoral Support and Transition

- **Emotional and Spiritual Care:** Moving stirs a range of emotions. Let us create safe spaces for pastors to express their joys, fears, and farewells. Encourage pastors to seek solace in prayer and reflection during this transition. Organize meaningful farewell gatherings to honor departing pastors and their congregations.
- **Orientation and Familiarization:** Introduce pastors to their new congregations as soon as appropriate. Share vital information about the church's history, culture, and key members. Explore the local community together. Familiarity with the context enhances pastoral effectiveness.
- **GNJ Transition Workshop:** Ensure the leaving pastor, incoming pastor, and congregation's transition team all participate in the GNJ Pastoral Transition Workshop, hosted by the Leadership Academy's Teachable platform.
- **Policy & Procedures:** Review GNJ's Moving Policy and Procedure to ensure you're familiar with your responsibilities, reimbursable vs. non-reimbursable expenses and the procedure/documents required for reimbursement.

### 2. Hiring Professional Movers

- **Multiple Estimates:** Obtain at least three written estimates of reputable professional movers to make informed decisions.
- **Schedule Early:** June is a busy time for many moving companies. Select your company and schedule the move early to accommodate transitions into and out of clergy housing.
- **Insurance Coverage:** Verify the company's insurance coverage for any potential damage during the move.
- **Packing Materials:** Ensure the movers use appropriate packing materials such as sturdy boxes and bubble wrap, and furniture blankets. Keep in mind, packing services offered by moving company are not reimbursable in our P&P.
- **Budget:** The cost of moving special items (such as boats, trailers, pianos/organs, etc.) and/or large quantities of belongings related to hobbies are not reimbursable in our P&P.
- **Do NOT pay in cash:** Our P&P requires proof of payment. An invoice marked "paid" is not proof of payment. You need a copy of the personal/certified check, credit card receipt or mobile app transaction (Venmo, Zelle, etc.).

### 3. Practical Logistics and Packing Tips

- **Start Early:** Begin packing at least six weeks before the move. Declutter and gather packing materials during the initial phase.
- **Consolidate:** Group similar items together based on rooms or use. Consolidate non-room-specific items whenever possible.

## GNJ Fiscal Policies and Procedures for Moving Expenses

### Policies:

- All reasonable efforts must be made to secure three bids for the cost of the move; this applies to active and retired clergy.
- The cost of moving is to be paid by the charge for the incoming pastor for moves within the Annual Conference, and for a designated portion of the expenses arising from transfers from other Annual Conferences as determined by the Cabinet of the receiving Annual Conference.

- While the charge to which the pastor moves is responsible for the cost of the move, those pastors who have hobbies that involve considerable quantities of belongings shall contribute in an amount equal to the cost of moving such belongings.
- The cost of packing or moving special items, such as boats or trailers, shall be borne by the pastor.
- When a pastor moves, insofar as possible, it should be the responsibility of the parsonage committee to provide the following services: 1. clean and wax floors; 2. wash windows; 3. Clean rugs, upholstered furniture, and drapes; and 4. ensure that proper furnishings are on hand as per the Standards for Parsonages.
- At moving time, the pastor should leave the parsonage in a clean and orderly condition. The parsonage should be in good repair, faucets not leaking, light switches working, etc. Light bulbs should be left in all fixtures and lamps and should be working. The yard should be neat, the garage orderly, trash hauled away, and keys for all locks should be tagged and marked. There shall then be arranged a joint meeting between the pastor and parsonage committee to evaluate the premises and ensure that it is left in proper condition.
- If a local charge with only one clergy under appointment has more than one move in any three year period, the charge may be reimbursed by the Annual Conference for one-half of the total moving cost through written request to the CFO along with copies of paid receipts.
- Each clergy retired by the Annual Conference (unless appointed to a charge with a parsonage) may submit a bill for moving expenses to the CFO, for not more than \$5,000. This policy shall also apply to the expenses of a surviving spouse moving out of the parsonage upon the death of a pastor while in active service, and to clergy granted disability leave.

#### Procedures:

##### Active Clergy:

1. Local church with clergy under appointment who has more than one move in any three year period qualifies for reimbursement of half the moving expenses. The local church submits all paperwork to the respective Regional Administrator, including:
  - a. Three bids received, as required (or explanation why three bids were not received)
  - b. Copy of all receipts
  - c. Proof of payment (cancelled check or credit card receipt)
2. Regional Administrator confirms eligibility and policy adhered to:
  - a. Eligibility - a local charge with only one clergy under appointment has more than one move in any three year period
  - b. Minimum of two bids presented
  - c. Packing costs, special items (boats/trailers, etc.) and considerable belongings related to hobbies are excluded from the reimbursable total
  - d. Works with the individual and District Superintendent to resolve any discrepancies/disputes over reimbursable total
3. Regional Administrator completes a "Check Request" form and obtains approvals:
  - a. Amount equals one-half of the total reimbursable total
  - b. All supporting documents from # 1 attached
  - c. Approval from District Superintendent, followed by CFO
4. Approved check request submitted to Accounts Payable for payment

##### Retired Clergy:

1. Individual submits all paperwork to the respective Regional Administrator, including:
  - a. Three bids received, as required (or explanation why three bids were not received)
  - b. Copy of all receipts
  - c. Proof of payment (cancelled check or credit card receipt)
2. Regional Administrator confirms eligibility and policy adhered to:
  - a. Eligibility – retired clergy
  - b. Minimum of two bids presented



- c. Packing costs, special items (boats/trailers, etc.) and considerable belongings related to hobbies are excluded from the reimbursable total
  - d. Works with the individual and District Superintendent to resolve any discrepancies/disputes over reimbursable total
3. Regional Administrator completes a "Check Request" form and obtains approvals:
    - a. Total reimbursable not to exceed \$5,000
    - b. All supporting documents from # 1 attached
    - c. Approval from CFO
  4. Approved check request submitted to Accounts Payable for payment

### Recommendations

As to the feasibility of a Conference Move Coordinator, we explored several options:

- Hire a full-time Conference Moving Coordinator.
- Hire a part-time Conference Moving Coordinator.
- Work with independent contractors during the appointment and moving season to coordinate clergy moves.

Because of the volume of moves concentrated in one month only, **we do not recommend hiring a part-time or full-time Moving Coordinator**. With between 40 and 70 moves per year, it would necessitate many coordinators in May and June, but there would be months with no work. The coordination of these coordinators would be onerous and/or expensive.

Our recommendation is, in addition to this report, to share resources, recommendations and best practices on the Conference webpage so that clergy have access to information to make the moving process easier. We also recommend that clergy reach out to friends, colleagues and congregational leaders throughout the moving process for prayer, support and to share resources.

**Submitted by:** Eric Drew, Director of Connectional Ministries

## NEW JERSEY COALITION OF RELIGIOUS LEADERS

The New Jersey Coalition of Religious Leaders is a unifying force of interfaith religious leaders across New Jersey seeking to build a just and merciful world. The interfaith Coalition includes religious leaders from the Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh faith traditions. The Greater New Jersey Annual Conference Coalition membership includes Bishop John Schol, Rev. Dr . Tanya Bennett. Chair of the Conference Board of Church and Society, Mr. Eric Drew, and Rev. Guillermo Javier Barroso, chair of the Commission of Christian Unity and Inter-religious Concerns and Rev. Jack Johnson who serves as the coordinator of the Coalition.

2023 was a significant year for the Coalition as it launched their strategic plan for 2023-2028. The plan grew out of a grant from the Russell Berrie Foundation that engaged Common Cause Consultants to create a new direction for the Coalition Mission. The mission underscored that the Coalition subscribes to a community centered theology, rooted in love, that harnesses the power of interfaith collaboration and fellowship to become a chorus for justice across New Jersey. The strategic priorities included cultivating a network of interfaith grass tops religious leaders, become a voice for policy and systems change, solidify the Coalition role within New Jersey's interfaith movement and fortify the internal operations of the Coalition. Some seventy religious leaders gathered in June 2023 when the Consultants unveiled their strategic priorities for the work of the Coalition.

Our faith based advocacy round table continued to advocate for New Jersey state legislative priorities on issues of fair share housing, a reparations study, criminal justice reform and urban environmental justice. The Coalition's collective voice impacted the success of an affordable housing bill.

Members represented the Coalition on several occasions thru out this past year including the dedication of the BAPS Swaminarayan Akshardham, the world.s second largest Hindu Temple in Robbinsville New Jersey. The interfaith gathering brought together religious leaders from the state, national and world faith traditions. The Coalition observed at it's fall meeting a pray service for world peace at the Ukrainian Cultural Center , Bishop John Schol led the gathering inviting representatives from our diverse faith communities to offer prayers in their faith tradition.

2023 saw expansion in our membership of faith communities including the Salvation Army, The Society of Friends (Quakers), Kean University Faith Based Institue of Public Policy, Seventh Day Adventist Church, Inter Faith Rise, Muslims for Peace, Coastlands Presbytery (PCUSA) New Jersey Regional Sikh Directors, and new synagogue communities.

We look forward to the new year of 2024 with our Public Policy and Advocacy Breakfast to be addressed by New Jersey's Governor, Phil Murphy. Our Public Policy Advocacy team will be presenting focused public policy agenda's for the next two years, plans too are underway for a cooperative interfaith forum in collaboration with Kean University Institute of Public Policy and the Fellowship in Prayer Foundation.

We are most appreciative of the support both financial and leadership resources from the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference, We are ever so mindful of the power of interfaith collaboration and fellowship that becomes a voice for justice across New Jersey.

**Submitted by:** Jack Johnson

## NEXT GENERATION MINISTRIES

The nonprofit organization Conference Council on Camps and Retreats of Greater New Jersey formally changed its name to be Next Generation Ministries of Greater New Jersey, Inc. in 2017 following the passage of the Next Generation Ministries 10 Year Strategic Plan by the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference. The mission of Next Gen continues to be: “to cultivate and catalyze new generations of enthusiastic disciples of Jesus Christ who connect, grow and lead in their church and communities for the transformation of the world.”

These past 7 years have been a rich time of focus, innovation and learning. Of course, COVID made significant changes to the landscape, but we celebrate a number of accomplishments and learnings:

- In 2018 and 2019, we relaunched camp and retreat ministry at the Pinelands Center.
- 15 College and 25 High School Cultivate Internships from 2017 to 2019.
- During the pandemic, IGNITE and IGNITE Communities created online events for youth and youth leaders to connect with God, grow in faith and continue their leadership.
- After a 2-year hiatus, IGNITE returned in 2022 and grew in 2023.
- Partnership with 4 camp and retreat centers in Eastern PA.

There have also been challenges. The Miracles Everywhere Campaign fell nearly \$1M short in its fundraising for Next Generation Ministries. This shortfall, partnered with low engagement in the relaunch of camping ministries and the pandemic led to the closing of Pinelands Center. We are currently working to close the sale of property at both Aldersgate and Pinelands Center. As per the legislation, once the sales are closed Next Gen will provide a full report to GNJ about the investment of all funds.

We also see challenges across GNJ and many Annual Conferences. Fewer youth and young people are involved in local church ministry. There are fewer resources available in local churches and for Annual Conferences to invest in ministry with the next generation of disciples. Youth and family schedules have many activities competing for their time and attention. The way young people and families are investing their time is changing.

The celebrations and challenges point us back to the 10 Year Strategic Plan: Greater New Jersey was wise in setting apart 10 years to focus on this vital ministry area. Now it is more important than ever to cultivate and catalyze new generations of enthusiastic disciples!

In 2023 we began to build on our learnings and new realities to accomplish our mission:

- IGNITE 2023 brought 4 Annual Conferences together: GNJ Eastern PA, New York AC and Upper New York AC. The future of all ministry will be collaborative and additional conferences bring more registrants to share the cost.
- For the school year starting in September 2023, we released a year-long Discipleship Calendar resource including IGNITE, camps and retreats, and other events so that local churches can create a plan for the full year of ministry with young people.
- In 2023 we made a major update to the GNJ Safe Sanctuaries Policy, bringing it much more in line with current best practices and standards for churches. We will revisit this every year.

With the sale of camp properties, these funds can be invested to create endowments and perpetuate ministry. Between 2018 and 2022, each year there were around \$80,000 in the budget for holding closed and vacant properties. After the properties are sold, they will create endowments leading to a draw of \$50,000 or more per year. This will put \$130,000 per year or more into ministry with the Next Generation, allowing us to depend less on Shared Ministry collections from local churches.

To close, I want to update you a little more on the story of David. You may have run into him at IGNITE or Annual Conference in the past. David volunteered with us on the IGNITE Squad. He began to grow his leadership and call through Cultivate Internships. We supported David to attend the Exploration Conference a few years ago, a conference for young people in the UMC to explore their call to ministry. David is currently pursuing his MDiv at the Perkins School of Theology, but he can't wait to come back and serve churches in GNJ. He is one of the young voices on the GNJ Memorandum of Understanding Taskforce, helping to shape the future of GNJ and the UMC through collaboration with Eastern PA. David is a thoughtful, faithful voice on the taskforce and throughout our Annual Conference. He is one beautiful example of GNJ's investment in creating Next Generation Ministries back in 2017.

Thank you for your support of Next Generation Ministries, IGNITE and additional programs. Thank you for your support of youth and young people in your church and community. We are in prayer for pastors, other congregational leaders and all of our congregations as we navigate difficult times. Your investment in the next generation of disciples of Jesus Christ is a great blessing. We can't wait to see what God has for us next.

**Submitted by:** James Lee, Next Gen Board Chairperson,  
& Mekan Payne, Next Gen Program Specialist

## ST. PAUL SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Educating tomorrow's leaders by offering on-campus, online, and hybrid learning courses at a FLEXible schedule, Saint Paul School of Theology is a seminary serving a diverse community committed to the formation of people for innovative, creative ministry through rigorous academic life. Grounded in the academic study of faith and ministry, theology is practiced in a traditional classroom and remote spaces. Our contextual curriculum features Ministry Collaboration Groups, Practicums, Spiritual Formation Retreats, and Seminars. Students learn from dedicated faculty, experienced pastors, and community leaders about best ministry practices, leaving our graduates with the tools and first-hand experience necessary to meet the needs of a changing world.

At the core of our mission at Saint Paul is the formation of people for innovative, creative ministry through rigorous academic life. In 2024, we are launching two exciting new programs to revitalize current pastors and preachers and prepare seminary students for music ministry. First, with the help of Lilly Endowment's Compelling Preaching grant and the leadership of Dr. Casey Sigmon, Assistant Professor of Preaching and Worship and Director of Contextual Education and Pause/Play Center for Preachers, Saint Paul School of Theology is creating a Center that addresses the risk of losing heart and prophetic imagination as a preacher in this divided world. The [Pause/Play Center for Preachers](#)' mission is in its name: to hold space for busy preachers to pause and play their way into a renewal of their vocation as preachers of the Good News. Second, for Fall 2024, as part of our Master of Arts in Christian Ministry (MACM) degree program, we will launch a first-of-its-kind specialization in Modern Worship Music. Saint Paul will partner with The United Methodist Church of the Resurrection and their [COR Worship Collective](#) to prepare students to write, produce, and perform modern worship music. Students will integrate a worship leaders' skills with their study of theology, the bible, history, and worship in a diverse, inclusive, and spiritually enriching environment. Lastly, we recently completed the (Theo) Logic Studio on our Oklahoma Campus. The Studio is for creating, recording, and editing digital media resources for the ministries of students, staff, faculty, and alums. The Studio is a place for content development, from podcasts and video resources to digital graphics.

We continue to invite Saint Paul students, alums, and friends to join us in a hybrid format, where participants may join in-person or online, allowing everyone to come together as one institution from wherever they are. Saint Paul offers weekly chapel services throughout the academic year featuring students, alums, faculty, and local leaders. In addition, weekly Spiritual Formation allows attendees to engage in spiritual practices led by new Oklahoma Chapel Coordinator Rev. Alanna Ireland '23. Some practices take us outdoors or to other sacred spaces, and others have us connect with community leaders.

For the 2023-2024 academic year, we brought 41 new, faithful theologians from across the world to our learning community. International students from South Korea, Belgium, and Mexico added to the global learning environment on both campuses and online. Twenty-seven percent of incoming students identified as a race or ethnicity other than white, and 53 percent identified as female.

Saint Paul staff and faculty continue contributing to the academy, church, and society. The faculty of Saint Paul School of Theology maintains high standards of scholarship, research, publication, and engagement. Over the past year, their many activities and publications have been so numerous that space permits only sharing selected highlights:

- Dr. Israel Kamudzandu, Lindsey P. Pherigo Associate Professor of New Testament Studies and Biblical Interpretation, published *Translation as Incarnation: The Bible in the Twenty-First Century Global South* and was the featured guest speaker of our January forum.
- Dr. Joshua Bartholomew, Assistant Professor of Ethics, Church, and Society, published *Black Theology and The Black Panthers*
- Dr. Elaine Robinson, Professor of Methodist Studies and Christian Theology, published *Leading with Love: Spiritual Disciplines For Practical Leadership*
- Rabbi Michael Zedek, Rabbi-in-Residence, published *Taking Miracles Seriously: A Journey to Everyday Spirituality* and hosted a forum with Dr. Jeanne Hoeft, Associate Professor of Pastoral Theology and Pastoral Care, and Franklin and Louise Cole Associate Professor in Town and Country Ministries, on *The War in Israel and Traumatized Communities*
- Dr. Mike Graves, Professor Emeritus of William K. McElvaney of Preaching and Worship, published *Jesus' Vision for Your One Wild and Precious Life (on Things Like Poverty, Hunger, Polarization, Inclusion, and More)*

The 2023-2024 Fiscal Year brought a change in leadership to the Seminary. Rev. Neil Blair '80 retired as President on December 31, 2023, and President Jay Simmons, formerly Vice President of Institutional Advancement, took the helm at the start of 2024. In addition, Saint Paul Board of Trustees' Chair Dr. Amy Hogan stepped down as Board Chair, with Ms. Sharon Cleaver assuming the position until the end of June 2024. Our current strategic plan is set to conclude within the coming year. Consequently, the Board of Trustees formed a task force several months ago to prepare the next iteration of our strategic plan. Members of the Seminary's Executive Leadership Team are now working with faculty and staff to refine the draft scripted by the task force. These efforts will continue over the next few months until we have a document ready for review by the Board of Trustees. While we are still too early in this effort to comment on any specific initiatives, the plan ultimately endorsed by the Board will guide all our efforts for the next several years. Therefore, this effort is critical in defining how we ensure that Saint Paul remains a vital and vigorous Seminary committed to preparing our students for creative and innovative ministry.

For the 2023-2024 fiscal year, Saint Paul Course of Study (COS) School educated 250 individual students, including 79 new students, with approximately 600 registrations and offering 46 classes. Serving 31 Conferences, 89 Districts, 116 Full Time and 126 Part-Time Licensed Local Pastors comprised these registrations. Seventy percent of these students are taking more than one course. To help offset student costs, twenty percent of all students received aid from their conference or church. COS School continues to attract a diverse student body. One hundred eighty-eight students ranged in age from 30 to 65, and 62 students ranged in age from 66 to 82. Students self-identified across four racial/ethnic groups. Fifty-two percent were male, and forty-eight percent were female. Many COS School students serve more than one church, many rural, with a few dozen students serving three or more churches. We helped 23 students finish the 20-course program this year, issuing them certificates of completion.

With approval from GBHEM, the school has continued its course offerings in both asynchronous and synchronous online formats. Utilizing this online format, we reached students in 28 states. We continue to offer online registration completed by the student with the ability to access their student account through Populi as used by our Seminary students. COS also uses the same learning platform, Moodle, as our Seminary students. By implementing the Course of Study School into Populi, these students share the same benefits as the Seminary, allowing them to participate in the Saint Paul experience. They have full access to the Seminary library on campus and online, with several required readings accessible as an eBook. We have invited COS School students to join our Saint Paul School of Theology Weekly Chapel Services and Spiritual Formation gatherings and other Saint Paul events.

Saint Paul is a financially healthy Seminary. We operate with a balanced budget, no debt, and an endowment that is 9-10 times the size of our annual expenses. Sustainability has been our focus over the past six years, and we have achieved our goal. Investments in our future bring exciting new opportunities for our students, staff, and faculty. As always, we continue to be grateful for donations from the community that provide technology, scholarships, and evolving academic programs to students. Our significant technological investments have allowed us to maintain a

hybrid educational delivery model, providing a flexible working arrangement for our students.

We are continuing to enhance our partnership with Zoom and Neat. We now have Neat Bars & Neat Boards in all our classrooms. In addition, during this last year, we implemented a Neat Board in Harris Chapel on our Oklahoma Campus. We also have Neat Boards in multiple common areas to encourage ad-hoc use of the technology for breakout groups and other miscellaneous meetings between our two campuses and our remote students. One of the best features of this technology is its ability to receive automatic real-time over-the-air feature upgrades. Zoom & Neat continue enhancing our learning environment by rolling out new enhancements, including enhanced whiteboarding, noise cancellation, and AI features. Our Neat equipment continuously monitors several environmental factors within our classrooms: air quality, temperature, humidity, VOC, and CO2, as well as being able to tell if the classrooms are occupied and how many individuals are in the room. We can also monitor the audio/video quality and network connectivity in each of our classrooms, as well as the connection quality for all remote students attending the class. We are excited about the additional enhancements that will come to our classrooms from Neat and Zoom over this next year.

Saint Paul School of Theology is blessed to be your partner in ministry and help those seeking to discover more and answer the call. Your advocacy for the Seminary and generous financial support have been vital in realizing our accomplishments. Many thanks for the innumerable ways you have helped Saint Paul. Your prayers and actions on behalf of the Seminary are a blessing to all of us.

Jay K. Simmons, President

# TRUSTEES CURRENT HOLDINGS

**Board of Trustees**  
**Report of Current Holding as of 1/3/2024**

<b>AVAILABLE PROPERTIES</b>					
<b>Church Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Realtor</b>	<b>Listing Price</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Northern Shore Parsonage	725 Old Corlies Neptune NJ	Monmouth	Jack Green 201-650-3007	\$580,000	
Hawthorne UMC	460 Lafayette St Hawthorne	Bergen	John Brito 908-242-7063	\$1950,000	
Magnolia UMC	300 Evesham Ave, East Magnolia NJ	Camden	Bryan Vurgason 609-828-4397		
New Beginnings	543 State St Camden	Camden	Bryan Vurgason 609-828-4397	\$240,000	

<b>UNDER CONTRACT</b>					
Fieldsboro	200 2 <sup>nd</sup> St Fieldsboro NJ	Burlington	Bryan Vurgason 609-828-4397	\$245,000	Under Contract \$195,000 Issues with Deed-Reverted Clause
Trinity UMC	47-49 E main St Stony Point NY	Rockland	John Brito 908-242-7063	\$1,075,000	Under Contract \$1,300,000
Ellisdale UMC	926 Province Line Rd Allentown NJ	Monmouth	Valerie Vargas 917-217-0599	\$225,000	Under Contract \$200,000

<b>Properties with issues</b>					
<b>Church Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Realtor</b>	<b>Listing Price</b>	<b>Notes</b>
House in Mansfield	267 Main St. Port Murray	Warren			GNJ does not own the property; ongoing dispute with Township
Land in Roxbury	6 Oneida Roxbury	Morris			Property has no value
1 <sup>st</sup> Salem UMC	152 Yorke Street Salem NJ	Salem			Township took ownership December 2023 (tax lien was more than value of property). Kept on this report only as update vs. last year's report.

**Board of Trustees**  
**Report of Current Holding as of 1/3/2024**

<b>Rentals</b>	<b>Church Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>RENTED</b>	<b>Notes</b>
	Woodruff UMC	4 E Finley Rd Bridgeton NJ	Cumberland	Rented to Victory Assembly of God	\$1,500/ month plus utilities. We need to replace the heater (major expense)
	Ewan UMC	325 Ewan Road Ewan NJ	Gloucester	Ridgewood Preschool	\$800/ month plus utilities. Property will be put on the market in in 2024.
	Stratford Parsonage	9 Sleepy Hollow Road Stratford	Camden County	Unity in Christ UMC	No cost rent to start-up congregation

**Other Conference Properties:**

- I. District Parsonages:
  - Cape Atlantic- rented to Oasis UMC.
  - Capital
  - Raritan Valley
  - Gateway North
  - MRC- Researching solar and EV Charger options.
  
- II. Cemeteries:
  - Mt Zion Methodist Cemetery, Lower Twp, Cape May
  - Esteville Methodist Cemetery, Estelle Manor City
  - Pointville Cemetery, New Hanover Twp. (owned by Pointville Cemetery Association and cared for by Joint Base McGuire) according to research done in 2016
  - Whitesville Methodist Cemetery, Jackson Twp
  - Wrightstown Cemetery, Wrightstown



**Board of Trustees**  
**Report of Current Holding as of 1/3/2024**

- III. Other properties
- Bethel UMC- Camden NJ- Now a Hope Center in a in conjunction with Asbury Woodlynnne. Beautiful work done by DS Glenn Conaway, Rev Dennis Blackwell, longtime pastor of Asbury and Tim Merryll, a native resident of Camden, leader at Asbury UMC and former Youth Pastor at Bethel. Together they are working to offer a new place for new people, while serving Christ and this underserved Camden community. Trustees are working on transferring the deed of Bethel to Asbury Woodlynnne UMC.
  - Lord's Grace – Bishop, Trustees and Chancellor Lynn Caterson working through dispute over closed property.
  - Calvary UMC- Kearny (closed as of 12/31/23)- BOT to vote in January 2024 to put property on the market.
- IV. JOH Properties – offered to Lenne Lenape Tribe
- Woodruff UMC- Bridgeton
  - Leesburg UMC- Leesburg
  - Deepwater UMC- Deepwater
  - Zion UMC- Diving Creek

## UM STEWARDSHIP FOUNDATION OF GREATER NEW JERSEY

Explore our new website for updates on investment options and how we can serve to help drive your stewardship and mission: [www.gnjfoundation.org](http://www.gnjfoundation.org)

2023 was an active and important year for the UM Stewardship Foundation of Greater New Jersey. Two exceptional new Board members joined an already strong team with Bre' Caldwell MBA, from Franklin St. John's UMC, Newark and Larry Springer, CLU, ChFC, CFP. from Simpson UMC in Old Bridge, NJ.

The Stewardship Foundation, which dates back, in several iterations, to 1990 ended 2023 with new accounts and over sixty-seven million dollars of assets under management. A new short-term investment launched as the Fidelity Institutional Money Market (FIGXX) was added as a service to those investing through the Stewardship Foundation.

The Stewardship Foundation invests through Wespath Institutional Investments. These investments values did well as the "balanced" Multiple Asset Fund in 2023 gained over 14% in 2023. New Asset Allocation models were also added in partnership with Wespath Institutional Investments that provide investment options for the range of ministry needs; short-term (up to 2 years). Mid-term (2-5 years) and long-term (5+ years to endowed funds for perpetuity). ALL the Wespath Investments align with our United Methodist values while generating competitive returns.

Helping congregations start or re-energize their Planned Giving Programs is one focus of the Foundation. With many congregations having an aging membership, increasing fixed costs, and large, dated facilities the Foundation seeks to help congregations develop an integrated fiscal plan. Developing alternative income streams and planned giving are two areas that will help create sustainable fiscal models. Several congregations launched Endowment Committees per the process in the Book of Discipline, guided and resourced by the Foundation.

Finally, the Stewardship Foundation held the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Stewardship & Generosity Summit, sponsored by the Foundation was held April 11<sup>th</sup> at Haddonfield UMC. Thanks goes to Horizon Stewardship and their lead team Joe Park, Rev. Scott McKenzie, PhD, and Kristine Miller. The summit, open to clergy and laity allowed many to engage with "best practices" and emerging models for growing giving and creating a viable, integrated fiscal model.

Throughout the year the Foundation's Executive Director, Rev. Brian Roberts led training sessions, preached at many congregations and held meetings with leaders across the Annual Conference.

The Foundation Board intentionally worked to increase offerings and resources with new investment investments options and a new website that came online in the first quarter of the year. We invite you to visit [www.gnjfoundation.org](http://www.gnjfoundation.org) regularly to draw on resources, go to DonorView online access for investors and check out upcoming events.

We continue to focus on growing generosity in response to God's Grace with appreciation to each of the dedicated Board members and to all the congregations and ministries that invest through the Foundation and utilize resources provided.

Virginia "Ginger" Harriett, CFP, AIF, CRES, Board Chair; Rev. Brian Roberts, Executive Director

## UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

DAYTON, OH

For more than 150 years, United Theological Seminary has prepared men and women to serve as faithful and fruitful Christian leaders who make disciples of Jesus Christ. In the 2022-2023 academic year, the seminary served 547 students, representing 36 states, 20 countries, and 43 denominations, with 38% of students identifying as United Methodist. United in Christ, the student body is a multi-ethnic, multi-racial community that is 43% African American, 27% White, 18% international, 9% Hispanic, and 2% Asian or Pacific Islander.\* During the 2022-2023 academic year, 120 graduates completed their programs.

### Houses of Study

United's academic programs include seven Houses of Study for denominational, church renewal, and/or language- and culture-based ministry, including online Spanish and Korean houses of study. These houses of study have enrolled over 120 new master's students in the United States and around the world.

### Bishop Bruce Ough Innovation Center

In 2023, the Bishop Bruce Ough Innovation Center, directed by Rev. Sue Nilson Kibbey, engaged more than 5,000 participants through 64 resourcing events and activities. The Center partnered with the Black Methodists for Church Renewal Laity Advocacy Committee to conduct the 2023 Laity Leadership Institution. The Center also launched a *Dynamite Prayer* movement, based on the guidebook *Dynamite Prayer: A 28 Day Experiment* (Invite Resources, 2022) by Rev. Kibbey and Rev. Dr. Rosario Picardo. Multiple United Methodist conferences and more than 90 congregations across denominations committed to be part of a Dynamite Prayer Wave and received resourcing on the practice of "breakthrough prayer."

### New Faces at United

Over the past year, the seminary welcomed several new members to the United community. Bishop James Swanson, most recently bishop of the Mississippi Conference of The United Methodist Church, was installed as United Methodist Bishop-in-Residence. Dr. Pauline Paris Buisch and Rev. Dr. Xavier L. Johnson joined the faculty as Assistant Professor of Old Testament and Assistant Professor of Preaching and Black Church Studies, respectively, and Dr. Eliseo Mejia came on board as the Academic Oversight Officer for the Hispanic House of Study.

### Reducing Student Debt

Finances shouldn't stand in the way of a seminary education. That's why United has launched the Fresh Wind: Where the Spirit Takes Flight campaign to add \$10 million to the scholarship endowment, which will dramatically increase the seminary's capacity to provide scholarships to students for many years to come. As of January 2024, the seminary was more than 70% toward the \$10 million goal.

Dr. Kent Millard, President

*\* Student data represent unduplicated headcount enrollment for the 2022-2023 academic year. Demographic figures represent those who responded.*

## UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

Report to the GNJ Annual Conference 2024

Submitted by President, Sue Zahorbenski

“United Women in Faith seeks to connect and nurture women through Christian spiritual formation, leadership development, creative fellowship, and education so they can inspire, influence and impact local and global communities.” This is the Mission Statement that was adopted in 2022 as we launched our new brand, and now celebrate 155 years of mission to improve the lives of women, children and youth. We also continue our focus on climate justice and the criminalization of communities of color.

Leadership Development is a focus for nurturing the talent of the women of the United Methodist Church, as well as those beyond our denomination. Our “Days of Action and Love” in January and February, were co-sponsored by our Charter for Racial Justice Committee. The three breakout rooms were Congressional Outreach, Native American Issues: “We Are Still Here” and Gun Violence. We held an additional Leadership Development day in April to honor the service of Harriet Jane Olson, who retired as CEO and General Secretary after a “15-year tenure marked by programmatic and structural innovations and bold changes to strengthen the organization and position it for a future of growth and increased impact.” <https://uwfaith.org/press/2022/united-women-in-faith-ceo-harriett-jane-olson-retires-spring-2023/>

Our spring celebration on April 15<sup>th</sup>, “Welcoming the Stranger,” was held at Pitman UMC. Rev. Tom Lank, Executive Director of the Immigration Law and Justice Network of the Delaware Valley (ILJN), was our speaker. Streamed on Facebook Live, he told stories about the trauma facing immigrant families and how his organization of lawyers and advocates tries to help. The offering was divided between the ILJN and Camden Neighborhood Center summer camps.

Mission U in July was our first return to a college campus since Covid! We spent two days at Centenary University, welcomed by their new president, our own Dale Caldwell! We studied the Lord’s Prayer in its original Aramaic – “O Birther, Father-Mother of the cosmos...” A highlight was a simulation where participants designed a community’s ideal response to a racial bias attack. Besides the live venue (45 participants led by Wilhemina Jackson and Bernadette Cataline), there was also a 2-day virtual event (23 led by same).

Since April, the Legislative Action Team, joined by members of the Charter for Racial Justice Committee, had planned a fall trip to Trenton to visit our legislators. Our preparation session, “How to be an Advocate: Legislative Action Training” was based on national training. Unfortunately, due to the Assembly & Senate schedules, we could not find a suitable date for our trip. We hope to pursue this again in 2024.

The Fall celebration, held at the MRC on October 21<sup>st</sup> featured “TEACHING RESILIENCE: Healthy Perspectives for Children (& all).” One thing we learned from the speaker, Meg Isbitski, a Licensed Social Worker and Disaster Response Crisis Counselor, is that coming out to community events like this is a healthy preventative for stress. All 45 attendees (plus 10 virtual) enjoyed activities led by Rutgers Medical School students, such as chair yoga, meditation, coloring, aromatherapy, and journaling. This was followed by our annual meeting where we held elections and approved the Pledge to Mission for 2024. The offering was divided between the Camden Neighborhood Center, which also received the ingathering of children’s fidget toys, and the Pledge to Mission.

Barbara Miller, Spiritual Enrichment Advisor, led four virtual micro-retreats (under an hour). The theme was Practicing Presence. Our GNJ Soul Care Retreat was held in July at Pendle Hill, a Quaker conference center in Pennsylvania. The setting was perfect for relaxation, rejuvenation and spiritual nourishment.

Thanks to the generous giving of many local units of United Women in Faith, we met our 2023 Pledge to Mission, despite that fact that many groups have not resumed meeting since the pandemic began. Please go to our [gnjumw.org](http://gnjumw.org) website for more information and 2024 events. The national website is [uwfaith.org](http://uwfaith.org) and includes videos, podcasts and an online membership option.

## UPDATES FROM THE 2023 ANNUAL CONFERENCE SESSION

### Annual Conference Rules

At the end of the 2023 Annual Conference, it was determined that the Conference Rules need tweaking and the rationale for the changes you will be voting on is as follows.

#1 A Resolution maker needs to be advised before the Pre-conference Journal is printed that his/her Resolution is likely to be ruled “out of order” and that a few changes could well make the Resolution “In order” and make the presentation run smoothly. Therefore, the proposed Rule change allows this process to occur and the correction made before printing in the pre-conference journal.

#2 The existing Rules now only require the Conference Secretary to determine if CFA is to review a Resolution. To insure there is a complete review prior to Annual Conference, CFA should review all submissions. This is the Rule change proposed.

### #forTanzania Campaign

As of February 20, 2024 GNJ has given \$74,133.09 to build a church building and pay pastors an equitable salary for the Tanzania Annual Conference. The land for the church building was purchased on January 13, 2024 and construction began on February 6, 2024. They are on track to finish construction by the time the GNJ Team lands in Tanzania for the 2024 Pastor’s School and we anticipate Bishop Schol and Bishop Mande Muyombo consecrating the church on May 26, 2024.

We continue to raise funds to pay pastors in Tanzania an equitable salary of \$1,200 in 2024. As of February 20, 2024 we are in the process of sending the first funds to be disbursed by the Tanzania Annual Conference.

The Tanzania Annual Conference has shared messages of deep gratitude and thanks for the generosity of United Methodists Greater New Jersey.

# RULES OF ORDER

Paragraph (§) references are to the 2012 and 2016 Book of Discipline as corrected by Errata notations issued by the General Conference. Portions in “quotation marks” are Disciplinary wording.

## GENERAL

These Rules (hereafter called the “Rules”) shall be standing rules for the governance of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference. At all times, the Rules shall be subject to the provisions of the applicable provisions of the Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church (hereafter called the “Discipline”. Unless otherwise indicated, all paragraph references below shall refer to the paragraph numbers and letters indicating provisions of the Discipline). Except as they may be inconsistent with applicable provisions of the Discipline, the Rules shall remain applicable unless and until modified or suspended as set forth below.

## I MEMBERSHIP

- 1) **Composition** – “The annual conference shall be composed of clergy and lay members. The clergy membership shall consist of deacons and elders in full connection, provisional members, associate members, and local pastors under appointment. The lay membership shall consist of professing lay members elected by each charge, the diaconal ministers, the active deaconesses, and home missionaries under episcopal appointment within the bounds of the annual conference, the conference president of United Methodist Women, the conference president of United Methodist Men, the conference lay leader, district lay leaders, the conference director of Lay Speaking Ministries, conference secretary of Global Ministries (if lay), the president or equivalent officer of the conference young adult organization, the president of the conference youth organization, the chair of the annual conference college student organization and one young person between the ages of twelve and seventeen and one young person between the ages of eighteen and thirty from each district. Each charge served by more than one clergy shall be entitled to as many lay members as there are clergy members.” (§ 32) Each church shall elect a lay member and an alternate lay member as outlined in Rule 3a. Additional lay members, as provided in Rule 6, shall be members under the lay equalization formula.
- 2) **Clergy Membership** – “The clergy membership of an annual conference (§ 370) shall consist of deacons and elders in full connection (§ 333), provisional members, associate members (§ 327), affiliate members (§§ 344.4, 586.4), and local pastors under full-time and part-time appointment to a pastoral charge (§ 317). (See also § 32).” (§ 602.1)
  - a) “Clergy members in full connection shall have the right to vote in the annual conference on all matters except in the election of lay delegates to the general and jurisdictional or central conferences and shall have sole responsibility for all matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy.” (§ 602.1a)
  - b) “Provisional clergy members shall have the right to vote in the annual conference on all matters except constitutional amendments, election of clergy delegates to the General and jurisdictional or central conferences, and matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy. (§602.b) Provisional clergy members who have completed all of their educational requirements may vote to elect clergy delegates to General and jurisdictional or central conferences. (See Judicial Council Decision #1181 and § 35, Article IV).”
  - c) Associate clergy members shall have the right to vote in the annual conference on all matters except constitutional amendments, and matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy. When associate members are members of the conference Board of Ordained Ministry, they have the right to vote at clergy session on matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy. (§ 602.c) Affiliate clergy members shall have the right to vote in the annual conference on all matters

except the constitutional amendments, election of clergy delegates to the General, jurisdictional or central conferences, and matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy. (See Judicial Council Decision #1181 and ¶ 35, Article IV).

- d) Full-time and part-time local pastors under appointment to a pastoral charge shall have the right to vote in the annual conference on all matters except constitutional amendments; election of delegates to the General and jurisdictional or central conferences and matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy. When local pastors are members of the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, they have the right to vote at clergy session on matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy. (¶ 602.d). Local pastors who have completed course of study or an M.Div. degree and have served a minimum of two consecutive years under appointment before the election may vote to elect clergy delegates to General and jurisdictional or central conferences. (See Judicial Council Decision #1181 and ¶ 35, Article IV).

### **3) Election and Qualifications of Lay Members**

- a) Lay members and one or more alternate lay members for each church shall be elected quadrennially at the regular meeting of the charge conference following the meeting of the general conference. “Both the lay members and the alternates shall have been professing members in good standing of The United Methodist Church for at least two years and shall have been active participants for at least four years next preceding their election (see ¶ 32), except in a newly organized church, which shall have the privilege of representation at the annual conference session.” (¶ 251.2) There shall be no restriction as to the number of terms for which a qualified person may be elected a lay member or alternate lay member.
- b) District youth and young adult representatives may be elected annually by the Ministries with Young People Team (or its successor, however named).

- 4) Seating of Lay Members** – Lay members and alternate lay members shall take office as of January 1 following their election, and the term of office shall be for the ensuing quadrennium. If the regular meeting of a Charge Conference is delayed beyond the year of the meeting of the General Conference, the lay member and alternate lay members shall take office immediately upon election. If the office of lay member or alternate lay member of any church becomes vacant during the quadrennium, a replacement for the unexpired term shall be elected at the next regular meeting of the Charge Conference or at a special meeting thereof. Each District Superintendent shall provide the Conference Secretary with a correct list of lay members from charges within the district by January 15 prior to the first meeting of the Annual Conference in the quadrennium. It shall be to the lay members so listed that credentials shall be issued for seating at sessions of the Annual Conference.

- 5) Lay Representation of a Local Church** – If the church’s lay representative to the Annual Conference “shall cease to be a member of the charge or shall for any reason fail to serve, an alternate lay member in the order of election shall serve in place.” (¶ 251.2) If there is no alternate lay member who can attend, another lay member or alternate lay member may be elected by the Charge Conference.

- a) The pastor may request the District Superintendent to authorize a special session of the Charge Conference for the purpose of electing a lay member or alternate lay member. A special session of the Charge Conference requires the written consent of the District Superintendent in his/her absence, and at least ten days advance notice to its members. (¶ 250)
- b) The pastor shall report to the District Superintendent and the Conference Secretary, in writing, the name and address of the elected lay member or alternate lay member.
- c) Under no circumstances shall a person who is not duly elected as stated above be seated at sessions of the Annual Conference.

- 6) Equalization of Lay Members** – “If the lay membership should number less than the clergy members of the annual conference, the annual conference shall, by its own formula, provide for the election of additional lay members to equalize the number of lay and clergy membership of the Annual Conference.” (¶ 32) Members will be added in the order nominated or recommended for selection until the required



number of additional lay members is reached. All terms will be for the quadrennium with the exception of category “i” below which shall be annually.

- a) The following persons shall be named as additional Lay Members to Annual Conference:
  - i. The Conference Secretary, Conference Treasurer, and Conference Statistician, when persons elected to these offices are lay persons who meet the disciplinary requirements for Conference membership and are not otherwise elected.
  - ii. Elected Lay Delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conferences not otherwise elected as Lay Members of the Annual Conference.
  - iii. Lay Chairpersons of the following agencies not otherwise elected as Lay Members of the Annual Conference: Council on Finance and Administration, Commission on Archives and History, Commission on Equitable Compensation, Committee on the Episcopacy, Board of Pensions, Board of Trustees, Board of Church and Society, Board of Discipleship, Board of Global Ministries, Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry, Commission on Camps and Conferences, Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns, Commission on Religion and Race, Commission on the Status and Role of Women, Commission on Communications, and Commission on the Ethnic Local Church.
  - iv. The past conference Lay Leaders not otherwise elected as Lay Members of the Annual Conference. This includes the former Northern New Jersey and Southern New Jersey Conferences as well as the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference.
  - v. Laity members of the Council on Finance and Administration not otherwise elected as Lay Members of the Annual Conference.
  - vi. Laity members of the Sessions Committee not otherwise elected as Lay Members of the Annual Conference.
  - vii. The District Presidents of United Methodist Women and District Presidents of United Methodist Men not otherwise elected as Lay Members of the Annual Conference.
  - viii. Lay Missionaries not otherwise elected as Lay Members of the Annual Conference.
  - ix. The District Directors of Lay Speaking Ministries not otherwise elected as Lay Members of the Annual Conference.
  - x. The co-secretaries of the Ministries with Young People Team, the Youth Service Fund Chairperson and one additional Youth and Young Adult from each District not otherwise elected as Lay Members of the Annual Conference.
- b) Nominations for additional Lay members from local churches: In the year preceding the beginning of the quadrennium, the Laity Council shall solicit nominations for additional Lay Members from local churches through Administrative Boards or Councils. The Laity Council will receive the nominations and elect those who will serve as additional Lay Members for the succeeding quadrennium. Vacancies that occur during the quadrennium shall be filled by the action of the Laity Council.

- 7) Lay Membership** – “The lay members of the annual conference shall participate in all deliberations and vote upon all measures except on the granting or validation of license, ordination, reception into full conference membership, or any question concerning the character and official conduct of ordained ministers, except those who are lay members of the Board of Ordained Ministry and the committee on investigation.” (§ 602.6)
- 8) Seated Without Vote** – The following shall be seated without vote in the Annual Conference and shall be given the privilege of the floor without vote: student local pastors, lay missionaries regularly appointed by the Board of Global Ministries in fields outside the United States, and the Conference Chancellor(s) “if not otherwise a voting member of the annual conference” (§602.10) The following shall be invited to attend the Annual Conference, without voice or vote, on the same financial basis as members of the Annual Conference: spouses of deceased clergy members, persons not officially eligible for appointment who have been assigned by the District Superintendents between sessions of Annual Conference as pastors in charge with the intention of appointment or reassignment for the ensuing conference year,



and persons to be presented for consecration as Diaconal Ministers or ordained as Deacons or Elders. Staff and clerical personnel necessary for the conducting of the Annual Conference Session shall attend at conference expense.

- 9) Attendance of Members** – “It is the duty of every member and all provisional members and local pastors of the annual conference to attend its sessions and furnish such reports in such form as the Discipline may require. Any such person unable to attend shall report by letter to the conference secretary, setting forth the reason for the absence. Should any ordained minister in active service be absent from the session of the annual conference without a satisfactory reason for the absence, the matter shall be referred by the conference secretary to the Board of Ordained Ministry.” (§ 602.8)

## II ORGANIZATION

- 10) Presiding Officer** – The bishop assigned shall preside over the annual conference, or “in case of inability, shall arrange for another bishop to preside. In the absence of a bishop, the conference shall by ballot, without nomination or debate, elect a president pro-tempore from among the traveling elders. The president thus elected shall discharge all the duties of a bishop except ordination.” (§ 603.6)
- 1) The Presiding Officer shall see that all business pertaining to the Conference shall be brought forward and conducted in a proper manner, according to the provisions of the Discipline and Rules for the Conference.
  - 2) The Presiding Officer shall decide all questions of order, subject to the right of appeal by any member of the Conference.
  - 3) The Presiding Officer shall appoint all committees and officers not otherwise designated to the Nominating Committee, unless otherwise directed by the Conference.
  - 4) The Presiding Officer shall appoint an elder to preside at the Conference during any temporary absence.
- 11) Conference Secretary** – At the session following the General Conference, the Annual Conference shall elect a Secretary to serve for the succeeding quadrennium. The Nominating Committee, in consultation with the Bishop and Cabinet, shall present the nomination. Term of office shall not exceed two consecutive quadrennia. “In the case of a vacancy in the interim of the sessions, the bishop, after consultation with the district superintendents, shall appoint a person to act until the next session of the annual conference.” (§ 603.7) Term limits of Rule 58a. shall apply.
- 1) The Secretary shall keep a correct record of the proceedings of the Conference, authenticating by signature all acts of the Conference.
  - 2) The Secretary shall handle all notification and communications directed by the Conference.
  - 3) Unless otherwise directed, the Secretary shall handle all other matters that normally come under the Secretary’s responsibility.
  - 4) The Secretary shall have the responsibility for editing, publishing, and distributing the Journal, Yearbook and Minutes of the Annual Conference.
  - 5) The Secretary shall nominate any staff that require election by the Conference.
- 12) Conference Statistician** – At the first session following the General Conference, the Annual Conference shall elect a Statistician to serve for the succeeding quadrennium. “In the case of a vacancy in the interim of the sessions, the bishop, after consultation with the district superintendents, shall appoint a person to act until the next session of the annual conference.” (§ 603.7)
- 13) Conference Treasurer** – The “annual conference, on nomination of its council on finance and administration, shall at the first session of the conference after the quadrennial session of the general conference or jurisdictional conference, or at such other times as a vacancy exists, elect a conference treasurer/director of administrative services. If a vacancy shall occur during the quadrennium, the council shall fill the vacancy until the next session of the annual conference.” (§ 619)
- 14) Conference Chancellors** – The Annual Conference may designate as Chancellor one or more laypersons, each of whom is a member in good standing of one of the local churches or a clergy person who is a

member of the Annual Conference in the Episcopal Area, and who is a member of the appropriate bar or bars in the Episcopal Area. Each chancellor, who shall be nominated by the bishop and elected by the Annual Conference, shall serve as legal advisor to the Bishop and the Annual Conference. (§ 603.8)

**15) Conference Parliamentarian** – There shall be a Parliamentarian at each Plenary Session of the Annual Conference. The bishop shall select the Parliamentarian(s).

**16) Rules of Order Committee** –

- 1) There shall be a standing Rules of Order Committee of eight (8) members, four (4) clergy and four (4) lay, nominated by the Committee on Nominations. The Conference Parliamentarian, if not already a member, shall be an ex-officio member of this committee with vote.
- 2) Prior to the consideration of any other business of an Annual Conference Session, the Rules of Order Committee shall present, for informational purposes only, any changes to the Rules mandated by changes in the Discipline.
- 3) The Rules of Order Committee shall also present for adoption by the Conference any other changes to the Rules that the Committee recommends. If any member of the Annual Conference desires to propose any other change to the Rules, the member shall submit a resolution setting forth the proposed change in accordance with the deadline for submitting proposed legislation. See Rule 19b. Upon its submission, the proposed legislation shall be referred to the Rules Committee for its review and response, prior to any vote on the legislation by the Conference.

### III BUSINESS PROCEDURES

**17) Roll Call** – The Conference Secretary shall take the roll of all members of this Annual Conference, both clergy and lay, by card registration while the Conference is in session, and the attendance shall be recorded in the Journal. Upon registration, members shall receive a name badge which shall state name, church, or position, and which shall also indicate voting rights.

**18) The Bar of the Conference** – The bar of the Conference shall be fixed at the beginning of each Annual Conference on motion of the Secretary. All members of the Conference, lay and clergy, must be within the bar of the Conference to have the privilege of the floor and to vote. Other persons shall be seated outside the bar of the Conference as indicated by the ushers.

**19) Pre-Conference Reports and Recommendations** –

- a) Reports –
  - i. There shall be a Pre-Conference Workbook which shall contain all reports of Conference, Jurisdictional and General agencies, boards, commissions, committees, councils, or teams received at the Conference offices by the first business day of March (or such other deadline as the Conference Secretary may establish). Such reports are to identify how the agency or other body has helped the Conference make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, how the agency has furthered the goals of the Conference, and the goals of the agency or other body for the coming year. Any such report may be included in the Journal of the Annual Conference, subject to editorial corrections, at the discretion of the Conference Secretary. Any recommendations from such an agency or other body must be submitted separately as legislation for consideration by the Annual Conference, in accordance with applicable procedures and deadlines for legislation.
  - ii. Except as provided in (b) below, no reports or recommendations of any Conference agency excepting the Board of Ordained Ministry and the Committee on Nominations, and then only with the consent of the bishop, shall be acted upon unless (1) they shall have been correctly and timely submitted to be included in the Pre-Conference Workbook as reports or legislation (as indicated above).
- b) Recommendations –
  - i. The Pre-Conference Workbook shall contain all proposed legislation and all reports of agencies, boards, commissions, committees, councils, or teams that have been received by the Annual

- Conference offices by January 31. (or such other deadline as the Conference Secretary may establish). Such submissions shall be made through the Conference website or by such other means as the Conference Secretary may establish. The Conference Secretary shall promptly refer all such submissions to CORR and COSROW for review for explicit or implicit bias. The Conference Secretary shall also promptly refer proposals and recommendations that affect the Conference Rules to the Rules Committee, and proposals and recommendations that affect the budget or finances of the Conference to the Committee on Finance and Administration, for their review. CORR and COSROW, the Rules Committee, and CF&A shall have two weeks after such referral to conduct a review and submit any recommendations and/or proposed changes. Any such recommendations and/or proposed changes shall be submitted to the Conference Secretary and copied to the person(s) or organization originally submitting the proposals or recommendations. Such persons or organizations shall then have ten days to submit any revisions to be included in the Pre-Conference Workbook. Approved at the 2022 Annual Conference.
- ii. All proposed legislation and reports received after January 31 (or such other deadline as the Conference Secretary may establish) shall be submitted to the agenda committee for review. Upon the agenda committee's recommendation and the bishop's consent, such items may be included in the agenda where urgent and appropriate.
  - iii. All recommendations submitted to the Conference Secretary in a timely manner shall be submitted to the CF&A by the Conference Secretary or his/her designee in time for the CF&A to present its findings to the annual conference in the Pre-Conference journal. If CF&A determines that adoption of the recommendation would have a financial impact, CF&A shall report its understanding of such impact.
  - iv. Greater NJ Commission on the Status and Role of Women and the Greater NJ Commission on Religion and Race shall review all reports, resolutions and legislations submitted for the consideration to the Annual Conference prior to the printing of the Preconference Journal for explicit or implicit biases and recommend changes to the appropriate bodies or individuals through the Conference Secretary to insure just, inclusive and equitable reports and resolutions that honor all of God's people and do not harm. If the agency decides not to make the change to its report, COSROW and Religion and Race will report to the Annual Conference session their concerns. \*Approved at the 2021 Annual Conference.
- 20) Program** – The program as contained in the Pre-Conference Workbook shall be the official program of the session of the Annual Conference, subject to necessary modifications by the Chairperson of the Session Agenda Subcommittee.
- 21) Official Journal** – The Conference Journal, signed by the Presiding Officer and the Secretary, shall be the official Journal of the conference. Among other materials included by the Conference Secretary, the Conference Journal shall contain all legislation and recommendations agreed to by the Annual Conference.
- 22) Copy for the Journal** – All materials for publication in the Conference Journal shall be in the hands of the Editor of the Journal (who shall be the Conference Secretary, or a person selected by the Conference Secretary) by the close of the Conference Session. Exceptions to this rule shall be at the discretion of the Editor.
- a) All substantive actions of the Conference shall be indicated in the Conference Journal. The Editor of the Journal shall have authority to make all appropriate, non-substantive editorial and conforming changes and corrections. Where explicitly so authorized by the Conference, the Editor of the Journal and the author of the action shall also be empowered to edit the contents of a given action together, to reflect the intent of the Conference. Rationales, preambles or supporting statements shall not be printed except in the case of complimentary resolutions.
  - b) Memoirs shall be limited to five hundred (500) words.

- c) Addresses delivered to the Conference Session shall not be included in the Conference Journal, except for those of the Bishop, the District Superintendents and Conference Lay Leader(s). A motion to so include shall be out of order unless prior permission to make the motion shall have been received in writing by a committee composed of the Secretary of the Conference, the Editor of the Journal, the Chair of the Council on Finance and Administration, the Chair of the Conference Sessions Committee, and the Dean of the Conference Cabinet.

**23) Distribution** – The Journal shall be distributed according to the following formula:

- a) One mailed paper copy for each surviving spouse of clergy or laity member in the year the Memorial is printed in the Journal at no cost.
- b) One paper copy to each conference officers, agency chairpersons, and general and jurisdictional agencies as required by the Discipline.
- c) One mailed paper copy upon request to retired clergy.
- d) A hard copy printed journal will be produced and available to all members upon request. A minimum fee for production and mailing costs will be assessed to each hard copy journal request. The amount to be paid for the journal will be published in advance.
- e) An online version of the journal will be available on [www.gnjumc.org](http://www.gnjumc.org) and available for download and review.
- f) All Annual Conference reports will be made available on the conference website.
- g) The Conference Journal will not be produced in CD format.

**24) Copyright** – In order to protect its directories and contents from unauthorized use, the Conference Secretary shall copyright the Journal on behalf of the Annual Conference.

**25) Mail Ballot** - In an emergency situation as declared by the Council on Finance and Administration, a mail ballot may be taken of the Annual Conference. All members of the Annual Conference immediately preceding the emergency will receive ballots. The vote will be confidential with the outside envelope requiring the signature of the member.

**26) Remote Participation Annual Conference** - In a situation which a state of emergency has been declared by the Governor of New Jersey or other applicable governmental authority, or in extraordinary circumstances as declared by the Bishop, Cabinet, Conference Trustees and CFA, the regular Annual Conference session, or a Special Annual Conference session, or parts of either, can be held by means of remote participation. Notice of such a session and all such means of remote participation shall meet all requirements of the Discipline, applicable state law, and the Rules of Order, including without limitation:

- a) authorization and prior notice of the meeting and means of participation.
- b) verification of membership and voting credentials.
- c) reasonable opportunity to concurrently see, read or hear, participate and vote; and
- d) record and maintain a record of any votes or other actions.

#### IV PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES

**27) Order of Precedence of Motions –**

- a) Not debatable
  - Privileged
    - Fix time at which to adjourn (when compared to other privileged) \*#
    - Adjourn (when compared to other privileged)
    - Take a recess (when compared to other privileged) \*#
  - Raise a question of privilege
  - Call for the orders of the day
    - Subsidiary
  - Lay on the table (2/3)
  - Previous question (2/3)
  - Limit or extend time of debate (2/3)

*\* Can be amended; the others cannot be amended. (from Robert's Rules of Order)*

*# Is privileged only when other business is before the Conference. (from RRO)*

b) Debatable

Postpone to a certain time

Commit or refer

Amend

Postpone indefinitely

Main motions

**28) Main Motion** – A main motion is a proposal that the Conference take certain action, or that it express itself as holding certain views. Any member may make a motion.

**29) Motions Which Are Not Debatable** – The following motions shall be acted upon without debate:

- a) To adjourn, when unqualified, except to adjourn the conference.
- b) To suspend the rules. (2/3 vote)
- c) To take from the table.
- d) To call for the previous question. (2/3 vote)
- e) To reconsider a non-debatable motion
- f) To limit or extend the limits of debate. (2/3 vote)
- g) To call for the order of the day.

**30) Precedence of Secondary Motions** – If any one or more of the following motions are pending, the order of precedence in relation to one another shall be the same as the order of their listing below:

- a) To fix the time at which the Conference shall adjourn. (This motion is subject to amendment, or it may be laid on the table.)
- b) To adjourn.
- c) To take a recess.
- d) To order the previous question.
- e) To lay on the table.
- f) To limit or extend the limits of debate.
- g) To postpone to a certain time.
- h) To commit or refer.
- i) To amend or substitute.
- j) To postpone indefinitely.

**31) When a Second is not required** – The following do not require a second, pursuant to latest edition of Roberts Rules of Order.

- a) To raise a question of privilege.
- b) Question of order.
- c) Objection to the consideration of a question.
- d) Call for the order of the day.
- e) Call for the division of the question.
- f) Call for the division of the Conference (for voting).
- g) Call for the motion to reconsider.
- h) Filling blanks.
- i) Nominations.
- j) Leave to withdraw a motion.
- k) Inquiries of any kind.
- l) Presentation of a report or recommendation by a Conference agency.

**32) Division of Question** – Before a vote is taken, any member has the right to call for the division of the question as the member indicates, if it is subject to division. If no member objects, the division shall be made; but if there is objection, the Chair, not waiting for a second, shall put the division to a vote.

**33) Tabling Related Motions** – No motion that adheres to another motion or has another motion adhering

to it can be laid on the table by itself. If they are laid on the table, such motions carry with them the motions to which they respectively adhere, or which adhere to them.

**34) Motions After Speaking on a Pending Question**

- a) A member may make a motion after a speech, although strict parliamentary practice requires motion to be made and seconded before a speech is made so the Conference may determine if it wishes to hear the matter.
- b) No member who has spoken on a pending question shall at the close of the speech have the right to call for the previous question, to move for indefinite postponement, or to lay the motion on the table.

**35) Previous Question** – To move the previous question is to move that the vote now be taken on the motion or motions pending.

- a) When moving a previous question, a member shall indicate to what such action applies if any secondary motion or motions are pending. If the member does not so indicate, the chair may regard it as applying only to the immediate pending question. This vote shall be taken without debate and if, in the judgment of the chair, two thirds (2/3) of those present vote for its adoption, the vote shall be taken on the motion or motion to which it applies.
- b) It shall not be in order to move the previous question in cases involving character or Conference relations, or where the Rules otherwise expressly limit when it is in order to move the previous question.

**36) Reconsideration of a Question** – A motion to reconsider an action of the Conference shall be in order at any time during the prevailing session if offered by a member who voted with the majority. If the motion it is proposed to reconsider is not debatable, the motion to reconsider may not be debated.

**37) Suspension of Rules** – The application of any of the provisions of these Rules of Order may be suspended at any time by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Conference.

**38) Motions and Resolutions are to be Written** –

- a) All motions, resolutions and reports shall be submitted in writing to the Secretary, properly signed by the movers thereof.
- b) Motions made on the floor shall be written on forms provided by the Secretary.

**39) When a Motion is in Possession of the Conference** – When a motion is made and seconded, or a resolution introduced and seconded, or a report presented and/or read before the Conference or stated by the Chair it shall be deemed in possession of the Conference. But any motion may be withdrawn or altered by the mover with the consent of the Conference at any time before voting has commenced.

**40) Amendments and Substitutions** –

- a) Only one amendment to an amendment shall be in order.
- b) It is in order to move a substitute for the main motion. In such case, the Chair shall proceed to perfect the original motion. When the main motion has been perfected, the Chair shall state the question on the substitute. If the substitute is adopted, it shall replace the original main motion and become the main motion. The Chair will then state the question on the (new) main motion. The new main motion can be amended only by addition. If the substitute does not carry, the Chair shall state the question on the original main motion as it has been perfected.

**41) Order of Amendments** – When a main motion, report or resolution is under consideration, only one amendment and one amendment to that amendment are permissible. While there can be only one amendment of each degree pending at the same time, any number of amendments can be offered in succession. A substitute and one amendment to the substitute may be offered while amendments of the first and second degree are pending. The permissive order then is: 1) main motion, 2) amendment, 3) amendment to the amendment, 4) substitute, and 5) amendment to the substitute. The voting in this order is 3, 2, 5, 4, 1. If the substitute becomes the main motion, it shall be treated as such.

**42) Appeal** – An appeal from the decision of the Chair shall be taken without debate, provided that after the Chair shall have stated the reason for the decision, the appellant may give the grounds for the appeal. ¶



51)

- 43) The Question of Consideration** – The question of consideration may be raised by any member upon the presentation of any matter that shall be deemed irrelevant, unprofitable, or contentious, and shall be decided without debate by majority vote. This applies only to the main motion.
- 44) Method of Voting** – Voting shall be by voice vote and/or show of hands, or by standing count (provided that in such a count those who cannot stand may vote by raising hands), or by ballot, at the discretion of the Presiding Officer, unless otherwise ordered by the Conference. It shall be in order for any member to call for a vote by count on any question before the Conference, and, if the call be sustained by one-third (1/3) of the members present and voting, a vote shall be taken as called for.
- 45) Robert’s Rules of Order, Supplemental Authority** – In any parliamentary situation not covered in these Rules of Order, the Conference shall be governed in its action by the appropriate provisions of the latest revision of Robert’s Rules of Order.

## V SPEAKING ON THE FLOOR

- 46) Securing the Floor** – Before speaking in debate or delivering any matter to the Conference, a member shall approach and wait at a microphone provided for addressing the Conference from the floor or shall raise a card provided for the purpose of gaining recognition. When the member has been recognized by the bishop, the member shall proceed to speak at a designated microphone. Before addressing the purpose of speaking, members shall state their names and local church or affiliation.
- 47) Limitations on Debate** –
- a) The chairperson of the agency that originated the report or recommendation(s) shall present them as the main motion before the plenary session and shall have five (5) minutes for comment, except as provided under h) below.
  - b) If there is a (are) minority report(s) or recommendation(s) from members of the agency, a representative shall be allowed five (5) minutes for a presentation.
  - c) All debate on the floor of the Conference shall follow the principle of alternate debate, that is, a speaker for, then a speaker against. When no speaker on the side opposed to the last speaker is ready, the President may recognize one who desires to speak on the same side as the prior speaker.
  - d) No person shall speak more than once on the same question without permission of the Conference, except as provided under g) below.
  - e) No person shall speak more than three (3) minutes at one time without permission of the Conference, except as provided under a) or h).
  - f) The initiator of the main motion shall in all cases be entitled to three (3) minutes to either
    - i. oppose the motion to lay the report or recommendation(s) on the table.
    - ii. close the debate before the report or recommendation is voted upon.
  - g) An agency presenting Special Reports at the direction of the Conference shall have sufficient time as determined by the Sessions Committee to present such reports and recommendations.
  - h) Except for non-debatable motions, no report or motion shall be put to the question without the opportunity having been given for at least two (2) speeches for and two (2) speeches against the pending question. After two (2) speeches pro and two (2) speeches con and provided no secondary (subsidiary, privileged--other than “previous question”-- or incidental) motions come to the floor and no other member seeks the floor to speak on the pending question, the question shall automatically be put to the question.
  - i) The motion for the previous question shall not be in order on the pending question until opportunity has been given for at least two (2) members to speak on each side of the pending question. If, after reasonable opportunity has been offered by the chair, no member has requested to speak against a resolution, motion or amendment, any member may

move the previous question, to close debate. Likewise, if one member has spoken against a resolution, motion or amendment, but, after reasonable opportunity has been offered by the chair, no second member has requested to speak against the measure, any member may move the previous question, to close debate.

- 48) Representation of Committees** – When the chairperson of a Conference agency is not in harmony with a report or recommendation adopted by the agency, it shall be the chairperson’s duty to state the fact to the agency. The agency may then elect one of its members to represent it in the presentation of the report or recommendation in Conference. If the committee fails to elect such a representative, the chairperson may designate a member to represent the committee.
- 49) To Limit or Extend Debate** – To move to limit or extend the limits of debate is in order at any time, except when a member has the floor, except as otherwise specifically provided elsewhere in the Rules.
- 50) Interrupting the Speaker** – No one shall interrupt a member who has the floor except for a breach of order, a misrepresentation, a departure from the question, to direct the attention of the Conference that the time has arrived for a special order of the day, or to raise a very urgent question of high privilege.
- 51) Questions of Privilege** – All requests from the floor to be recognized for matters of privilege must be made in writing to the Conference Secretary. They shall state the reason for the request to address the conference and the purpose of the request. The requests will be reviewed by a committee composed of the Conference Lay Leader, Conference Secretary, and the Chair of Conference Sessions. The committee shall recommend to the Presiding Bishop whether or not to recognize the requestor for the purpose of presenting the matter of privilege. The Presiding Bishop shall have sole authority in receiving and acting upon the recommendation of the committee.
- 52) Announcements, Courtesy Presentations and Distribution of Papers** –
- a) Announcements of matters of information to the Conference shall be submitted on the Announcement Authorization Form to the Conference Secretary before the conclusion of the plenary session prior to the plenary session when the announcement will be made unless it is an emergency matter which may be submitted as soon as possible after the matter is known.
  - b) Requests to make Courtesy Presentation speeches during a plenary session by a person not a member of Annual Conference or by a member are subject to the discretion of the bishop. As a general rule, no presentations or speeches will be made to the Conference outside the agenda.
  - c) Papers or other materials may not be distributed to the members during the Conference sessions, except with express prior permission by the bishop.
- 53) Privilege of the Floor for Lay Members of Conference Agencies** – Laypersons not members of the Conference but currently serving on Conference agencies shall have the privilege of the floor without vote.
- 54) Lay Officers of a Conference Agency** – Any Lay Officer of any Conference agency, who is not a lay member of the Conference, shall have the privilege to move and defend the report of the group such Lay Officer represents, without vote.

## VI NOMINATIONS

- 55) The Committee on Nominations and its Ministry** – The Committee on Nominations will consist of the District Lay Leaders, the Conference Lay Leader, the Director of Connectional Ministries, and the District Superintendents. The Committee shall nominate the appropriate number of people each year to the Annual Conference Session for election.
- a) The Committee on Nominations will develop and use a system to identify nominees based on their gifts, experience, and skills that will help the Conference achieve its vision, mission, and goals as adopted by the Annual Conference, particularly leadership evidenced in making and maturing disciples, growing vital congregations and transforming lives and communities.



Additionally, the Committee shall ensure the nominations reflect the diversity of the Conference.

- b) Agency members shall be elected and placed into four staggered classes and each class will serve for a term of two years. An agency member may serve for four terms for a maximum of eight years. Nominations and elections will follow the rotation schedule unless otherwise mandated by the Book of Discipline.
- c) In order to aid the Committee on Nominations in its work, it is requested that any member of the Conference who has a personal preference to serve on any particular agency communicate such personal preference to the chairperson of the Committee on Nominations on the appropriate form prior to January 1.
- d) Nothing herein shall exclude additional nominations from the floor of the Conference. All nominations from the floor must be submitted on forms supplied in the pre-conference mailing or secured from the Chairperson of Nominations prior to placing the name in nomination. The signatures of the nominator and nominee must be on the form, or it will be declared invalid.

#### **56) Chairpersons and Officers –**

- a) For the sake of empowering diverse leadership, the Committee on Nominations shall nominate, and the Annual Conference elect, all chairpersons and officers for agencies, boards, commissions, committees, councils, and teams except where the Book of Discipline instructs differently. All terms shall be for the quadrennial, or such other period as specified by the action of the Conference.
- b) The Committee on Nominations shall nominate all chairpersons and officers for agencies, boards, commissions, committees, council, and teams [hereinafter Agency/Agencies] that the Book of Discipline requires to select its own chair and officers. These nominations shall not come before Annual Conference but shall be presented directly to the respective Agencies for vote at their first meeting after Annual Conference. In the absence of a duly elected Chair, whose term has not yet expired, the District Superintendent assigned to the agency either permanently, or for the election process, shall chair the meeting until the new chair is elected.<sup>1</sup>
- c) In all nominations, special attention shall be given to seeking diversity of inclusion by gender, age, racial and ethnic background, and to inclusion of people with disabilities and from all size churches. (See Discipline paragraph 610.5)

#### **57) To Fill Vacancies –**

- a) The Committee on Nominations is to recommend to the Connectional Table Executive Committee any persons to fulfill an unexpired term of any agency vacancy between Annual Conference Sessions except where the Discipline instructs differently.
- b) Preference will be given to members of the Annual Conference to serve on conference agencies when they have the skills, experience and qualities being sought for an agency.
- c) The Connectional Table Executive Committee shall approve the appointments or request additional nominations, in which case the Committee on Nominations is to submit new nominations. These individuals serve until they or someone else is elected at the next Annual Conference Session.
- d) When a person duly nominated and elected to any Conference agency does not attend three (3) consecutive meetings of the agency, it shall be the responsibility of the chairperson to attempt to contact that person by mail or telephone with a view to activation or resignation. The chairpersons shall report in writing annually to the Chairperson of the Committee on Nominations regarding contact with all non-participants and the results of such contacts. This information shall be provided by January 31 of each year.

#### **58) Elections –**

- a) The report of the Committee on Nominations shall be distributed in the Pre-Conference mailing and/

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<sup>1</sup> See Judicial Council decision 1328

or the packet received at the seat of the Annual Conference. The report shall be presented without reading. Upon adoption of a motion to close nominations, the Chairperson of the Committee on Nominations shall move the election of all nominees whose elections are uncontested.

- b) When the number of persons nominated exceeds the vacancies on an agency or when more than one person is nominated for a specific office, there shall be a secret ballot listing only those persons where a contest exists. The ballot will be taken at a time subsequent to the election in a) above. The ballot shall be distributed, collected and tallied by tellers selected by the Conference Secretary, who shall report the results listing only those elected. Election shall be by a majority of those voting. Lacking a majority, there shall be another ballot listing only those receiving 25% or more of the votes.

#### **59) Quadrennial Agencies -**

- a) An elected member of a conference or district committee, board or agency shall be eligible for not more than two consecutive four year terms unless specified otherwise in the Book of Discipline. Service of two years or more in filling an unexpired or vacated position shall be counted as a full four-year term. For this purpose, annual conference to annual conference shall be considered one year, regardless of the actual dates of the conferences.
- b) Persons elected by the Annual Conference to serve in an affiliated organization\* may serve in accord with the by-laws of the organization in which they are elected to serve, except that no term of office may exceed five years. All persons elected or reelected to serve in an affiliated organization shall be elected in accord with the Annual Conference rules on nomination and election.

\*An affiliated organization is one that wishes to maintain a connectional relationship with the United Methodist Church through the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference.

- c) Members of the Annual Conference who are voting members of a general agency shall serve as ex-officio (with vote) members of the corresponding annual conference agency or its equivalent structure (§§610.6, 710.4 and 710.6).

**60) Quorum** – The members present and voting at any duly announced meeting of a Conference agency, board, commission, committee, council or team shall constitute a quorum.

**61) Limitations of Service** – No person shall be elected to more than two conference agencies, boards, commissions, committees, councils or teams, except for persons who are ex-officio members by virtue of an office or as a member of a general agency.

**62) District Superintendent Voting** – A District Superintendent regularly assigned to any Conference agency by the Cabinet shall have a vote in that agency, and shall be the only District Superintendent who shall have the right to vote in such agency, except where the Discipline provides otherwise.

## **VII PETITIONS AND ELECTIONS TO GENERAL AND JURISDICTIONAL CONFERENCE**

**63) Petitions to General Conference** – All petitions to General Conference shall be presented as prescribed in ¶ 507 of the Discipline. Petitions for endorsement by the Annual Conference to General Conference will only be considered in the year in which General Conference delegates will be elected.

### **Nominations –**

**64)** In a year in which elections to the General or Jurisdictional Conferences are to be held, the Conference Secretary shall open nominations for lay and clergy delegates on December 15 of the year preceding the Conference Session. By Feb. 28th the Conference Secretary will publish those nominations which are received by Feb. 15th, or such other date as the Conference Secretary shall establish. Not less than ten days before such initial date for closing pre-Conference nominations, the Conference Secretary shall refer information concerning nominations submitted to date to the Commission on Religion and Race (CORR) and the Committee on the Status and Role of Women (COSROW), for their review and response within seven days. “If by the end of the seven days, either COSROW or CORR reports to the Conference Secretary that they have concerns regarding the gender, racial and/or ethnic diversity of the nominations submitted to date, or if not enough nominations have been submitted to fill all open positions in the

Conference's delegation(s), the Conference Secretary shall promptly (a) report such concerns to the membership of the Annual Conference, and (b) extend the deadline for submitting nominations by 30 days. In so doing, the Conference Secretary shall remind the members of the Annual Conference of the importance of diversity in the delegations for GNJ. (approved 2023)

- a) Nominees may address their respective sessions for no more than one minute each, provided that no more than forty-five minutes shall be allotted for speeches. If more than 45 lay persons or clergy persons are nominated, the allowed times for individual speeches will be adjusted accordingly. No speeches regarding nominees will be in order after the original time allotted for such speeches.

**65) Balloting** – The Conference Secretary shall announce the number of clergy delegates to be elected. A like number of lay delegates will be elected.

- a) The time of initial balloting shall be set by the agenda committee.
- b) Balloting shall be by electronic or mechanical means.
- c) The Secretary shall announce a Chief Clergy Teller and a Chief Lay Teller, and two lists each of clergy and lay assistants.

**66) Voting** – All members, lay and clergy, must be within the bar of the Conference to be eligible to vote.

- a) Before each ballot, the President shall announce the number of delegates each ballot shall elect. To be effective, a ballot must list the exact number of names of lay or clergy delegates to be elected.
- b) The intent of the voter shall be allowed regardless of mistakes in spelling.
- c) Where there is more than one member with the same family name, the Christian name or identifying initials shall precede the family name.
- d) A majority of valid votes cast shall be necessary for election, except on the ballot to elect reserve delegates pursuant to Rule 68.
- e) Only those nominated are eligible for election. If a ballot lists someone who has not been nominated, the ballot will be disqualified.

**67) Counting and Reporting** –

- b) After a ballot has been counted, the chief teller, either clergy or lay, shall furnish a written report to the bishop, which shall contain (a) the number of ballots cast; (b) the number of ballots not valid; (c) the number of valid ballots counted; (d) the number of ballots necessary to elect; and (e) the list of names of persons voted for, including the number of votes received by each. The results will be disclosed or displayed before the next ballot is taken.
- a) **Minimum Votes.** On the first ballot for both General Conference and the jurisdictional conference, the presiding officer shall read or distribute all names receiving 5 or more votes, together with the number of votes cast for each. Thereafter, the minimum number of votes received to be included in the next ballot shall be increased by five for each delegate elected (that is, on the first ballot a minimum of 5 votes to be included in the next ballot; after the election of the first delegate, a minimum of 10 votes to be included in the next ballot; after the election of the second delegate, a minimum of 15 votes, etc.). After the ballot in which the last delegate is elected to the General Conference, all the names that were originally nominated are available for election to Jurisdictional conference. Those elected to General Conference will not be listed.
- b) If necessary, another ballot shall be taken in like manner, and so on, until the proper number of delegates has been chosen.

**68) Qualifications** –

- a) **Clergy Delegates** – The Discipline, ¶ 35 (Article IV), permits any active or retired member of the Annual Conference in full connection to be eligible for election to the General or Jurisdictional Conferences.
- b) **Lay Delegates** - The Discipline, ¶ 36 (Article V), asserts that lay delegates shall be elected “without regard to age, provided that such delegates shall have been professing members of the United Methodist Church for at least two years next preceding their election, and shall have been active

participants in the United Methodist church for at least four years next preceding their election, and are members thereof within the Annual Conference electing them at the time of holding the General and Jurisdictional Conferences.”

- 69) Reserve Delegates** – After the authorized numbers of delegates have been elected, 3 clergy and 3 lay reserve delegates shall be elected on a single ballot, with the 3 persons receiving the greatest number of votes in each category being elected in the order of the number of votes received.

## VIII CONCERNING FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

- 70) Budget** – The Annual Conference shall adopt at each Annual Session a budget for each of the following: Clergy Support, Administrative Costs of the Annual Conference, World Service, Conference Benevolences, and other Apportioned Funds. These budgets become effective for the fiscal year beginning on January 1st following the session. Apportionments of these budgets shall be sent to the several churches as soon after the session as is feasible.
- 71) Apportionments** – The Conference Shared Ministry Budget shall be apportioned annually among the churches of the Conference according to a formula recommended by the Conference Council on Finance and Administration and adopted by the Annual Conference. Following adoption, the formula will remain in effect until such time as changes are recommended by the CF&A and adopted by the Annual Conference. The formula shall be outlined on a Shared Ministry data sheet, which shall be distributed to the churches as soon as practical after the end of each year’s annual conference, but in no event later than the end of the fiscal year.
- 72) Prior Action by Council on Finance and Administration** – Every motion, recommendation, resolution, or other legislative act having to do with budgeting, apportionments, allotments or expenditure of funds shall first be submitted to the Council on Finance and Administration. After adequate time is allowed for investigation and study, the council shall report its recommendation to the Conference. This report shall be received before such legislation may be acted upon by the Annual Conference.
- a) No agency or member of the Conference shall commit the Conference financially for the support of programs within or beyond the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference without first obtaining the approval of the Annual Conference after study and recommendation of the Council on Finance and Administration, and not until funds are available or have been allocated to meet such commitments.
  - b) Any person or agency requesting an emergency offering should contact one of the Team Coordinators, who will present the matter to the Cabinet and the Council on Finance and Administration. Any funds received as a result of such an offering will be held by the treasurer and administered by a task force established by the Cabinet for that particular appeal.
- 73) Time Limit on Submitting Budget Requests** –
- a) Requests for inclusion of an item in the Clergy Support Budget and/or the Administrative Costs of the Annual Conference Budget to be acted on by an Annual Conference shall be submitted to the Treasurer’s office by the third Monday of January preceding the date of the Annual Conference, except in cases of unavoidable emergency.
  - b) Requests for inclusion of an item in the World Service Budget and/or the Conference Benevolences Budget to be acted on by an Annual Conference shall be submitted to the Connectional Table by January 15 preceding the date of the Annual Conference, except in cases of unavoidable emergency.
- 74) Amending Allotments** – An agency shall not attempt to amend its allotment in a proposed budget submitted to an Annual Conference unless it has previously presented an appeal to the Council on Finance and Administration at a meeting held preceding the date of the Conference.
- 75) Increased Asking by Amendment** – In amending a proposed budget on the floor of the Annual Conference, no item shall be increased above the amount originally requested by the responsible agency in its asking to the Council on Finance and Administration, except when the consent of both the agency

and the Council on Finance and Administration has been obtained.

- 76) Proper Use of Budgeted Funds** – No agency of the Conference shall spend budgeted funds for any purpose other than the general purpose for which the funds were originally requested unless the consent of the Council on Finance and Administration and the Ministries Team has been obtained for such a reallocation. An expenditure item shall be budgeted for the year when it is expected to be spent, and it shall be spent only in the year for which it is budgeted. When uncontrollable circumstances warrant, an emergency request may be directed through the Ministries Team to the Council on Finance and Administration for a budget adjustment.
- 77) Financial Appeals to the Churches** – Any agency planning to send a communication or appeal to the churches requesting contributions to any agency or fund shall first submit its proposed communication or appeal to the Council on Finance and Administration. The Council shall ascertain if the procedure is in accord with existing legislation and shall make certain that remitting instructions are correct. Any contribution received by the Conference Treasurer in response to a communication which has not been cleared as herein provided shall be credited automatically to World Service and Conference Benevolences through the remitting church.
- 78) Customary Draft** – When presented and endorsed, the customary draft from the United Methodist Publishing House shall be turned over to the Conference Treasurer for pensions for clergy of the central conferences.
- 79) Bonding** – All persons who hold or disburse conference funds shall be bonded in such amounts as may be deemed wise by the Council on Finance and Administration.
- 80) Fiscal Year** – The fiscal year shall coincide with the calendar year unless another fiscal year is designated by the Conference Treasurer after approval by the Conference. All payments to be credited to a given fiscal year shall be in the hands of the Conference Treasurer not later than the following January 20th. All local church financial reports shall be forwarded to the Conference Treasurer by a deadline to be announced annually.
- 81) Audit** – The Council on Finance and Administration shall be responsible for arranging that a Certified Public Accountant shall audit the accounts of the Annual Conference. The Council on Finance and Administration shall publish a statement of Certification of each audit in the Journal.

## IX CONSENT CALENDAR

- 82) Consent Calendar** –
- a) The Conference Agenda Committee may present to the Annual Conference a proposed consent calendar, including those items which the Annual Conference may approve with one vote of approval by the Conference membership.
  - b) A written list of items on the consent calendar, including the name of the motion, name of the author, and page number in the Pre-Conference Workbook will be presented to all members of the Conference upon check-in at the Conference session.
  - c) The consent calendar list will include a space where Conference members may check any item(s) which they would like to see removed from the consent calendar.
  - d) To vote to remove an item from the consent calendar, Conference members must:
    - i. Check the item(s) they wish to see removed from the list, or
    - ii. Write in an item which has been added subsequently by Conference action.
    - iii. Print his or her name and church on the list, and sign the list.
    - iv. Bring the list to the Conference Secretary's table and give the list to the Conference Secretary or one of the Assistant Secretaries.
  - e) If any item on the consent calendar receives ten (10) or more such votes in favor of removing it from the consent calendar, that item will be removed and placed on the Conference agenda by the Agenda Committee.
  - f) All requests for items to be removed from the consent calendar shall be delivered to the

Conference Secretary as early as possible, but no requests will be received within the last twenty-four (24) hours before the stated time of adjournment of the Conference session. During this last twenty-four (24) hour period, items may only be removed from the consent calendar by a  $\frac{3}{4}$  vote of the Conference.

## X NOMINATION OF EPISCOPAL CANDIDATES

**83) Nomination of Episcopal Candidates** - The procedure for nomination of Episcopal Candidates to the Jurisdictional Conference as permitted by ¶1405 of the Book of Discipline shall be as follows:

- a) In a year in which one or more Episcopal Candidates are to be nominated by the Annual Conference, the Conference Secretary shall provide for the receiving of nominations until the deadline for submission of proposed legislation for that year's annual conference. Each proposed nomination shall be submitted on one side of an 8 ½ x 11-inch sheet of paper or by electronic means designated by the Conference Secretary. Only eligible persons may be nominated. The bishop shall, before the ballot is taken, remind the Annual Conference of the eligibility requirements for election to the office of the episcopacy.
- b) The Jurisdictional Conference delegates (acting as a group) shall have the privilege to speak to the Annual Conference on behalf of the person(s) they have endorsed for nomination to the episcopacy (provided they have submitted such nomination in the manner described in Rule 82(a) above). If no other nominations have been submitted as indicated in Rule 82(a) above, the bishop shall call for a vote of the body. A majority vote will be sufficient for this person (these persons) to be recognized as the episcopal nominee(s) of the Annual Conference.
- c) If there are additional nominations submitted in accordance with Rule 82(a) above, the Bishop shall call for a written or electronic ballot following this procedure.
  - i. Nominees may each give a three-minute speech. There shall be no seconding speeches.
  - ii. If any ballot contains the name of an ineligible person, that name shall not be tallied, but other names on the ballot shall be tallied.
  - iii. Conference members may vote for one such nominated individual. An individual must receive 60% of those voting to be nominated by the Annual Conference. If an individual does not receive 60% of the vote by the fifth ballot there will be no nominee. If someone is nominated, the conference will take up to three ballots to see if a second person is nominated. If no one receives 60% of the vote by the third ballot there will not be a second nominee. Those who do not wish to see anyone nominated may so indicate that desire on their ballots (in the manner prescribed by the Conference Secretary) and the ballot shall be counted as cast.
- d) Only the persons selected in the foregoing manner shall be deemed Nominees of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference.
- e) This procedure shall not foreclose efforts by individuals or groups in the Annual Conference to promote the candidacy for the episcopacy of other persons.

## XI RULES OF ORDER RESOLUTIONS

**84) Resolutions to Change the Rules of Order –**

- a) Any resolution or proposed change, by addition or deletion to the Rules of Order, with the exception of **Concerning Financial Operations**, shall first be referred to the Committee on Rules of Order for its recommendation. The Committee shall submit its recommendation to the body prior to any action by the body. The initiator of any proposed change to be included in the Pre-conference mailing shall at the same time submit a copy of said proposed change to the chairperson of the Committee on Rules of Order. The Rules Committee may request a meeting with the initiator prior to the convening of the Annual Conference.



- b) If the change is proposed at the site of the Annual Conference, it shall be referred to the Committee on Rules of Order and a report to the body will be made no later than the next plenary session.

## **XII HOLY CONFERENCING PROCEDURE FOR CERTAIN GENERAL CONFERENCE PETITIONS**

- 85)** A procedure to facilitate holy conferencing shall be used, at the Bishop's discretion, to discuss petitions to General Conference regarding issues related to human sexuality or such other issues that would benefit from the same procedure.

A special order of the day will be established to provide for holy conferencing. The special order of the day shall proceed as follows:

- i. Representatives of the two primary positions selected by the bishop will each make a twenty-minute presentation.
- ii. Upon conclusion of the opening presentations, the bishop shall bring the Conference into silent prayer for two minutes.
- iii. Then ten minutes will be provided for delegates to share what they heard with their fellow Christians seated to their immediate left and right. This is not a time for debate, but rather to listen to what their neighbors heard.
- iv. The bishop will then call the Conference to order. Delegates will then have the opportunity to share their thoughts with the Conference. The bishop shall establish a total amount of time for discussion, not to exceed sixty minutes. No member may speak longer than two minutes. All speakers will be notified when ten seconds remain of their time. The speaker will be allowed to finish a sentence at the expiration of allotted time. Then, that microphone will be cut off and the next speaker will be recognized. This will continue until the total allotted minutes have elapsed or everyone who wished to be recognized had an opportunity to speak, whichever comes first. No subsidiary privileged or incidental motions will be in order during this time of discussion.
- v. The regular business of the Conference will then resume.

At a previously noted time during plenary session on the following session day, the petitions will be voted upon by secret written ballot. Thirty minutes will be allotted for this vote. No debate or motions will be in order at this time.

## **XIII HOLY CONFERENCING PROCEDURE FOR PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS**

- 86)** A procedure to facilitate holy conferencing shall be used at the bishop's discretion to discuss proposed Constitutional amendments coming from the General Conference.

A special order of the day may be established to provide for holy conferencing. The special order of the day shall proceed as follows:

- i. The co-chairs of the delegation to General Conference will present the proposed amendments to the Conference in a fifteen-minute presentation.
- ii. Upon conclusion of the opening presentation, the bishop shall bring the Conference into silent prayer for two minutes.
- iii. Then up to ten minutes will be provided for members to share what they heard with their fellow Christians seated to their immediate left and right. This is not a time for debate, but rather to listen to what their neighbors heard.
- iv. The bishop will then call the Conference to order. Members will then have the opportunity to share their thoughts with the Conference. Sixty minutes will be allotted for this. No member may speak longer than two minutes. Each speaker will be notified when ten seconds remains of their time. The speaker will be allowed to finish a sentence at the expiration of their time. Then, that microphone will be cut off and the

next speaker will be recognized. This will continue until sixty minutes have elapsed or everyone who wishes to speak has been recognized whichever comes first. No changes are permitted to be made to Constitutional amendments.

- v. The regular business of the Conference will then resume.

At a previously noted time during a subsequent plenary session, the amendments will be voted upon by secret ballot. Members will be able to vote in favor of or against each individual amendment. If a member wishes to abstain, the member will leave the ballot blank for that particular amendment.

Should any of the foregoing Rules of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference be in conflict with the provisions of the current Book of Discipline, then the provisions of the Discipline shall take precedence.

*Revised November 2023*





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