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WELCOME FROM BISHOP MOORE-KOIKOI

*“Seek the Lord while God may be found;
call upon God while God is near.” (Isaiah 55:6, Adapted)*

Beloved Siblings,

I greet you in the name and with the love of Jesus who is the Christ. The Greater New Jersey Annual Conference 2026 is almost here. Last year, in preparation for Annual Conference 2025, we engaged on a Journey of Healing. This year we have been on a 28-day Journey of Prayer from April 8-May 15, 2026. But I know that most of us began praying for Annual Conference 2026 long before April 8th. Therefore, I am confident that this year’s annual conference is going to be a spirit-filled time of Holy Conferencing where we will all hear from God.

As we live into our theme of “Prayer”, we will be offering intercessory prayer and prayers of thanksgiving and praise at annual conference. But most importantly, we will be focusing on seeking God, using prayer as a way to listen to and for God, so that our conversations and our votes might be directed by God’s Spirit among us.

I encourage you to pray over your pre-conference materials. Before you read any of the legislation or reports, ask God to help you to surrender your thoughts and desires so that you might read each word and respond with God’s grace, compassion, wisdom, and insight. After you read the legislation and reports, ask God if there is any additional information about the legislation or reports that might be helpful to the body, and be prepared to ask those questions during annual conference. Finally, I urge you to entreat God to continue to move within you and all the members of the annual conference so that we will all be blessed by our experience of Holy Conferencing.

I look forward to seeing you and praying with you at Wildwood.

Peace and blessings,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cynthia Moore-Koikoi". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi

AGENDA

Annual Conference 2026

Wildwood Convention Center

Prayer

*“Seek the Lord while God may be found; call upon God while God is near.”
(Isaiah 55:6, Adapted)*

AGENDA FOR SUNDAY, MAY 17 - GNJ

- 1:00 p.m. Open Registration & Fellowship
Vendor Exhibits
- 4:00 p.m. Clergy Executive Session Ballrooms
Laity Session West Hall
- 5:00 p.m. Clergy Dinner Ballrooms
Laity Dinner East Hall
- 6:30 p.m. Clergy organize for Processional/Robing Ballrooms
- 7:00 p.m. Celebration of Ministry Service West Hall
Commissioning and Ordination Worship & Service of Passage with Anointing

AGENDA FOR MONDAY, MAY 18 - 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
- 8:15 a.m. Praise and Worship
- 8:30 a.m. Early Morning Bible Study West Hall
- 9:30 a.m. Organizing the Conference
- 9:40 a.m. Episcopal Address
- 10:10 a.m. **Business and Legislation:**
Greater New Jersey Parental Leave Policy and Procedures
Safe Sanctuaries
Domestic Violence Policy
Sexual Ethics Policy Update
Church Closures
- 10:50 a.m. Offering: **For Tanzania**
- 11:00 a.m. Service of Remembrance with Communion
- 12:15 p.m. Lunch & Mission Project East Hall and East Deck
Bishop’s Luncheon with memorial service families
- 1:30 p.m. Praise and Worship West Hall

- 1:45 p.m. **Business and Legislation**
 2027 Budget
 Revise Rule 19
 Transparency for a Safer GNJ 2026
 Forming a Conference Commission on the Status and Role of Queer People
 Resolution for Maintaining the Informational Integrity of the GNJ Conference Journal
 Resolution to Amend “A Journey of Hope” with the Journey of Hope Plan
 Trustees Enabling Resolution
 Pension and Health Benefits Recommendations 2027
 GNJ Nominations/Leadership Report
- 4:00 p.m. Monitoring Report
- Upon Adjournment **Small Group Meetings**
 Order of Elders Ballroom A
 Order of Deacons Ballroom B
 Fellowship of Local Pastors & Associate Members Ballroom C
 Certified Lay Ministers Meeting Room 1
- 6:30 p.m. Dinner for groups and individuals at the convention center (pre-arranged)

AGENDA FOR TUESDAY, MAY 19 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
- 8:15 a.m. Praise and Worship West Hall
- 8:30 a.m. Early Morning Bible Study West Hall
- 9:30 a.m. Reading the Appointments West Hall
- 9:45 a.m. **Business and Legislation**
 Conference Advance Specials
 Equitable Compensation for 2027
 GNJ Parsonage Standards
 Arrearage Policy for Clergy Salaries
- 10:30 a.m. Monitoring Report
- 11:30 a.m. Closing Worship
- 12:30 p.m. Optional Reception with EPA&GNJ – Join for a time of
 refreshments & fellowship Ballroom Hallway
- 12:30 p.m. LAPI Luncheon

GREETINGS FROM THE CONFERENCE SECRETARY

Dear Annual Conference Lay and Clergy Members,

Welcome to the 2026 Greater New Jersey Annual Conference! We look forward to our gathering at the Wildwood Convention Center, May 17-19, 2026, for worship, business, and fellowship under the leadership of Bishop Moore-Koikoi. Please be in prayer for our time together.

This 2026 Pre-Conference Workbook serves as a valuable resource for you to use as an active member of the 2026 Annual Conference Session. Please review it in advance and have it available as you attend the Conference. The Pre-Conference Workbook is also available online and can be downloaded on the GNJ website. Included in these pages are reports, proposals of legislation and nominations received for consideration at the Annual Conference. Thank you to all who submitted reports and proposed legislation.

If this is your first Annual Conference as an active member, there are resources to support you in engaging in and following the activity of the annual conference. The Rules of Order, Name Badge and Voting Rights chart, and “How to Understand Parliamentary Procedures” will support you in following the business of the Annual Conference. We hope the workbook will also be helpful as you participate in our time together and prepare a report as you return to your congregation. You are invited to attend an Annual Conference Orientation Workshop on Wednesday, April 29th at 7pm on Zoom. Learn about the process of making motions, amendments, passing legislation, and the agenda.

The 2026 GNJ Conference begins with badge distribution at the Welcome Desk starting at 1:00pm at the Wildwoods Convention Center, Wildwoods, NJ. Please see the Agenda in the printed or online booklet for the complete conference schedule.

Holy Conferencing is a distinct practice held within our Wesleyan tradition. As we gather, may we be embrace the movement of the Holy Spirit among us, giving thanks and leaning in to all that God calls us to be in this season.

Grace and peace,

Rev. Shelley S. Smith
Conference Secretary
Greater New Jersey Annual Conference

Conference Secretary Letter and General Information

HOW TO UNDERSTAND PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES						
To Do This...	You Say This...	Interrupt Speaker?	Second Needed?	Motion Debatable?	Amendable?	Vote Needed?
SECONDARY MOTIONS IN ORDER OF PRECEDENCE						
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
INCIDENTAL MOTIONS GROW OUT OF THE BUSINESS THE CONFERENCE IS CONSIDERING						
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
MAIN MOTIONS AS TOOLS TO INTRODUCE NEW BUSINESS						
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

NAME BADGES & VOTING RIGHTS

Badge Color	Affiliation	Voting Rights
Yellow ¶602.4 ¶602.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elected Lay Member, Youth-Young Adult Elected Member, At-Large Lay Member/Equalizing Lay Delegate Diaconal Minister, Deaconess, Home Missioner under appointment Conf. Lay Leader, District Lay Leader, Conf. Director of Lay Servant Ministries, Conf. UWF President, Conf. UMM President 	<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"> Full connection (Elder and Deacon) 	May vote on all matters except election of lay delegates to General, Jurisdictional, and Central Conferences.
Blue ¶602.1c	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Associate Members 	<p>May vote on all matters except constitutional amendments and matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy.</p> <p>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.</p>
¶602.1b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provisional Members (<i>under appointment to a pastoral charge who have completed educational requirements towards ordination</i>) 	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"> Full Time/Part Time/Retired 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>) 	<p>May vote on all matters except constitutional amendments and matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy.</p> <p>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.</p>
Green ¶602.1b ¶346.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provisional Members (<i>under appointment to a pastoral charge who have not completed educational requirements toward ordination</i>) Affiliate Members (<i>when determined credentials are equal to Elders in Full Connection while under appointment</i>) 	May vote on all matters except constitutional amendments, election of clergy delegates to the General, Jurisdictional, and Central Conferences, and matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy.
¶602.1d	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full Time/Part Time/Retired Local Pastors (<i>under appointment to a pastoral charge who have not completed course of study or an M.Div. degree</i>) 	May vote on all matters except constitutional amendments, election of delegates to the General, Jurisdictional, and Central Conferences, and matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy.
White ¶320.5c ¶602.1c	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retired Local Pastors (<i>not under appointment</i>) Affiliate Members (<i>when determined credentials are not equal to Elders in Full Connection while under appointment</i>) 	May attend with voice but not vote.
Teal ¶602.9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visitors, Student Pastors (from other conferences), Lay Missionaries Members of Other Conferences Interim Supply Pastors 	No vote and no voice unless granted on the floor.
Pink	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conference Staff Members 	No vote and no voice unless granted on the floor.
Purple	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Official Guest and Episcopal Staff 	No vote and no voice unless granted on the floor.
Orange	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-Voting Youth 	No vote and no voice unless granted on the floor.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE AWARDS

FOUNDATION FOR EVANGELISM AWARD (FORMERLY THE DENMAN AWARD)

Nominee: Samuel Albania, Wesley UMC in Edison

Samuel Albania has faithfully served Wesley United Methodist Church for the past five years, setting a powerful example of Christian discipleship and evangelism. He actively participates in every aspect of church life, joyfully sharing the message of Jesus through both words and actions. Sam beautifully coordinates our Christmas and Easter Cantata and presentation, decorates the altar every Sunday, and generously organizes a welcoming fellowship lunch for the congregation. Through his faith, dedication, and warm hospitality, Sam has helped our church grow by more than thirty people. His cousins, friends, and neighbors now attend our church because of his faithful witness.

ONE MATTERS AWARD

TRINITY UMC MERCHANTVILLE is awarded the One Matters Award.

Every Person Matters: Hospitality, Discipleship, and New Life at Trinity UMC Merchantville

At Trinity United Methodist Church in Merchantville, we believe that every person matters deeply to God. Through intentional hospitality, personal relationships, and vibrant community outreach, our congregation is witnessing lives being transformed and new disciples emerging. When new visitors or families attend worship, the pastor and members often invite them to share a meal together, building genuine relationships and helping them connect with the life of the church. As a result of this intentional welcome, more than 90 percent of first-time visitors eventually make Trinity their church home.

Through Vacation Bible School and community outreach, many young families have begun attending Trinity. Some arrived with little or no knowledge of Jesus and are now beginning their journey of faith through baptismal preparation and baptism. Youth who were baptized as children but drifted away are rediscovering Christ through Confirmation classes and becoming active members of the church.

Trinity's outreach ministries extend beyond our walls. We partner with local Scouts and intentionally invest in the next generation. We also regularly invite a nearby high school string quartet to join our Sunday worship, offering students a welcoming space to share their musical talents and gifts with the congregation. Events such as Youth Night and Movie Night create welcoming opportunities for young families, while our Food Pantry and Clothing Ministry serve neighbors with compassion and dignity.

As Trinity becomes increasingly multicultural, the congregation celebrates Multicultural Sunday, where members praise God in their own languages through song, prayer, or worship dance, and bring foods from their home countries to share together. These gatherings reflect our shared confession that God loves every nation, language, and people.

One visitor who had wandered for many years said with tears, "This is my home. I have finally found where I belong." Another new family, after enduring many hardships, shared with tears of joy, "This church is the only place where I feel I can truly breathe. Thank you." In these moments, we witness the heart of the gospel—lives welcomed, restored, and discovering that they truly matter to God.

HELEANOR ALTER DAVISSON AWARD



Denise Tiedemann is a local licensed pastor that has served in the United Methodist Church for the past 10 years, and is currently serving full-time as the pastor of Jackson United Methodist Church, where she provides thoughtful, compassionate, and steady leadership. Denise has also founded Jackson Arts Ministry (JAM), a ministry that allows individuals to express themselves through art mediums. The program currently boasts roughly 100 youth and young adults participants that are predominantly unchurched.

Throughout her ministry, Denise has demonstrated a quiet but intentional commitment to encouraging women to serve and lead within the church. She has consistently lifted and supported women in leadership roles, offering encouragement, trust, and opportunities to grow. She is currently actively mentoring two female ministerial candidates. Denise has consistently centered those who are often overlooked—women, children, people with special needs, and those struggling economically—and has done so in a way that builds them up as participants and leaders, not simply recipients of care. She brings vision, creativity, resilience, and a quiet perseverance to everything she does. Her life and ministry reflect both the heart of the gospel and the spirit of Helenor Alter Davisson.



WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

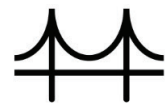
We'd love to hear how prayer has been part of your life's journey. During the 2026 Annual Conference Session, you are invited to add your stories around prayer to the Pathways Bridges Story Gallery. As we prepare for this time of story sharing we invite you to reflect on the following:

***How has prayer been a meaningful part of your story?
How has prayer shaped you?***

When is a time God spoke to you through prayer?

***How has your understanding or experience of prayer
changed over time?***

Stop by a creative table during the Annual Conference Session to share your story! Not attending the Annual Conference Session? Plan a story share night or story gallery for your congregation and community!



LEGISLATION

01 **RESOLUTION TO CREATE THE GREATER NEW JERSEY CONFERENCE PARENTAL**
02 **LEAVE POLICY**
03
04

05
06 **WHEREAS**, our United Methodist Social Principles affirm, “[We] endorse policies that guarantee every
07 worker paid time off, including but not limited to... parental leave for those caring for newborns or newly
08 adopted children”;^[1]

09
10 **WHEREAS**, “Maternal Health: The Church’s Role” in the United Methodist *Book of Resolutions* issues
11 this call to action: “Align church policies to support maternal health, including paid family, parental and
12 medical leave”;^[2]

13
14 **WHEREAS**, Scripture calls us to provide care for each other as members of Christ’s family (“But if
15 someone doesn’t provide for their own family, and especially for a member of their household, they
16 have denied the faith.” 1 Timothy 5:8, CEB); and

17
18 **WHEREAS**, The World Health Organization and the International Labor Organization advocate for at least
19 14 weeks of paid maternity leave;^[3] and

20
21 **WHEREAS**, The United Methodist *Book of Discipline* states, “Maternity or paternity leave, not to
22 exceed one-fourth of a year, will be available and shall be granted by the bishop and the cabinet, and
23 the executive committee of the Board of Ordained Ministry to any local pastor, provisional member,
24 associate member, or clergy member in full connection who so requests it at the birth or arrival of a child
25 into the home for purposes of adoption”;^[4] and

26
27 **WHEREAS**, the parental leave policy as written in the United Methodist *Book of Discipline* only
28 guarantees paid leave for eight weeks, has been considered open to interpretation and has not always
29 been applied equitably across the connection, since “one-fourth of year”^[5] is thirteen weeks; and

30
31 **WHEREAS**, several annual conferences have adopted policies maintaining compensation for thirteen
32 weeks and assisting local congregations in paying for coverage during the leave; and

33
34 **WHEREAS**, congregations have disproportionate access to resources, and generous parental leave
35 policies positively affect clergy well-being, recruitment, and retention throughout the annual conference;
36 and

37
38 **WHEREAS**, supporting clergy families lives up to our calling to welcome all generations as Christ
39 welcomes children (Matthew 19:14, Mark 10:15, Luke 18:16), expressed in our baptismal covenant
40 when we promise to “nurture these children in Christ’s holy Church” and “surround these persons with a
41 community of love”;^[6]

42
43 **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, the Greater New Jersey Conference adopt the following Parental Leave
44 Policy and Procedures

45
46 **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, the Greater New Jersey Conference adopt the following policy for Foster/
47 Resource Families and Kinship Care Placements.

48
49 Respectfully submitted,
50 Gabrielle Corbett
51 Commission on Equitable Compensation
52 Commission on the Status and Role of Women

Greater New Jersey Parental Leave Policy

Statement of Purpose

The United Methodist Church proclaims, “Children are a gift from God to be welcomed and received”^[7] and “Nurture and support are fundamental to the proper functioning of families.”^[8] We seek to love one another and enable all members of the body of Christ to grow and flourish.

The Greater New Jersey Conference supports families and advocates for parental leave for all persons welcoming a child into their home, both clergy and lay. Further, we encourage all parents who are welcoming a child into their home to make full use of parental leave policies.

The World Health Organization and the International Labor Organization advocate for at least 14 weeks of paid maternity leave,^[9] and The United Methodist *Book of Discipline* allows for up to ¼ of a year of “maternity or paternity leave” for clergy families.^[10]

The Greater New Jersey Conference has developed this policy in order to assist clergy families, local churches, District Superintendents, and the Annual Conference in caring for family and advocating for parental leave in the church and beyond the church.

This policy applies to all clergy, regardless of their part-time or full-time status. In this policy, “clergy” means any local pastor, provisional member, associate member, or clergy member in full connection who is appointed to a local congregation or annual conference-funded extension ministry, including but not limited to conference and district positions, and conference staff. Clergy appointed to non-conference-funded extension ministries are encouraged to adopt similar policies for their settings. [In this policy, the term ‘clergy’ shall not be interpreted or understood to exclude laity serving a local church or annual conference-funded ministry setting under episcopal and/or superintendent assignment, including, but not limited to, Certified Lay Ministers, Lay Missioners, Home Missioners and Deaconesses, and/or supply preachers.]

This policy goes into effect on January 1, 2027. COSROW, the Cabinet, and the Board of Ordained Ministry will review and update this Parental Leave policy at least quadrennially.

Book of Discipline Foundations

¶ 355. Maternity or Paternity Leave—Maternity or paternity leave, not to exceed one-fourth of a year, will be available and shall be granted by the bishop and the cabinet, and the executive committee of the Board of Ordained Ministry to any local pastor, provisional member, associate member, or clergy member in full connection who so requests it at the birth or arrival of a child into the home for purposes of adoption.

1. Persons desiring maternity or paternity leave should file their request with the committee on pastor-parish relations after consulting with the district superintendent at least ninety days prior to its beginning to allow adequate pastoral care for the churches involved to be developed.
2. During the leave, the clergy member’s annual conference relations will remain unchanged, and the health and welfare benefit plans will remain in force.
3. A maternity or paternity leave of up to one-quarter of a year will be considered as an uninterrupted appointment for pension purposes.
4. Compensation will be maintained for no less than the first eight weeks of leave.
5. During the leave time, pastoral responsibility for the church or churches involved will be handled through consultation with the committee on pastor-parish relations of the local church(es) and the district superintendent.
6. Special arrangements shall be made for district superintendents, bishops, and those under special appointment.

01 **Births and Adoptions**

02

- 03 1. All clergy in the Greater New Jersey Conference who are expecting the birth, placement, or
04 adoption of a child are eligible for Parental Leave (see *The Book of Discipline of the United*
05 *Methodist Church 2020/2024*, ¶ 356). Parental leave is guaranteed to all clergy who request it
06 within the guidelines of this policy.
- 07 2. Families giving birth are encouraged to communicate with their district superintendent as soon
08 as they are public about their pregnancy. Adoptive parents are encouraged to communicate with
09 their district superintendent as soon as they are approved for adoption/foster parenting, with
10 follow-up upon the placement of the child to begin conversations around planning for leave.
11 District Superintendents will provide clergy with a list of clergy/lay servants in the district who
12 are willing to serve as pulpit supply/pastoral care coverage. Clergy are responsible for creating
13 their plans, and District Superintendents will approve them in consultation with the Cabinet.
- 14 3. Parental leave should be requested at least 90 days in advance of the anticipated beginning of
15 the leave, in accordance with the *2020/2024 Book of Discipline*. Clergy should send notification
16 in writing to the District Superintendent, Episcopal Office, and the Board of Ordained Ministry
17 Conference Relations Registrar with their plan for coverage throughout their leave.
- 18 4. Parental leave shall be encouraged and permitted for up to 13 weeks with full pay and will not
19 affect the clergy person’s pension, health benefits, and appointment status.
- 20 5. Churches will maintain their regular compensation for clergy on leave for the duration of the
21 leave.
- 22 6. The Annual Conference will assist local churches with additional funding for pastoral coverage, in
23 consultation with the clergy person and the SPRC, up to \$6,000 (with an increase of 3% per year
24 for COLA each year beginning in 2027) per leave. These funds will be approved by the Cabinet
25 and will be dispersed through GNJ’s grant process. Parental leave may be taken consecutively or
26 nonconsecutively, full or part time, according to the needs of the family. All parental leave must
27 be taken within 9 months of the placement or birth of the child.
- 28 7. Parental leave is not vacation. The use of parental leave does not affect the clergy person’s use of
29 their annual vacation granted in the Annual Conference Rules.
- 30 8. Churches will make reasonable accommodations for breastfeeding and pumping parents, as well
31 as for the feeding of infants. This can include private space, access to an outlet, and time/space
32 to feed according to the infant’s needs.
- 33 9. Churches and other ministry settings will also examine their personnel policies for lay staff and
34 are encouraged to ensure adequate and equal parental leave for all.
- 35 10. Clergy in the Annual Conference will support and promote parental leave, including by providing
36 pastoral care coverage if asked and needed, in accordance with their schedule.
- 37 11. The Annual Conference will support clergy on parental leave by excusing or making alternate
38 arrangements for their district and conference duties. This includes the annual conference
39 session, charge conference, district and conference committees, and residency requirements.
- 40 12. The Cabinet will remain in conversation with clergy about potential appointment changes,
41 without making assumptions about the desires of future parents. These conversations should
42 affirm the professional dignity and sacred worth of clergy parents and families.
- 43 13. In the event of a pregnancy loss or infancy loss, District Superintendents will help interpret and
44 support the need for space and time for grieving for clergy families. District Superintendents will
45 be in consultation with clergy and the SPRC to arrange this time, recommended for a minimum
46 of two weeks, and it will not affect a clergy person’s annual vacation.
- 47 14. Beyond the church, the Annual Conference will advocate for paid Parental Leave in all aspects of
48 society.

49

50 **Policy for Foster/Resource Families and Kinship Care Placements**

51

52 The Greater New Jersey Conference recognizes the significant need for foster/resource families and
53 kinship care. The intended temporary nature, often short notice, and variable government financial
54 support of foster/resource families and kinship care present different support needs.

- 01 1. Clergy who serve as foster/resource parents should be in communication with their SPRC and
02 District Superintendent at the time of appointment or during the licensing process. Clergy
03 considering or notified of possible kinship placement should communicate immediately with
04 their SPRC and District Superintendent. Within thirty days, clergy should send notification in
05 writing to the District Superintendent, Episcopal Office, and the Board of Ordained Ministry
06 Conference Relations Registrar.
- 07 2. Should a clergy family welcome a child into their home through foster/kinship care, a specific
08 plan will be worked out among the District Superintendent, SPRC, and the clergy family, with the
09 goal of caring for the family. This plan is encouraged to be made as early as possible.
- 10 1. Foster/resource parents and kinship caregivers generally anticipate taking off work for some
11 days at the beginning of the placement, to arrange for daycare and/or school enrollment,
12 potential medical or caseworker appointments, potential first family visitation, and to begin
13 to establish a relationship of mutual trust with the child(ren).
- 14 2. Foster/resource parents and kinship caregivers may also need a few days at the end of a
15 placement as well, to care for both the logistics and grief of transition. These transitions may
16 be unexpected.
- 17 3. Up to four weeks of paid parental leave may be given each calendar year to clergy beginning
18 or ending foster/resource/kinship placements. This may be taken consecutively or
19 nonconsecutively, full or part time, according to the needs of the family.
- 20 4. The Annual Conference will assist local churches with additional funding for pastoral coverage
21 and compensation, in consultation with the clergy person and the SPRC, up to \$1,500 (with an
22 increase of 3% per year for COLA each year beginning in 2027) per leave. These funds will be
23 approved by the Cabinet and will be dispersed through GNJ’s grant process.
- 24 5. The Annual Conference will advocate in New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania for all children
25 and families, especially those in foster/kinship care.

26
27
28 ^[1] 2020/2024 *Book of Discipline* Par. 161, ECONOMIC JUSTICE, C. THE DIGNITY OF WORK.

29
30 ^[2] 2020/2024 *Book of Resolutions*, # 3355, pp. 379-388.

31
32 ^[3] Maternity Protection, Compliance with International Labor Standards. [https://www.who.int/data/nutrition/nlis/
33 info/maternity-protection-compliance-with-international-labour-standards](https://www.who.int/data/nutrition/nlis/info/maternity-protection-compliance-with-international-labour-standards)

34
35 ^[4] The 2020/2024 *Book of Discipline*, ¶ 356.

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37 ^[5] The 2020/2024 *Book of Discipline*, ¶ 356.

38
39 ^[6] “The Services of the Baptismal Covenant of The United Methodist Church” The United Methodist Hymnal : Book
40 of United Methodist Worship. Nashville, Tenn. :United Methodist Pub. House, 1989.

41
42 ^[7] The 2020/2024 United Methodist *Book of Discipline*, ¶ 162, THE NUTURING COMMUNITY, A.

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44 ^[8] The 2020/2024 United Methodist *Book of Discipline*, ¶ 162, THE NUTURING COMMUNITY, A.

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46 ^[9] Maternity Protection, Compliance with International Labor Standards. [https://www.who.int/data/nutrition/nlis/
47 info/maternity-protection-compliance-with-international-labour-standards](https://www.who.int/data/nutrition/nlis/info/maternity-protection-compliance-with-international-labour-standards)

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49 ^[10] The 2020/2024 United Methodist *Book of Discipline*, ¶356.

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Greater New Jersey Parental Leave Procedures

Clergyperson's Responsibilities & Action Steps:

1. Clergy are encouraged to begin planning for Parental Leave as soon as possible. Think through the logistics and needs of your family, ensuring that you consider what will best serve your family.
2. Talk with your District Superintendent as soon as you feel comfortable, but around the time that you are announcing publicly, if you plan to.
3. Discuss your plan for leave coverage with your DS and then your SPRC.
4. Submit a formal Parental Leave request via email to the District Superintendent, Episcopal Office, and the Board of Ordained Ministry Conference Relations Registrar. This should occur at least 90 days in advance of the projected start date of leave.
5. If needed or desired, the District Superintendent will meet with the SPRC to discuss the Parental Leave Policy, benefits, and needs of the congregation.
6. Work with the SPRC to determine the local church resources and needs during the leave. Request funding by submitting grant paperwork through Connectional Ministries with expenses related to pastoral care coverage, pulpit supply or other needs.
7. Arrange pastoral coverage for the duration of your leave. The District Superintendent is available to assist you if desired, and will provide names and contact information of retired clergy and lay servants willing to do pulpit supply and a list of people willing to cover for pastoral care
8. Communicate your Parental Leave plans to the SPRC, District Superintendent, and Local Church/ministry setting.
9. As the child's arrival date nears, ensure all notes and pastoral coverage plans are in place and have been communicated to all involved.
10. Set appropriate boundaries with Local Church leadership as to your needs during leave. Think about if you wish to be contacted during your leave, and under what circumstances. Communicate your boundaries clearly, and ensure that the Local Church/ministry setting understands your availability during leave. (Think about how or if you will respond when a parishioner calls you. What about if there is a funeral? What will happen to emails that are sent during your leave?). Ensure that communication is kind and clear so that all know what to expect.
11. As the child's arrival date nears, it may be helpful to have back up pastoral coverage and worship services ready, in case of unanticipated circumstances. Consider developing a lay-led service or two and equipping members to be prepared in the event they need to lead without you.
12. When your child arrives and leave begins, inform your District Superintendent and SPRC.
13. Take full advantage of the Parental Leave benefits offered to you, for the benefit of your family.

District Superintendent and Conference Responsibilities & Action Steps:

1. District Superintendents will support clergy and encourage the full use of the Parental Leave Policy, including the Policy for Births and Adoptions and the Policy for Foster/Resource Families and Kinship Care Placements.
2. If desired, District Superintendents will meet with the SPRC to discuss the Parental Leave Policy, benefits, and needs of the congregation, for birth, adoption, kinship care, or foster care placement.
3. District Superintendents will receive Parental Leave coverage budgets and approve their submission through the Connectional Ministries grant process.
4. District Superintendents will remain in consultation with the clergy as pastoral coverage is arranged. The District Superintendent will provide a list of retired clergy and lay servants and others for pulpit supply and a list of those who would be willing to cover pastoral care.
5. District Superintendents will encourage good boundaries during Parental Leave. District Superintendents will not require clergy to attend charge conference, district conference, or annual conference related duties during their parental leave.

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6. During the appointment process, no assumptions should be made about the desires of future parents. The District Superintendent should be in conversation with clergy about potential appointment changes. These conversations should affirm the professional dignity and sacred worth of clergy parents and families.
7. District Superintendents will help interpret and support the need for space and time for grieving for clergy families experiencing pregnancy or infancy loss or at the end of a placement. District Superintendents will be in consultation with clergy and the SPRC to arrange this time. This time will not affect a clergy person’s annual vacation.
8. The Annual Conference will support and promote Parental Leave and will advocate for paid Parental Leave in all aspects of society.
9. COSROW, the Cabinet and the Board of Ordained Ministry will review and update the Parental Leave policy at least quadrennially.

01 **UNITED METHODISTS OF GREATER NEW JERSEY SAFE SANCTUARY LEGISLATION**

02
03
04
05 **2026 Annual Conference Update**

06
07 **WHEREAS** the Safe Sanctuaries team is required to update and amend the conference policies and
08 procedures for the care and protection of children, youth, and vulnerable adults

09
10 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** THAT the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference adopt the following
11 Safe Sanctuaries Policy and Procedures for all programs dealing with children, youth (under 18) and
12 vulnerable adults as of May 19, 2026

13
14 **Therefore, be it resolved** that the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference adopt the following policy
15 requirements and procedures for GNJ local congregations, Communities of HOPE and HOPE Centers, and
16 ministry sites

17
18 **SMART TEAM PROCEDURE(S):** The GNJ Conference will work with COSROW and other conference
19 resources to create and implement a Sexual Misconduct Response Team to work with churches,
20 survivors, alleged abusers, etc. to support and care for everyone involved if and when a situation arises.
21 The Sexual Abuse Awareness Team will be included in the guidelines for how local churches respond
22 to allegations of Sexual Misconduct. The Safe Sanctuaries coordinator will work with COSROW and the
23 SMRT to provide information to local churches in order to provide resourcing to all congregations, clergy,
24 and laity in GNJ.

25
26 Local churches that have experienced or are experiencing sexual abuse or misconduct in any form may
27 request assistance from the GNJ Sexual Misconduct Response Team (SMRT). Additionally, the District
28 Superintendent or the Cabinet can send out the team to assist in local church matters if they deem it
29 necessary.

30
31 **Process:**

- 32
33 1. Any person impacted by the incident can request assistance from the SMRTeam by emailing
34 SMRTGNJ@gmail.com, or calling (INSERT NUMBERS) The email or call should include the
35 following information:
36 a. Name of the person requesting assistance
37 b. Title or role
38 c. Brief summary of the request
39 i. Do not include- any identifying information about the incident or alleged perpetrator
40 outside of the person requesting help
41 d. Contact information including phone number for a return phone call
42 2. Within 48 hours the person requesting assistance will receive a response from the team about
43 next steps and getting more information about the incident.
44 3. From there the team will be responsible for creating an individualized response plan based off of
45 the needs of those impacted.

46
47 **Notes about the SMRTeam**

- 48
49 1. The SMRT can respond at the request of an individual, or a local church that has been impacted
50 by Sexual Misconduct. If the local church or individual requests the team’s assistance, the
51 episcopal office will be notified by the SMRTeam. Additionally, if the DS or Cabinet deems that
52 the SMRT would be beneficial in a situation, they can also request the team’s presence.

- 01 2. Once the response process has been initiated, the team will host separate small group meetings
02 with staff, SPRC, and members of the congregation. At no time will the name of the alleged
03 harmed individual be disclosed to prevent secondary harm to the individual.
- 04 3. A minimum of 1 meeting will be required with a church or faith community after a complaint is
05 filed against a church leader.
 - 06 ◦ The purpose of these meetings is to address healing in the aftermath of misconduct or
07 trauma.
 - 08 ◦ Dates for follow-up meetings will be set to meet again with each group if requested.
 - 09 ◦ A focus will be made on transparency while keeping confidentiality.
- 10 4. Response Team Members shall also be sent out as an individual support person for any
11 individual (alleged victim or alleged perpetrator) involved in a sexual misconduct complaint.
- 12 5. Response Team members will be able to make recommendations for appropriate care and
13 response to congregations, the cabinet, and the bishop when deemed appropriate and
14 necessary by the Response Team.

15
16 **Safe Sanctuaries Policy Approval Process:**

17
18 Local Church/Ministries Policies will be approved in the following way:

- 19
20 1. A local church/ministry will form a Safe Sanctuaries team to review/create a Safe Sanctuaries
21 policy for the local ministry context. This team will utilize resourcing from the Safe Sanctuaries
22 Coordinator for GNJ as found on the GNJAC website in order to create/review the policy.
- 23 2. The policy/procedures will then be presented for approval from the Administrative Council
- 24 3. The policy/procedure will then be submitted via email to the Safe Sanctuaries Coordinator from
25 a designated member of the Safe Sanctuaries Team in the local ministry context
- 26 4. The Safe Sanctuaries Coordinator will review the policy/procedure and work with a designated
27 member of the team to ensure that the policy meets all of the requirements of GNJ and will
28 respond as quickly as possible, but no later than 2 weeks after receipt of the Policy.
- 29 5. The Safe Sanctuaries Coordinator will issue a certificate for the local ministry context valid for 2
30 years.
- 31 6. The local church/ministry will upload both the approved policy and certificate to Arena only once
32 they have been cleared by the Safe Sanctuaries Coordinator.

33
34 **Policy Requirements for Safe Sanctuaries Policies and Procedures for all ministries and missions within
35 GNJAC and the Local Church:**

36
37 Section 1: Forms

38
39 Policies must include the following forms:

- 40
- 41 • A volunteer application form
- 42 • An Incident Report Form

43
44 A Building Use Form that is compliant with GNJAC Trustees guidelines and requires non- church groups
45 to have their own insurance. *Please note that local churches cannot require any outside group or
46 program to follow local church Safe Sanctuaries guidelines or require outside groups to have their own
47 policies.*

48
49 Section 2: Screening Process for all Volunteers and Staff

- 50
- 51 • A Background Check must be run through the local church/ministry’s Ministry Safe account
52 (Level of background check must be minimum level 1 for volunteers, and level 2 for anyone who
53 is operating a motor vehicle for a local church/ministry program (for ministries of the Annual
54 Conference, background checks will be paid for by the board or agency requesting them, for the

01 local church/ministry context the local church can decide to cover the cost of the background
02 check, but this should be clearly explained in the policy)

- 03
- 04 • All Volunteers and Staff must complete training through the local church/ministry’s Ministry Safe
05 Account (minimum is Sexual Abuse Awareness Training, but local churches/ministries can require
06 additional training)
- 07 • All applicants for volunteers and staff must complete an application form, and have at least 2
08 references for volunteers and 3 references for staff
- 09 • Anyone looking to volunteer must be a regular attendee of a local congregation for at least six
10 months before being allowed to supervise programming or serve as a leader within a program.
11 For programs like VBS that require more volunteers for a shorter period of time, volunteers who
12 do not meet the six-month criteria must not be allowed to supervise or lead alone; they must
13 always be paired with a known adult volunteer or staff person from the local church/ministry.
- 14 • All Screening forms, applications, and references shall be reviewed by the Chairperson of the
15 Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee, the supervisor (Ministry Lead) of the prospective
16 employee(s) or volunteer(s) and the pastor. Additionally, an interview should be held by a
17 member of the SPRC, the pastor and the Ministry lead to ensure compatibility and fitness for
18 ministry.
- 19 • screening forms and background checks shall be maintained in the confidential personnel files
20 of the church after the termination of any employee or volunteer for a minimum of 20 years in
21 paper or a password-protected digital file on the church computer, and are not to be deleted
22 from the Ministry Safe database.
- 23 • These screening and background checks shall be required of all persons unless a more stringent
24 check is required to satisfy the standards of a licensing agency
- 25 • If at any point a ministry worker (clergy or laity) has an incident (examples are but not limited to,
26 criminal activity, Driving under the influence charges etc.) that would change their background
27 check they are to immediately report it to the pastor of the local church if they are laity, and the
28 pastor would then immediately report to their DS. If a clergy person has an incident, they are
29 to immediately report to their District Superintendent(DS). Failure to do so would subject the
30 person to an investigation.

31
32 Section 3: Clergy

- 33
- 34 • Clergy under appointment are to participate in the Professional Ethics Development Program.
35 Clergy must complete the first round of PEDP by the end of 2024, and then once a quadrennium
36 following.
- 37 • Clergy shall have their background checks completed through Ministry Safe through the
38 Conference Office, but take the Abuse Prevention Training through their local church’s Ministry
39 Safe account. Those in extension ministry or not serving the local church shall work with the Safe
40 Sanctuaries Coordinator for the conference to have their Abuse Prevention Training completed
41 through GNJAC’s Ministry Safe Account. This should be completed every three years, and at
42 the start of a new appointment. Ministry Safe will notify the local church administrator when
43 renewals are due- both at the conference level and the local church level.

44
45 Section 4: Local Church Requirements

- 46
- 47 • All Local churches are required to have a certified Safe Sanctuaries policy in compliance with the
48 Conference Legislation, Policy Template, and Standards set by the Annual Conference.
- 49 • Safe Sanctuaries policies shall be reviewed/updated every year by the Local Church
50 Administrative Council and certified by the Annual Conference Safe Sanctuaries Coordinator
51 every other year.
- 52 • The certificate should be placed at a visible place for parents and visitors to see. Additionally,
53 the compliance and adoption of the Safe Sanctuaries Policy by a local church shall be reported
54 through a written question to be answered as a part of the Church Conference Report.

- 01 • All programs at the local church shall be clearly differentiated between those that are church
02 operated and those that are non-church-operated.
- 03 • All buildings in which such programs are housed shall have any necessary “certificates of
04 occupancy”.
- 05 • All groups conducting such programs shall have the necessary certificates of insurance for both
06 liability and workers’ compensation. They shall be displayed as required by law.
- 07 • All such programs shall conform to Federal and State wage and tax laws for employees.
- 08 • All Churches, if they have programming for youth, children, or vulnerable adults that require an
09 overnight stay, will have a policy in place for safeguarding and caring for folks in those situations.
- 10 • If Churches are to be in a relationship with youth, children, or vulnerable adults who self-identify
11 in the LGBTQIA+ community, they will have policies and procedures outlining how to keep youth/
12 children/Vulnerable adults safe, cared for, and protected in both physical and emotional security.
13 This care shall be focused on housing arrangements, curriculum development and overall well-
14 being. Volunteers should be well equipped to minister to every child of God.
- 15 • The resource Safer Sanctuaries: Nurturing Trust within Faith Communities (published April 2023)
16 shall be the model by which churches shall develop their policy, and each policy while unique to
17 each local church setting.
- 18 • Supervision procedures, including Sunday School, youth group, overnight programming, etc.
19 including the Two-Adult Rule (There must always be at least two unrelated screened adults),
20 Five-Years Older Rule (The youngest screened adult working with youth/children/vulnerable
21 adults must be at least five years older than the eldest person in the program/event/etc.), and
22 safeguards for ministry context.
- 23 • Reporting allegations of abuse.
 - 24 a. The policy spells out who and how to report suspected abuse (includes state reporting
25 phone numbers)
 - 26 b. The Policy requires that any knowledge or suspicion of child abuse be reported to the DCP
27 hotline in NJ/NY/PA (depending on which state the program is located in)
 - 28 c. Policy states that only the pastor must inform the DS and be directed to the Director of
29 Communications so that a communications plan can be developed. No one should speak to
30 the media unless directed to by the Director of Communications.
 - 31 d. The pastor and the Ministry Leader should be notified whenever an allegation or concern
32 rises. If the Pastor is the accused, the DS should be called immediately by the SPRC Chair. If
33 the Ministry Leader is the accused, the Pastor and SPRC Chair should work together to notify
34 the DS.
 - 35 e. Policy requires notification of the District Superintendent when an allegation or suspicion of
36 abuse occurs
 - 37 f. Policy requires the removal of the child to a safe setting
 - 38 g. Policy requires the removal of the alleged abuser if they are in the same space as the victim.
 - 39 h. Policy requires calling 911 only in cases when the child is in immediate danger.
 - 40 i. Policy requires a written record of all steps taken in response to allegation
 - 41 j. Policy includes a report form for suspected incidents of sexual or physical abuse

42
43 Section 5: Annual Conference Requirements:

- 44
- 45 • The United Methodists of Greater New Jersey, through the Conference Children, Youth and
46 Young Adult Coordinator and the Conference Media Center shall resource local churches with
47 materials, persons, training opportunities, and guidelines for establishing effective measures
48 that will reduce the risk of emotional, physical or sexual abuse of children and youth in the local
49 church.
- 50 • Each district within GNJ shall designate person(s) who will, in partnership with GNJ, develop and
51 implement measures that will reduce the risk of child /youth abuses in the local church. This
52 could be the district youth coordinator or another person, but all designated persons will work
53 with the Safe Sanctuaries Coordinator on a Conference Wide Team.
- 54

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

Section 6: Definition of Terms (Policies must include the following definitions)

Child: In the United States, this term is commonly used to identify anyone age twelve or younger.

Youth: Anyone not a “child” and under eighteen (age of legal majority).

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

Vulnerable person: 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 out of the foster system, persons who are in active addiction.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

04
05 Neglect: When a person with responsibility for a child, youth, or other vulnerable person fails to
06 care for that individual's physical and/or emotional needs.

07
08 CHURCH PROGRAMS/NON-CHURCH PROGRAMS AS RELATED TO INSURANCE: Programs relating to
09 children, youth and vulnerable adults are covered under the GNJ Property and Casualty Insurance
10 Program so long as they are church-operated. That is, the church must have control over starting
11 and stopping the operation, hiring or firing the employees and the management of the day-to-day
12 operations. The decision to operate a program, as described above, should be a matter of record in the
13 meeting minutes of the Administrative Board or Board of Trustees of the local church. The non-church
14 program is not covered by the GNJ insurance and the church should be sure that these non-church
15 programs carry a minimum of \$1,000,000 General Liability Insurance and are covered by Workers'
16 Compensation insurance. Certificates of these insurance coverages should be requested and received by
17 the church annually. GNJ and the local church should be named as additional insureds on these policies.
18 The employees of the church-operated childcare centers are covered under the Workers' Compensation
19 Program and as such should be reported on the annual Workers' Compensation salary audit of the local
20 church.

21
22 SCREENING FORMS: Screening forms for use with volunteers are designed to assist the local church in
23 gaining information on persons who are applicants for working in church programs with children, youth
24 and vulnerable adults. Their use is designed to enhance the protection of those who participate in the
25 programs.

26
27 BACKGROUND CHECKS: As with the screening forms, background checks are designed to protect those
28 individuals involved in the programs offered by the church to children, youth and vulnerable adults.

29
30 Submitted by:

31
32 Gabrielle Corbett, Safe Sanctuaries Coordinator for GNJ

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34 COSROW

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01 **2026 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE POLICY**

02
03
04 **Whereas:** The Greater New Jersey Annual Conference does not currently have a policy or guide on
05 domestic violence;

06
07 **And whereas,** research has shown responding well to sexual misconduct reduces levels of harm to
08 individuals and churches and lessens liability;

09
10 **And whereas,** the following policy is proposed to establish an official policy on Domestic Violence for the
11 Greater New Jersey Annual Conference:

12
13 **Domestic Violence Policy for the United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey**

14
15 *All references to the Book of Discipline are in the 2020/2024 edition. Paragraph numbers are for easy*
16 *reference and may change with future editions of The Book of Discipline. Unless there are substantive*
17 *changes to the content of the Discipline, the Policy will be updated to reflect the current Book of*
18 *Discipline as editorial changes without the need to re-approve the Policy. Future name changes of the*
19 *United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey will also be updated as editorial changes.*

20
21 It is not enemies who taunt me—I could bear that: It is not adversaries who deal insolently with me—I
22 could hide from them. But it is you, my equal, my companion, my familiar friend, with whom I keep
23 pleasant company. Psalm 55: 12-14a NRSV.

24
25 The Psalmist captures the feeling of many persons who experience domestic violence: the pain of being
26 betrayed and injured by a loved one.

27
28 **What is Domestic Violence?**

29
30 Any abusive, violent, coercive, forceful, or threatening act or word inflicted by one member of a family or
31 household on another can constitute domestic violence.

32
33 The United Methodist Church affirms the sacredness of all persons and their right to safety, nurture
34 and care. It names domestic violence and sexual abuse as sin and pledges to work for their eradication
35 (2020/2024 *Book of Resolutions*, ¶3355, pp. 379-388). Thus, we recognize domestic violence as an
36 immoral act and a chargeable offense (2020/2024 *Book of Discipline*, ¶ 2702.1)

37
38 **How to Respond to Domestic Violence**

39
40 We celebrate God’s gift of intimacy, the image of God in each person, the inherent right of each person
41 to health, wholeness, and safety, and we commit ourselves to working toward the elimination of
42 domestic violence.

43
44 We encourage every local church to discuss domestic violence and create accessible resources on how
45 church leadership will respond to incidents of domestic violence within their church community. Some
46 sample topics include:

- 47
48 • What to do in response to a disclosure of abuse.
49 • What actions could or should be taken to ensure safety of the person experiencing domestic
50 abuse
51 • Who should be notified
52 • Who should respond
53 • What community resources are available in your community for a person experiencing domestic
54 abuse

- 01 • What community resources exist for perpetrators of domestic abuse.
- 02 • How is the local church discipline procedures engaged in reported incidents of domestic violence
- 03 • What safety protocols will the church need to have in place

04
05 **Resources regarding Domestic Violence**

06
07 The Greater New Jersey Commission on the Status and Role of Women will develop and disseminate
08 resources including those that can be shared through social media annually to all churches within
09 the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference during the month of October which is Domestic Violence
10 Awareness Month.

11
12 **Therefore, Be It Resolved That:** The Greater New Jersey Annual Conference adopt this policy as the
13 formal domestic violence policy of the annual conference.

14
15 **Rationale:** The Greater New Jersey Annual Conference has not had a policy solely designed to address
16 domestic violence so this policy would eliminate the gap.

17
18 Commission on the Status and Role of Women

19
20 Chair: Isabel Quezada

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01 **2026 SEXUAL ETHICS POLICY UPDATE**

02
03
04 **Whereas:** The Greater New Jersey Annual Conference updated its sexual ethics policy in 2023 and
05 COSROW made a commitment to review regularly;

06
07 **And whereas,** the current policy has been reviewed throughout this year by COSROW;

08
09 **And whereas,** the following policy is proposed as an updated policy to be adopted as the official sexual
10 ethics policy of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference:

11
12 Clergy/Laity Sexual Misconduct, Abuse, and Harassment Policy for the United Methodist Church of
13 Greater New Jersey

14
15 *All references to the Book of Discipline are in the 2020/2024 edition. Paragraph numbers are for easy*
16 *reference and may change with future editions of The Book of Discipline. Unless there are substantive*
17 *changes to the content of the Discipline, the Policy will be updated to reflect the current Book of*
18 *Discipline as editorial changes without the need to re-approve the Policy. Future name changes of the*
19 *United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey will also be updated as editorial changes.*

20
21 **I. Context**

22
23 For the purpose of this policy, we will use “clergy” or “clergyperson” to refer to all ordained,
24 commissioned, consecrated members of the Annual Conference, licensed local pastors, supply pastors
25 and Certified Lay Ministers.

26
27 **II. Purpose**

28
29 Clergy are in a position of great trust, power and responsibility. This provides the opportunity for unique
30 relationships of grace and caring. While most clergy remain faithful to their vows and their covenant with
31 God and the church, there are clergy who sometimes violate the trust given them. Sexual misconduct
32 is one grave violation of this trust. We also acknowledge that laypersons can engage in acts of sexual
33 misconduct, abuse and /or harassment. This policy seeks to address the abuse of power by all clergy and
34 laity who engage in sexual misconduct, abuse, and/or sexual harassment. (See Section IV for definitions)

35
36 Incidents of sexual misconduct, abuse, and/or harassment have been reported in United Methodist
37 Churches, agencies, and institutions. It is both the ethical and legal responsibility of the Annual
38 Conference to ensure that there are mechanisms for addressing grievances in these matters. The intent
39 of this document is to provide guidance to both laity and clergy of the Annual Conference, and to the
40 local churches contained therein regarding clergy/lay sexual misconduct, abuse, and/or harassment.

41
42 It is our hope, as the people of Christ, that this policy will serve to guard against inappropriate behavior
43 and be a guide for our community of faith as we seek to handle grievances should sexual misconduct,
44 abuse, and/or harassment occur.

45
46 **III. Theological Foundation**

47
48 All persons are created by God. In the Genesis stories, as in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, it
49 is affirmed that we are created in the image and likeness of God. God values human life, intending all
50 persons to have worth and dignity in all relationships with God and others. God calls us into a covenant
51 with each other as children of God and as the body of Christ. The scriptures remind us that Jesus was
52 sent into this world so that we might experience whole relationships with each other and God. “There
53 is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all
54 one in Christ Jesus.” (Galatians 3: 28 RSV)

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

08

09 One who repents for sinful behavior is promised forgiveness. However, discipline should be distinguished
10 from forgiveness. A clergyperson guilty of sexual misconduct needs and may receive forgiveness and
11 be offered avenues for redemption and change. Forgiveness, however, does not excuse one from
12 responsibility to the community and accountability for the brokenness caused by one's behavior. The
13 church must still take steps to protect the people of God.

14

15 **IV. Definitions**

16

17 *Sexual Misconduct*

18

19 It is sexual misconduct when a person within a ministerial role of leadership (pastor, educator, counselor,
20 youth leader or other position of leadership) engages in sexual contact or sexualized behavior with a
21 congregant, client, employee, student, staff member, co-worker, or volunteer within the ministerial
22 relationship. (2020/2024 *Book of Resolutions*, ¶3351 p.361-368)

23

24 Examples of ministerial relationships:

25

- 26 • Pastor/member of church
- 27 • Supervisor/church employee
- 28 • Youth pastor/youth
- 29 • Sunday School teacher/student
- 30 • Pastor/student intern
- 31 • Pastoral counselor/counseled

32

33 Examples of sexualized behavior or sexual contact:

34

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

45

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

47

48 This understanding is equally applicable in the context of ministries in which there are no "parishioners"
49 but there is a community which acknowledges the authority of the clergyperson or lay worker as a
50 spiritual leader or other ministries in which the ministering person serves a community much wider than
51 the membership of the local congregation.

52

53 At the core of this definition of sexual misconduct is the abuse of power and trust that occurs when a
54 ministering person initiates or allows sexual behavior with someone who is in a relationship of trust and/

01 or dependence. Sexual misconduct breaks a sacred trust. Any such sexual misconduct is a violation by
02 the ministering person who then bears the responsibility for his/her behavior.

03

04 *Sexual Harassment*

05

06 Sexual harassment is any unwanted sexual advance or demand, either verbal or physical that is
07 reasonably perceived by the recipient as demeaning, intimidating, or coercive. Sexual harassment
08 must be understood as an exploitation of a power relationship rather than as an exclusively sexual
09 issue. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, the creation of a hostile or abusive working
10 environment resulting from discrimination on the basis of gender. For full statement about Sexual
11 Harassment, see Par. 162, OTHER SOCIAL ISSUES, M in the 2020/2024 *Book of Discipline*.

12

13 Suggested guidelines for determining hostile environment:

14

- 15 • Is the behavior sexual in nature or gender specific?
- 16 • Is the behavior unwelcome?
- 17 • Is the behavior severe or pervasive enough so that it creates an environment which interferes
18 with one's ability to work, get an education, or participate in ministry?

19

20 Sexual harassment also includes the development or attempted development of a sexual or romantic
21 relationship between a clergyperson or lay worker and a person with whom they have a ministerial
22 relationship, when that is an unwanted or inappropriate relationship.

23

24 *Sexual Abuse*

25

26 Sexual abuse is a sexual invasion of the body by force. Sexual abuse may be: rape, sexual assault, sexual
27 violence, incest, indecent exposure, statutory rape, indecent assault, and aggravated indecent assault.
28 Sexual abuse is also an internal assault, a deliberate violation of emotional integrity, and a hostile and
29 degrading act of violence. For full statement about Sexual Abuse, see Par. 162, OTHER SOCIAL ISSUES, M,
30 in the 2020/2024 *Book of Discipline*.

31

32 **V. Standards for Clergy Conduct**

33

34 A. Clergy related to the Annual Conference are always accountable for the ways they respond to persons
35 who ask their ministerial assistance and over whom they have authority. Any breach of this ministerial
36 relationship, ministerial responsibility, and ministerial authority is abusive and unethical.

37

38 B. Clergy often relate to persons who are fragile and vulnerable, and therefore must exercise special
39 care:

40

- 41 1. That clergy are psychologically, emotionally, and spiritually healthy.
- 42 2. That there has been proper and adequate preparation and education as well as adequate
43 continuing education for providing appropriate help for those under their care.
- 44 3. That they seek counsel, advice, and supervision.

45

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

49

50 D. Clergy self-discipline requires self-awareness and takes for a standard of ethics those implied and
51 described in the vows of ordination and consecration. (2020/2024, *Book of Discipline*, ¶1301-¶1370)
52 Personal integrity and mature professional conduct are a part of every ministerial relationship. This
53 prohibits any sexual behavior with a parishioner, colleague, staff, or client entrusted to their sacred care
54 outside the bonds of marriage.

01 E. All clergy have the responsibility for developing healthy and ethical relationships with other persons.
02 All clergy shall participate in sexual ethics training provided by the annual conference and approved by
03 COSROW a minimum of once per quadrennium.

04
05 F. When clergy are providing professional pastoral counseling to persons in their church or community, it
06 is understood that they shall keep appropriate standards of professional behavior and boundaries in that
07 relationship.

08
09 It is also recommended that clergy seek supervision for their counseling by a certified counselor
10 supervisor to ensure that proper counseling relationships are maintained.

11 12 **VI. Standards for the Conduct of Laity**

13
14 Within the United Methodist connection, lay persons are also called to a standard of conduct which
15 stands against sexual misconduct, abuse and/or harassment as outlined in 2020/2024 Book of Discipline
16 ¶12702.3. Laity have the responsibility for not creating hostile environments as a result of sexual
17 harassment, abuse and/or sexual misconduct against other persons.

18 19 **VII. Honoring Perceptions of Reality**

20
21 We understand that intentions and perceptions are not always the same. It is our policy to treat seriously
22 a person's perception of the truth of their experience if/when sexual harassment, abuse, and/or
23 misconduct are reported.

24 25 **VIII. Confidentiality**

26
27 The primary purpose of this policy is to encourage and support persons who experience sexual
28 harassment, abuse, and/or misconduct to report such incidents, by providing a process that protects
29 them from intimidation and preserves their dignity. We recognize that there also may be occasions
30 when persons are falsely charged with sexual harassment, abuse and/or misconduct. Appropriate
31 confidentiality will be maintained whenever a complaint is made. Occasionally, information will need
32 to be shared for the safety and protection of individuals within Greater New Jersey and the broader
33 community.

34 35 **IX. Sexual Misconduct Response Team**

36
37 The United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey provides the following support system to assist any
38 individual who has a concern about an issue of sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, or sexual abuse
39 with the church. The response team can be vital in support of congregations throughout the healing
40 process. Response teams also provide education to help understand the nature of sexual misconduct by
41 a faith leader. The response team is not involved in any judicial or disciplinary processes that involve a
42 legal resolution of a situation. Bishops shall employ a Response team whenever a congregation and/or
43 individuals experience trauma related to sexual misconduct. The response team can be deployed across
44 the conference for situations including but not limited to:

- 45
- 46 • Ministerial or clergy sexual misconduct
 - 47 • Laity sexual misconduct directly involving the congregation or ministry setting
 - 48 • Sexual abuse of an individual at a church camp or other church-affiliated event
 - 49 • Any other instances as requested by the bishop, the bishop's representative, the alleged
50 individual harmed, the church involved, or the alleged perpetrator.

51
52 The focus of response teams is to support individuals who have experienced trauma and assist with
53 healing. Response teams are charged with providing support, prayer, and encouragement for individuals

54

01 harmed, families of the alleged individual harmed, the alleged perpetrator and their family, and the
02 church community impacted by a complaint.

03

04 1. We urge all related institutions/agencies in the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference to identify and
05 train Response Teams to serve within their organization.

06

07 1. Training will be provided by the annual conference a minimum of once yearly, for all response
08 team members, and open to all members of the annual conference.

09 2. Training will include the Do No More Harm curriculum and training to be developed and
10 implemented yearly by COSROW and in conjunction with the GNJ Leadership. All training shall
11 be approved by COSROW prior to being advertised to the conference membership and response
12 team members.

13 3. Topics to be covered in annual training shall include at minimum:

14 a. Counseling 101

15 b. Maintaining healthy interpersonal boundaries

16 c. Power dynamics of abuse

17 d. Responding well to individuals and congregations that have experienced abuse

18 e. Sacred trust

19 f. Secondary trauma

20 g. Self-care

21 h. Spiritual guidance

22 i. Trauma-informed care

23 j. Walking with the accused

24

25 2. Each local church will receive posters produced by the annual conference in conjunction with COSROW
26 that shall be hung in the bathroom(s). These posters will have a brief statement on sexual misconduct,
27 sexual harassment and sexual abuse and will provide the ways to contact the Sexual Misconduct
28 Response Team and ways to file a complaint if a person feels they have experienced sexual misconduct.

29

30 **X. Process**

31

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

35

36 1. A letter, informing the process, shall be provided to both the complainant and the accused at the
37 time the complaint is received. (2020/2024 *Book of Discipline*, ¶1363.)

38 2. Limit all media responses on behalf of the Church/Conference to the Bishop or the Bishop's
39 designate.

40 3. If the complainant chooses to file a written complaint, the process will proceed as indicated in
41 the 2020/2024 *Book of Discipline* ¶1363.2.

42 4. A complainant has the option of following church policy and discipline procedures when bringing
43 a complaint of sexual misconduct against a clergy member. They also have the option of seeking
44 legal advice and filing charges. These additional options shall be communicated both in writing
45 and verbally to the person bringing the complaint.

46 5. Any incidence of sexual abuse in which the person who experienced sexual abuse is a minor is
47 a crime and must be handled according to the Safe Sanctuaries policy of the church. Anyone
48 within the church who becomes aware of a child abuse issue is morally obligated and required
49 to take steps necessary in the attempt to prevent further harm to the child. If an incident of
50 child abuse occurs involving a church employee or volunteer within the church building or at any
51 church activity, or if a minor brings forth a complaint of sexual abuse it must be reported to the
52 local authorities. The United Methodist Church understands all clergy and lay leadership to be
53 considered mandated reporters of suspected abuse.

54

01 6. The United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey recognizes that accusations of misconduct
02 of a sexual nature can be harmful to the whole congregation. The Greater New Jersey Annual
03 Conference will provide support to the church affected by these accusations by providing
04 guidance from the Sexual Misconduct Response Team and counsel.
05

06 **For Your Information**

07
08 If you feel that you have experienced clergy sexual misconduct, abuse, and/or harassment and wish to
09 find peace, justice, healing, and resolution, please contact:

10
11 The SMRT Team:
12 SMRTGNJ@gmail.com

13
14 Any of the District Superintendents' Offices
15 The contact information for each of the District Superintendent's Offices can be found here: [https://](https://www.gnjumc.org/gnj-districts/)
16 www.gnjumc.org/gnj-districts/

17
18 OR The Bishop of The United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey
19
20 <https://www.gnjumc.org/about-gnjumc/leadership/>

21
22 **Therefore, Be It Resolved That:** The Greater New Jersey Annual Conference adopt this policy as the
23 formal updated sexual ethics policy of the annual conference.

24
25 **Rationale:** The Greater New Jersey Annual Conference committed to reviewing this policy annually
26 and updating as necessary, and this update enhances the current policy, updates all *Book of Discipline*
27 references, and removes a section a new policy was developed to address since this policy was last
28 updated.

29
30 Commission on the Status and Role of Women

31
32 Chair: Isabel Quezada

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01 **CHURCH CLOSURES**

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04

Be it resolved that the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference expresses its thanksgiving for all the blessings made possible by the clergy and laity who have contributed to the ministry and mission of the following congregations. In the closing of these churches, these congregations give a living legacy of support to the United Methodist mission.

08

09

Be it further resolved, in keeping with the provisions of Paragraph 2549.2b of the Book of Discipline, 2020/2024 edition, the congregations are discontinued, and the assets of the church are transferred to the Trustees of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference.

12

13

Be it further resolved, that in keeping with the provisions of Paragraph 229 of the Book of the Discipline, 2020/2024 edition, the remaining members of the church may be transferred to a United Methodist Church of their choice.

16

17

Be it further resolved, that through its budget fund distribution percentages for the sale of property, Greater New Jersey Annual Conference distribute net proceeds after all outstanding loans and other obligations owed to Greater New Jersey Annual Conference or any other creditor shall be repaid upon the sale of the property, and liquidation of any other assets.

21

22

Be it further resolved, in keeping with provisions of Paragraph 2549.4 of the Book of Discipline, 2016 edition, all deeds, records, legal papers and other official documents shall be maintained in permanent safekeeping with the Conference Commission on Archives and History.

25

26

Be it further resolved that the remaining funds from the sale of the church after all debt and obligations have been paid will be disbursed according to the legislation as approved by the January 2021 Greater New Jersey special annual conference, except in cases in which the local church is closed in an urban area with more than 50,000 in population. In these cases, paragraph 2549.8 of the Book of Discipline, 2020/2024 edition, will govern the proceeds of the sale.

31

32

We are grateful for the ministry of these congregations:

33

34

Cape Atlantic

35

36

Trinity United Methodist Church of South Dennis: The members and friends of Trinity UMC in South Dennis (Dennis Township) have been gathering for worship since the early 1802 wherein originally they shared buildings with the local Baptist congregation and others. Over the years, the congregation experienced a sustained decline in active membership and participation, resulting in financial challenges that make it no longer possible to faithfully sustain its ministry. Following a season of prayerful discernment, a special church conference was held and the church voted to close on December 7, 2025.

42

43

Piney Hollow United Methodist Church: The members and friends of Piney Hollow UMC in Newfield, NJ have been gathering for worship, ministry, and mission for over 170 years. Through worship, dinners, children's programs, Mother's Day celebrations and many more mission and ministry activities they have over the years, the congregation experienced a sustained decline in active membership and participation, resulting in financial challenges that make it no longer possible to faithfully sustain its ministry. Following a season of prayerful discernment, a special church conference was held on December 7, 2025 and the church voted to close on May 10, 2026.

50

51

Submitted by

52

The Greater New Jersey Cabinet

53

54

01 **BUDGET**

02
03
04 **2027 Budget Legislation**

05 Whereas the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference’s mission is to *recruit and develop transformational leaders to make*
06 *disciples of Jesus Christ and grow vital congregations for the transformation of the world.* In partnership with the Bishop,
07 Extended Cabinet, and Board/Agency leadership, the Council of Finance and Administration ensures the spending is focused
08 on driving our strategic goals.
09

10 Therefore, be it resolved that GNJ adopts the 2027 budget to achieve our mission; the 2027 budget will:

- 11 1. Consolidate all billings to congregations, GNJ ministry and mission, administration and property, and general church
- 12 apportionment budgets.
- 13 2. Apportion congregations on their total spending as inputted by the congregation in its statistical reports excluding
- 14 capital expenditures, mission giving and paid apportionments.
- 15 3. Apportion all congregations except for the Journey of Hope Congregations at 14.8%, of which 12.3% is for GNJ
- 16 Shared Ministry and 2.5% for general church apportionment.
- 17 4. Apportion Journey of Hope congregations at the rate set through the Journey of Hope Plan.
- 18 5. Support six district superintendents.
- 19 6. Includes income from the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of the UMC in the amount of \$748,724 (in monthly equal
- 20 installments) towards the cooperative efforts undertaken to jointly further mission and ministry by the two
- 21 conferences (Memo of Understanding).
- 22 7. Draw 5% from designated funds according to policy to support the budget.
- 23 8. Provide monthly statements to congregations which include the following.
- 24
 - 25 a. The total apportionment to the congregation for GNJ Shared Ministry.
 - 26 b. The total apportionment to the congregation on behalf of the general church.
 - 27 c. Direct billings to the congregation from GNJ, which include but are not limited to, blended rate for active
 - 28 healthcare and incremental contributions for self-elected benefits (health, dental, vision, health
 - 29 reimbursement accounts and Compass contributions) for active pastors/lay employees, workers
 - 30 compensation, property insurance, church-paid Compass contributions, and back payments for past billings.

31 Be it further resolved that GNJ, as a commitment to its Journey of Hope, will give from end of the year budget surplus, if it
32 exists, up to 100% to two General Apportionment funds: Black College and Africa University.
33

34
35 Submitted by:

36
37 Rev. Cliff Still, President, Council of Finance and Administration
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2027 Consolidated Spending Budget

	2027 Budget	Approved 2026
Income		
GNJ Shared Ministry Apportionment	6,781,644	6,314,829
GNJ portion of General Church MEF	54,771	52,797
Local Church Billing Revenue	15,130,018	15,096,570
Centenary Fund	513,937	674,000
Designated Funds	1,024,129	902,788
Draw from Disaffiliation SM funds	140,000	142,000
Property Sale Revenue	-	-
Grants and Donations	114,020	105,295
Registrations	125,550	205,750
EPA MOU Contribution	748,724	409,318
MRC Staff Health Contributions	70,217	148,724
Total Income	24,703,009	24,052,071
Expenses		
Personnel		
GNJ Staff	5,714,803	5,258,461
Clergy Benefit Billings	10,705,636	7,831,416
Retiree Health Insurance	1,038,097	1,130,532
Total All Personnel	17,458,537	14,220,409
Leadership Development	262,371	287,947
Congregational Development	535,250	531,850
Mission and Justice Ministries	624,232	998,464
Agency Budgets	89,400	89,400
Administration	520,396	483,765
Communications	317,800	313,403
Property	4,892,475	7,126,724
Total Expenses	24,700,461	24,051,961
Net surplus / (deficit)	2,549	110
General Church Apportionments		
Apportionment Base	62,814,501	59,355,580
General Church Apportionment \$'s	1,541,916	1,486,337
General Church Apportionment %	2.5%	2.5%

01 **REVISE RULE 19**

02
03
04 **Whereas**, the Conference-provided guidance for legislative recommendations shows a process that ends
05 on February 26th; and

06
07 **Whereas**, either January 15th or February 26th is among the earliest deadlines in the Northeastern
08 Jurisdiction for legislative submissions; and

09
10 **Whereas**, it does not appear that Conference agencies are held to that deadline; and

11
12 **Whereas**, it should be possible to print and mail a Pre-Conference Workbook in less than thirty days or
13 we should have a conversation about how many truly need a mailed Workbook or both; so therefore be
14 it

15
16 **RESOLVED**, That Rule 19b as found in the 2025 Conference Journal, be amended to create a new
17 deadline of no earlier than February 15th for submissions.

18
19 **RATIONALE –**

20
21 It should be noted that there has never been a demand for negotiations. But, Isaiah implored us to
22 “reason together.” A lack of communication from the Rules Committee for whatever the rationale
23 seems not to be in line with this. We have other issues such as the deadline for General/Jurisdictional
24 nominations and Episcopal endorsements being held to the same deadline as petitions. I know I am far
25 from perfect and in need of grace.

26
27 I would respectfully disagree that the additional reviews that GNJ has means that the deadline needs to
28 be so early. Comparisons with some other Conferences:

29
30 SUSQUEHANNA 2026 - petition deadline February 15 - Conference June 4

31
32 BALTIMORE-WASHINGTON 2026 - petition deadline February 21 - Conference starts May 27

33
34 UPPER NEW YORK 2026 - petition deadline March 1 (for Workbook, later submissions go to website) -
35 Conference May 28

36
37 PENINSULA-DELAWARE 2026 - petition deadline March 6 - Conference starts May 12

38
39 WEST VIRGINIA 2026 - petition deadline March 12 - Conference starts June 10

40
41 WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA 2026 - petition deadline April 1 - Conference starts June 4

42
43 NEW YORK 2025 - petition deadline April 25 - Conference June 6

44
45 Even with District Conferences, Western PA is able to have a petition deadline of April 1st.

46
47 Submitted by Creed Pogue

48
49
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54

01 RESPONSE FROM THE RULES COMMITTEE—

02

03 The Rules Committee met to re-consider this resolution to amend Rule 19b once again (since we had
04 met last year and had not supported this prior to our annual conference session).

05

06 After due deliberation, we decided:

07

08 **1. To continue to keep the January 31st deadline as presently required by Rule 19b.**

09 *Rationale: In conversation with Conference Secretary, Program Staff, the Conference Chancellor,*

10 *the Cabinet and Bishop’s office, it was determined that Rule 19b is appropriate. It is a realistic*

11 *deadline to accomplish the reviews, editing, and publishing requirements for the pre-conference*

12 *work. The proposed legislation notes the timelines of other conferences in the Northeastern*

13 *Jurisdiction. This is not comparable based on the variances of conference cultures, later start*

14 *dates of other annual conferences and each conference’s Rules of Order.*

15

16 **2. Furthermore, in response to the “Rational” section of this Resolution:** The Rules Committee

17 was not mandated to negotiate with the author of proposed legislation, but rather, to seek

18 to discover, and/or re-affirm (or not), the parameters of the logistics to accomplish the tasks

19 involved in the preconference work to determine whether or not this resolution was a viable

20 option and report back to the Annual Conference. We have been faithful to that task.

21

22

23 Vicki Brendler

24 Chair, Rules Committee

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01 **TRANSPARENCY-FOR-A-SAFER-GNJ-2026**

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Whereas, in the past an unknown number of persons have been directly and adversely affected by United Methodist clergy who violated the trust of those persons by inflicting sexual abuse upon them; and

Whereas, working to maintain confidentiality has meant that an unknown number of situations have been addressed by unknown expenditures of Conference resources in the past; and

Whereas, moving forward in transparency by simply giving the number of victims and the amount spent for their treatment and healing would not violate confidentiality;

Whereas, concerns were raised that reporting in a year with only one payment may compromise confidentiality, so therefore be it

RESOLVED, That beginning with their report to the 2027 Annual Conference the Council on Finance and Administration will state the number of individuals who came forward with claims of clergy sexual abuse if the number is more than one.

RATIONALE -

It should be understood that with the statutory elimination of Statutes of Limitations, some situations that will be reported will have come from those alleging abuse from decades ago..

We will also have the legacy of an unknown number of non-disclosure agreements (NDAs).

It is the hope of the Annual Conference that our focus is moving forward as various mechanisms are being put in place to enable possible victims to report and receive restorative justice without the need to resort to the court system.

Submitted by Creed Pogue
Lay Member, West Side (Millville) UMC

01 **FORMING A CONFERENCE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS AND ROLE**
02 **OF QUEER PEOPLE**
03
04
05

06 Whereas the work of dismantling discrimination and harm cannot be done entirely through legislation
07 but requires ongoing collaborative labor, including but not limited to: policy change, support, advocacy,
08 education, leadership development, monitoring, accountability, and solidarity, and
09

10 Whereas the existing Conference Commissions (Commission on Religion and Race and Commission on
11 the Status and Role of Women) labor toward equity for all persons, and are empowered to focus on
12 specific aspects of intersectional justice concern for the communities they represent by combining voices
13 when helpful and focusing on one marginalized identity when necessary,
14

15 Whereas the ministry of Conference Commissions on Religion and Race and on the Status and Role
16 of Women, along with that of the Conference Board of Church and Society, models the importance of
17 having dedicated and empowered teams who focus on specific areas of injustice and provide conference-
18 wide opportunities for growth, and
19

20 Whereas the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference seeks to be proactive in building relationships,
21 learning, and living into all that is now possible for ministry with and for queer persons,
22

23 Whereas the term “queer” (and/or “LGBTQIA+”) for the purposes of this Commission describes those
24 persons who identify with sexual orientations and gender identities other than heterosexual and
25 cisgender, such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, gender non-binary, intersex, asexual, etc.
26

27 Therefore be it resolved that the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference shall form a conference level
28 **Commission on the Status and Role of Queer People** for the purpose of:
29

- 30 1. Actively supporting LGBTQIA+ laity, clergy, and candidates for licensed/ordained ministry in
31 the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference with community-building, faith and leadership
32 development, solidarity, and advocacy.
- 33 2. Centering and amplifying the voices and experiences of the LGBTQIA+ community, especially
34 those who have been marginalized by church and society, in particular transgender and BIPOC
35 (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) persons.
- 36 3. Monitoring Annual Conference committees and policies, as well as the status and needs of
37 candidates and clergy under appointment to ensure justice and equity on the basis of sexual
38 orientation, gender identity, and expression, and to report findings to the Annual Conference.
- 39 4. Curating, creating, and sharing resources to equip local churches for:
40 a. relationship building and continuing education
41 b. meaningful ministry with and for LGBTQIA+ church and community members
- 42 5. Collaborating with ministry-specific areas, particularly children’s ministry, youth ministry, and
43 campus ministry in the desire to safely and most effectively be in ministry with and for LGBTQIA+
44 people of all ages.
- 45 6. To advocate for more just and equitable policies and practices at every level of the Annual
46 Conference.
- 47 7. To consult with the other Commissions and justice-seeking organizations of the Conference to
48 advance intersectional justice, diversity, and equity.
- 49 8. To advise and assist the cabinet and conference leadership in educating and preparing local
50 churches to welcome and affirm the gifts of LGBTQIA+ pastors, leaders, members, and visitors.
51

52 Be it further resolved that the 2026 Greater New Jersey Annual Conference authorizes the development
53 of a Transitional **Commission on the Status and Role of Queer People** to be established within 3
54

01 months of the adjournment of the 2026 Greater New Jersey Annual Conference meeting through
02 cooperation between the leadership of the GNJ Nominating Committee and the GNJ Connectional Table,
03 collaborating when possible with queer advocacy groups within conference bounds such as Methodists
04 for Full Inclusion and Reconciling Ministries Network of GNJ.

05

06 Be it further resolved that the responsibilities of the Transitional Commission will include:

07

08 1. organizing themselves and determining the desired membership and scope of the Standing
09 Commission, which is encouraged to strive for equitable representation within its membership in
10 these ways:

11 a. Intentional diversity of gender identity/expression and sexual identity, with LGBTQIA+
12 persons making up at least 1/3 of the Commission's total membership

13 b. Intentional diversity of age

14 i. At least 2 members under the age of 25

15 ii. 1/3 membership under 35

16 iii. 1/3 membership 36 to 55

17 iv. 1/3 membership 56 and up

18 c. Intentional diversity throughout all races and ethnicities

19 d. Inclusion of lay and clergy representatives from each district

20 e. Inclusion of members with established leadership in the area of LGBTQIA+ justice and
21 inclusion

22 2. collaborating with the Committees on Leadership and Nominations and on Rules to assure that
23 Commission members will be named in a manner consistent with the Conference Policies and
24 Procedures, and

25 3. bringing to the 2027 Annual Conference session (and subsequent future Annual Conference
26 sessions as needed) resolutions to:

27 a. Add an official Conference Commission to the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference
28 Policies and Procedures and Nominations Report, and;

29 b. Accomplish other legislative aims related to the status and role of queer people in GNJ.

30

31 Be it further resolved that the **Commission on the Status and Role of Queer People** shall be fully
32 included in all future annual conference processes related to ensuring an appropriate budget,
33 representation on other committees, reporting to the annual conference, and ongoing membership
34 based on the above criteria.

35

36 Respectfully submitted by,

37 Rev. Kaleigh Rasmussen

38 Rev. Dr. Jess Winderweedle

39 Rev. Dr. Drew Dyson

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01 **RESOLUTION FOR MAINTAINING THE INFORMATIONAL INTEGRITY OF THE GNJ**
02 **CONFERENCE JOURNAL**
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06 **WHEREAS**, the print version of the Conference Journal is the legal and historical record of the annual
07 conference session and of clergy and church appointment records; and
08

09 **WHEREAS**, the names of clergy appointed to serve congregations have historically been included in the
10 Church Directory section of the Conference Journal; and
11

12 **WHEREAS**, the listing of church pastors, associate pastors, deacons, and others appointed to a local
13 church is indispensable information for researchers documenting the pastoral history of a congregation;
14 and
15

16 **WHEREAS**, the printed versions of the 2024 and 2025 GNJ Conference Journals omit the names of clergy
17 serving churches from the Church Directory section, which severely degrades the research value and
18 reference potential of that information; and
19

20 **WHEREAS**, the 2025 GNJ resolution entitled “Resolution for Timely Dispersal of Conference Journal” did
21 not define “contact information” nor require the names of appointed clergy be removed from the Church
22 Directory in the print version of the GNJ Conference Journal.
23

24 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Journal of the 2026 session of the Greater New Jersey Annual
25 Conference, and all subsequent annual conference journals, shall list the names of all clergy persons,
26 supply pastors and certified lay ministers appointed to serve congregations in the Church Directory
27 section of the Journal.
28

29 **Rationale:** this resolution seeks to restore the names of all clergy appointed to congregations in the
30 Church Directory section of the print version of the 2026 GNJ Conference Journal and the print versions
31 of all GNJ Conference Journals in subsequent years going forward. This restores the cross-reference
32 functionality of having clergy appointments identified in both the Clergy Directory and the Church
33 Directory of the print version of the Conference Journal, without increasing electronic information
34 exposure or changing the privacy boundaries permitted by the 2025 “Resolution for Timely Dispersal of
35 Conference Journal” which allowed clergy contact information to be provided to clergy and local church
36 leadership online in “a secure manner”.
37

38 **Submitted by:**

39 Rev. John D. Callanan, Chairperson
40 The Greater New Jersey Conference Commission on Archives and History
41 For the Commission
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01 **RESOLUTION TO AMEND “A JOURNEY OF HOPE” WITH THE JOURNEY**
02 **OF HOPE PLAN**
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04

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06 **Whereas**, the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference adopted *A Journey of Hope* in 2020 as a strategic
07 commitment to end the sin of racism within our church, communities, and institutions; and
08

09 **Whereas**, the legislation required that all recipients of conference grants complete the Journey of Hope
10 Plan; and
11

12 **Whereas**, this requirement, while rooted in the desire for accountability and transformation to end the
13 sin of racism, has shown limited practical effectiveness; and
14

15 **Whereas**, removing the requirement is not a retreat from the conference’s commitment to anti-racism
16 but a strategic shift toward more effective and sustainable formation; and
17

18 **Whereas**, in the 2024 grant cycle, among 46 grant recipients, only 8 churches completed the Journey
19 of Hope Plan, demonstrating both the difficulty of compliance and diminished participation in the grant
20 program because of the mandate; and
21

22 **Whereas**, the reduction in applications and the low completion rate indicate that the current model is
23 not achieving its intended purpose of strengthening anti-racism learning across the conference; and
24

25 **Whereas**, many local churches have expressed the need for high-quality, accessible, and conference-
26 supported learning opportunities that foster long-term growth rather than compliance-based
27 requirements tied to financial grants;
28

29 **Be it resolved**, that the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference remove the Journey of Hope Plan
30 requirement for conference grant recipients as a condition for receiving funds; and
31

32 **Be it further resolved**, that *A Journey of Hope* shall be amended accordingly, striking all language that
33 links Journey of Hope Plan completion to grant eligibility or reporting; and
34

35 **Be it further resolved**, that instead of a mandated Journey of Hope Plan tied to grants, the Conference
36 and Districts shall develop and implement high-quality, spiritually grounded, and contextually relevant
37 learning programs intended to help clergy, lay leaders, and congregations grow in understanding and
38 action to end the sin of racism; and
39

40 **Be it further resolved**, that these programs shall be voluntary and open to all churches, clergy, and lay
41 leaders, and designed to build long-term capacity for anti-racism ministry at the local church level; and
42

43 **Be it further resolved**, that Conference and District leadership shall ensure broad accessibility, regular
44 scheduling, and culturally sensitive facilitation so that participation becomes an empowering resource
45 rather than a compliance requirement; and
46

47 **Be it further resolved**, that these amendments shall take effect beginning with the 2027 grant cycle.
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49 **Submitted by**

50 Rev. Miso Park

51 Chair of Commission on Religion and Race of GNJ
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01 **TRUSTEES ENABLING RESOLUTIONS**

02

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04 Be it resolved that the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church hereby
05 ratifies, approves, and confirms actions taken by the Conference Board of Trustees since the last Annual
06 Session.

07

08 Be it further resolved that if subsequent to this Annual Session of the Greater New Jersey Annual
09 Conference of The United Methodist Church and prior to the 2027 Annual Session, any property, real or
10 personal, that is conveyed or transferred to the Annual Conference by any church or other person, firm,
11 partnership, or corporation, the Board of Trustees is hereby authorized and empowered, in its discretion,
12 provided that the same be approved by the Bishop and Cabinet, to refuse to accept, or accept and then
13 sell, transfer, lease or convey any such real or personal property for such price and at such time or times
14 and upon such other terms and conditions as the Board of Trustees of the Greater New Jersey Annual
15 Conference of The United Methodist Church shall determine; and

16

17 Be it further resolved that the proper officers of the Board of Trustees of the Greater New Jersey Annual
18 Conference of The United Methodist Church be and hereby are authorized in the name and on behalf of
19 the Conference, to execute and deliver the Conference deed of conveyance or instrument of transfer and
20 all other instruments and documents to implement and carry out the purpose and intent of the herein
21 resolution and to affix the corporate seal of the Conference thereto; and

22

23 Be it further resolved that the President or Vice-President or Treasurer of the Corporation is hereby
24 fully authorized and empowered to transfer, convey, endorse, sell, assign, and deliver, any and all stock,
25 bonds, evidence of interest and/or indebtedness and all other securities, corporate or otherwise, now,
26 or hereafter standing in the name or owned by this Corporation and to make, execute and deliver, any
27 property to effectuate the authority hereby conferred; and

28

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

39

40 Be it further resolved that after this Annual Session of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference of The
41 United Methodist Church and prior to the 2027 Annual Session, the Board of Trustees of the Greater
42 New Jersey Annual Conference is hereby authorized to acquire or dispose of all staff housing including
43 but not limited to District parsonages, Director of Connectional Ministries, Camping Staff, Episcopal
44 Residence and Treasurer's residences, as in its discretion, it may deem necessary and advisable and
45 in accordance with The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church. The Conference Board
46 of Trustees is hereby authorized and empowered to enter into such contracts of sale and such other
47 documents as may be necessary to effectuate the sale, transfer, or purchase of such properties. Such
48 properties, real or personal, may be sold or acquired from any person or persons, firm, partnership, or
49 corporation upon such terms and conditions as the Board of Trustees of the Greater New Jersey Annual
50 Conference of The United Methodist Church shall determine; and

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52 Be it further resolved that the proper officers of the Board of Trustees of the Greater New Jersey Annual
53 Conference of The United Methodist Church are hereby empowered and authorized to execute all such

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

03

04 Be it further resolved that the Board of Trustees of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference of The
05 United Methodist Church, be and are hereby authorized to act on behalf of the Annual Conference in any
06 and all lawsuits or legal actions in which the Annual Conference is named.

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08 Be it further resolved that the Board of Trustees of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference of
09 The 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
11 purpose of long-term investment or economically viable ministry opportunities. This work shall be done
12 in concert with the Council of Finance and Administration and the District Board on Church Location and
13 Building in which the real property exists.

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15 Submitted by,

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17 Reverend Mathew J. Enzler, Chair, Board of Trustees

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01 **PENSION AND HEALTH BENEFITS**

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04 **Be it resolved** that the Past Service Annuity Rate for January 1, 2027, to December 31, 2027, be set at
05 \$787 per approved service year prior to January 1, 1982.

06
07 **Be it further resolved**

- 08
09 1. That effective January 1, 2026, the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference adopted the new
10 United Methodist Pension plan known as “Compass” for full-time, three-quarter time and
11 one-half time clergy and continue to sponsor UMPIP for those clergy in one-quarter time
12 appointments.
13 a. That the Conference Board of Pension and Health be authorized to adopt the required plan
14 choices and publish these choices in the Conference Journal and Yearbook.
- 15 2. That contributions for January 1, 2027, to December 31, 2027, for the Conference sponsored
16 UMPIP Plan for ¼-time clergy, be set at 13.6% of plan compensation. The percentage includes 3%
17 for administrative costs and 6% uncollectable fees.
- 18 3. That contributions for January 1, 2027, to December 31, 2027, for the Comprehensive Protection
19 Plan be set at 3.3% of plan compensation for full-time and ¾-time ordained clergy, and for
20 Conference Sponsored UMLife Options for ½-time ordained clergy to be set 2.2% of plan
21 compensation. That local churches may sponsor ¼-time ordained clergy and ¾-time part-time
22 local pastors in UMLife Options. The percentages for CPP and UMLifeOptions includes 3% for
23 administrative costs and 6% uncollectable fees.
- 24 4. That the starting date for retirement payments for new retirees commences July 1, 2026, unless
25 otherwise stated.
- 26 5. That clergy participants in the Conference Health Insurance Plan who have expenses associated
27 with the adoption of a child will be reimbursed up to \$10,000 per child upon the presentation of
28 finalized adoption documentation and any related receipts and/or other documents as proof of
29 payments.
- 30 6. That clergy retiring will be reimbursed for one-time moving expenses up to \$6,000.00 incurred
31 while moving from church-owned housing to personal housing. This reimbursement is limited
32 to actual moving expenses, not to include moving company packing costs (see GNJ’s full Policy
33 and Procedure on our website). Clergy are required to make every effort to obtain three bids
34 to the Board of Pension & Health Benefits prior to final approval and provide supporting
35 documentation of proof of payments when submitting the reimbursement request. The same
36 benefits and restrictions shall also apply to a surviving spouse moving out of the parsonage upon
37 the death of a pastor while in active service in the Annual Conference, and to those entering
38 disability status (see Insurance Guidelines).
- 39 7. That the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits be authorized to make modifications
40 to the current Insurance Plan as the health care market demands. Modifications to the Plan
41 that could reduce premium costs to local churches and Annual Conference are to be studied
42 and enacted as the Board determines appropriate. These changes might include increased
43 participant deductibles, co-payments, greater use of generic medications, and other avenues of
44 cost saving and sharing. Such changes will be subject to review by the Cabinet.
- 45 8. That the Guidelines for Health Insurance Participation be approved by the Board of Pensions and
46 upon approval printed in the 2026 Conference Journal and Yearbook.
- 47 9. The Greater NJ Annual Conference (the “Conference”) adopts the following resolutions relating
48 to rental/housing allowances for active, retired, terminated, or clergypersons in disabled status
49 of the Conference:

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51 **Be it resolved** that an amount equal to 100% of the pension, severance, or disability payments received
52 from plans authorized under *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church* (the “Discipline”),
53 which includes all such payments from the Wespath Benefits and Investments, during the period January
54 1, 2027 through December 31, 2027, by each active, retired, terminated, or clergyperson in disabled

01 status, who is or was a member of the Conference, or its predecessors, be and hereby is designated as a
02 rental/housing allowance for each such clergy person; and

03

04 That the pension, severance, or disability payments to which this rental/housing allowance designation
05 applies will be any pension, severance, or disability payments from plans, annuities, or funds authorized
06 under the *Discipline*, including such payments from Wespath and from a commercial annuity company
07 that provides an annuity arising from benefits accrued under a Wespath plan, annuity, or fund
08 authorized under the *Discipline*, that result from any service a clergy person rendered to this Conference
09 or that an active, a retired, a terminated, or a clergy person in disabled status, of this Conference
10 rendered to any local church, annual conference of the Church, general agency of the Church,
11 other institution of the Church, former denomination that is now a part of the Church, or any other
12 employer that employed the clergy person to perform services related to the ministry of the Church,
13 or its predecessors, and that elected to make contributions to, or accrue a benefit under, such a plan,
14 annuity, or fund for such an active, a retired, a terminated, or a clergy person in disabled status, pension,
15 severance, or disability plan benefit as part of his or her gross compensation.

16

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

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27 **For information only: Any reference to exceptions can be found in journals before 2025.**

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29 Submitted by, Rev. Elouise Hill-Challenger, Chair of Board of Pension & Health Benefits

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01 **NOMINATIONS**

02 **The United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey**
03 **2026 Leadership and Related Agencies Nominations for AC**

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07 **Conference Lay Leader**

08 **Rule:** The Conference Lay Leader shall be elected for a term of not less than four years by the annual conference as the annual
09 conference may determine. The method of nomination and term of office shall be determined by the annual conference
(¶607.9, 2020/2024 Book of Discipline).

10

Current	Term Started
David Yamoah	June 1, 2023

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14 **Conference Secretary**

15 **GNJ Rule:** At the session following the General Conference, the Annual Conference shall elect a Secretary to serve for the
16 succeeding quadrennial. The Nominating Committee, in consultation with the Bishop and Cabinet, shall present the
17 nomination. Term of office shall not exceed two consecutive quadrennial. "In the case of a vacancy in the interim of the
18 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, 2020/2024 Book of Discipline) Term limits of Rule 59a, Conference Journal 2025, shall apply.

19

Current	Term Started
Rev. Shelley Smith	June 1, 2020

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23 **Conference Statistician**

24 **GNJ Rule:** At the first session following the General Conference, the Annual Conference shall elect a Statistician to serve for the
25 succeeding quadrennial. "In the case of a vacancy in the interim of the sessions, the bishop, after consultation with the district
26 superintendents, shall appoint a person to act until the next session of the annual conference." (¶ 603.7, 2020/2024 Book of
Discipline)

27

Current	Term Started
Robert Zuckerman	June 1, 2020

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31 **Conference Treasurer**

32 **GNJ Rule:** The "annual conference, on nomination of its council on finance and administration, shall at the first session of the
33 conference after the quadrennial session of the general conference or jurisdictional conference, or at such other times as a
34 vacancy exists, elect a conference treasurer/director of administrative services. The treasurer/director shall serve for the
35 quadrennium or until a successor shall be elected. If a vacancy shall occur during the quadrennial, the council shall fill the
36 vacancy until the next session of the annual conference." (¶ 619, 2020/2024 Book of Discipline)

37

Current	Term Started
Robert Zuckerman	June 1, 2020

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40 **Conference Chancellor**

41 **GNJ Rule:** The Annual Conference may designate as Chancellor one or more laypersons, each of whom is a member in good
42 standing of one of the local churches or a clergyperson who is a member of the Annual Conference in the Episcopal Area, and
43 who is a member of the appropriate bar or bars in the Episcopal Area. Each chancellor, who shall be nominated by the Bishop
44 and elected by the Annual Conference, shall serve as legal advisor to the Bishop and the Annual Conference. (¶ 603.8,
2020/2024 Book of Discipline)

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Current	Term Started
Evelyn S. Caterson (initial appt. 2009)	2024

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49 **Director of Lay Servant Ministries**

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Current	Term Started
Terri Pagani	2020

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53 **Conference Disaster Response Coordinator**

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Current	Term Started
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01 **GNJ Conference Sessions (Quadrennial Slate):** Term 2025-2028

02 Leadership:

- 03 Conference Secretary & Chair of Sessions Committee: Shelley Smith
- 04 Lay Leader: David Yamoah
- 05 BOOM Chair: Michelle Ryoo
- 06 Young Adults Representative: **Moselle Jules**
- 07 William Carter III
- 08 Marcel Okito

08 Support & At-Large Members:

- 09 • At-Large:
- 10 Jessica Naulty
- 11 McWilliam Colon

12 Advisory Team:

- 13 Resident Bishop (C)
- 14 Sang Won Doh – Dean of the Cabinet
- 15 Dawn Taylor-Storm – DCM
- 16 Gina Yeske – Worship Support
- 17 Sean Lee – Assistant to the Bishop
- 18 Diana Picurro – Connectional Ministries
- 19 Sarah Borgstrom-Lee (EPA & GNJ) – Communications
- 20 Jay Kim – Contracts
- 21 Rob Zuckerman – CFO/Treasurer

22 **Rule 61: Limitations of Service**, states:

23 *No person shall be elected to more than two conference agencies, boards, commissions, committees, councils or*
 24 *teams, except for persons who are ex-officio members by virtue of an office or as a member of a general agency.*

25 * Indicates shift in term due to revised format implemented in 2020.

26 **BOARD, AGENCIES AND COMMISSIONS ORGANIZED BY CONFERENCE RULES**

28 **Council on Youth Ministries ¶649, 2020/2024 Book of Discipline**

29 Plans and supports ministries that enable youth (ages 12-18) to be actively involved in the life of the church.

30 Chair: Eun Young "Rosie" Pang

	2027	2028	2029	2030
31 Laity	Priscilla Montero (1)	Ben Black (2) Mercedes Colon (2) Amirah Kitchen (2)		
34 Clergy		Charlie Kinch (2)	Rosie Eun Young Pang (2)	Jisu Ahn (2)*

36 Staff: Kate Monahan

38 Status	Age	Race	Region	Start Date
39 Lay 57.1%	<31 57.1%	Hispanic 14.3%	CP 28.6%	2020 57.1%
40 Clergy 42.9%	31–65 42.9%	White 14.3%	MH 42.9%	2021 14.3%
	65+ 0%	African American/Black 28.6%	Not Listed 28.6%	2023 28.6%
		Asian 28.6%		
		Not Provided 14.3%		

45 Please Note: self-reported gender identity information is not yet available.

48 **Council on Young Adult Ministries ¶650, 2020/2024 Book of Discipline**

49 Plans and supports ministries that enable young adults (ages 19-35) to be actively involved in the life of the church.

49 Co-Chairs: Zachary Holder and Irwin Jules

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	2027	2028	2029	2030
Laity		Leah Zuckerman (1)	Irwin Jules (1)* Amy Charleston (1)	Zachary Holder (2) Alex Eckert (1) Martha Cannella Durham (1)
Clergy	Jun Gyu Park (1)		YoonCheol Shin (2)*	

Staff: Kate Monahan

Status	Age	Race	Region	Start Date
Lay 75%	<31 75%	White 50%	CP 50%	2022 12.5%
Clergy 25%	31–65 25%	African American/Black 25%	MH 37.5%	2023 25%
	65+ 0%	Asian 25%	N 12.5%	2024 25%
				2025 12.5%
				2026 25%

Please Note: self-reported gender identity information is not yet available.

Board of Global Ministries ¶632, 2020/2024 Book of Discipline

To connect churches to resources of the General Board of Global Ministries and the General Board of Church and Society. To cultivate Advance Special giving for missions, missionaries, and UMCOR ministries. To coordinate the iteration visits of missionaries and encourage covenant relationships. To encourage church participation in ministries of mercy and justice that meet human needs. To assist churches in developing abundant health ministries.

Chair: Jennifer Cho

	2027	2028	2029	2030
Laity	Diana Yamoah (2)*	Lokana Shankara (0)	Brooke Foster (1)	Moselle Jules (1)
Clergy	Dawn Corlew (2)*	Jennifer Cho (1)	Emmanuel Agyemfra (1)	Moses Flomo (2) Elijah Brown (1)

Conference VIM Coordinator: Cricket Denton

District Superintendent: Eunice Vega-Perez

Status	Age	Race	Region	Start Date
Lay 44%	<31 11%	Asian 33%	MH 44%	2018 22%
Clergy 56%	31–65 78%	African American/Black 44%	CP 33%	2022 11%
	65+ 11%	White 22%	N/A 22%	2024 22%
				2025 22%
				2026 22%

Please Note: self-reported gender identity information is not yet available.

Metropolitan Commission The Book of Discipline ¶632(j) states that in metropolitan areas (population over 50,000), “consideration shall be given to the establishment of a metropolitan commission whose purpose shall be to promote long-range planning and to provide a coordinating framework for United Methodism’s mission strategy for that metropolitan area.”

	2027	2028	2029	2030
Laity				
Clergy				Jack Fosbenner David Gaitan-Rivera Myung Sun Han Esther Morales Ralph Terrell Ninabeth Metcalf Vanessa Wilson

01				Sean Lee
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Status	Age	Race	Region	Start Date
Lay 0%	<31 0%	White 25.0%	CP 37.5%	2026 100%
Clergy 100%	31–65 100%	African American/Black 25.0%	MH 50.0%	
	65+ 0%	Asian 25.0%	Not Provided 12.5%	
		Hispanic 25.0%		

10 Please Note: self-reported gender identity information is not yet available.

12 **Board of Discipleship ¶629, 2020/2024 Book of Discipline**

13 Chair: **Andi Semler Laidlaw**

	2027	2028	2029	2030
Laity	Lee Haase (2)*	Jen Caldwell (0)	Elizabeth Woghiren (1)	
Clergy	Jisun Yang (2)*	Andi Semler Laidlaw (1)		

19 Staff: Derrick Doherty and Eunice Vega-Perez

Status	Age	Race	Region	Start Date
Lay 60%	<31 0%	White 60%	MH 80%	2020 20%
Clergy 40%	31–65 80%	Asian 20%	CP 20%	2021 20%
	65+ 20%	African American/Black 20%		2026 60%

28 Please Note: self-reported gender identity information is not yet available.

29 **Board of Church and Society ¶628, 2020/2024 Book of Discipline**

30 Chair: **Emily Wilton**

Laity	Millard LeCompte (0)	Patricia Massa (0)	Judy Graves (1)	Carol Rigler (1)
Clergy		Pyoungkang Kim (1)	Emily Wilton (1)	Janice McCrostie (1) Peter Mantell (1)

35 Staff: Ronell Howard

Status	Age	Race	Region	Start Date
Lay 50%	<31 0%	White 88%	MH 62.5%	2024 12.5%
Clergy 50%	31–65 75%	Asian 12%	CP 25%	2025 25%
	65+ 25%		Not Listed 12.5%	2026 62.5%

42 Please Note: self-reported gender identity information is not yet available.

44 **Committee on Ethnic Local Church Concerns ¶631, 2020/2024 Book of Discipline**

45 Chair: **Latasha Milton**

	2027	2028	2029	2030
Laity	Sun Kim (1)	Samuel Albania (1)*		
Clergy	Julie Lee (0)	McWilliam Colón Sr.(1)	Lark McCalman (1)	Roeline Ramirez (2) Latasha Milton (2)

51 District Superintendent: William Williams III

Status	Age	Race	Region	Start Date
Lay 28.6%	<31 0%	Hispanic 14.3%	MH 85.7%	2020 14.3%
Clergy 71.4%	31–65 85.7%	Asian 57.1%	Not Listed 14.3%	2022 42.9%
	65+ 14.3%	African American/Black 28.6%		2023 14.3%
				2026 28.6%

Please Note: self-reported gender identity information is not yet available.

Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry ¶633, 2020/2024 Book of Discipline

Provides Conference guidelines and support for higher education and various campus ministries in our conference. Awards scholarships to persons attending United Methodist related seminaries, graduate schools, and undergraduate schools using funds from endowments to the Annual Conference.

Chair: Laura Steele

	2027	2028	2029	2030
Laity	Gabrielle Irizarry (0)	Janine Flint (1)	Cindy Gryniewicz (2) Tempe Mahan (2)	Lourdes Turner (1)
Clergy	Laura Steele (0)	Michael Kim (1)	Don Stevens (2) Ron Wilkinson (2)	Wil Wilson, Jr. (2) Scott Clifton (1)

Status	Age	Race	Region	Start Date
Lay 45.5%	<31 0%	White 72.7%	MH 27.3%	2020 18.2%
Clergy 54.5%	31–65 63.6%	Asian 9.1%	CP 72.7%	2021 45.5%
	65+ 9.1%	Hispanic 9.1%		2025 18.2%
	Not Provided 27.3%	Not Provided 9.1%		2026 18.2%

Please Note: self-reported gender identity information is not yet available.

Commission on Communications ¶646, 2020/2024 Book of Discipline

Provides leadership in the implementation of a strategic communications ministry; promotes and interprets the connectional life of the conference and support of conference-wide ministries.

Chair: Ben Lee

	2027	2028	2029	2030
Laity	Ben Meyer (1)			
Clergy	Yeeun Kim (1)	Ben Lee (1)	Tiffany Murphy (2) Han Kil Kim (2)	Charlie Kinch (2)* John Lore (1) Dianna Stone (1) Javier Barroso Rodriguez (1)

Staff: Sarah Borgstrom Lee

Status	Age	Race	Region	Start Date
Lay 11.1%	<31 0%	White 33.3%	MH 44.4%	2020 11.1%
Clergy 88.9%	31–65 77.8%	African American/Black 11.1%	CP 55.5%	2021 11.1%
	65+ 11.1%	Asian 33.3%		2023 22.2%
	Not Provided 11.1%	Hispanic 11.1%		2024 11.1%
		Not Provided 11.1%		2025 11.1%
				2026 33.3%

Please Note: self-reported gender identity information is not yet available.

Commission on Status and Role of Women ¶644, 2020/2024 Book of Discipline

Advocates for the status and the role of women in all Conference events and promotes women in leadership positions.

Co-Chair: Isabel Quezada

01 **Co-Chair: Krystal Woolston**

	<u>2027</u>	<u>2028</u>	<u>2029</u>	<u>2030</u>
Laity	Joyce McKnight Young (1)		Krystal Woolston (2)	Bobbette Kelly (1) Kelly Lee (1) Lourdes Vidal-Turner (1)
Clergy	Innica Humphrey (1)	Isabel Quezada (1)	Constance Squire (1) Roeline Ramirez (2)	Joe Tiedemann (1) Janice McCrostie (1) Maritza Gonzalez-Colon (1)

Status	Age	Race	Region	Start Date
Lay 41.7%	<31 0%	White 25%	N 16.7%	2021 16.7%
Clergy 58.3%	31–65 83.3%	Asian 25%	MH 50%	2023 16.7%
	65+ 8.3%	African American/Black 25%	CP 33.3%	2024 16.7%
	Not Provided 8.3%	Hispanic 25%		2026 50%

18 Please Note: self-reported gender identity information is not yet available.

20 **Sexual Misconduct Response Team**

21 Co-chair: Jana Purkis-Brash

	<u>2027</u>	<u>2028</u>	<u>2029</u>	<u>2030</u>
Laity			Madalynne Ollivierre (1)	
Clergy			Gabrielle Corbett (1) Shawn Callender-Hogan (1) Peggy Holder (1) Kay Dubuisson (1) Brian Robinson (1) Miso Park (1) Susan Trombetta (1) Jeff Markay (1) Nancy Cooke (1) Luana Cook Scot (1) Jana Purkis-Brash (1)	

35 Staff: Sean Lee

Status	Age	Race	Region	Start Date
Lay 8.3%	<31 0%	White 66.7%	MH 66.7%	2025 100%
Clergy 91.7%	31–65 58.3%	Asian 8.3%	CP 25.7%	
	65+ 33.3%	African American/Black 16.7%	Not Provided 8.3%	
	Not Provided 8.3%	Not Provided 8.3%		

43 Please Note: self-reported gender identity information is not yet available.

45 **Commission on Archives and History ¶ 641, 2020/2024 Book of Discipline**

46 Purpose: Documents and celebrates historical records and events. Membership: 12 persons. Ex-Officio: 1 representative from each of the Heritage Landmarks located within the boundaries of the Annual Conference.

47 Chair: **Rupert Hall**

	<u>2027</u>	<u>2028</u>	<u>2029</u>	<u>2030</u>
Laity	Ken Helsby (1)	Cynthia Wilks-Mosley (0)	Matthew Beland (1)	Rupert Hall (2) Iris McMurray-Matthews (1)

Clergy	John Gaskill (0)	Josh Schuster (1)	Todd Lattig (1)	Donald DeGroat (1)
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Status	Age	Race	Region	Start Date
Lay 56%	<31 0%	White 56%	CP 33%	2022 11%
Clergy 44%	31–65 66.7%	African American/Black 22%	MH 33%	2023 11%
	65+ 33.3%	Native American 11%	EPA North 11%	2024 11%
		Other 11%	Not provided 22%	2025 33%
				2026 33%

Please Note: self-reported gender identity information is not yet available.

Commission on Christian Unity and Inter-religious Concerns ¶642, 2020/2024 Book of Discipline

Chair: Javier Barroso Rodriguez

	2027	2028	2029	2030
Laity	Langirene Aguilh (1)			Gerard Mayers (2)
Clergy	Javier Barroso Rodriguez (2)	Rachel Callender (0)	Jessica Robertson (1)	David Gaitan (1) Frederick Boyle (1) Jeff Markay (1)

Status	Age	Race	Region	Start Date
Lay 25%	<31 0%	White 63%	MH 62.5%	2019 12.5%
Clergy 75%	31–65 62.5%	Hispanic 25%	CP 37.5%	2022 12.5%
	65+ 37.5%	African American/Black 12%		2023 12.5%
				2024 12.5%
				2026 50%

Please Note: self-reported gender identity information is not yet available.

Commission on Religion and Race ¶643, 2020/2024 Book of Discipline

Advocates for inclusion, respect, and justice for all persons regardless of racial/ethnic identity or religion.

Chair: Miso Park

	2027	2028	2029	2030
Laity	Ignace Conic (1)	Timothy Merrill (1)		Selena Springer (2)
Clergy	Lark McCalman (1)	Debra De Vos (1)	Tom Lank (2)* Miso Park (2)	YoungHak Lee (2) Maritza Gonzalez-Colon (1) Jisun Kwak (1)

Staff: Ronell Howard

Status	Age	Race	Region	Start Date
Lay 30%	<31 10%	White 10%	CP 30%	2020 10%
Clergy 70%	31–65 80%	Asian 30%	MH 40%	2021 10%
	65+ 10%	African American/Black 40%	EPA South 10%	2022 20%
		Hispanic 20%	Not Provided 20%	2023 20%
				2024 20%
				2026 20%

Please Note: self-reported gender identity information is not yet available.

Commission on Small Church Membership ¶645, 2020/2024 Book of Discipline

01 Chair: Deborah (Debi) Selm-Orr

	<u>2027</u>	<u>2028</u>	<u>2029</u>	<u>2030</u>
Lay	Rosa Estronza (1)	Anthony Mensah(1)	Bethany Summers(1)*	
Clergy	Iraida Ruiz de Porras (1)	Donna Nilson (1) Jennifer Lovallo (0)	Peter Mantell (1)	Justin Spano (1) Michael Turner (1)

Status	Age	Race	Region	Start Date
Lay 40%	<31 0%	White 60%	CP 30%	2016 10%
Clergy 60%	31–65 80%	Hispanic 20%	MH 70%	2023 20%
	65+ 20%	African American/Black 10%		2024 30%
		Not Provided 10%		2025 10%
				2026 30%

14 Please Note: self-reported gender identity information is not yet available.

15 **Committee on Disability Concerns ¶1653, 2020/2024 Book of Discipline**

16 Elevates awareness of ministry with and for other-abled persons and persons with special needs.

17 Chair: Shawn Le lion

	<u>2027</u>	<u>2028</u>	<u>2029</u>	<u>2030</u>
Lay	Don Tomalino (1)*	Nimmi Thomas (2)*	Peter Pantalena (2)	Heather Fizur (2)*
Clergy	Cricket Denton (1)*	Hee Young Lim (2)	ChangYong Shin (2)*	Megan Mead-Bracknell (1)

Status	Age	Race	Region	Start Date
Lay 44%	<31 11.1%	White 56%	MH 56%	2020 11%
Clergy 56%	31–65 77.8%	Asian 22%	CP 44%	2021 11%
	65+ 11.1%	Not provided 22%		2022 33%
				2024 22%
				2025 11%
				2026 11%

32 Please Note: self-reported gender identity information is not yet available.

34 **Committee on Parish and Community Development ¶1632.5, 2020/2024 Book of Discipline**

35 Chair: Debbe Barnett

	<u>2027</u>	<u>2028</u>	<u>2029</u>	<u>2030</u>
Lay	Heather Ashfield (2)*			
Clergy	Jennifer Lovallo (0)	Debbe Barnett (1)	Scott Clifton (1)	Corinne Arthur (2) Joe Monahan (1)

39 Staff: Ronell Howard

Status	Age	Race	Region	Start Date
Lay 16.7%	<31 0%	White 66.7%	CP 66.7%	2020 16.7%
Clergy 83.3%	31–65 83.3%	African American/Black 16.7%	MH 33.3%	2022 16.7%
	65+ 16.7%	Not Listed 16.6%		2024 16.7%
				2026 50.0%

47 Please Note: self-reported gender identity information is not yet available.

50 **Commission on Equitable Compensation ¶1624.1, 2020/2024 Book of Discipline**

51 Recommends an annual compensation plan for clergy.

52 Chair: Steve Bechtold

	<u>2027</u>	<u>2028</u>	<u>2029</u>	<u>2030</u>
Lay	Paulette Osborne (2)*	Godfrey David (0)		Staci Scheetz (2)
Clergy	Steve Bechtold (2)			Frank Davis (2)

District Superintendent: Derrick Doherty

Status	Age	Race	Region	Start Date
Lay 60%	<31 17%	White 40%	MH 60%	2019 20%
Clergy 40%	31–65 60%	African American/Black 40%	CP 20%	2021 20%
	65+ 40%	Not Provided 20%	Not Listed 20%	2022 40%
				2026 20%

Please Note: self-reported gender identity information is not yet available.

Committee on Native American Ministries ¶654, 2020/2024 Book of Discipline

Develops and promotes Native American ministries across the GNJ; gives voice to Native Americans; provides leadership to the Conference to meet the mandate to recognize the gifts and contributions made by Native Americans to our society

Interim Chair: Cynthia Wilks-Mosley

	<u>2027</u>	<u>2028</u>	<u>2029</u>	<u>2030</u>
Laity		Mark Gould (2) Allie Mosley (2)	Cynthia Kent (1)	Milton Pierce (1) Terri Ganderton (1)
Clergy			Ricardo Ramos (2)*	

Ex officio UW of Faith Rep: Leslie Bivins

Status	Age	Race	Region	Start Date
Lay 83%	<31 17%	White 16.7%	CP 66.7%	2020 33.3%
Clergy 17%	31–65 33%	Hispanic 16.7%	MH 16.7%	2022 16.7%
	65+ 50%	Native American 66.7%	Not Listed 16.7%	2025 16.7%
				2026 33.3%

Please Note: self-reported gender identity information is not yet available.

St. John’s UMC Fund Stewards (Legislation passed at 2022 AC):

1 Member nominated by St. John UMC Charge Conference: Romaine Street

1 Member from GNJ CONAM: Cynthia Wilks-Mosley

1 Member from GNJ Trustees: Joe Monahan

1 Member from GNJ CFA: **Andrew Maggs**

Cabinet Member: Sang Won Doh

Committee on Hispanic/Latino Ministries ¶655, 2020/2024 Book of Discipline

Works to advocate for all ministries related to Latino persons and churches.

Chair: McWilliam Colon

	<u>2027</u>	<u>2028</u>	<u>2029</u>	<u>2030</u>
Lay	Rosa Estronza (2)	Cookie O’Shea (1)	Paola Oviedo (1)	Sara Torres (1)
Clergy	Pedro Cesar Miyares (2)*	Waleska Trinidad (0)	McWilliam Colon (2)	David Gaitan-Rivera (1)

Staff: Eunice Vega-Perez

Status	Age	Race	Region	Start Date
Lay 50%	<31 0%	Hispanic 75%	MH 37.5%	2016 12.5%
Clergy 50%	31–65 75%	Not Provided 25%	CP 62.5%	2019 12.5%

Status	Age	Race	Region	Start Date
	65+ 25%			2021 12.5%
				2024 12.5%
				2026 50%

Please Note: self-reported gender identity information is not yet available.

Committee on Rules of Order

Rule: Eight (8) members, four (4) clergy and four (4) lay. The Conference Parliamentarian, if not already a member, shall be an ex-officio member of this committee with vote.

Chair: **Ken Sloane**

	2027	2028	2029	2030
Lay	Doug Fontenello (1)*			Joe Garemore (2)
Clergy	Cherese Evans (2)*	Dale Caldwell (2)	Shelley Smith (1)	Laura Steele (2)

Staff: Sean Lee

Status	Age	Race	Region	Start Date
Lay 28.6%	<31 0%	White 71%	CP 57.1%	2018 14.3%
Clergy 71.4%	31–65 71.4%	African American/Black 29%	MH 42.9%	2020 14.3%
	65+ 28.6%		Not Listed 0%	2022 14.3%
				2023 14.3%
				2024 14.3%
				2026 28.6%

Please Note: self-reported gender identity information is not yet available.

BOARD, AGENCIES AND COMMISSIONS ORGANIZED BY THE BOOK OF DISCIPLINE

Board of Ordained Ministry ¶634, 2020/2024 Book of Discipline

Oversees the entire process of ordination for all candidates for ordained ministry within the annual conference. Leadership is determined in accordance with the Book of Discipline Paragraph 634.1a: Members nominated by the Bishop for 4-year terms in the same year as General Conference. Members may serve a maximum of 3 consecutive terms. GNJ Conference rules applies, 45 members.

Chair: Michelle Ryoo

Name			Name			Name		
Gabrielle Corbett	C	2024	Jessica Robertson	C	2020	Ignace Conic	L	2016
Pauline Kang	C	2024	Myung Sun Han	C	2020	Larry Oksten	C	2016
Alison Van Buskirk Philip	C	2024	Gina Yeske	C	2021	Isabel Quezada	C	2016
John Inverso	C	2024	Daeil Min	C	2021	Michelle Ryoo	C	2016
Dave Ledford	C	2024	Janice Sutton Lynn	C	2021	Christine Lelache	C	2017
Chris Heckert	C	2025	Deb DeVos	C	2021	Jennifer Cho	C	2017
Barbara Miller	L	2025	Dr. Lillie Edwards	L	2021	Drew Dyson	C	2019
Hyun Hui Kim	C	2025	Kay Dubuisson	C	2022	Heather Valosin	C	2019
Luana Cook Scott	C	2025	James Lee	C	2022			
Rich Hendrickson	C	2025	Hosuk Chung	C	2022			
Marissa van der Valk	C	2025	Jisun Yang	C	2022			
Stephen Yun	C	2025	Cricket Denton	C	2023			
Yoseb Jeon	C	2025						
Joseph Jueng	C	2025						
Jessica Winderweedle	C	2025						

01	Glenn Conaway	C	2025						
02	Carol Davies	C	2025						
03	Jason D. Ríos	C	2026						
04	Ricardo Ramos	C	2026						
05	McWilliam Colon	C	2026						
06	Esther Morales	C	2026						

Status	Age	Race	Region	Start Date
Lay 7.3%	<31 — 2.4%	White 44%	MH 53.7%	2016 10%
Clergy 92.7%	31–65 75.6%	Asian 31.7%	CP 36.6%	2017 5%
	65+ 9.8%	African American/Black 7.3%	Not Provided 9.7%	2019 5%
	Not provided 12.2%	Hispanic 14.6%		2020 5%
		Korean 2.4%		2021 12%
				2022 9%
				2023 2%
				2024 12%
				2025 29%
				2026 10%

Please Note: self-reported gender identity information is not yet available.

Board of Pensions ¶638, 2020/2024 Book of Discipline

Oversees management of clergy pension and health care benefits. BOD: Shall have at least 12 members elected in staggered 8-year terms. GNJ Conference rule applies, may serve a maximum of one term.

Chair: Elouise Hill-Challenger

Vice-chair: Sung Hyuk Kim

	2027	2028	2029	2030
Lay		Robert Dietz		Garry Smith
Clergy			Elouise Hill-Challenger	Sung Hyuk Kim

	2031	2032	2033	2034
Lay		Greg Crawford Linda Munsey	Peter Espeut	
Clergy		Jesse Ruch Brian Robinson Joesph Jueng Tayler Necochea		Jana Purkis-Brash (1) Waleska Trinidad (1)

Conference Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer: Robert Zuckerman

District Superintendent: Ronell Howard

Status	Age	Race	Region	Start Date
Lay 38%	<31 7.7%	White 54%	MH 54%	2020 8%
Clergy 62%	31–65 84.6%	AA-Black 15%	CP 46%	2021 8%
	65+ 7.7%	Asian 15%		2022 15%
		Other (O) 8%		2024 46%

		Hispanic (H) 8%		2025 8%
				2026 15%

Please Note: self-reported gender identity information is not yet available.

Council on Finance and Administration ¶611-618, 2020/2024 Book of Discipline

BOD: Shall have no less than 5 no more than 21 members, one more lay than clergy, elected at the session next succeeding the general conference or jurisdictional conference for a 4-year term. Conference Rule applies may serve a maximum of two terms. Term Limits of GNJ Rule 58a shall apply.

BOD paragraph 612.2b, 2020/2024 Book of Discipline

No member or employee of any conference agency and no employee, trustee, or director of any agency or institution participating in the funds of any conference budget shall be eligible for voting membership of the council.

Chair: Clifford Still

Vice Chair:

	<u>2027</u>	<u>2028</u>	<u>2029</u>	<u>2030</u>
Lay	Jaki Fanelli (1)*	Iona Harding (2)	Tracey Callaway (1)	
Clergy	Andrew Maggs (1) Jisun Nam (1)*	Dave Falcone (2) William Wilson, Sr. (2) Clifford Still (2) William Carter III (1)		Rosario Quinones (2)

Ex Officio without vote: Bishop Moore-KoiKoi, Brian Roberts

Ex Officio without vote: William Williams III, General Commission on Finance and Administration

Conference Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer: Robert Zuckerman

Status	Age	Race	Region	Start Date
Laity 30%	Under 31 10%	W 50%	CP 60%	2020 50%
Clergy 70%	31–65 70%	AA-BLACK 30%	MH 40%	2022 10%
	65+ 20%	H 10%		2023 10%
		A 10%		2024 20%
				2026 10%

Please Note: self-reported gender identity information is not yet available.

Investment Committee (sub-committee of CF&A):

	<u>2027</u>	<u>2028</u>	<u>2029</u>	<u>2030</u>
Lay	Virginia Harriett (2) Larry Springer (1) Bob Dietz (1)			Jonathan Furlow (1)
Clergy	Brian Roberts (2)	Dave Falcone (2)		

Status	Age	Race	Region	Start Date
Lay 67%	<31 0%	White 100%	CP 67%	2019 33%
Clergy 33%	31–65 67%		MH 33%	2020 17%
	65+ 33%			2023 33%
				2026 17%

Please Note: self-reported gender identity information is not yet available.

Audit committee (sub-committee of CF&A):

	<u>2027</u>	<u>2028</u>	<u>2029</u>	<u>2030</u>
Lay		Ade Adesanya Robert Zuckerman Robert Dietz Marlin Townes Eric Drew		Jim Rohrman

01	Clergy	Andrew Maggs		
02		Mathew Enzler		
03		Rosario Quinones		
04		Dan Gepford		
05		Clifford Still		

06	Status	Age	Race	Region	Start Date
07	Lay 54.5%	<31 9.1%	White 54.5%	MH 54.5%	2024 90.9%
08	Clergy 45.5%	31–65 72.7%	African American/Black 27.3%	CP 18.2%	2026 9.1%
09		65+ 18.2%	Asian 9.1%	Not Applicable 27.3%	
10			Hispanic 9.1%		

11 Please Note: self-reported gender identity information is not yet available.

12 **Board of Trustees ¶640 and 2512, 2020/2024 Book of Discipline**

13 Oversees the maintenance, use, and value of all assets owned by the Conference. BOD shall have 12 members elected in staggered 4-year terms. Conference rules may serve a maximum of two terms.

14 Chair: Mathew Enzler

15	2027	2028	2029	2030
16	Lay	Charlene Williams-Gungil (1)*	Aaron Amankwah (2)	Tracy Estes (1)
17				Cynthia Mosley (2)
18	Clergy	Vivian Rodeffer (1)*	Joe Monahan (2)* Mathew Enzler (2)	Myung Sun Han (2)
19				Hyun Hui Kim (2)* Elijah Brown (1) Jisun Kwak (1)

20 District Superintendent: Sang Won Doh

21 Conference Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer: Robert Zuckerman

22	Status	Age	Race	Region	Start Date
23	Lay 36.4%	<31 9.1%	White 36.4%	MH 63.6%	2020 9.1%
24	Clergy 63.6%	31–65 63.6%	Asian 27.3%	CP 27.3%	2021 9.1%
25		65+ 27.3%	African American/Black 27.3%	Not Listed 9.1%	2022 36.4%
26			Native American 9.1%		2024 18.2%
27					2026 27.3%

28 Please Note: self-reported gender identity information is not yet available.

29 **Committee on Episcopacy ¶636, 2020/2024 Book of Discipline**

30 Provides guidance, support, and evaluation for the presiding Bishop. BOD: Shall have no less than 7 no more than 17 members. One-fifth appointed by the Bishop. One layperson shall be the conference lay leader. Elected quadrennially. Conference Rule applies may serve a maximum of two terms.

31 Chair: Blair Goold

32 Vice-Chair: Drew Dyson

33	2028	2032
34	Blair Goold (1)	Eunice Lee (1)
35	Kathryn Johnson (1)	
36	David Yamoah (1)	
37	Rupert Hall (1)	
38	Christopher Heckert (1)	
39	Drew Dyson: Jurisdictional Delegate (1)	
40	Bethany Amey-Sutton: Jurisdictional Delegate (1)	

41 Ex-Officio with vote: Jurisdictional Episcopacy Members: Bethany Amey-Sutton and Drew Dyson

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Status	Age	Race	Region	Start Date
Lay 62.5%	<31 0%	White 37.5%	MH 50%	2022 25%
Clergy 37.5%	31–65 75%	Asian 25%	CP 50%	2023 12.5%
	65+ 25%	African American/Black 37.5%		2024 25%
				2025 25%
				2026 12.5%

Please Note: self-reported gender identity information is not yet available.

Administrative Review Committee ¶635, 2020/2024 Book of Discipline

Purpose: The committee's purpose is to provide oversight and ensure that all administrative actions concerning clergy status within the conference are conducted in compliance with the BOD and fair process standards. The committee is composed of three clergy members in full connection and two alternates, all nominated by the bishop and elected by the annual conference quadrennially.

Chair: David Tillisch

TERM 1 (2028)	TERM 2 (2028)
Gina Hendrickson	Dan Gepford
Kil Jae Park	
David Tillisch	
John DiGiamberardino	

Status	Age	Race	Region	Start Date
Lay 0%	<31 0%	White 60%	MH 60%	2020 20%
Clergy 100%	31–65 80%	Asian 40%	CP 40%	2024 80%
	>65 20%			

Please Note: self-reported gender identity information is not yet available.

Committee on Investigation of a Clergy Member 2703.2 and 2703.2a, 2020/2024 Book of Discipline

Chair: Steve Bechtold

TERM 1 (2028)	TERM 2 (2028)
Doug Baitinger	Anna Thomas*
Hyunsook Song	Steve Bechtold
Vanessa Wilson	
Joseph Jueng	
David LeDuc	

Status	Age	Race	Region	Start Date
Lay 0%	<31 0%	White 42.9%	CP 71.4%	2022 14.3%
Clergy 100%	31–65 85.7%	Asian 42.9%	MH 28.6%	2023 14.3%
	65+ 14.3%	African American/Black 14.3%		2024 71.4%

Please Note: self-reported gender identity information is not yet available.

Committee on Investigation of a Diaconal Minister ¶2703.2b, 2020/2024 Book of Discipline

Chair: Cynthia Kent

TERM 1 (2028)	TERM 2 (2028)
Minho Cho	Winifred Asa-Awuku
Onay Lopez	Cynthia Kent
Josh Schuster	Juanita Rodriguez
Donald Stevens	Heike Graef
Gary Frieze	John Hartman

01	Elouise Hill-Challenger	Edmund Martin
02	Cameron Overbey	Edna Dismus (ALT)

04	Status	Age	Race	Region	Start Date
05	Lay 35.7%	<31 0%	White 35.7%	CP 50%	2020 50%
06	Clergy 64.3%	31–65 50%	African American/Black 14.3%	MH 42.9%	2024 50%
07		65+ 42.9%	Hispanic 14.3%	(EPA) N 7.1%	
08		Not provided 7.1%	Asian 7.1%		
09			Native American 7.1%		
10			Other 7.1%		
11			Not Provided 14.3%		
12					
13					

14 Please Note: self-reported gender identity information is not yet available.

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16 **Board of Laity ¶1630, 2020/2024 Book of Discipline**

17 Provides training support and resources for effective lay ministry at the local church, District, and Conference level
18 (BOD recommends members and slates, Lay Leader shall be Chair)

19 Chair: David Yamoah

20 Conference Director of Lay Servant Ministries

21 Conference Lay Leader

22 District Lay Leaders

23 President of Council of Youth Ministry

24 President of Council of Young Adult Ministry

25 President of United Methodist Men

26 President of United Women in Faith

27 Consultant: Millie Grey

28 Director of Laity Leadership Development

29 **OTHER CONFERENCE AND AFFILIATED AGENCIES**

30 **Next Generation Ministries, Inc. (January 2026)**

31 Chairperson/President: Braedon Dobrynio

32 Co-Chair: Braedon Dobrynio

33 Secretary: Eun Young “Rosie” Pang

34		2027	2028	2029
35	Laity	Eric Colwell (1)	Braedon Dobrynio (2)	
36				
37	Clergy	Eun Young “Rosie” Pang (2) Millie Pillot (2)	Catherine Jordan-Latham (2)	
38				

39 Ex Officio: Robert Zuckerman, Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer

40 Dawn Taylor-Storm, Director of Connectional Ministries

41 Eric Drew, Director of Young People’s Ministry

42 Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi, Bishop

44	Status	Age	Race	Region	Start Date
45	Lay 60%	<31 0%	African American/Black 20%	CP 20%	2020 20%
46	Clergy 40%	31–65 40%	Asian 20%	MH 40%	2023 60%
47		65+ 0%	Not Provided 60%		Not Listed 20%
48		Not Listed 60%		Not Listed 40%	

49 Please Note: self-reported gender identity information is not yet available.

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01 **Centenary Fund and Preachers Aid Society**

02 Chair: Robert (Bob) Dietz

	<u>2027</u>	<u>2028</u>	<u>2029</u>	<u>2030</u>
Laity	Steve Poloff (1)	Bob Dietz (1)		
Clergy	Dave Montanye (1) Vivian Rodeffer (2)	Richard Romero (2)	Scott Bostwick (1)	

07 Board of Pension Representative: Bob Dietz

08 Non-Voting Members: Robert Zuckerman, Conference Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer

Status	Age	Race	Region	Start Date
Lay 33%	<31 0%	White 83%	CP 50%	2019 16.7%
Clergy 67%	31–65 50%	Hispanic 17%	MH 16.7%	2020 16.7%
	65+ 50%		N 16.7%	2023 50%
			C 16.7%	2024 16.7%

16 Please Note: self-reported gender identity information is not yet available.

18 **Centenary Fund and Preachers Aid Society Bylaws: Board of Trustees**

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20 SECTION 1: The affairs and activities of the Corporation shall be governed and managed by a Board of Trustees (or
21 the "Board") which shall consist of up to twelve elected Trustees ("Elected Trustees" defined below) and not fewer
22 than six, all of whom shall be entitled to vote and who shall serve without compensation.

- 23 • At least three of the Trustees shall be clergy members of the Conference and at least three shall be
24 laypersons who are members of churches in the Conference, as defined in *The Book of Discipline of The*
25 *United Methodist Church ("2020/2024 The Book of Discipline")*.
- 26 • Trustees are to be natural persons, at least 21 years of age.
- 27 • Paid employees of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference ("GNJ") may serve as Trustees. GNJAC's
28 Bishop (or his/her designate) will be included as one of the 12 members of the Board (the full composition
29 of the board entitled the "Board") with voice and vote. The GNJAC Treasurer will be an ex officio member
30 of the Board with voice but without vote.
- 31 • Trustees shall include an ex officio member from the Board of Pensions with voice but without vote.
- 32 a) Quorum. The quorum at any duly called meeting shall consist of those voting members attending.
- 33 b) Vote. An affirmative vote of a majority, but not fewer than three, of the Trustees present shall be required
34 for approval of any action requiring the approval of the Board.
- 35 c) A Trustee shall have no property rights in the assets of the Corporation, nor shall any Trustee be subject
36 to dues or assessments.

37 SECTION 2: The Corporation, while independent legally and structurally from GNJ as well as from any other legal
38 entity associated with the United Methodist Church, shall comply with all applicable provisions of *The Book of*
39 *Discipline of The United Methodist Church ("2020/2024 The Book of Discipline")* and as amended over time.

41 **ELECTION PROCESS**

42 All Elected Trustees will be elected by GNJ upon nomination by the GNJ Nominating Committee as provided in
43 Article VII Section 1.

- 44 a) The Board of the Corporation shall provide recommendations of candidates to the GNJ Nominating
45 Committee. The GNJ Nominating Committee shall either agree with the Board of Trustees'
46 recommendation or ask the Board to recommend another candidate. If the Board does not make
47 another recommendation, then the GNJ Nominating Committee may recommend a candidate or that
48 particular Trustee position shall remain vacant until the following year, when the nominating process
49 shall renew.

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- b) If there is a disagreement between the Board of Trustees and the GNJ Nominating Committee the nomination may be appealed to the Annual Conference session.
- c) Subject to the above, Elected Trustees shall be nominated at the annual meeting of the Centenary Fund Board.
- d) Regardless, in the event of a mid-year Trustee vacancy due to the death, disability, resignation, or removal by the Board for any reason, the Board shall fill the vacancy in consultation with the GNJ Nominating Committee and that Board member must then be elected by GNJ at its next Annual Conference in order to continue to serve on the Board.

SECTION 3:
TERM OF SERVICE

- a) Elected Trustees will be elected to serve initially for a four-year term or until their successors are elected. Upon completion of their terms, Elected Trustees are eligible for re-election to an additional four-year term.
- b) Elected Trustees will be assigned to one of four classes such that each year, the terms of approximately one-quarter of the Elected Trustees will expire requiring either their re-election or replacement, unless a change in the composition of the Board has been approved.
- c) A Trustee may serve a maximum of two consecutive four-year terms and then rotate off the board for at least one year. If a Board member is elected to fulfill an unexpired term of another Board member, the remainder of that term will constitute one term.

United Methodist Stewardship Foundation of New Jersey (January 2026)

To oversee the investment strategies and management of all assets held by the UM Stewardship Foundation.

President: Virginia Harriett

Executive Director: Brian Roberts

	<u>2027</u>	<u>2028</u>	<u>2029</u>	<u>2030</u>
Laity	Virginia Harriett (2)		Marlin Townes (2)	Larry Springer (2) Bre' Caldwell (2)
Clergy		Chris Heckert (1)		YoonCheol Shin

Ex-Officio: Cynthia Moore-KoiKoi, Bishop

Conference Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer: Robert Zuckerman

Staff: Stuart Goodwin

Status	Age	Race	Region	Start Date
Lay 66.7%	<31 17%	White 50%	MH 66.6%	2019 16.7%
Clergy 33.3%	31–65 33%	African American/Black 33.3%	CP 33.4%	2021 16.7%
	65+ 50%	Asian 16.7%		2023 33.3%
				2024 16.7%
				2026 16.7%

Please Note: self-reported gender identity information is not yet available.

United Methodist Stewardship Foundation of New Jersey Bylaws

Section 4.1 – Number and Qualifications

The business affairs of the Foundation shall be managed by a Board of Trustees which shall consist of the incorporators until the first annual meeting of the members, but thereafter the Board of Trustees shall consist of ten (10) trustees, or such greater or less as the Board of Trustees or members of the Foundation may determine, from time to time, the determination of the members to be controlling if both should act. In addition, the Conference Board of Trustees and the Board of Pensions may nominate two (2) members of the Board of Trustees of the Foundation who shall serve

01 ex-officio with the right to vote and for such term or terms as the nominating Board shall
02 determine. Any other provision of these By-laws to the contrary notwithstanding, the resident
03 Bishop of the Conference at all times shall serve ex-officio of the Board of Trustees, with the right
04 to vote. The members of the Board of Trustees shall be natural persons, twenty-one (21) years of
05 age or older, at least two-thirds (2/3) of whom shall be members of the United Methodist Church.

06 Section 4.3 - Term of Office

07 The members of the Board of Trustees shall be elected for terms of four (4) years. The terms shall
08 be staggered, so that one-half (1/2) of the trustees, or approximately one-half, if the Board consists
09 of an odd number of trustees, shall be elected every two (2) years; provided, however, that the
10 terms of trustees designated by the Board of Trustees and by the Board of Pensions of the
11 Conference to serve ex-officio shall be determined by those respective Boards but in no event to
12 exceed four (4) years. If an elected Trustee has four consecutive absences from regular meetings of
13 the Board of Trustees, the Trustee shall be considered to have resigned and shall be notified by the
14 Secretary of the Foundation.

15 Section 4.4 - Nominations and Election

16 a) Except as is otherwise provided in Section 4.5, or as to ex officio trustees, trustees shall be elected by
17 the Conference with consideration of the nominations by the Foundation. Except for trustees
18 designated to serve ex-officio by the Board of Trustees or Board of Pensions of the Conference or
19 the resident Bishop, no trustee shall be eligible to serve more than ten (10) consecutive years in
20 that capacity. The term of office of a trustee shall commence upon his election and shall continue
21 throughout the term for which he shall have been elected and until the election of his successor.

22 b) The Nominating Committee shall strive for the nomination of members of the Board of Trustees to be
23 distributed as follows: 1/3 laymen, 1/3 laywomen and 1/3 clergy.

24 Section 4.5 - Vacancies in Offices

25 If the members should fail to elect a successor to a trustee whose term would otherwise expire, the
26 remaining trustees may fill such vacancy by an election to be effective until the next meeting of the
27 members of the Foundation. Vacancies in the Board of Trustees, including vacancies resulting from
28 an increase in the number of trustees, may be filled by a majority of the remaining members of the Board,
29 though less than a quorum, and each person so elected shall be a trustee until his successor is elected by
30 the members, who may make such election at the next annual meeting of the members, or at any
31 special meeting duly called for that purpose. Such successors shall complete the unexpired term of the
32 trustee he or she replaced.

33 **ARTICLE V- OFFICERS**

34 Section 5.1 - Enumeration and Qualification

35 The Foundation shall have a President of the Board of Trustees, a Vice- President, a Secretary and a
36 Treasurer, and may have such other officers and assistant officers, as the trustees shall authorize from time
37 to time. With the exception of the Treasurer, all of the officers provided for in this section must be
38 trustees. The Treasurer of the Conference may be the Treasurer of the Foundation.

39 Section 5.2 – Election

40 a) Annual Election of Officers: The officers of the Foundation will be elected by the Board of Trustees
41 at the Annual Organizational meeting of the Board to be held in accordance with Article IV, Section
42 4.6(a) above.

43 b) Nominating Committee: Prior to the organizational meeting, the Executive Committee may designate
44 a Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee may be authorized to recommend officers for
45 election by the Board of Trustees at the annual organizational meeting, but additional nominations may
46 be made from the floor at that meeting.

47 Section 5.3 – Term

48 The officers shall be elected annually, for terms of two (2) years, and shall be eligible for re-election. The
49 Board shall have power to fill any vacancies in any office, provided, however, that an officer elected to
50

fill a vacancy shall hold office only for the balance of the term for which the prior incumbent was elected.

OTHER BOARDS THAT SUBMIT NOMINATIONS TO THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Pennington School – Board of Trustees - Board Slate

Officers:

Chair: Peter Tucci '79 P'16 '16

First Vice Chair: Michael Jingoli '85 P'11 '15

Second Vice Chair: **The Rev. Dr. Virginia**

Cetuk

Secretary: Jason Ridings '05

Class of 2026	Class of 2027	Class of 2028	Class of 2029
Jordan Gray	Vandana Bhanote	Lou Denton	David Long
Dennis Keating	G. Geoffrey Cromarty	Michael Jingoli	William Oldsey
John Biddiscombe	Jack Green	Dan Mahony	Judith Rosenberg
Lisa Espinoza	Arti Patel	Brenda Martini O'Loughlin	Steve Silberman
Jae Hyeok Heo	Matthew Pauls	Julie Wulf	Soopakij "Chris"
Min Soo Kim	Stephen Tan	Celeste Jackson	Chearavanont
Swati Navani	Peter Tucci	Katherine Rosa	
	Chandra "Binky" Sanders	Jason Ridings	
	Erich Stegich		
	Jian "Jim" Wang		

Assistant Secretary: Emily Martin

Ex-Officio:

Head of School: Dr. William Hawkey

Resident Bishop: **Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi**

Central District Superintendent: Rev. Ronell Howard

The Rev. Dr. Virginia Cetuk

The Rev. Dr. Donald Medley Alumni

Association President: Jacob Levy

'09Parents Association Co-President: **Amy**

Sullivan

United Methodist Communities – Board of Directors

Class of 2026	Class of 2027	Class of 2028
Gavin Stobie (2)	Jana Purkis-Brash (2)	Victor
Brian Roberts	Devine	Conaway
Ross	Park	Barch
Griffith	Byrnes	Day
		Zigler

Ex Officio (with voice and vote)

Bishop: Cynthia Moore-Koi-Koi

Appointed by Bishop: Rev. William Williams III

Operations Committee: Jana Purkis-Brash

(2) = expiration of second 5-year term

(x) = expiration of 15 years of continuous board service

01 (u) = expiration of an unexpired term

02

03 *Rodney Ross elected to Board Chair (August 2025)*

04 *Kathy Devine elected Vice Chair (August 2025)*

05 *Tom Griffith elected to Secretary (August 2025)*

06 *Joe Zigler elected in September 2023 to Board Treasurer and Finance Chair*

07 *Cora Park elected to Foundation Chair (February 2024)*

08

09 **UM Communities Bylaws**

10 **ARTICLE I: Name and Office of the Corporation**

11

12 The name of the corporation is The United Methodist Homes of New Jersey, doing business as United
13 Methodist Communities ("UMC") whose principal office is located at 3311 Highway 33, Neptune, New
14 Jersey 07753.

15 **ARTICLE II: Purpose**

16

17 The purposes for which this corporation is organized shall remain consistent with those set forth in the
18 Corporation's Restated Certificate of Incorporation.

19

20 **ARTICLE III: Board of Directors**

21

22 **1. Board Membership.**

23

24 1.1 Number and Terms. This corporation shall have a Board of Directors (Board) consisting of not less than 15 nor more
25 than 18 voting members. Except for the Resident Bishop and the Conference Designee, these members are to be
26 elected from nominations of the Governance Committee or persons nominated at a Board meeting. Directors shall
27 be elected for a term of five years. No person shall serve as Director for more than two consecutive terms of five
28 years, after which one year shall elapse before a Director may serve again. However, superseding the above,
29 persons serving on the Board of Directors as Officers may continue to serve in that capacity without regard to span
30 of elected service. The maximum continuous number of years a person can serve on the Board is fifteen years. The
31 membership shall be divided into five classes.

31

32 1.2 The Resident Bishop. The Bishop of the Greater New Jersey Conference shall be an ex-officio member with voice
33 and vote.

34 1.3 Conference Designee. The GNJAC Bishop, in consultation with the UMC Governance Committee, shall appoint a
35 Conference Designee who shall serve as a member of the Board, with voice and vote.

36

37 1.4 The President & CEO is a non-voting member of the Board.

38

39 1.5 Unexpired Term. A person elected to fill an unexpired Director's term shall take office immediately upon election.
40 He/she may serve two additional full terms.

40

41 **1.6 Vacancies.** The Board shall have the authority to elect persons to fill vacancies for the unexpired terms
42 of Directors.

43

44 **1.7 Director Emeritus.** Upon nomination by the Governance Committee the Board of Directors, at its
45 discretion, may confer the honorary title of Director Emeritus upon any Director who shall have served a
46 minimum of two (2) terms on the Board and one (1) term as an Officer. The election of a Director Emeritus
47 shall be conferred upon a Board Member whose leadership has resulted in a significant corporate
48 achievement. A Director Emeritus shall have the privilege of attending meetings of the Board, but shall not
49 be entitled to vote and shall not be counted as a regular member of the Board.

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01 **The Wesley Foundation Board at Princeton**

02 Chair:

03 Kate Monahan	Herb Mertz
04 Ronell Howard	Erik Matson
05 Jennifer Smith Walz	

06 Ex-Officio: Jenny Smith Walz

07 District Superintendent: Ronell Howard (Ex-Officio)

08
09 **BYLAWS OF WESLEY FOUNDATION AT PRINCETON UNIVERSITY ARTICLE VII**

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12 **Officers.** The Officers of the Foundation shall be:

- 13 President
- 14 Vice President
- 15 Secretary
- 16 Treasurer
- 17 Executive Director (ex-officio member)

- 18
- 19 1. Officers shall be elected annually by a simple majority vote of the Board at the Annual Meeting.
- 20 Nominations for Officers will be taken from the floor.
- 21 2. The term of the office is two (2) years, starting at the close of the Annual Meeting at which the
- 22 officer was elected.
- 23 3. All elections shall be by written ballot or voice vote, as the Board may deem to be appropriate.
- 24 4. Officers may not serve in a given office for more than three (3) successive terms.
- 25 5. The President and Vice-President must (to qualify for these offices) have served at least one year as
- 26 a Trustee.
- 27 6. Vacancies may be filled at any meeting of the Board by the Trustees
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DISTRICT SLATES

Meadowlands – District Superintendent: Rev. William M. Williams, III

District Lay Leader: Eunice Lee

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 2027			
Name	Eileen Hirsch	David Montanye	Hee Young Lim
Lay/Clergy	Laity	Clergy	Clergy
Start Date	July 1, 2024	July 1, 2025	July 1, 2024
Race	W-White	W-White	A-Asian
Age	SA-Senior Adult (65+)	SA-Senior Adult (65+)	A-Adult (31-65)
Class 2028			
Name	<u>Prescott Butler</u>	Eusun Kim	Judy Karius
Lay/Clergy	Clergy	Clergy	Laity
Start Date	July 1, 2025	July 1, 2025	July 1, 2025
Race	AA-Black/African American	A-Asian	W-White
Age	SA-Senior Adult (65+)	A-Adult (31-65)	A-Adult (31-65)
Class 2029			
Name	Dianne Gordon-McGrath	Roeline Ramirez	Ji Su Ahn
Lay/Clergy	Laity	Clergy	Clergy
Start Date	July 1, 2026	July 1, 2026	July 1, 2026
Race	AA-Black/African American	A-Asian	A-Asian
Age	SA-Senior Adult (65+)	A-Adult (31-65)	A-Adult (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. Ex-officio: Bishop Cynthia Moore-KoiKoi

	Clergy	Laity
Name	Frederick Boyle	Petronella Linson
Start Date	July 1, 2025	July 1, 2024
Race	W-White	AA-Black/African American
Age	SA-Senior Adult (65+)	SA-Senior Adult (65+)
Name	<u>Juyeon Lee</u>	Ojetta Townes
Start Date	July 1, 2023	July 1, 2025
Race	A-Asian	AA-Black/African American
Age	A-Adult (31-65)	SA-Senior Adult (65+)
Name	Corinne Arthur	Zachary Holder
Start Date	July 1, 2023	July 1, 2023
Race	AA-Black/African American	AA-Black/African American
Age	SA-Senior Adult (65+)	YP-Young Adult/young person (31<)
Name		Eunice Lee
Start Date		July 1, 2023
Race		A-Asian
Age		A-Adult (31-65)
Name		Michael Burniston

Start Date		July 1, 2023
Race		W-White
Age		SA-Senior Adult (65+)

District Committee on Ordained Ministry ¶1666

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	Cleopatra Wingard
Start Date	July 1, 2022	July 1, 2025
Race	A-Asian	AA-Black/African American
Age	A-Adult (31-65)	A-Adult (31-65)

Name	<u>Gabrielle Corbett</u>	Sandra Cook-McKnight
Start Date	July 1, 2022	July 2, 2022
Race	W-White	AA-Black/African American
Age	A-Adult (31-65)	SA-Senior Adult (65+)

Name	Jin Kook Kim	Rick Perdew
Start Date	July 1, 2023	July 1, 2026
Race	A-Asian	W-White
Age	A-Adult (31-65)	SA-Senior Adult (65+)

Name	Hee Young Lim	Ojetta Townes
Start Date	July 1, 2022	July 1, 2025
Race	A-Asian	AA-Black/African American
Age	A-Adult (31-65)	SA-Senior Adult (65+)

Name	Amanda Hemenetz	Johanna Pearrich
Start Date	July 1, 2022	July 1, 2026
Race	W-White	Latina / Hispanic
Age	A-Adult (31-65)	SA-Senior Adult (65+)

Name	Elouise Hill-Challenger	
Start Date	July 1, 2024	
Race	AA-Black/African American	
Age	A-Adult (31-65)	
Name	Eusun Kim	
Start Date	July 1, 2025	
Race	A-Asian	
Age	A-Adult (31-65)	

District Lay Leader:

Name	Eunice Lee
Start Date	July 1, 2024
Race	A-Asian
Age	A-Adult (31-65)

District Director of Lay Servant Ministries:

Name	Diana Yamoah
Start Date	July 1, 2020
Race	AA-Black/African American
Age	SA-Senior Adult (65+)

District Disaster Response & Poverty Task Force Coordinators:

Name	Adrian Mendoz	Schuyler Berdan	Krystal Woolston
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01	Start Date	July 1, 2024	July 1, 2024	July 1, 2025
02	Status	Clergy	Clergy	Laity
03	Race	A-Asian	W-White	W-White
04	Age	A-Adult (31-65)	A-Adult (31-65)	A-Adult (31-65)

05 **District Youth Coordinator:**

06	Name:	Eunsil Kim
07	Start Date	July 1, 2026
08	Status	Clergy
09	Race	A-Asian
10	Age	Young Adult

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Skylands – District Superintendent: Rev. Dr. Eunice Vega-Perez

District Lay Leader: Barbara Miller

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 2027			
Name	Joyce Mcknight - Young	Ellen Bechtold	KyuTae Pak
Lay/Clergy	laity	Retired Clergy	Clergy
Race	AA	W	A
Age	65+	65+	65+
Class 2028			
Name	Jeannette Zajac	JongIn Lee	Pedro Pillot
Lay/Clergy	Clergy	Clergy	Clergy
Race	W	A	L
Age	35-65	35-65	18-35
Class 2029			
Name	Yohan Baik	<u>Jennifer Lovallo</u>	Carla Constantino
Lay/Clergy	Clergy	Clergy	Retired Clergy
Race	A	W	W
Age	35-65	35-65	35-65

Committee on District Superintendency ¶1669

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>Marissa van der Valk</u>	Seon Ah Ahn
Start Date	7/24	7/23
Race	W	Korean
Age	35-65	35-65
Name	Erica Munoz	Kim Burse
Start Date	7/24	7/22
Race	W	W
Age	35-65	35-65
Name	Amy Garrett	Mary Bland
Start Date	7/24	7/23
Race	W	W
Age	65+	65+
Name	Eunji Lee	Patricia Fermin
Start Date	7/26	7/25
Race	K	AA
Age	18-35	35-65
Name	Janice McCrostie	Karyl-Lynn Marcia
Start Date	7/26	7/25
Race	W	W
Age	35-65	65+

01 **District Committee on Ordained Ministry ¶1666** BOD: Members nominated annually by the Superintendent.
 02 At least 3 laypersons and 6 clergy, a representative from the Board of Ordained Ministry and the District
 03 Superintendent.

	Clergy	Laity
04 Name	Pauline Kang	Ignace Conic
05 Start Date	7/23	7/21
06 Race	Asian/Korean	African American
07 Age	35-65	35-65

08 Name	Brian Neville	Seon Ah Ahn
09 Start Date	7/22	7/22
10 Race	W	Korean
11 Age	35-65	35-65

12 Name	Miso Park	Lee Haase
13 Start Date	7/22	7/21
14 Race	Korean	W
15 Age	35-65	35-65

16 Name	<u>Erica Munoz</u>	Barbara Miller
17 Start Date	7/1/24	7/21
18 Race	W	W
19 Age	35-65	31-65

20 Name	Luana Cook- Scott	Nancy Carver
21 Start Date	7/1/22	7/1/21
22 Race	W	W
23 Age	35-65	31-65

24 Name	Nancy Cook
25 Start Date	7/1/25
26 Race	W
27 Age	35-65

28 Name	Iraida Ruiz de Porras
29 Start Date	7/24
30 Race	L
31 Age	35-65

32 **District Poverty Task Force**

	Clergy
33 Name	Gerardo Oviedo
34 Start Date	7/24
35 Race	L
36 Age	35-65

37 Name	Lisa Robinson
38 Start Date	7/26
39 Race	AA
40 Age	35-65

41 **Lay Servant Ministries:** Cara Quick
 42 **District Youth Coordinator:** Jackie Pillot
 43 **District Communicator:** Seonwoo Lee

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Raritan Shore District – District Superintendent: 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 2027			
Name	Kevin Davis	Kevin Helsby	Barry Smith
Lay/Clergy	Clergy	Lay	Lay
Start Date	1/1/22	1/1/22	1/1/2024
Race	W	W	W
Age	A	A	A
Class 2028			
Name	Douglas Fontenello	Tracy Estes	David Tillisch
Lay/Clergy	Lay	Lay	Clergy
Start Date	1/1/22	1/1/22	1/1/2025
Race	W	W	W
Age	A	A	A
Class 2029			
Name	Kirk Huber	Steven Yeske	
Lay/Clergy	Lay	Lay	
Start Date	7/1/22	1/1/22	
Race	W	W	
Age	A	A	

Committee on District Superintendency ¶1669

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>Jennifer Cho</u>	Tracy Allen
Start Date	1/1/22	1/1/22
Race	A	AA
Age	SA	A
Name	Chuck Coblentz	Douglas Fontenello
Start Date	1/1/22	1/1/22
Race	W	W
Age	SA	A
Name	Isabel Quezada	Ken Helsby
Start Date	1/1/22	1/1/22
Race	H	W
Age	SA	A

Ex-officio: Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi

District Committee on Ordained Ministry ¶1666

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>Alison Van Buskirk Philip</u>	Beth Crawford
Start Date	7/1/22	1/1/22

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Race	W	W
Age	A	A

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Name	Cameron Overbey	
Start Date	1/1/22	
Race	W	
Age	A	

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Name	Benjamin Lee	
Start Date	1/1/22	
Race	W	
Age	A	

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Name	Kevin Davis	
Start Date	1/1/22	
Race	W	
Age	A	

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Name	Hyun Hui Kim (Registrar)	
Start Date	7/1/22	
Race	A	
Age	A	

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Name	Gina Yeske	
Start Date	1/1/22	
Race	W	
Age	SA	

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Name	Christina Zito	
Start Date	2/16/23	
Race	W	
Age	SA	

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Name	Yo Seeb Jeon	
Start Date	7/1/24	
Race	A	
Age	A	

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37 **District Poverty Task Force**

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	Clergy	Laity
Name	Marco Depestre	
Start Date	1/1/22	
Race	H	
Age	SA	

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Name	Federico Quezada	
Start Date	1/1/22	
Race	H	
Age	SA	

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49 **District Director of Lay Servant Ministries:** Donald Schultz
50 **District Disaster Response Coordinator:** Kevin Davis
51 **District Youth Coordinator:**

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Central District – District Superintendent: Rev. Ronell Howard

District Lay Leader: Laura Jaskot

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 2027		
Name	<u>John Taylor III</u>	Jim Conway
Lay/Clergy	Laity	Laity
Start Date		
Race	W	W
Age	>65	31-65
Class 2028		
Name	Jesse Ruch	Keith Sheppard
Lay/Clergy	Clergy	Laity
Start Date		
Race	W	W
Age	>31	65+
Class 2029		
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. Ex-officio: Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi

	Clergy	Laity
Name	Jesse Ruch	<u>Laura Jaskot</u>
Lay/Clergy	clergy	laity
Race	W	W
Age	>31	31-65
Name	Erik Matson	Patricia Love

01	Lay/Clergy	clergy	laity
02			
03	Race	W	AA
04	Age	<31	>65
05			
06			
07	Name	Jessica Stenstrom	Karen Murray
08			
09	Lay/Clergy	clergy	clergy
10			
11	Race	W	W
12	Age	<31	

13 Ex-officio: Bishop, Cynthia Moore-Koikoi

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

17 BOD: Members nominated annually by the Superintendent. At least 3 laypersons and 6 clergy, a
18 representative

19 from the Board of Ordained Ministry and the District Superintendent.

21		Clergy	Laity
22	Name	<u>Jenn Smith-Walz, Chair</u>	Julie Dixon-Thomas
23			
24	Start Date		
25			
26	Race	W	AA
27	Age	31-65	65+

29			
30	Name	Evan Dodge (Registrar)	Jeneene Reduker
31			
32	Start Date		
33			
34	Race	W	W
35	Age	31-65	31-65

37			
38	Name	Sunny Shim	Fred Muller
39			
40	Start Date		
41			
42	Race	Asian	Anglo
43	Age	31-65	65+

45			
46	Name	Anna Gillette	Jessica Stenstrom
47			
48	Start Date		
49			
50	Race	W	W
51	Age	31-65	31-65

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Name	Jonathan Campbell	
Start Date		
Race	W	
Age	31-65	

Name		
Start Date		
Race		
Age		

Name		
Start Date		
Race		
Age		

District Poverty Task Force

	Clergy	Laity
Name	Waleska Trinidad	Laura Jaskot
Start Date		
Race	H	W
Age	31-65	31-65

District Director of Lay Servant Ministries: Laura Jaskot
District Disaster Response Coordinator: Karen Nyby
District Youth Coordinator: David Geller

Cape Atlantic – District Superintendent: Rev. Dr. Derrick Doherty

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

Class 2027			
Name	<u>Jonathan Johnson</u>	Chris Antolini	
Lay/Clergy	Clergy	Laity	
Start Date	7/1/2022	7/1/2022	
Race	W	W	
Age	SA	SA	
Class 2028			
Name	Mark Gibson	Keith Roller	
Lay/Clergy	Laity	Clergy	
Start Date	7/1/2021	6/1/2025	
Race	W	W	
Age	A	A	
Class 2029			
Name	Tom Novack	Allen Maddox	Nicole Troast
Lay/Clergy	Clergy	Laity	Clergy
Start Date	7/1/2026	7/1/2026	7/1/2026
Race	W	AA	W
Age	A	A	A

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	7/31/2023	7/1/2014
Race	H	AA
Age	SA	SA

01			
02			
03	Name	Ginnie Keiser	Gunn Lee
04			
05	Start Date	7/1/2022	6/1/2025
06	Race	W	A
07	Age	SA	S
08			
09	Name	Scott Bostwick	James Baker
10			
11	Start Date	6/1/2025	7/27/2022
12	Race	W	W
13	Age	A	A
14			
15	Name	John DiGiamberardino	Normary Rodriquez
16			
17	Start Date	7/1/2026	7/27/2022
18	Race	W	H
19	Age	A	A
20			
21	Name	William Greene	Carl Henry
22			
23	Start Date	7/1/2026	7/1/2022
24	Race	AA	AA
25	Age	SA	AA
26			

District Committee on Ordained Ministry ¶1666

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	
43	Name	Linda Ross	Carolyn Pendleton
44	Start Date	7/27/2022	7/22/2022
45	Race	W	AA (BOOM rep)
46	Age	SA	SA

	Clergy	Laity
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Name	Dan Sooy	Michelle Lee
Start Date	7/1/2026	7/1/2022
Race	W	A
Age	A	A

	Clergy	Laity
Name	David Ledford III	Virgil Williams
Start Date	7/1/2022	7/1/2026
Race	W	AA
Age	A	SA

	Clergy	Laity
Name	Gerri Ridings	
Start Date	7/31/2023	
Race	W	
Age	A	

	Clergy	Laity
Name	Erik Hall	
Start Date	7/1/2022	
Race	W	
Age	A	

	Clergy	Laity
Name	Wil Wilson	
Start Date	7/31/2023	
Race	W	
Age	A	

	Clergy	Laity
Name	Kyewoon Choi	
Start Date	7/1/2026	
Race	A	
Age	SA	

01 **District Poverty Task Force**

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	Clergy	Laity
Name	Dan Clarke	<u>David Dorfman</u>
Start Date	7/1/2026	7/1/2020
Race	W	W
Age	A	A

Name	Melissa Doyle-Waid	Amy Charleston
Start Date	7/1/2026	7/27/2022
Race	w	W
Age	A	A

Name		Emily Bruley
Start Date		7/27/2022
Race		W
Age		A

Name		Joe Neidinger
Start Date		7/27/2022
Race		W
Age		A

Name		Allen Maddox
Start Date		7/27/2022
Race		AA
Age		SA

District Director of Lay Servant Ministries: Janice Betts
District Disaster Response Coordinator: Steve Tozour
District Youth Coordinator: Robyn Clark
Mission Central Coordinator: Nicole Troast
District Photographer: John Lore

Delaware Bay – District Superintendent: Rev. Kate Monahan

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.

Class 2027			
Name	Walt Kellen	Jay Brown	Walt Mander
Lay/Clergy	Clergy	Laity	Clergy
Start Date	1/1/2022	1/1/2022	1/1/2022
Race	W	AA	W
Age			
Class 2028			
Name	Marlin Saunder	<u>Don Stevens</u>	Dave Carber
Lay/Clergy	Laity	Clergy	clergy
Start Date	7/1/2026	1/1/2022	1/1/2022
Race	W	W	W
Age			
Class 2029			
Name	Glenn Conaway	Andrew Maggs	Jeanette Block
Lay/Clergy	Clergy	Clergy	Clergy
Start Date	7/1/2026	7/1/2026	7/1/2026
Race	W	W	W
Age			

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.

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	Clergy	Laity
Name	Lawrence Hickman	Brian Mickle
Start Date	7/1/2026	1/1/2022
Race	AA	W
Age		
	Clergy	Laity
Name	Cliff Stills	Terri Ganderton
Start Date	1/1/2022	1/1/2022
Race	AA	W
Age		
	Clergy	Laity
Name	Chris Heckert	Cynthia Mosley
Start Date	1/1/2022	1/1/2022
Race	W	NA
Age		
	Clergy	Laity
Name	<u>Shelley Smith</u>	Elwood Breon
Start Date	1/1/2022	1/1/2022
Race	AA	W
Age		
	Clergy	Laity
Name	Tim Conaway	Sophia Vicari
Start Date	7/1/2026	7/1/2026
Race	W	W
Age		

District Committee on Ordained Ministry ¶1666

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
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Name	<u>John Inverso</u>	Belinda Hall
Start Date	1/1/2022	1/1/2022
Race	W	AA
Age		
	Clergy	Laity
Name	Lori Mitchell	Janet Holdcraft
Start Date	1/1/2025	1/1/2022
Race	W	W
Age		
	Clergy	Laity
Name	Christine Day	Sally Durham
Start Date	1/1/2022	1/1/2022
Race	W	Hispanic
Age		
	Clergy	Clergy
Name	Doug Goldsborough	Sunghyuk Kim
Start Date	1/1/2022	7/1/2026
Race	AA	K
Age		
	Clergy	Clergy
Name	Chuck Mitchell	Nicole Maggs
Start Date	1/1/2022	7/1/2026
Race	W	W
Age		
	Clergy	
Name	Walt Kellen	
Start Date	1/1/2022	
Race	W	
Age		
	Clergy	
Name	Larry Oksten	

01	Start Date	1/1/2022	
02	Race	W	
03	Age		

05
06

District Poverty Task Force

	Clergy	Laity	
08			
09			
10	Name	Jack Fosbenner	Cynthia Mosley
11			
12	Start Date	2/29/2000	1/1/2022
13	Race	W	NA
14	Age		

15

16			
17			
18	Name	Cricket Denton (chair)	
19			
20	Start Date	1-Jan-22	
21	Race	W	
22	Age		

23

District Director of Lay Servant Ministries: Creed Pogue

District Disaster Response Coordinator: Cricket Denton

District Youth Coordinator: Cricket Denton

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01 **CONFERENCE ADVANCE SPECIALS RESOLUTION**

02
03
04 **Be It Resolved**, that the 2026 Session of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference designates the
05 following ministries and institutions as Conference Advance Specials for the 2027 conference year,
06 without in any way restricting a local church’s ability to support other mission work; and

07
08 **Be It Further Resolved**, that the Executive Committee of the Connectional Table be authorized to make
09 additions to or deletions from the Conference Advance Specials list based upon recommendations of the
10 Conference Board of Global Ministries.

11
12 **Centenary Fund / Preachers Aid Society**

13
14 Established in 1857, the Centenary Fund and Preachers Aid Society provides financial assistance for
15 retired clergy, surviving spouses, and dependent children of deceased clergy who have served in the
16 Greater New Jersey Conference. This ministry offers support in times of need and ensures care and
17 dignity for those who have faithfully served the Church.

18
19 **Christian Outreach Project**

20
21 The Christian Outreach Project provides no-cost home repairs to individuals and families in need
22 throughout the northwest region of the Conference. Participants include high school youth and adult
23 volunteers who work together in service. In addition to home repair projects, participants engage in daily
24 devotionals, worship, singing, and recreational activities, fostering spiritual growth alongside hands-on
25 mission work.

26
27 **CUMAC / ECHO**

28
29 CUMAC works to alleviate hunger and address its root causes for individuals and families in Paterson,
30 Passaic County, and northern New Jersey. CUMAC’s pantry serves more than 3,000 people each month,
31 while its depot warehouses and distributes over two million pounds of food annually through a network
32 of approximately 40 partner feeding programs. Through its Community Food Coalition, CUMAC supports
33 food distribution while also screening clients for member pantries and advocating at local and state
34 levels. Additional ministries include: a Community Closet providing clothing and household items,
35 Pathways to Work offering job training and hands-on experience, Place of Promise a supportive housing
36 program for chronically unhoused individuals, and seasonal initiatives providing school supplies, holiday
37 gifts, and essential items for children in need. All programs rely heavily on volunteer engagement and
38 community support.

39
40 **First Friends of New Jersey and New York**

41
42 First Friends upholds the inherent dignity and humanity of immigrants impacted by the immigration
43 enforcement system. This ministry provides compassion, advocacy, and hope through volunteer
44 engagement that supports individuals during detention, assists with reentry after release, and helps
45 families rebuild their lives. First Friends provides toll free phone access in English and Spanish at multiple
46 detention facilities and offers in person visitation. The Pen Pal Program allows volunteers who cannot
47 visit in person to maintain supportive correspondence with detainees.

48
49 **The Neighborhood Center**

50
51 Founded in 1913, The Neighborhood Center serves the Camden community by breaking cycles of
52 poverty through academic, athletic, and arts programming for children and teenagers. The Center
53 provides a safe and engaging environment where young people are challenged and supported. Services
54 include a nutritious lunch program six days a week, childcare, after school programming, and evening

01 programs for teens. Using a two-generation approach, The Neighborhood Center seeks to lift entire
02 families while fostering academic success, athletic achievement, and artistic expression. Its long-term
03 vision is to serve as a community living room that nurtures connection, opportunity, and hope.

04

05 **Pennington School**

06

07 The Pennington School is a college preparatory institution affiliated with the Methodist Church,
08 grounded in the Wesleyan values of honor, virtue, and humility. Students are formed in an environment
09 that cultivates both academic excellence and moral character, preparing them to make a positive
10 difference in the world. The school provides half tuition scholarships to support diversity among students
11 in grades six through twelve.

12

13 **The Maker’s Place**

14

15 The Maker’s Place is an initiative of the United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey and serves as
16 a diaper bank and neighborhood resource center in Trenton, New Jersey. Through its Diaper Depot,
17 The Maker’s Place distributes free disposable diapers to families with young children and partners with
18 community organizations to strengthen families and promote dignity and equity. The ministry connects
19 neighbors in Trenton with neighbors throughout central New Jersey by fostering inclusive, relationship-
20 centered community. As a site for local mission and ministry, The Maker’s Place cultivates transformative
21 relationships that empower underrepresented populations, helping build bridges out of poverty and
22 creating a multiethnic and economically diverse community hub where all people experience the wide
23 welcome of God.

24

25 **United Methodist Church of Tanzania (Tanzania Mission)**

26

27 The United Methodist Church of Tanzania organized training sessions for church leaders and
28 communicators focused on connectional identity, communication, and regionalization following the 2024
29 General Conference. These sessions provided participants with a deeper understanding of the United
30 Methodist Church and offered practical insights for Christian education within local congregations. Youth
31 leaders were strengthened through dedicated training programs, while women’s groups and children’s
32 ministries worked intentionally to break cycles of poverty and build more sustainable futures for families
33 and communities. Despite ongoing challenges including disaffiliation, the loss of church properties, and
34 political instability, these ministries continue to serve faithfully and make a positive and transformative
35 impact.

36

37 **Submitted by:** Rev. Dr. Jennifer H. Cho, Chair, Board of Global Ministries

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01 **MINIMUM EQUITABLE SALARY RECOMMENDATION FOR 2027**

02
03
04 **WHEREAS** The Commission on Equitable Compensation in seeking to support quality pastoral leadership
05 to help United Methodists of Greater New Jersey to grow in all areas of vitality recommends the
06 following:

07
08 **BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference adopt the following recommendation
09 for required minimum salary for persons under full-time appointment in the local church effective
10 January 1, 2027.

11

12 Full Member	63,550
13 Provisional/Associate	59,100
14 Local Pastor	55,890

15

16 Any changes in clergy salaries related to a change in clergy status through ordination, commissioning or
17 licensing in 2026 will become effective as of January 1, 2027.

18
19 Though not mandatory for 2027, local church Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committees are strongly
20 encouraged to consider a minimum of \$300 per year of service increment above the basic minimum
21 compensation up to a maximum 15 years. Years of service are determined by the number of full-time
22 years (or equivalent) fully completed prior to January 1, 2027.

23
24 These salaries apply to clergy (elder and deacon in full connection, provisional elder and deacon,
25 associate members and local pastors) serving in full-time appointments in the local church. The years
26 of service for each clergy can be found on the Clergy Service Record at Wespath (General Board of
27 Pension and Health Benefits). In calculating years of service, time on leave of absence is not counted in
28 accumulated years of service. Part time equivalencies are to be included.

29
30 For purposes of pension credit and years of service calculations, the minimum equitable salary for
31 $\frac{3}{4}$ time pastoral appointments shall be $\frac{3}{4}$ of the required minimum in the pastor's cash salary. The
32 minimum equitable salary for $\frac{1}{2}$ time pastoral appointments shall be $\frac{1}{2}$ of the required minimum. All
33 appointments less than $\frac{1}{2}$ time shall be considered $\frac{1}{4}$ time appointments. Salaries and expected hours
34 of service (per week) shall be determined by the District Superintendent in consultation with the pastor
35 and the local church S/PPRC.

36
37 Each pastor's salary is determined by the local church or charge in consultation with the District
38 Superintendent provided that the required minimum salary is met. In determining a recommendation
39 for salary, each Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee shall take into consideration the pastor's
40 years of experience, education, leadership ability, health and dental coverage, social security, pension
41 contributions, family needs, and comparable salaries of other professionals in the community.

42
43 All full-time pastors shall be provided with a parsonage that meets parsonage standards adopted
44 by GNJ or an equitable housing/rental allowance for that particular community as part of their total
45 compensation package.

46
47 All full-time pastors shall have an accountable reimbursement expense line item in the church budget
48 to cover mileage for pastoral work, continuing education, and other professional ministerial expenses
49 as allowed by the IRS. The reimbursable amount for full time clergy shall be no less than \$2,500. For
50 churches receiving Equitable Compensation support, their accountable reimbursement should not
51 exceed \$2,500. For less than full time service, the accountable reimbursement expense line item
52 shall be determined by consultation between the SPRC and the District Superintendent at the time of
53 appointment.

01 Vacation Policy:

02

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

05

06 4 weeks (including 4 Sundays) of vacation consistent with the average work week; with 5 weeks
07 (including 5 Sundays) after 10 years of full-time or equivalent part time service consistent with the Clergy
08 Service Record.

09

10 Vacation time shall not be cumulative from year to year. Time spent in leadership responsibility in
11 conference/district activities shall not be considered vacation time. This includes Course of Study, Local
12 Pastors Licensing School, Camps, Annual Conference related Ministries, and other education and renewal
13 as required by the *2020/2024 Book of Discipline* (§351.2).

14

15 Rationale:

16

17 With the shift from CRSP to Compass, the 2026 recommendation included an adjustment in the base
18 salary in addition to a cost-of-living increase. The recommendation for 2027 takes that adjustment into
19 consideration and is recommending an increase consistent with the increased cost of living for clergy
20 within the areas included in GNJ.

21

22 Submitted by Rev. Steve Bechtold

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01 **STANDARDS FOR PARSONAGES**

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04 Revised May 2026

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06 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the following recommendation be adopted as the standards for parsonages for
07 GNJUMC effective July 1, 2026.

08
09 **STANDARDS FOR PARSONAGES**

10
11 **Responsible Group in the Church**

12
13 The Book of Discipline does not mandate a parsonage committee; however, it is strongly recommended
14 that each local church which has responsibility for a parsonage form a parsonage committee. This
15 committee will follow-up to assure timely resolution of parsonage problems affecting the health and
16 safety of the pastor and/or pastor’s family (much like a landlord). The chairpersons of the S/PPRC, Board
17 of Trustees and the pastor shall make an annual review of the church-owned parsonage to assure proper
18 maintenance and up-keep. (¶258.2 g(16) and ¶2533.4, 2020/2024 Book of Discipline). As a part of that
19 review, congregations are encouraged to have conversation about how the parsonage could become
20 ADA compliant both inside and out, as well as discussing the current parsonage’s appropriateness for the
21 church at this time.

22
23 The cost of housing, whether in the form of a parsonage or in the form of a housing allowance, shall not
24 be determined on the basis of race, color, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, marital
25 status, age, or disability.

26
27 **Standards for Existing Parsonages**

28
29 All parsonages shall meet local requirements for a Certificate of Occupancy, if any. It is the responsibility
30 of the Board of Trustees of the Local Church to be familiar with these requirements. If a church is unable
31 to meet these requirements, they should be in contact with the District Superintendent as soon as
32 possible.

33
34 **Health and Safety Standards**

- 35
36 1. Parsonages shall be supplied with effective HVAC systems. With the increased health issues
37 due to climate change and related increased health issues, adequate cooling is an essential
38 consideration. Specific health concerns shall be addressed with local congregations.
39 2. The septic or sewer system shall be fully functional and meet the needs of the parsonage family.
40 Maintenance of septic systems is the responsibility of the church.
41 3. The local church is responsible for testing of water on a periodic basis consistent with local
42 health codes for rental properties. It is the responsibility of the local church to insure that there
43 is safe drinking water including a proper filtration system within the parsonage if needed.
44 4. The local church shall perform radon testing periodically consistent with E.P.A. standards and
45 local requirements.
46 5. Parsonages shall be tested periodically for lead paint and asbestos. Abatement of these is the
47 responsibility of the local church.
48 6. Drive and walkways shall be hard surfaced.
49 7. Minimally acceptable outside light for safety to illuminate walkways and driveways
50 8. One fire extinguisher in kitchen and one extinguisher outside of the furnace room. There shall
51 be at least one extinguisher per floor level. All fire extinguishers, smoke detectors and Carbon
52 Monoxide detectors are to be in compliance with local code requirements for rental properties
53 and certificate of occupancy where applicable.
54 9. Parsonage electrical service shall conform to the current National Electrical Code.

01 Furnishings, Equipment and Services:

02

03 1. Living room and family room furniture.

04 2. Dining room furniture.

05 3. Kitchen appliances including stove, refrigerator with separate freezer compartment, exhaust fan,
06 and dishwasher.

07 4. Furnishings for special rooms such as sun porch, den, etc. that may be different from one charge
08 to another.

09 5. Laundry equipment – automatic washer and dryer.

10 6. Standard television connection or equivalent such as streaming services (providing at least 30
11 channels/basic cable package), high speed internet service fast enough to support streaming
12 where available, and one telephone line (cell or land line). As churches/parsonages are located
13 in a variety of geographical areas, we encourage discussion at the local church level to provide
14 comparable communication services and cost saving measures such as bundling of services.

15 7. Floor coverings (solid surfaces are preferred).

16 8. Functioning window shades and blinds, or curtains/drapes.

17 9. Closets or free-standing storage units in each bedroom.

18 10. Trash cans. In municipalities where garbage pickup is not part of the tax base and is billed to the
19 parsonage, the local church is responsible to pay for this service.

20 11. Suitable equipment for lawn care and snow removal corresponding to the size and condition of
21 lawns/driveways/walkways and/or appropriate lawn/plowing services.

22 12. A study for the pastor in either the parsonage or church building. Office furnishings shall include
23 a desk, desk chair, minimally acceptable shelving for the pastor's library, additional chairs, and a
24 locking filing cabinet.

25 13. Parking space for a minimum of one (1) car shall be provided.

26

27 Additional Suggestions

28

29 1. Electrical service to be inspected every five (5) years by a licensed electrician

30 2. Roof inspection every five (5) years

31 3. Energy audits every five (5) years

32

33 Responsibility

34

35 1. Each pastor is responsible for:

36 a. a. Furnishings for as many bedrooms as the family needs

37 b. b. Personal items such as television, vacuum cleaner, small appliances, dishes, glassware,
38 flatware, cleaning tools, wastebaskets, and decorative accessories

39 c. The following regular maintenance

40 i. Routine cleaning

41 ii. Floor maintenance

42 iii. Trash disposal and recycling

43 d. The pastor shall provide tenant (renters) insurance to cover property loss and personal
44 liability.

45 e. Restitution for any damage beyond normal wear and tear is the pastor's responsibility

46 f. At the time of a move, the current pastor shall remove all personal items and furniture from
47 the parsonage and property and shall leave the parsonage in a "broom clean" state. The cost
48 for removal of furnishings and personal property not previously agreed upon with the church
49 will be met by the pastor. Pastors are responsible for cleaning and disinfecting all surfaces
50 such as kitchen counters, appliances and cabinets, bathroom fixtures, and church owned
51 furniture that has been used by the parsonage family during their time in the parsonage.

52 2. Each charge shall provide:

53 a. Utilities – heat, electric, gas/oil, sewage, cable, internet and basic telephone, as well as any
54 property taxes or HOA fees that are assessed to the parsonage.

- 01 b. Maintenance for all parsonage equipment
02 c. Basic furniture for all rooms except the bedrooms (see above)
03 d. Funds for the repair of the parsonage and its maintenance should be allocated and allowed
04 to accumulate so that continuing care and major repairs can be made when needed.
05 e. At the time of a move, the church is responsible for more thorough cleaning and preparing
06 the parsonage for the new pastor and her/his family. This includes washing or dry-cleaning
07 curtains and drapes, cleaning window blinds, shampooing carpets and/or washing floor
08 coverings, washing windows, cleaning/ disinfecting garbage cans, doorknobs, etc.
09 f. The congregation is responsible for complying with health regulations imposed by
10 government officials, home owner's associations, or other regulatory agencies.
- 11 3. Miscellaneous
- 12 a. The parsonage is the pastor's home for his/her tenure in that church or charge. S/he has,
13 therefore, the responsibility to care for the home and its furnishings from damage by pets
14 or people and, if it is damaged, to return the home to a condition equal to that when s/
15 he received it to use. If an item of furniture is damaged beyond repair, s/he is obligated to
16 replace it.
- 17 b. The right of the pastor to own furniture and equipment cannot be challenged. However, if
18 s/he does own furniture and goods that s/he wishes to use in the parsonage, and parsonage
19 furnishings have to be stored, s/he should make every effort to store it properly so it is in
20 good condition and does not suffer damage from being in storage. The site or method of
21 storage for any church owned furniture shall be determined by mutual agreement between
22 the pastor and the Board of Trustees. The pastor assumes financial responsibility for the
23 storage of any unused furniture.
- 24 c. The pastor's family shall be permitted to purchase an all-electronic vehicle (EV) or a plugin
25 hybrid and charge it at the parsonage. The expense of the charger and any electrical
26 improvements to the parsonage are the sole responsibility of the pastor's family. All
27 improvements to the parsonage must be approved by the local church board of Trustees and
28 must meet all applicable local codes. Before purchasing the said vehicle, the pastor's family
29 and the appropriate committees in the church must negotiate how the increased electrical
30 expenses will be handled.
- 31 d. We recommend that in addition to the required written reports filed annually with the
32 Church Conference paperwork, there be a complete video/photo inventory of all church-
33 owned furnishings in the parsonage. The inventory and all videos and photos should be
34 updated annually as needed.
- 35 e. It is the responsibility of the Parsonage Committee to be acquainted with the parsonage
36 and, after a new pastoral appointment is made, meet with the incoming parsonage family
37 to discuss the minimum acceptability of housing and furnishings, and to meet annually
38 thereafter with the parsonage family.
- 39 f. At the time of a new pastoral appointment, the chairs of the S/PPRC and the Board of
40 Trustees, the current pastor and the incoming pastor will walk through the parsonage
41 together for inspection and planning. It is recommended to utilize the Church Conference
42 parsonage inspection report as a guide.
- 43 g. In order to respect the privacy of clergy and families, the church has a responsibility to make
44 an appointment and secure the approval of the pastor or an adult member of the household
45 prior to visiting the parsonage at any time.
- 46 h. Given the great differences in housing costs throughout GNJ, a church that wishes to provide
47 for a housing allowance rather than providing a parsonage must take into consideration
48 comparable housing costs for that community to set an appropriate allowance that
49 provides for the pastor and his/her family needs. Churches and pastors exploring this option
50 must be in conversation with the District Superintendent at the very beginning of these
51 considerations to understand the implications for future appointments, and the Disciplinary
52 requirements for potential sale of an existing parsonage if applicable.
- 53 4. Multiple Church Appointments and Clergy Couples
54

- 01 a. In appointments where a clergy person is appointed to more than one church and a
02 parsonage is provide by one of the churches, the utility expenses (heat, water, and electric)
03 will be divided equally between the churches. Any capital improvements and maintenance
04 on the parsonage are the responsibility of the church that owns the parsonage.
05 b. In cases of clergy couples when the couple resides in the parsonage of one of the
06 appointments, the utility expenses will be divided equally between the appointments
07 provided that housing is considered as a part of the compensation package for each of
08 the clergy. In situations where both persons in a clergy couple are utilizing their respective
09 parsonages, each church will provide utilities for their own pastor.

10
11 Standards for Parsonages (Purchasing or Building a New Parsonage)

- 12
13 1. All parsonages shall meet local requirements for a Certificate of Occupancy, if any.
14 2. The District Committee on Church Location and Building must be consulted in developing plans
15 for all purchases or construction of a new parsonage.
16 3. All newly constructed or newly purchased parsonages shall be in full compliance with the Book
17 of Discipline. Consideration shall be made for those with handicapping conditions.

18
19 ¶12544.4d states: Provide on the ground-floor of a newly constructed parsonage: (1) one room that
20 can be used as a bedroom by a person with a disability; (2) a fully accessible bathroom; and (3) fully
21 accessible laundry facilities

- 22
23 4. Churches considering selling their current parsonage and purchasing a new one need to explore
24 property tax implications as well as leans on the property that may need to be considered in
25 potential financing.

26
27 Additional considerations for purchase or building a new parsonage:

28
29 Option 1

- 30
31 1. The use of maintenance-free materials in building and in finishing and furnishing, thus
32 contributing towards keeping maintenance costs lower.
33 2. The following room requirements:
34 a. Living Room/Family Room
35 b. Dining Room
36 c. Kitchen
37 d. Study
38 e. Baths (2)
39 f. Bedrooms (3)
40 3. A minimal electrical service of 200 amperes
41 4. A garage of a size to accommodate 2 cars, plus room for storage of lawn mowers, bicycles, tools,
42 garden equipment, ladders, paint supplies, etc.
43 5. Space to store large articles of furniture/equipment
44 6. The use of materials meeting the most energy efficient standards for insulation and windows
45 7. Careful consideration should be given in choosing the location of the parsonage. This
46 consideration might include the distance from the church, accessibility from main streets of the
47 community and the church, the neighborhood and its future, and the community itself and its
48 future growth.

49
50 Option 2

- 51
52 1. The standards of Option One would apply with consideration by the church of purchasing,
53 leasing, renting a townhouse or condominium. This option would be negotiated by the District
54

01 Superintendent, the local charge and the pastor following consultation with the District
02 Committee on Church Location and Building
03 2. The purpose of this option is to provide an alternative to the “traditional” church parsonage for
04 ministry in special situations. Allowing for the wide variety of townhouse/condo choices, it is
05 difficult to recommend a single standard for such settings.
06

07 Appeals

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09 Appeals by the churches or pastors on any of the above provisions should be made to the District
10 Superintendent who has the final authority to interpret and implement the foregoing standards.
11

12 Submitted by Rev. Steven G. Bechtold.

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01 **ARREARAGE POLICY FOR CLERGY SALARIES**

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03
04 Be it resolved that the Greater New Jersey Conference adopt the following arrearage policy for Clergy
05 Salaries:

- 06
07 1. In the event that the local church treasurer becomes aware that the church will be unable
08 to provide to the pastor full payment of a regularly scheduled salary, housing allowance
09 installment, pension payment, or health insurance payment, the church treasurer shall
10 immediately notify both verbally (within 24 hours) and in writing (within 3 days) the Pastor, the
11 Lay Leader, and the Chairs of S/PPRC, Finance, Trustees, and the Church Council or equivalent
12 of the impending arrearage. Upon receipt of such notice, the Chair of S/PPRC and/or the
13 Pastor shall immediately notify the District Superintendent and congregation of the impending
14 arrearage. It is the pastor’s responsibility to keep copies of all such written notifications, and to
15 provide additional written confirmation to the District Superintendent when an arrearage has
16 taken place. “Failure to report within 90 days may result in surrender of any/all arrearage claims,
17 subject to the annual conference arrearage policy” (§623.2, 2020/2024 Book of Discipline).
- 18 2. Upon receipt of notice of a pending arrearage, the Chair of S/PPRC shall meet with the Pastor,
19 Lay Leader, and Chairs of Finance, Trustees, and the Church Council to discuss the financial
20 situation and seek remedies to prevent an arrearage from occurring. Consistent with The Book of
21 Discipline §623.1, 2020/2024 Book of Discipline, “A pastor’s compensation can be reduced only
22 at the end of the conference appointment year or when there is a change of appointment.”
- 23 3. If after consultation among these leaders it becomes apparent that the church may be facing a
24 long-term financial crisis, the Chair of S/PPRC shall notify in writing the Pastor, congregation and
25 District Superintendent to consider potential solutions including but not limited to developing a
26 payment plan so that the pastor receives full payment of compensation, full benefit payments
27 are made by the end of the fiscal and/or appointment year. The District Superintendent may
28 refer this to another appropriate resource person to work with the church towards resolution of
29 the situation.
- 30 4. If the local church is already receiving a subsidy grant, the District Superintendent or designee
31 will determine if all subsidy grant funds allocated to the church were used to pay the pastor’s
32 salary.
- 33 5. It is the responsibility of the pastor to provide evidence of an arrearage by providing
34 documentation such as: Treasurer’s Reports, Charge Conference reports, check stubs, etc.
- 35 6. The statute of limitations for any salary arrearage is one year from the date of the initial
36 arrearage or once an appointment ends. “No pastor shall be entitled to any claim for unpaid
37 base compensation against any church or charge served after pastoral connection with the
38 church or charge has ceased.” (§342.4, 2020/2024 Book of Discipline)

39
40
41 Submitted by Rev. Steven G. Bechtold.

REPORTS

ARCHIVES & HISTORY REPORT TO GNJAC 2026

GNJ Commission on Archives and History

I am humbled to acknowledge that, through the structure of our former GNJ two-Quadrennium term leadership rotation format and a two-year extension of all conference leaders in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, I have had the distinct privilege of serving as the Chairperson of the Commission on Archives and History and leading the ministry of memory within GNJ for the past ten years. Looking back, I am grateful for a succession of exceptional team members whom we have had as commission members during that timeframe and for the accomplishments that we have made together as a team.

Foremost, I wish to recognize and thank Mark Shenise, Don DeGroat, and Rupert Hall for their dedication to the ministry of memory within GNJ.

Mark, who is the Archivist for the General Commission on Archives and History (GCAH) of our United Methodism Church (UMC), has long served as our GNJ archival expert and has kept our commission in sync with best practices within the archival field and GCAH initiatives. Under both my tenure as GNJCAH Chairperson and that of my predecessor, Bill Wilson, Mark has been the heart and soul of the commission.

Don served as Vice-Chairperson and Treasurer of the commission during my first quadrennium in this role, where he was singularly responsible for researching and applying to GCAH for recognition of our seven most recent Conference Historic Sites, which was a huge effort! He was also responsible for leading our Church History contests which encouraged local congregations to document and celebrate their histories. Recently as a volunteer consultant, Don has diligently worked alongside of our new half-time, professional, archivist, Kevin Dusenberry, to begin to create high-level inventories of the roughly 200 cubic feet of closed church records that we have received over the past four years, which is a herculean task.

Rupert currently serves as the commission's current Vice-Chairperson and has taken a lead alongside of me in planning and preparing for the Northeastern Jurisdiction Commission on Archives and History 2026 Annual Meeting, which our commission is hosting at the Pennington UMC in Pennington, NJ from May 12th to May 14, 2026.

While all of our team members have contributed in significant ways to the functioning of the commission, the positive impact of these three individuals work is inestimable. I treasure their unflagging support and am grateful for all they have done to shape and carry forward the ministry of memory within GNJC.

I would be remiss if I did not give thanks for and celebrate the life of faith and service of Walter Howard (Walt) Jones, GNJCAH's longtime volunteer Archivist and emeritus member of the Commission, who died December 17, 2022.

Walt was passionate about the ministry of memory, always eager to help people find information, and dedicated to advancing the work of the Commission. He helped merge the archival collections of the Southern New Jersey (SNJ) and Northern New Jersey Conferences after the formation of the Greater New Jersey Conference (GNJC), led the organization of records to be digitized by Ancestry.com, and served for nearly two decades as a dedicated volunteer and archivist for the commission. His retirement for health reasons prior to the pandemic created one of the most pressing concerns for the commission during my tenure as Chairperson (*see his full memorial on page 313 of the 2023 GNJ Conference Journal*).

Strengthening our commission team overall has also been a key goal and an area of important progress during my tenure as Chairperson. By hiring Kevin Dusesnberry as our part-time Archivist, and with Mark's ongoing involvement, our commission benefits greatly from having the expertise of both of the archivists who currently work for GCAH.

Additionally, Ken Helsby, former curator of the Cornelius Low House Museum in Piscataway, has brought years of experience as a museum curator and historical interpreter to the commission. He has also been very helpful in planning for NEJCAH26.

Likewise, Matthew Beland, Archivist for Drew University, brings a further level of archival expertise to the commission's oversight role of our GNJ records collection.

Don DeGroat's ongoing volunteer efforts to assist Kevin in inventorying recent records acquisitions, and his service as registrar for the NEJCAH 2026 Annual Meeting are significant contributions to GNJCAH. He also contributes to the ministry of memory within our wider denomination by serving on the Executive Committee of the Northeastern Jurisdiction Commission on Archives and History.

Similarly, Todd Lattig has served GNJCAH faithfully as Secretary, Meekyung Choi Kim has been a consistent participant, and we have been pleased to welcome Josh Shuster as a new member to the team. We look forward to welcoming John Gaskill, Cynthia Wilks-Mosley, and Iris McMurray-Matthews to our team in the year ahead.

I leave the role as Chairperson knowing that the commission team is stronger today than ten years ago and believe we have people in place who will be able to lead it forward into the future effectively.

The commission's most significant achievement during my decade of leadership has been securing Walt's replacement as archivist and therein ensuring the integrity of our stewardship of our extensive physical records collection as well as building capacity for increasing our ability to embrace digital archiving. This effort involved demonstrating the need, and collaboratively creating support, for hiring a half-time, trained, professional, archivist to move our commission forward in these areas (*for a complete description of the rationale for hiring a half-time archivist please see the 2024 GNJCAH report on pages 245 – 250 of the 2024 GNJ Conference Journal*). I wish to thank Rev. Dawn Taylor-Storm, Executive Director of Connectional Ministries and Rob Zuckerman, CFO/Treasurer, for their support in this effort. As a result, beginning February 1, 2024, the commission hired Kevin Dusenberry to serve as a part-time archivist working 15 hours per week for GNJ. His presence has already been a tremendous asset and achieved the long-term goal of securing a professional to lead our preservation efforts for which the commission has advocated since the formation of GNJC in 2000 (*for a current assessment of the state of our GNJ archival collection please see Kevin's note below*).

CURRENT COMMISSION GOALS AND INITIATIVES

In 2025, our team was primarily focused on two projects. Archivist, Kevin Dusenberry and commission member Don DeGroat worked to further inventory the closed church records that we have received over the past three years. They made significant progress in this effort (*see Kevin's report included below*). The remainder of our team, including Rupert, Don, Ken, Mark, and I, have been preparing to host the Northeastern Jurisdictional Commission on Archives and History (NEJCAH) 2026 Annual Meeting and program from May 12-14, 2026 (*see NEJCAH 2026 Annual Meeting Planning Overview below*). We give a sincere thank you to Rev. Sue Jung Shin and the congregation of Pennington UMC for co-hosting this significant event with us. We also wish to thank Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi, Bishop Ernest S. Lyght, Rupert A. Hall, Jr. JD, and Rev. Dr. Kevin Newberg for being our keynote speakers.

We have a long-term goal of assisting all our churches, especially our ethnic and non-dominant culture congregations, with identifying and preserving their core historical records and with collecting their unique stories and telling them in their own voice. Once the commission gets past hosting the NEJCAH Annual Meeting in May 2026, we expect to focus more on developing these initiatives.

A new initiative for 2026 will be convening a Task Force to explore alternatives for housing our GNJ physical archival collection. This effort is necessitated by a change in relationship between Drew University and GCAH in whose vault on the Drew Campus our collection is located. While we hope that

our collection will be able to remain in the Archives and History Center at Drew, we need to be proactive and be prepared for any eventuality. Bishop Moore-Koikoi and the cabinet have approved forming this task force and we look forward to it exploring our alternatives and securing the future for our collection.

Moving forward, the commission recognizes the need to be able to capture and store current born-digital records. Minimally, we would like our archivist to conserve the annual conference website on a quarterly basis through an account with Archive-It (Internet Archive) for future research. Other examples would include conserving the records of conference officers, committees, boards, and agencies. At present, we have a poor level of compliance by conference leadership in archiving official conference records. We would like to create an educational program and a consistent process to preserve those records. Unfortunately, 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. To successfully implement these goals annual increases to the GNJCAH budget will be required.

Also going forward, we would like to see a collaborative effort among the cabinet, conference leadership and the commission to improve the percentage of membership/vital statistics records received by the commission when churches close. It remains a serious area of concern that while many churches do appropriately transfer their incorporation and membership records to the conference archives upon closure, many others submit fragmentary records or none at all (*see Kevin Duesenberry's Archivist's Report below*). The commission would like to see a multi-level strategy developed to address this issue from several perspectives:

1. A more rigorous protocol to ensure that membership and key legal records are transferred to the conference archives as part of the church closure process
2. An educational program for pastors and church membership secretaries stressing the legal requirement for congregations to maintain and preserve those records to increase awareness of both pastoral and congregational responsibility for ensuring compliance with the proper handling of records
3. An initiative that encourages active congregations to digitally copy their legal and membership records now and submit digital copies of those records to the archives for preservation (*see "What Tools/Resources Do Local Churches Need?" below for guidelines*)

BY THE BOOK: LEGAL REPOSITORY FOR GNJC AND CLOSED CHURCH RECORDS

The Annual Conference is required by the Discipline to preserve the records of closed congregations and the Commission on Archives and History is specified therein as the official legal and historical repository for the closed church and annual conference records of the United Methodist Church and all of its predecessors. In the case of merged congregations, the historical membership records of the predecessor congregation(s) remain with the newly created merged congregation but in all other instances closed church records are required to be transferred to the care of the Commission of Archives and History upon the church closure.

Given our Disciplinary mandate, 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 some local church Charge Conference booklets which show programmatic and financial summaries for congregations in any given year. We also have various sermon manuscripts from other pastors, and much more.

CURRENT ACCESSIBILITY OF PRESERVED GNJC RECORDS:

1. **Pre-1970 closed church vital statistics** records are posted on Ancestry.com

2. **Post 1971 closed churches vital statistics** are only accessible at the archives, which requires the archivist to enter the vault and pull records out of the boxes in response to an inquiry
3. **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 in response to an inquiry
4. 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)**.

For a detailed description of the full range of programs and resources our commission makes 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 on pages 310-313 in the 2023 Journal, and/or the CAH webpage on the GNJC website ([gnjc.org/ministry/resources/agencies and committees/commission on archives and history/archives and history resources](http://gnjc.org/ministry/resources/agencies_and_committees/commission_on_archives_and_history/archives_and_history_resources)).

ARCHIVAL RESOURCES EVERY PASTOR AND CHURCH SHOULD KNOW ABOUT!

For a description of **what differentiates documents with historical value from general information**, including **examples of historical records to be saved** and **examples of informational content with minimal historical value**, and also for an **analysis what records should be kept as paper versus digital documents**, please see our Commission on Archives and History (CAH) report to GNJAC 2025 on pages 225-229 in the 2025 Journal.

WHAT TOOLS/RESOURCES DO LOCAL CHURCHES NEED?

As a hedge against future loss of physical records, we strongly encourage congregations to digitize their historic documents and provide GNJCAH with a digital record in the appropriate archival format of those documents now. Most congregations will only need access to a scanner and appropriate software that meets the requirements for archival digital storage. One example of such software is Adobe Acrobat Standard, which can convert PDF documents into PDF/A format. Churches with a large volume of records may desire to outsource their digital preservation.

Additionally, GNJCAH currently posts an information retention schedule on the CAH page of the GNJ conference website (see e-address above) to guide churches with regard to what materials should be preserved and for what length of time those records should be kept.

NEJCAH 2026 ANNUAL MEETING PLANNING OVERVIEW

Our theme for the NEJCAH 2026 Annual Meeting is "Saving the Soul of Our Nation, State, and Church". We will meet at the Pennington UMC in Pennington, NJ, which was one of our earliest congregations that credibly goes back to a Methodist Class Meeting started by Captain Webb and Brother Bunn. The first two days will be self-contained events that can be marketed separately from the NEJCAH Annual Meeting to attract a wider group of potential attendees.

Day One, Tuesday, May 12, 2026, will be called "Faith Forum" and will be focused on the theme of "Striving to End the Sin of Racism in Church and State: Contemporary and Historical Methodist Perspectives" which will be addressed by three keynote speakers. Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi (*Resident Bishop of the EPA/GNJ Episcopal Area*), will be our preacher for the opening worship service. Bishop Ernest S. Lyght (*Northeastern Jurisdiction/Retired*) will share his personal reminiscences of the Delaware Conference of the Central Jurisdiction and the process of integration with GNJ's predecessor conferences, focusing on what the black church gained and lost during the merger and what it offered to the white church. Rupert A. Hall, Jr. JD, CEO and Founder of Hope For The City Foundation in Trenton, New Jersey, will speak on "Economic Justice in Faith and Society" and will address the challenges we confront and obstacles we need to overcome as we seek to end the sin of racism in our midst.

Additionally, Kevin Dusenberry, Digital Archivist for the General Commission on Archives and History (GCAH) and part-time Archivist for Greater New Jersey Commission on Archives and History (GNJCAH), will also lead an archival workshop for conference archivists and historians, as well as local church pastors and historians identifying archival best practices that can be embraced by any congregation. He will also identify archival resources for Black, Hispanic, Korean and other ethnic congregations.

Dovetailing on our nation's 250th anniversary, Day Two's historical tour will focus on "Saving our Nation" by examining New Jersey's role in the American Revolution. We will lead off by visiting Washington's Crossing State Park and exploring Washington's Crossing of the Delaware and the Continental Army's crucial victories at the battles of Trenton and Princeton. While in Trenton, we will visit Turning Point UMC - the successor to the second Methodist Class started by Captain Webb and Jospeh Toy and an innovative urban ministry today.

We will then tour the new Princeton Theological Seminary Library and Archives, where we will see an impressive library renovation and view original documents by our nation's founders like George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and Benjamine Franklin. Later that afternoon we will drive by the Princeton Battlefield and conclude our tour by visiting Monmouth Battlefield Park and Historic Tenant Church, a key congregation in the formation of the Presbyterian Church in America and a stopping place of Francis Asbury, who was friends with the Tenant brothers.

Dinner on Day Two will be at Meadow Lakes, a Continuing Care Retirement Community in East Windsor, NJ, and will be provided by the Springpoint Marketing and Sales Team. The theme of "Saving our State" will be addressed after dinner by Dr. Kevin Newburg, Associate Teaching Professor in the History of Christianity and Methodist Studies, and the Director of Methodist Studies at Drew Theological School. Dr. Newburg will explore Captain Thomas Webb's ministry in central New Jersey during his presentation.

A NOTE FROM OUR ARCHIVIST KEVIN DUSENBERRY

The Greater New Jersey Conference Archives has continued to experience significant challenges in recent months, primarily stemming from the ongoing influx of records from closed churches. While a large number of these materials have been received, not all closed church records have been transferred to the archives, creating substantial gaps in documentation. These missing materials have hindered our ability to respond to an increasing number of research requests from former congregants, genealogists, and church officials.

Additionally, the sheer volume of incoming accessions has limited the time available for proper archival processing. Much of the current work has necessarily focused on inventorying materials for basic control rather than completing full accessioning and description. This triage approach, while essential for maintaining order, delays the creation of comprehensive finding aids and restricts researcher access to newly acquired collections.

Despite these challenges, progress continues toward stabilizing and organizing the collection, and it is expected that once the backlog of closed church records is fully addressed, more resources can be devoted to formal processing and public access initiatives.

HOW TO CONTACT US

The GNJCAH Archival Repository is located at the Archives & History Center, Drew University, 36 Madison Avenue, Madison, NJ 07940.

To make records Inquiries and schedule appointment times to visit the archives to access records in-person please contact Kevin Dusenberry at gnjarchivist@gmail.com.

To reach the commission, please contact the new commission chairperson elected by the 2026 session of Annual Conference.

To reach me as the Conference Historian, please contact me at jdcallanan@gmail.com or

(973) 349-9202 (cell).

PERSONAL PRIVILEGE

In closing, I wish to thank Bishop John Schol, Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi, members of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference, and my colleagues on the Commission on Archives and History for the distinct privilege of serving as the chairperson of the commission and leading the ministry of memory within GNJC for the past two and one half quadrennia. I have felt honored to serve the conference and our United Methodist connection in this manner.

Respectfully submitted:
The Rev. John D. Callanan
Chairperson, GNJC Commission on Archives and History

GNJ CABINET REPORT

Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer.”
— Epistle to the Romans 12:12

We serve a faithful God who calls the Church not simply to activity, but to prayer. Before we plan, before we act, before we respond to the many challenges around us, we are invited to persevere in prayer. Prayer is not secondary to our ministry — it is its foundation. In seasons of uncertainty, prayer anchors us. In seasons of growth, prayer humbles us. In seasons of challenge, prayer strengthens and refocuses us on the mission of sharing the saving love of Jesus Christ.

With grateful hearts, the Cabinet gives thanks for the clergy and laity of our Conference who have led their congregations with faith, courage, and resilience. Your leadership has been sustained by prayer, guided by prayer, and strengthened through prayer. In a season unlike any other, you have remained steadfast in your commitment to the mission of Jesus Christ for such a time as this. Through flexibility, creativity, and deep trust in God, you have continued to bear witness to God’s work among us.

Districts and Regional Work

With confidence, we can say that in 2025–2026, GNJ has offered a myriad of worship opportunities, programs, trainings, seminars, and missional resources to clergy and lay leaders to help congregations make disciples of Jesus Christ amid ongoing challenges. Just to mention few:

- **Regional Day of Learning** events in the Coastal Plain region reached 205 congregational leaders.
- **Foundation Training** in Metro Highlands equipped 268 congregational leaders in 2026.
- Eleven congregations are participating in the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference **Bridges Program**, working with more than 60 leaders. Each congregation joined the cohort with their pastor(s) and a team of 2–6 lay people.
- The Metro Highlands Region hosts a **monthly prayer gathering** over zoom.
- The **Leadership Academy Preaching Institute (LAPI)** continues to strengthen pastors in proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ.
- The Coastal Plain region hosted the **Coastal Plains Clergy retreat** for 45 clergy persons, focusing on renewal, preaching, and fellowship.
- The **Pathway Resource** for congregational development continues to support churches across our Conference.
- The **Mid-Atlantic United Methodist Foundation’s Financial Stewardship Academy** has provided practical tools for faithful financial leadership.
- The **GNJ Stewardship Foundation Summit** gathered leaders to deepen understanding of generosity and sustainability in ministry.
- **Laity Cohorts**, including gatherings with pastors and laity alongside Rev. Olu Brown, have strengthened collaborative leadership.
- **Online Leadership Academy video** courses continue to expand access to high-quality training and development resources.

Through the **Mosaic Program**, 13 seminarian students are serving in local churches this year, providing an avenue for recruiting and nurturing new pastors from seminary into congregational ministry.

The **Breakthrough Initiative** continues to support local churches in strengthening worship, small groups, missions, and financial stewardship — helping congregations build healthy systems for sustainable impact.

District Superintendents have witnessed congregations and pastors engaging in Spirit-filled, creative, and life-giving ministry both within and beyond their communities. Many congregations—large and small—continue to participate in feeding ministries and other missional opportunities beyond expectation, especially given the number of volunteers and available resources.

Through District Conferences and episcopal visits, we are expanding access to meaningful grassroots resources while fostering stronger relationships among clergy and laity. These gatherings create space for encouragement, accountability, and a shared vision for the future.

Our deepest thanks to our Assistant Superintendent, Rev. Gina Yeske, who faithfully works with all District Superintendents and districts to support pastors and congregations as they move forward in vitality and mission. We also extend our sincere gratitude to the GNJ Directors for their dedicated service and steadfast commitment to the church.

Appointments

During the appointment season, the Bishop and Cabinet enter into a sacred time of prayerful discernment, seeking God’s wisdom to align the unique gifts and graces of our pastors with the needs and opportunities of our congregations. This holy work requires deep listening — to the Spirit, to our clergy, and to our churches.

This year brings several strong appointments that we believe will further strengthen our shared mission and move the Church forward in faithful and fruitful ways. We remain grateful for the ways God continues to raise up leaders for such a time as this.

We hold in prayer those pastors and congregations who will experience transitions in the coming months. Amid ongoing challenges affecting our communities, we pray for grace-filled, healthy, and hopeful transitions that honor the past while embracing the future God is preparing.

New District Superintendents and DS Retirements

This year, we offered heartfelt gratitude and farewell to Rev. Glenn Conaway and Rev. Jana Purkis-Brash. They enriched the Cabinet with seasoned pastoral leadership, thoughtful insight, and strategic vision. Their collegial spirit, humility, and joyful presence were true gifts. Their faithful service and deep love for the Church have helped shape a stronger GNJ, and they will be greatly missed.

At the same time, we joyfully welcomed Rev. Kate Monahan to the Delaware Bay District and Rev. Dr. Derrick Doherty to the Cape Atlantic District. They bring strong leadership, strategic insight, and a wide array of gifts that will bless both the Cabinet and the districts they now serve. We are grateful for their willingness to step into this important work.

Moving Forward with Perseverance and Prayer

The words of Epistle to the Romans 12:12 — “Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer” — continue to guide us as both promise and calling.

As we look toward the future of GNJ, we do so with hope rooted not in circumstances, but in the faithfulness of God. We remain patient in the work before us, trusting that even in seasons of challenge God is shaping us for deeper impact. And above all, we commit ourselves again to persevering in prayer — seeking God’s direction, depending on God’s strength, and aligning our hearts with God’s will.

May we move forward together with renewed courage and unity, confident that the One who has begun a good work among us will bring it to completion. Let us rejoice in the hope we share, stand firm through every trial, and continue steadfast in prayer as we make disciples and share the transforming love of Jesus Christ in every community we serve.

Respectfully Submitted,

GNJ Cabinet

CANDLER SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY-2026 REPORT TO THE UMC ANNUAL CONFERENCES

As **Candler School of Theology at Emory University** continues in its second century of educating faithful and creative leaders for the church's ministries throughout the world, we are heartened by the work and witness of The United Methodist Church and look forward to our enduring partnership as the denomination moves into its next chapter with a vision to **love boldly, serve joyfully, and lead courageously**.

An official seminary of The United Methodist Church, Candler has a strong Methodist presence among our students, faculty and staff, while holding true to the Wesleyan value of ecumenical openness. Our student body reflects the diversity and breadth of the Christian faithful, with an enrollment of 507 from 11 countries, 42 states, 45 denominations, 34 UM annual conferences, and 50% persons of color. We see this diversity as a blessing, enriching our life together and providing the perfect context for training for relevant ministry in the 21st century—ministry that cultivates community across difference, welcomes all to contribute and belong, and embodies Christ's love in and among us.

Last fall Candler welcomed its largest incoming class in over a decade. This strong enrollment reflects years of intentional work to reimagine programs, continue to invest in faculty excellence, and offer robust scholarship support through the generosity of alumni and friends. And even more importantly, it reflects that God is still calling people to join the holy work of transforming the world in Jesus' name.

Candler offers six degrees, most of which are available in hybrid or online formats. Nearly a quarter of MDiv students participate in Candler's Teaching Parish program, earning course credit by serving as student pastors in local churches. And our proven DMin program—with a remarkably high 94% completion rate—is 90% online. These flexible options along with Candler's recognized academic excellence and hands-on learning opportunities are opening possibilities for more people to follow God's call to ministry.

Reducing financial barriers to high-quality theological education remains a top priority at Candler. This year, we are on track to award nearly \$8.5 million in scholarship support across degree programs. All MDiv students receive scholarships, with those who are certified candidates for ordained ministry in the UMC receiving full tuition.

Several programs beyond our formal degrees make Candler a true hub of Christian learning. The Candler Foundry, our public theological education initiative, offers in-person and online courses, events, and certificate programs. The United Methodist Course of Study School at Candler worked with 19 annual conferences to educate licensed local pastors in 2025. The Candler Center for Christian Leadership, which trains United Methodist leaders in best business practices, now has certified facilitators in 33 annual conferences. And a recent \$10 million grant from Lilly Endowment will further develop Candler's La Mesa Academy, a multicultural, multilingual program dedicated to the theological education of lay ministers.

We are preparing for a leadership transition in summer of 2026, as Jonathan Strom completes his tenure as dean of Candler in July. We invite your prayers as we search for the school's next dean.

When we talk to Candler alumni and students about their call, one thing becomes clear: The specifics may be different, shaped by their unique gifts, contexts, and life experiences, but their drive to join God's work of transforming lives and the world is a constant. We recently launched a series called "Candler Changemakers" highlighting the range of fascinating ways our alumni are leading change as they fulfill their call. Follow along on our website (candler.emory.edu) and social media to see how God is working through them. You'll be inspired!

—Office of Communications
Candler School of Theology, Emory University

COMMISSION ON RELIGION AND RACE ANNUAL REPORT TO THE GREATER NEW JERSEY ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The ministry and witness of the Commission on Religion and Race (CORR) are grounded in the Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church (2020/2024). ¶1643 affirms that racism is a sin and calls the Church to engage in intentional and sustained efforts to confront and dismantle racism in all its forms.

In accordance with ¶1643, CORR works collaboratively with conference leadership, boards, agencies, and local churches to support inclusive practices, address systemic barriers to participation, and equip the Annual Conference to live more fully into God’s vision of justice, dignity, and beloved community.

Guided by these responsibilities outlined in the *Book of Discipline*, CORR engaged in the following areas of ministry during the 2025 conference year:

Implicit Bias Review

In collaboration with the Commission on the Status and Role of Women (COSROW), the Committee on Ethnic Local Church Concerns, and the Board of Church and Society, CORR conducted the Implicit Bias Review of Annual Conference legislation and reports. This work, which began at the 2022 Annual Conference, continues to support the use of language in conference legislation, reports, and communications that reflects equity, inclusion, and respect for the diversity of the Annual Conference.

Through this ongoing collaboration, committees, agencies, boards, conference leaders, and conference-sponsored organizations within GNJAC have demonstrated increased attentiveness to language choices. This work contributes to broader conference efforts to address implicit bias and to support practices that align with the shared commitment to dismantling racism.

Annual Conference Monitoring

In partnership with COSROW, CORR resumed Annual Conference Monitoring during the 2025 Annual Conference after a decade-long period of inactivity. Through this monitoring process, CORR observed patterns of participation and representation within the life of the conference, including participation on the conference floor, diversity within worship leadership, representation in leadership roles, and access to and use of microphones.

Observations from this monitoring were shared with the GNJ Cabinet through COSROW. Among the recommendations offered was the importance of continued education and intentional outreach to support broader participation in the legislative life of the Annual Conference, including increased awareness of processes for submitting legislation and engaging in conference dialogue.

Journey of Hope

The GNJ Journey of Hope legislation was passed by the Annual Conference in 2021. During the 2025 conference year, CORR reviewed this legislation and assessed its implementation, particularly the Journey of Hope Plan requirement for GNJ grant recipients. Through this review, CORR identified opportunities to strengthen the connection between the stated goals of the legislation and its practical impact.

In response, CORR submitted legislation to remove the Journey of Hope Plan requirement from grant recipients and recommended that GNJAC instead offer conference-wide anti-racism courses and workshops. These learning opportunities are intended to provide consistent, accessible, and formative education for conference, district, and local church leaders. CORR remains committed to collaborating with GNJAC to support implementation at multiple levels of conference life.

Breakthrough Sermon Series on Anti-Racism

During the 2025 conference year, CORR identified the need for a conference-wide sermon series on anti-racism to support local churches in engaging faithful conversation, theological reflection, and ongoing learning. Recognizing the role of preaching and worship in shaping congregational understanding and practice, CORR advocated for resources that are pastoral, accessible, and grounded in the gospel.

In collaboration with the GNJ Breakthrough Ministry Team and the Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference Commission on Religion and Race, and also the Committee on Healing the Wounds of Racism, CORR participated in the development of an anti-racism sermon series. This work will continue into 2026, with plans to finalize and publish the series through GNJ Breakthrough Ministry for use by local churches across the conference.

Oversight of Dismantling Racism and CRCC Ministry Workshops

CORR provided supervision and consultative oversight for the content of the Dismantling Racism Workshop and the Cross-Racial/Cross-Cultural (CRCC) Ministry Workshop to help ensure that these learning opportunities are appropriate, relational, and responsive to the context of GNJAC leadership.

In this role, CORR reviewed workshop content with attention to theological grounding, language use, cultural humility, and practical applicability for conference and local church leaders. The Commission offered guidance to support approaches that foster relationship-building, reflective learning, and constructive engagement, while remaining attentive to the diverse experiences and ministry contexts within GNJAC. This oversight reflects CORR's commitment to supporting educational offerings that encourage growth, accountability, and faithful leadership development.

Support for Immigrant Clergy

CORR also engaged in advocacy related to immigrant clergy serving within GNJAC. The Commission identified that changes and delays in immigration processes have affected the ability of some clergy to maintain continuity in their appointments.

In response, CORR worked with the GNJ Immigration Task Force to better understand current circumstances affecting immigrant clergy and to support conference-level awareness and response. CORR encouraged GNJAC to continue providing appropriate institutional support for clergy navigating visa extensions or status changes while awaiting permanent residency, consistent with conference policies and commitments to equity and care.

CORR remains committed to supporting the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference in its ongoing work toward justice, reconciliation, and beloved community. The Commission gives thanks for collaborative partnerships across the conference and looks forward to continuing this ministry in the coming year.

Submitted by:
Rev. Miso Park
Commission on Religion and Race

COSROW REPORT

The Book of Discipline charges each Annual Conference Commission on the Status and Role of Women (AC COSROW) with raising awareness of the status of women and working with church leaders at all levels to move toward the full and equal participation of women in the total life of the church (2020-2024 Book of Discipline). To fulfill this mandate, COSROW's work is organized around four areas of ministry: Education, Advocacy, Cooperation, and Monitoring & Research.

The Greater New Jersey Annual Conference (GNJ) affirms women's gifts and callings to leadership in families, congregations, and the wider church. GNJ celebrates women, lay and clergy, who lead in worship, teaching, administration, and missional service, including women who serve at all levels of the church to the Annual Conference and General Conference, including serving as district superintendents, conference delegates, and leaders in general agencies. In alignment with GNJ COSROW resolutions, the conference affirms women as full and equal members of God's human family and denounces sexism and all forms of prejudice and bias within and beyond the church.

At the same time, COSROW acknowledges ongoing challenges, including resistance to clergywomen in some local churches, incidents of sexual misconduct, and continued inequities and underrepresentation within church structures. These realities underscore the need for sustained, intentional COSROW ministry.

Monitoring & Research:

COSROW successfully reinstated Monitoring at the most recent Annual Conference in 2025, supporting inclusive, respectful, and equitable conference processes. This ministry encourages accountability, models best practices, and creates space for all voices to be heard.

COSROW is also conducting a clergy compensation study to examine current pay structures and identify any potential compensation inequities within the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference. Upon completion of the data analysis, COSROW will present findings and, if warranted, make recommendations to the Annual Conference aimed at promoting fairness, transparency, and equity in clergy compensation.

Advocacy:

COSROW endorsed and supported key legislation brought to the Annual Conference, including Safe Sanctuaries, Parental Leave, Sexual Ethics, and Domestic Violence policies, advocating for the safety, dignity, and well-being of all people in the church.

Education:

COSROW continues to raise awareness around sexism, sexual ethics, leadership equity, and inclusive practices through conference engagement and resource development. Plans are underway to expand educational access through a dedicated COSROW webpage.

Cooperation:

COSROW is actively working with the Conference Nominations Committee to expand membership and develop sub-committees, strengthening collaborative leadership and increasing the commission's capacity to respond effectively to emerging needs.

Through these efforts, COSROW remains committed to challenging the church toward justice, inclusion, and faithful discipleship, ensuring that women's voices, gifts, and leadership are fully recognized and valued in the life of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference.

Rev. Dr. Isabel Quezada
COSROW Chair

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON HISPANIC/LATINO MINISTRIES TO THE 2026 GREATER NEW JERSEY ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Committee on Hispanic/Latino Ministries entered a period of rebuilding beginning with a Hispanic/Latino clergy retreat in November of 2024 led by Rev. Dr. Lydia Muñoz as director of The Plan for Latine Ministries. At this retreat, GNJ clergy involved in Hispanic/Latino ministry evaluated pre-COVID goals and strategies, then began working to reimagine them for today. Clergy present at this retreat created a slate of candidates for the Committee on Hispanic/Latino Ministries. These candidates were elected by the 2025 annual conference alongside candidates nominated by the annual conference Committee on Nominations.

The first strategic visioning day hosted by Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi in June 2025 marked the next phase of this rebuilding period. At that time, the Hispanic/Latino ministries strategic visioning team established the following timeline with goals for the Committee to achieve before the end of 2025:

- No later than October 2025:
 - Convene the Committee.
 - Secure a list of all Hispanic/Latino clergy, lay ministers, and ministries.
 - Design a context-specific survey for all Hispanic/Latino ministers and ministries to aid in the “analysis of the socioeconomic, cultural, and religious realities” of GNJ. (Book of Discipline 2020/2024, ¶ 655).
- No later than Dec 2025:
 - Reconvene the Committee.
 - Conduct the survey and review data.
 - Establish a strategic plan for 2026 and beyond, including the following emphases:
 - Immigration advocacy
 - Congregational growth
 - Financial administration
 - Leadership development
- Clergy-emphases: Pastoral care in Hispanic/Latino contexts, Inter-Latino cultural competency, emotional intelligence
- Lay-emphasis: Reestablishment of a Spanish-language lay training academy (formerly known as SELAH)

The Committee achieved or made progress on each one of these goals in 2025. The Committee met monthly, secured a list of all Hispanic/Latino ministers and ministries, and created an outline for the analytical survey. As of the submission of this report, the Committee believes that the survey will be complete and its results analyzed before the commencement of the 2026 annual conference.

In September 2025, members of the GNJ Hispanic/Latino Ministries Committee attended a strategic planning retreat held by the EPA Latino Commission which gave us key insights about similarities and differences between the missional landscapes of EPA and GNJ. These observations will play a significant role in implementing any future joint ventures.

Key observations:

- EPA has more Hispanic/Latino lay ministers/missioners than Hispanic/Latino clergy. GNJ has the opposite.
- EPA’s Hispanic/Latino ministries skew more rural, GNJ’s more urban.
- EPA’s Latino Commission serves primarily to advocate for Hispanic/Latino ministry. Its structure includes representation from every Hispanic/Latino ministry in EPA. GNJ’s Hispanic/Latino Ministries Committee serves primarily to develop, implement and evaluate plans and strategies by/for the annual conference. Its membership is elected by the annual conference.

- EPA's Hispanic/Latino ministries are primarily Communities of Faith (i.e., ministries of established Anglo churches. Some of the chartered Hispanic/Latino churches do not have their own building. Just over half of GNJ's Hispanic/Latino ministries are chartered churches with their own buildings.
- Both EPA's and GNJ's Hispanic/Latino leadership structures recognize the necessity of establishing a covenant with the bishop and cabinet regarding "strategies to...identify, equip, and deploy" (Book of Discipline 2020/2024, ¶ 655) clergy and laity in Hispanic/Latino ministry.

In November 2025, the Bishop called for another strategic visioning event where the strategic visioning team for Hispanic/Latino ministry created a strategic plan. In its December meeting the Hispanic/Latino Ministries Committee revised and accepted this plan. It is included at the end of this report. The Committee has made progress on one of the goals of the strategic plan, as it hosted a Three Kings Day (Epiphany) celebration in January 2025, bringing together clergy and laity from Hispanic/Latino ministries across GNJ with participation from EPA. The committee intends to make further progress on this goal with a gathering held during the 2026 annual conference.

Greater New Jersey Annual Conference Strategic Plan for Hispanic/Latino Ministry

Proposed by the GNJ Hispanic/Latino Ministry Strategic Visioning Team, November 15, 2025. Revised by the GNJ Committee on Hispanic/Latino Ministry, December 3, 2025

- STRATEGY #1: Immigration Advocacy
 - Resources
 - Rapid Response Team
 - Legal Aid Fundraising
 - Know Your Rights Training
 - Goal(s)
 - **Train 1 or more immigration advocates in each Hispanic/Latino congregation of GNJ by the end of 2026**
 - Background: This person would go through "Know Your Rights" training and be able to direct a person in immigration crises toward available resources in the annual conference
- STRATEGY #2: Leadership Development
 - Resources
 - Hispanic/Latino Clergy: 12 Ordained Elders, 1 Ordained Deacon, 3 Elders from another denomination, 1 Provisional Elder, 9 Local Pastors, 4 Retired Elders, 1 Retired Associate Member, 1 Retired Local Pastor
 - Laity: multiple trained Lay Servants and Lay Missioners
 - The Plan for Latine Ministry
 - Goals(s)
 - **Identify one or more key leader(s) in each Hispanic/Latino ministry to serve as a liaison for information about various annual conference events.**
 - Background
 - The Hispanic/Latino ministries committee would give these persons targeted information about annual conference events including Ignite, Walk to Emmaus, Laity Academy, and newly established Lay Missioner training through The Plan for Hispanic/Latino Ministry
 - These liaisons may be good candidates for lay ministry training. If they express a call to pastoral ministry, the committee should direct the person to explore that path with the help of their pastor, and a Hispanic/Latino clergy person should be suggested as mentor.
 - **Hold the first Lay Missioner encounter (formerly known as 'modules') by February 2027**
 - Background

- Through this process, the Hispanic/Latino Ministries Committee must ensure that the GNJ Board of Laity is aware of and equipped to address the unique pathway to Lay Ministry certification offered through the Plan for Latine Ministry.
- Laity of the UMC may go through lay servant training to become Certified Lay Servants. Certified Lay Servants may then undergo training to specialize either as Certified Lay Ministers or Certified Lay Speakers. Certified Lay Ministers are trained primarily to serve within the church as part of a ministerial team under a clergyperson's supervision. Certified Lay Speakers are trained primarily to offer pulpit supply. (See Book of Discipline 2020/2024, ¶ 266-269).
- Laity of the UMC may alternatively go through Lay Missioner training designed by The Plan for Latine Ministry to become Lay Missioners. This certification is considered equivalent to that of a Certified Lay Minister. Certified Lay Missioners may serve as Certified Lay Ministers if called to do so. However, the Lay Missioner is trained differently than the Lay Minister. The Lay Missioner is trained specifically to analyze and meet the needs of the local community and to establish Communities of Faith that extend the church's ministry.
- **Train 5 or more Hispanic/Latino clergy as clergy mentors by the end of 2026**
- **Hold "Inter-Latino Cross-Cultural Training" for persons in pastoral roles by July 2027**
 - Background
 - This training would be designed to help Hispanic/Latino clergy serving in Hispanic/Latino contexts to address the challenges that arise from the diversity of cultures within the Hispanic/Latino ethnic category.
- STRATEGY #3: Congregational Growth
 - Resources
 - 8 Hispanic/Latino churches, 4 Multicultural churches with Hispanic/Latino ministries, 2 Anglo churches with Hispanic/Latino ministries
 - Goal
 - **Each Certified Lay Missioner to come through the training which will be initiated by January 2027 to establish 1 (one) or more Communities of Faith by the end of 2028.**
- STRATEGY #4: Financial Administration
 - Resources:
 - Funds from matching grant issued by The Plan before the pandemic: approximately \$75,000.
 - \$1,000 annual agency budget
 - Goal
 - **Host 4 (four) gatherings in 2026 which will support the leadership development goals**
 - These gatherings may include Three Kings Day, Christmas/Christmas Eve, a summer barbecue, commemoration of Hispanic/Latino heritage month, the Hispanic/Latino gather during annual conference, or other gatherings which may help to identify immigration advocates, congregational liaisons, candidates for training as Lay Servants or Lay Missioners.
 - Submit these plans to The Plan for Latine Ministry for redesignation of existing grant funds.

Submitted by: Rev. Pedro Pillot, Secretary, Committee on Hispanic/Latino Ministries



GNJ Connectional Ministries Report to the 2026 Annual Conference

Youth & Young Adult Ministries

- IGNITE saw 700 youth and leaders from 68 churches and 4 Annual Conferences (GNJ, EPA, New York AC and Upper New York AC) come together for engaging worship, relevant messages and powerful community. In addition, 30 young adults from GNJ, EPA and NYAC volunteered and provided event support for the weekend.
- 9 Congregations and 130 youth and leaders attended the first ever GNJ Six Flags Takeover for the end of the summer, organized by the GNJ District Youth Coordinators.
- Monthly Youth Leader Learning Calls included more than 20 leaders and 20 congregations. We host this monthly call on the first Monday evening and Friday at noon, every month. Join us!
- Churches across GNJ had students participate in Confirmation Camps, Winter Blast, Camp Days of Service, Latino Camp and other Summer Camps in 2025 at Eastern PA Camp and Retreat Centers.

Social Impact & Belonging

- Helped establish the Immigration Rapid Response Team, supporting coordination, accompaniment, and referral pathways in response to emerging immigration needs.
- Supported and amplified *Know Your Rights* trainings through strategic communication and coordination, ensuring broad awareness and participation among Hope Centers and partner congregations.
- Reviewed and coordinated the Community Outreach Grant, resulting in \$150,000 in funding to 9 Hope Centers to strengthen community-based ministries responding to local needs.
- Served as a liaison between the Annual Conference and Hope Centers, including site visits with most centers to build relationships, understand local context, and strengthen alignment with conference priorities.
- Supported and consulted with Hope Centers on community engagement, grant development, and sustainable ministry models.
- Collaborated with conference committees, commissions, and caucuses to advance equity, belonging, and shared accountability in conference life.
- *Dismantling Racism 1* workshops, facilitated through conference partnerships, are now available to GNJ in English and Spanish.
- Exceeded the \$50,000 goal to support pastors in Tanzania with an equitable salary, strengthening global partnership and shared ministry.

Clergy & Lay Leadership

- Launched our Leadership Academy Preaching Institute made possible by 1.3M grant funding through the Lilly Foundation in a collaborative grant with GNJ to develop the Leadership Academy Preaching Institute, designed to equip clergy in their preaching goals and provide a supportive community for growth and experimentation in preaching.
- Expanded Bridges programming to EPA through a **\$750,000 Lilly Funded** matching grant, a new congregational training that is experiential, an in-person opportunity for congregations to bridge to their congregations.
- Students enrolled in the GNJ hybrid Licensing School and Certified Lay Minister Course shared in some learning concepts together such as preaching, congregational care, safe sanctuaries and sacraments that enriched both groups of leaders.

- Over **1,500** individuals in EPA&GNJ resourced in areas of leadership, intercultural competency, missional giving, local church administration and congregational vitality. Online courses are actively being developed in both Korean and Spanish.
- A Cross-Racial/Cross-Cultural (CRCC) pastor's cohort was offered with facilitators representing both EPA and GNJ.
- National and International Recruitment and connections with seminaries in EPA expanded to include Mosaic recruitment
- Expansion of Breakthrough, a sermon series resource, to **16,000** unique visitors, here in EPA and GNJ, and throughout the world.

Prison Ministry and Restorative Justice

- Christmas cards for the incarcerated program – **6980** cards with encouraging messages were delivered to a total of 8 correctional facilities (6 in PA, 1 in TX, 1 in NY) for distribution to the incarcerated as a sign of God's love and care. Thanks to all in EPA and GNJ who supported and participated in this ministry!
- Undies for Easter – a great success – thanks to the many who participated from both EPA and GNJ! Underwear needed for those entering incarceration was delivered to the Head Chaplain of the Philadelphia Prison System, including
 - **2808** men's briefs
 - **2556** men's undershirts
 - **2352** pair socks
- As a bonus, on the day of delivery, the Chaplain led a small group of 8 – representing both EPA and GNJ, including Bishop Moore Koi-Koi, to enter and directly deliver packed bags of briefs, undershirts, and socks to men in the intake section at the Curran Fromhold Correctional Facility.
- Healing communities training was provided to **18** individuals representing both EPA and GNJ, to help congregations and community members learn more about how to help those impacted by the criminal justice system.

Office of Latino Ministries

- **Lay Empowerment: 4 leaders** are advancing in ministry: **1** began CSM and CLM studies, **2** are entering candidacy for COS classes, and **1** Lay Missionary is now serving as pastor for the *Transformando Vidas* community in Lebanon.
- Equipped **65 laity members** with specialized skills in Congregational Development, Community Engagement, and Local Church Organization.
- Currently offering **Safe Sanctuary, Laity Leaders & Clergy Basic Sexual Ethics, and Dismantling Racism courses in Spanish** via the Leadership Academy and EPA connectional ministries.
- **16 participants**—comprising both clergy and congregational lay leaders—successfully completed the first Basic Sexual Ethics course held entirely in Spanish.
- **74 participants** for an enriching experience focused on spiritual growth.
- **12 youth & young adults** attended the Ignite event and returned to their home congregations inspired and ready to make a meaningful difference in their local churches.
- **14 lay, and clergy** leaders participated in a discernment, assessment, and development retreat facilitated by *El Plan*.
- **Celebrating Epiphany** through worship, prayer, and reflection with Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi, leaders from the Eastern Pennsylvania and Greater New Jersey Conferences continued to deepen their shared work.

For more information on GNJ Connectional Ministries, Youth & Young Adult Ministries, Latino Ministries, Leadership Development, Hope & Wholeness Centers or Grant/Scholarship Opportunities, please contact the Office of Connectional Ministries: dtaylorstorm@epagnj.org

CUMAC: FEEDING PEOPLE AND CHANGING LIVES

2025 IMPACT

SERVED:



82,655 GUESTS



43,827 FAMILIES

BY HELPING:



50,933 ADULTS



20,233 CHILDREN



11,489 SENIORS

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:



1,221 VOLUNTEERS



5,656 VOLUNTEER HOURS

ACTIVITY BY THE NUMBERS:



543 WRAP-AROUND SUPPORTS
(SNAP, MEDICAID, LIHEAP, +)



2,997,515 LBS OF FOOD SERVED
(AS OF 12/19/25)



87 TRAINED ON TRAUMA-
INFORMED SERVICE & ACES



BOARD OF DISCIPLESHIP REPORT TO AC2026

This year the Board of Discipleship nominated unanimously Dave and Wendy Dorfman who are members of Grace Union United Methodist Church in Hammonton, New Jersey for the Harry Denman Award for Evangelism in the Laity category. They are a husband and wife team of exemplary and dedicated leaders in outreach, youth ministry and evangelism. Their senior pastor is Rev. John Coleman. The award was presented to Dave and Wendy by Rev. Dr. Derrick Doherty on Dec 7th 11am worship service at their local church. The committee encourages exemplary discipleship in our conferences so we can build the kingdom of God.

Respectfully Submitted: Anna Thomas, Chair

DREW UNIVERSITY THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL

2025 Report to the United Methodist Annual Conferences

Rev. Edwin David Aponte, PhD, ThD (honorary)

Dean and Professor of Religion & Culture

December 10, 2025

Drew University Theological School is a global seminary with a global student population serving the worldwide church. Drew Theological School educates and mentors pastors, preachers, deacons, activists, teachers, thought leaders, and change agents for ministry and service in the church, society, and the wider world. Building upon its Wesleyan and Methodist foundations, Drew Theological School is diverse in theology, vocations, age, as well as racial, ethnic, national, and international identities of its faculty, students, and staff. Many Drew students are just beginning their ministry, while others come to graduate theological education with prior ministry experience, reflecting an ongoing trend among theological schools in the United States and Canada. In providing theological education to the world, Drew holds in-person classes in Madison, New Jersey, classes that meet exclusively online, while others meet in hybrid fashion, i.e., partially online, partially in-person, as well as in-person Doctor of Ministry program in South Korea. Regular chapel services are offered in a hybrid way on Tuesdays and Thursdays with people participating from Seminary Hall as well as online. Chapel worship is live-streamed so that students, alumni, and friends around the world can participate.

In Fall 2025 Drew Theological School welcomed 88 new students in all degree programs, with total student enrollment (by headcount) in Fall 2025 semester being 365. Enrollment of international students at Drew is very strong at 140 students in Fall 2025. 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, promote adaptive leadership skills, and encourage 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 in the teaching, learning, and the formation of students. These values are: 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 continues to experience an increase in United Methodist students, including United Methodist Global Fellows pursuing further education for ministry. UMC graduates are serving in conferences of The United Methodist Church across the United States, and especially within nearby regional episcopal areas of Greater New Jersey, Eastern Pennsylvania, Susquehanna, Upper New York, New York, and New England.

DUKE DIVINITY SCHOOL

2025 Annual Conferences Report

Duke Divinity School celebrated its 99th Opening Convocation in August 2025 with a sermon from Dean Edgardo Colón-Emeric to begin the Nicene Creed Preaching Series at Duke Divinity School. He emphasized that the Nicene Creed is both a Pentecost profession and a peace proclamation:

“Perhaps this is the season for untangling the Nicene Creed from state theology and church theology. Perhaps this is a task for a divinity school whose mission claims to ‘engage in spiritually disciplined and academically rigorous education, in service and witness to the Triune God in the midst of the church, the academy, and the world.’ ... Christ did not preach peace looking for recognition or awards. His life is a single extended sermon on peace. Peace is believing that our lowest point does not limit our highest hope, because we acknowledge the power of baptism, the possibility of repentance, and the forgiveness of sin. *We believe. We believe.* This is a Pentecost profession, a peace proclamation, and also a praise pronouncement.”

This year we have joined with Christians around the world to commemorate the 17th centennial of the Council of Nicaea and the Nicene Creed. Duke Divinity scholars and ministry leaders published the book *Trinitarian Matters: 1700 Years of Shaping Christian Identity and Practice*. The school hosted two conference events to explore and learn from Nicaea: Convocation & Pastors’ School, focused for those in church and vocational ministry; and “Visible and Invisible: Surprising Encounters in Theology and the Arts,” with musical performances, poetry, and artistic expressions informed by the richness of the Nicene Creed.

Through God’s sustaining grace, we continue to welcome students from across the nation and around the world to be trained for faithful ministries serving God in churches, chaplaincy, and community service. In 2025, we were joined by 219 students. The Master of Divinity program gained 120 new students in both residential and hybrid programs, a 10 percent growth over last year. The Master of Arts in Christian Practice enrolled six new students; the Doctor of Ministry, 34; Master of Theology, seven; Master of Theological Studies, 32; and the Doctor of Theology welcomed five new students to campus. The Certificate in Theology and Health Care welcomed 14 students.

Duke Divinity is committed to facilitating clear and supportive pathways into theological education to encourage and equip those who are discerning a call to ministry. We confirmed an MOU with Huntingdon College, reaffirming our mutual dedication to nurturing vocations, strengthening the United Methodist tradition, and investing in the next generation of Christian leaders.

We welcomed four new faculty this year: Jonathan Tran, professor of theological ethics; Natalie Carnes, professor of theology; Matthew Whelan, associate research professor of theology; and Nina Balmaceda, Irene and William McCutchen Associate Professor of the Practice of Reconciliation and director of the Center for Reconciliation.

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.

Respectfully submitted by Edgardo Colón-Emeric
Dean of Duke Divinity School

REPORT OF GNJ COMMITTEE ON EPISCOPACY TO THE GREATER NEW JERSEY ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The GNJ Committee on Episcopacy (COE) supports the Bishop in episcopal leadership, offers counsel, assists in identifying and addressing episcopal needs, and ensures the Bishop is informed of conditions within the conference that impact relationships between the Bishop and the people of GNJ. In accordance with the Book of Discipline, the committee fulfills various disciplinary responsibilities as part of its broader role in supporting our Episcopal leader and the ministry of the conference.

The COE continues to work well with Bishop Moore-Koikoi as she serves in her second year leading the Greater New Jersey Conference. We have settled into quarterly meetings alternating between Zoom and in-person gatherings.

A particular focus this year was the work done in the Episcopal Evaluation Survey. This newly developed survey was provided by the Northeast Jurisdiction COE and tailored specifically for GNJ. Leaders in both Laity and Clergy across the Conference were sent the survey in October. The results were gathered by the NEJ COE and then summarized and forwarded to the GNJ COE. We then held a conversation with the Bishop in December to discuss the results, which were predominantly positive. As a committee we highly recommend participation in these surveys as they provide valuable insight and useful feedback for the Bishop. We anticipate the next survey to be sometime in the fall.

Please continue to pray for our Bishop as she leads our Conference with the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Respectfully submitted,
In Christ,
Rev. Blair Goold, Chairperson, GNJ Committee on Episcopacy

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON EQUITABLE COMPENSATION

The responsibilities of the Commission on Equitable Compensation as outlined in ¶624.2 of the 2020/2024 Book of Discipline are five-fold: “a) recommending conference standards for pastoral support; b) administering funds to be used in base compensation supplementation; and c) To provide counsel and advisory material on pastoral support to district superintendents and committees on pastor-parish relations; and d) submitting an arrearage policy to be adopted by the annual conference; and e) recommending the amount needed to fund the Equitable Compensation fund as described and secured in 614.1e and 624.7.”

The Commission continues to discuss what is equitable for clergy considering 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. 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.

The Commission is acutely aware that any 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 specifically in congregations at the minimum salary level. 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 for the health of their clergy.

We are pleased to report that Greater New Jersey Conference Average Compensation increased by 3.7% for 2026 which bring us just about level with the DAC (Denominational Average Compensation) which is a marked improvement over the past 6 years. We are grateful that churches are stepping forward in their support of their pastors and their work. As we look ahead to the coming year (2027), the commission is recommending a 3.5% increase in the minimum equitable compensation levels which is slightly above the government’s cost of living increase for 2026 but also recognizes that costs are continuing to rise for our clergy families.

The Commission is currently working with the cabinet to develop guidelines and processes for the awarding of Equitable Compensation grants. The goal is to work cooperatively in a streamlined process that does not put additional burdens on local churches for duplicative paperwork. We are also in conversation with other committees of our annual conference who are responsible for developing various clergy policies and benefits to insure that we are working cooperatively and for the benefit of all of our clergy and congregations.

My thanks to the members of the Commission on Equitable Compensation 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

REPORT FROM CFA TO ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Council of Finance and Administration recognizes that our congregations continued to face challenges in 2025 and you have our continued prayer for God's guidance and wisdom.

Financial Report:

The annual conference remains thankful for the leadership of pastors and the generosity of our congregations during 2025.

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.

Here are the financial highlights for 2025:

- A total of \$7.3M was given through shared ministries by our congregations, missing our projected \$7.6M by \$0.3M. This was a collection rate of 84.4% vs. projected 88.0%.
- A total of \$13.2M was received for billings from our congregations. We had projected that we would receive \$13.3M; a miss of only \$55K. This was a collection rate of 94.6% vs. projected 95.0%.
- 348 of our congregations gave 100% of shared ministry in 2025 as compared to 353 of the same group of churches in 2024.
- 371 of our congregations gave 100% of their billings in 2025 as compared to 394 of the same group of churches in 2024.
- 75 of our congregations contributed a higher percentage of their shared ministry assessments and 45 congregations gave a higher percentage of their billings in 2025 than they did in 2024.

We also continue to celebrate our A Journey of Hope Plan actions to address inequities in shared ministry and billings for lower income communities. The overall shared ministries collection rate for these churches increased in 2025 (71.5% vs. 70.0%), while the billings collection rate declined (71.2% vs. 78.5%). 13 of the 64 were able to contribute a higher percentage of Shared Ministry and 8 a higher percentage of billings.

Based on unaudited financial statements, the Conference had an operating deficit of \$573K vs. the budgeted break-even (slight surplus of \$927). The significant miss to our budget was largely driven by \$243K less Shared Ministry collection (GNJ's portion) and \$245K expense overruns (with unanticipated legal cost representing \$112K of the incremental costs resulting from lawsuits and property tax disputes). The remaining \$85K came from a shortfall in miscellaneous income (grants, GCFA Episcopal support, annual conference, etc.).

With respect to General Church Apportionment payments, the Annual Conference voted that GNJ would pass through whatever the churches paid toward GCFA apportionments. In 2025, GNJ paid 84% 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.

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. In 2025, \$647,000 of the premiums paid were from the Centenary Fund's approval of an annual contribution to the Conference. In partnership with the Centenary Fund's investments and GNJ's designated fund, at the end of 2025, the retiree health liability is fully funded

Property sales in 2025 were under budget, with gross proceeds of \$921K and net proceeds totaling \$875.5K (vs. \$3.85M budgeted).

Property sale details:

- \$921K in property sales in 2025.
- \$61.4K toward closing costs (legal fees, property transfer fees, etc.)
- \$15.9K net positive to GNJ as rental income more than offset expenses toward maintenance and other costs prior to selling and past billables.
- \$177.8K of net proceeds from property sales was allocated toward the 2025 budget as approved by Annual Conference
- \$697.8K of net proceeds from property sales was allocated toward designated funds as directed by the Annual Conference which was \$2.97M million less than projected.

In other business, CFA:

- \$0.00 has been spent on trauma-informed care reimbursements in accordance with “A Safer GNJ Amendment” passed at the May 2024 Annual Conference Session”
- Updated our Financial Policy and Procedures as needed; these are reviewed/updated annually.
- Supported by the staff, continue the work on the Conference’s cyber security readiness, policies and procedures.

Respectfully submitted by:

Rev. Cliff Still
CF&A President

BUDGET

Income Details

	2027 Budget	2026 Budget
GNJ SHARED MINISTRY		
Apportionment Base	62,814,501	59,355,580
GNJ Shared Ministry Percent	6.2% to 12.3% (wt. avg. 11.8%)	6.2% to 12.3% (wt. avg. 11.8%)
Total Apportioned Shared Ministry	7,535,160	7,016,477
Anticipated Giving rate	90%	90.0%
Net GNJ Shared Ministry	6,781,644	6,314,829

Apportionment Base – the total spending of all congregations minus a congregation’s mission spending, shared ministry giving, and capital expenditures. For the 2027 budget, the 2025 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 2027, the Shared Ministry percentage for local churches will be between 6.15% and 12.3%, depending on the average income level of the community.

Anticipated Giving rate – For 2027 budget, 90% is used (same as 2026 budget) vs. 85% in 2025 actual (partially driven by unanticipated closings)

GNJ PORTION OF GENERAL CHURCH MINISTERIAL EDUCATION FUND (MEF)

Total Ministerial Education apportionment	243,426	234,652
GNJ Portion %	25%	25%
GNJ Portion	60,857	58,663
Anticipated Giving rate	90%	90%
Net GNJ MEF Portion	54,771	52,797

LOCAL CHURCH BILLING REVENUE

Assumed collection rate *	95%	95%
Healthcare blended rate	33,200	27,100
Health & Dental	6,082,377	5,588,667
Pension	4,314,937	2,461,275
Property / Workers Comp	4,732,705	7,046,628
	15,130,018	15,096,570

* 2026 budget held flat to 2025 actual

CENTENARY FUND CONTRIBUTION

	513,937	674,000
% of retiree health costs	50%	60%

Income Details

	2027 Budget	2026 Budget								
DESIGNATED FUNDS (excluding operating reserve, Next Gen. & St. John's in 2027)										
Forecasted 2026 year-end balance	23,070,088	21,856,545								
Exclude 2026 deposits	(2,587,500)	(3,800,779)								
Net eligible for disbursement	20,482,588	18,055,766								
Disbursement %	5%	5%								
Designated funds disbursement	<u>1,024,129</u>	<u>902,788</u>								
DRAW FROM DISAFFILIATION SM FUNDS	<u>140,000</u>	<u>142,000</u>								
PROPERTY SALES REVENUE										
Forecasted 2027 total sales income	1,500,000	3,000,000								
Allocated to budget %	<u>0.0%</u>	<u>0.0%</u>								
Allocated to budget	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>								
<p>Additional property sale proceeds beyond the above amount to support the budget (“investable proceeds”) will be deposited into the approved designated funds as follows:</p> <table border="0" style="margin-left: 40px;"> <tr> <td>Harvest Mission Fund</td> <td style="text-align: right;">50%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Strategic Disciple Making</td> <td style="text-align: right;">20%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Retiree Health</td> <td style="text-align: right;">20%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Property Redevelopment</td> <td style="text-align: right;">10%</td> </tr> </table>			Harvest Mission Fund	50%	Strategic Disciple Making	20%	Retiree Health	20%	Property Redevelopment	10%
Harvest Mission Fund	50%									
Strategic Disciple Making	20%									
Retiree Health	20%									
Property Redevelopment	10%									
GRANTS AND DONATIONS										
Shared Services (UMSF)	31,000	25,000								
UM Communities Rent	36,789	35,795								
Episcopal Office	<u>46,231</u>	<u>44,500</u>								
	<u>114,020</u>	<u>105,295</u>								
REGISTRATIONS										
Annual Conference	89,000	104,100								
Local Pastor School	6,000	5,000								
Certified Lay Minister Course	2,100	2,100								
Lay Servant Ministries Courses	5,800	5,800								
Regional Resourcing	7,000	6,500								
BOOM Candidate Process Income	650	1,000								
Bishop's Convocation	<u>15,000</u>	<u>81,250</u>								
	<u>125,550</u>	<u>205,750</u>								
EPA MOU Contribution	<u>748,724</u>	<u>409,318</u>								
MRC Staff Health Contributions	70,217	148,724								
TOTAL INCOME	<u><u>24,703,009</u></u>	<u><u>24,052,071</u></u>								

Personnel

	2027	2026
	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Budget</u>
GNJ STAFF		
Salary	3,871,869	3,556,828
Benefits	1,580,867	1,457,622
Travel, Meals & Continuing Ed	217,067	189,011
GNJ elected leadership & staff development	45,000	55,000
	<u>5,714,803</u>	<u>5,258,461</u>
CLERGY BENEFITS BILLINGS		
Congregations' Clergy and Lay Health & Dental	6,369,197	5,334,664
Congregations' Clergy and Lay Pension	4,336,439	2,496,752
	<u>10,705,636</u>	<u>7,831,416</u>
RETIREE HEALTH INSURANCE		
Retirees under 65	319,101	425,268
Retirees over 65	735,000	787,500
Retirees income (only from those who do not qualify for maximum benefit because of years of service)	(16,003)	(82,237)
	<u>1,038,097</u>	<u>1,130,532</u>
TOTAL PERSONNEL	<u><u>17,458,537</u></u>	<u><u>14,220,409</u></u>

Leadership Development

	2027	2026
	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Budget</u>
BOARD OF LAITY		
Board Ministry Expenses	4,000	4,000
LEADERSHIP ACADEMY		
Certified Lay Ministry Training	2,100	2,100
Lay Servant Expenses	5,800	5,800
RIM Expenses	9,000	9,000
Local Pastor Licensing School	10,000	9,000
Leadership Academy Development and Workshops	30,000	30,000
Mission School	4,250	4,250
Bishops Convocation	50,000	85,000
A Journey of Hope; training, internships, ministry	35,000	35,000
	<u>146,150</u>	<u>180,150</u>
BOARD OF ORDAINED MINISTRY (Discernment of Clergy)		
Adm/General Exp.	250	500
Candidate Process Expenses	1,000	1,000
Board Meeting Expenses	500	300
Background Checks	3,000	4,000
BOOM Retreats/Interviews	20,000	12,000
Psych. Evals.	24,000	24,000
Special Training (includes Intro to Ministry)	2,000	2,000
DCOM Expenses	1,200	1,200
Fellowship/Orders	5,500	5,500
Cont. Ed: individual and group (includes RIM Retreat)	-	500
Career/Family Counseling	-	-
	<u>57,450</u>	<u>51,000</u>
MINISTERIAL EDUCATION		
Course of Study/Scholarships	35,000	35,000
Continuing Education: Individual and group	19,771	17,797
	<u>54,771</u>	<u>52,797</u>
TOTAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT	<u>262,371</u>	<u>287,947</u>

Congregational Development

	2027	2026
	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Budget</u>
CLERGY, LAITY, CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT		
Regional Resourcing	30,000	30,000
DCM Programs	15,000	15,000
Parental Leave	30,000	0 New for 2027
Breakthrough	4,250	4,250
Bishop's Retreat with those to be ordained and commissioned	1,000	4,500
CABINET		
Leadership/Congregational Dev Grants	122,000	101,100
Strategic Disciple Making Fund Grants	60,000	77,000
Mosaic Grants	0	0
Circuit Elders	8,000	90,000
Recruitment	0	0
Equitable Clergy Compensation Grants	115,000	50,000
Strategic Clergy Salary Support Grants	150,000	160,000
TOTAL CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT	<u><u>535,250</u></u>	<u><u>531,850</u></u>

Mission & Justice Ministries

	2027	2026	
	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Budget</u>	
Community Outreach Grants	150,000	150,000	
Disaster Response	2,000	2,000	
Justice for Our Neighbors	-	-	
Rise Against Hunger	-	-	
Tanzania Pastors School GNJ Travel	14,000	14,000	
Journey of Hope Consultant	-	-	
Journey of Hope Equity Grants	326,584	610,397	
Young People's Ministry (Next Generation)	35,646	106,064	
NEJ Conference	26,003	26,003	
Drew School of Theology	-	80,000	
NJ Interfaith Coalition	10,000	10,000	
Dismantling Racism	10,000	-	New for 2027
International Clergy Support	50,000	-	New for 2027
	<u>624,232</u>	<u>998,464</u>	

Agency Budgets

	<u>2027</u> <u>Budget</u>	<u>2026</u> <u>Budget</u>
Board of Global Ministries	500	500
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	39,000	39,000
Commission on Christian Unity	250	250
Commission on Religion and Race	500	500
Commission on Small Membership Church	100	100
Commission on Status and Role of Women	2,650	2,650
Committee on Disability Concerns	100	100
Committee on Ethnic Local Church Concerns	250	250
Korean American Plan	18,000	18,000
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>89,400</u>	<u>89,400</u>

Administration

	<u>2027</u>	<u>2026</u>
	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Budget</u>
Superintending Admin Expenses	59,000	46,000
Episcopal Office Admin Expenses	30,879	34,315
Audit	26,000	25,000
Chancellor and legal work	125,000	125,000
Postage/Supplies	22,000	13,000
Conference Secretary	11,315	11,250
Active Clergy moving expenses	5,500	10,000
Conference Journal	34,500	32,574
Information Technologies	132,000	115,442
Copier lease/usage	15,000	16,184
Processing fees (payroll, banking, credit cards)	30,202	28,500
CFA/BOP Board Expenses	2,000	1,500
Other Administration	27,000	25,000
	<u>520,396</u>	<u>483,765</u>

Communications

	2027	2026
	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Budget</u>
Annual Conference Session	230,000	268,500
Relay	25,000	25,393
Freelance (Graphics/General)	8,000	-
Photography	5,000	1,587
Tanzania translation services	3,000	-
Hosting/Licensing Fees	30,000	3,381
Website Maintenance/Updates	1,800	3,000
Studio/Equipment Maintenance	15,000	11,541
	<u>317,800</u>	<u>313,403</u>

Property

	2027	2026
	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Budget</u>
CONGREGATIONS' PROPERTY INSURANCE & WORKERS COMP	4,599,465	6,834,924
GNJ MRC PROPERTY		
Maintenance	63,000	55,000
Utilities	67,700	64,600
Cleaning Service	56,300	72,100
Phone	23,900	18,700
Property Insurance	9,122	20,000
Misc. Expenses	1,000	1,000
	<u>221,022</u>	<u>231,400</u>
SUPERINTENDENT PARSONAGES		
Maintenance	35,100	23,700
Utilities	35,000	33,700
Property Insurance	1,888	3,000
	<u>71,988</u>	<u>60,400</u>
TOTAL PROPERTY	<u><u>4,892,475</u></u>	<u><u>7,126,724</u></u>

General Church Apportionments

	2027	2026
	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Budget</u>
World Service	703,753	678,387
Ministerial Education	243,426	234,652
Black College	97,101	93,601
Africa University	21,731	20,947
Episcopal	346,892	334,388
General Administration	118,939	114,652
Interdenominational Cooperation	10,074	9,710
	<u>1,541,916</u>	<u>1,486,337</u>

Young People's Ministry (Next Generation)

	<u>2027</u> <u>Budget</u>	<u>2026</u> <u>Budget</u>
<u>Next Gen Income:</u>		
Designated Fund Draw	154,354	133,366
Camping	-	-
Youth Activities	35,000	68,000
Contributions from other conferences	-	105,000
Total Income	<u>189,354</u>	<u>306,366</u>
<u>Next Gen Expenses:</u>		
Personnel	-	175,430
Operations	20,000	35,000
Camping	-	-
Youth/Young Adult Activities	190,000	187,000
Cultivate Internships	15,000	15,000
Total Expenses	<u>225,000</u>	<u>412,430</u>
Next Gen Surplus/(Deficit) *	<u>(35,646)</u>	<u>(106,064)</u>

* See "Mission & Justice Ministries" budget

GNJ General Ledger Fund Balance Roll Forward 2024 - 2025					
		2025 (unaudited)			
		<u>Opening Balance</u>	<u>YTD Receipts</u>	<u>YTD Disbursements</u>	<u>Ending Balance</u>
<u>GNJ Designated Funds</u>					
Mission and Ministry Funds					
Harvest Mission Fund		292,724	61,235	1,260	352,700
Strategic Disciple Making		612,222	111,821	2,719	721,324
Episcopal Office Fund		499,651	80,028	2,138	577,541
GNJ Funds to Other Organizations					
St. John's Native American Historical Preservation		1,171,015	174,350	109,972	1,235,393
Next Gen Ministries Funds		1,657,032	1,387,126	7,113	3,037,044
Benefits Funds					
Pension and Benefits Operational Fund		657,102	144,378	3,910	797,570
Retiree Health Fund		9,738,004	1,592,464	33,649	11,296,819
Property Funds					
Property Operational Reserve Fund		3,382,429	1,082,115	14,453	4,450,091
GNJAC Development & Repurposing		189,413	30,236	808	218,841
Superintending Housing Reserve		1,035,470	165,770	4,454	1,196,787
Episcopal Residence Maint Fund BD		467,533	73,095	2,189	538,438
<u>GNJ Restricted Funds</u>					
Mission and Ministry Funds					
Disaster Relief		127,226	125	77,339	50,011
Mosaic Ministries Reserve & Mosaic Program Fund		1,053,276	165,320	40,831	1,177,765
Tanzania Fund & Tanzania Campaign Fund		504,784	116,679	85,234	536,229
Leadership Academy Preaching In. (Lilly Grant)		1,179,277	52,422	157,776	1,073,922
Bridges-Scaling Grant (Lilly)		755,825	32,074	105,102	682,797
Shared Ministry Disaffiliation Fund		429,798	17,226	77,967	369,057
Pension Disaffiliation Fund		2,291,215	789,864	10,971	3,070,108
Trustees - Donor Restricted					
Broad Street Millville Fund Balance		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		158,305	-	-	158,305
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		143,065	-	-	143,065
Horner Trust - 3rd Party		81,122	-	-	81,122

	2025 (unaudited)			
	<u>Opening Balance</u>	<u>YTD Receipts</u>	<u>YTD Disbursements</u>	<u>Ending Balance</u>
Trustees - without Donor Restricted				
Goldsmith Estate Fund Balance	7,460	-	-	7,460
Deaconess Accumulated Income Reserve	60,481	-	-	60,481
Estate Funds - Drew/Kimble/Friedrich	182,713	82,340	-	265,054
Conf Scholarship Fund Balance	4,208	-	-	4,208
Glading Trust Fund Balance	19,582	-	-	19,582
Maddock Trust Fund Balance	176,430	-	-	176,430
Seese Scholarship Fund Balance	4,300	-	500	3,800
Goorley Fund Balance	9,156	-	-	9,156
Urban Scholarship Fund Balance	31,022	-	14,500	16,522
Kappler Scholarship Fund Balance	1,321	-	-	1,321
Ethel Snyder/Inez Irons Book Fund Balance	59	-	-	59
Frances Nelson Scholarship Fund Balance	13,770	-	-	13,770
Phyllis Jane Stetser Scholarship Bal	1,628	-	-	1,628
Fullman Memorial Temp for Sustentation	3,237	-	-	3,237
Augustin-Smith Fund	12,293	-	-	12,293
Nancy Belsky Temp Rest Fund	2,472	-	-	2,472
Trustee Discretionary Fund	553,044	1,942,612	1,749,763	745,893
Perpetual Care Cemetery Fund	-	1,198,700	-	1,198,700
<u>GNJ Affiliate Funds</u>				
Mission Partners				
Centenary Fund	12,405,822	1,744,967	704,491	13,446,298
The United Methodist Foundation	178,527	398,364	324,428	252,463
A Future with Hope	117,466	4,763	4,322	117,908
Other Affiliates				
Ministerial Education (GCFA) Fund	153,380	52,677	43,173	162,884
Peace with Justice Fund	3,731	6,977	3,488	7,219
Christian Ed Sunday Fund	14,345	18	-	14,362
Laity Sunday Fund	7,206	251	-	7,457
Lay Servant Ministries Fund	6,926	-	-	6,926
Comm of Native American Min. Fund	67,534	8,521	4,260	71,795
National Hispanic Plan	74,984	-	-	74,984
GNJ Korean Partners in Ministry	9,394	-	-	9,394
Friends of Old Estellville Methodist Church	46,397	1,073	200	47,270
Rehema Education Fund	-	3,512	-	3,512
Educational Society	155,755	3,694	-	159,449

GARRETT-EVANGELICAL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Report to the Annual Conference
2025-2026

Garrett Seminary continues to embody a trajectory of growth, innovation, and deepening partnership across the connection. Rooted in its Wesleyan heritage and animated by its mission to form courageous leaders in the way of Jesus, the seminary looks toward the future with confidence and hope.

For the fifth consecutive year, Garrett welcomed an entering class that reflects sustained enrollment growth. This steady expansion signals renewed confidence in our approach to theological education and in Garrett's distinctive role within The United Methodist Church and the global Christian community. The newest students represent geographic and cultural breadth, coming from across the United States and more than twenty countries throughout the worldwide connection. They prepare for ministry in congregations, chaplaincy settings, nonprofit leadership, academia, and mission contexts, reflecting the increasingly diverse and global nature of the Church's leadership needs.

In response to the evolving realities of ministry and lifelong learning, Garrett launched The Garrett Collective, a comprehensive digital platform offering theological resources, courses, learning experiences, and stackable microcredentials. Designed to serve laity and clergy alike, The Garrett Collective expands access to high-quality theological education in multiple languages and modalities. Content is curated and developed in partnership with annual conferences, congregations, and mission-driven organizations to address expressed needs across the connection. This initiative strengthens ongoing professional development for clergy, equips lay leaders for faithful witness, and extends Garrett's reach to communities that may not otherwise have access to formal theological study. The Garrett Collective represents a significant step toward greater accessibility, affordability, and contextual responsiveness in theological education.

The seminary also announced a historic agreement with its long-standing campus partner, Northwestern University. Through this agreement, Garrett will relocate to newly designed, state-of-the-art facilities on the southern end of campus. These buildings will support the seminary's increasingly multi-modal student body—those studying on campus, in hybrid formats, and in fully immersive online programs from across the nation and around the world. The new facilities will allow Garrett to invest more fully in vibrant residential theological formation while simultaneously expanding global access through digital and hybrid degree offerings. This agreement reflects a deep and mutual commitment between the seminary and the university, positioning both institutions for a strong and collaborative future. Most importantly, it enables Garrett to remain focused on mission-driven initiatives for generations to come.

Garrett has also experienced significant success in foundation and grant support for innovative learning and leadership initiatives. Strategic investments have strengthened The Garrett Collective, the Center for Ecological Regeneration, the Job Institute for Spiritual Formation, the National Initiative to Strengthen Hispanic Pastoral Leaders and Congregations, the Mageto Fellows Program in partnership with Africa University, and the Faith and Leadership Collaborative. Each of these initiatives extends the seminary's relationship with congregations and their leaders, resourcing the Church in areas of ecological justice, spiritual formation, intercultural ministry, global partnership, social impact, and leadership development. Together, they represent a widening circle of accessibility and impact, ensuring that theological education is responsive to the needs of diverse communities throughout the connection and beyond.

Garrett Seminary remains deeply committed to the vitality of The United Methodist Church. Through enrollment growth, digital innovation, historic institutional partnerships, and expanding grant-supported initiatives, the seminary is strengthening its capacity to serve the Church in a season of significant transition and opportunity. Guided by the conviction that God continues to call and equip leaders for this moment, Garrett looks forward to continued partnership with annual conferences, congregations, and ministries across the connection.

Submitted by:
Javier A. Viera, President

2026 ACTIVE 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 non-vested current benefit for 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 who also include:
 - 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)
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 contributions.
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 [Book of Discipline ¶344.1a (3)(4); 344.1b; 344.1d; 331.1a,b; 326; 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.
6. Part-time clergy in any category are not eligible for coverage through the Plan.
7. At the request of the Bishop, a clergy member serving in a role which is an exception to the above can be approved by the Board of Pensions.

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 Via Benefits, Retiree 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. 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.

4. Dependents eligible for coverage in the Conference Plan are limited to the spouse, children who are qualified adult dependents, and children who are under age 26. 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

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

III. CONTINUATION OF COVERAGE AFTER CERTAIN EVENTS

- A. **Voluntary and Involuntary Termination** - If a person's participation in the Plan ceases due to voluntary or involuntary termination of Conference membership or employment or discharge or removal from the Annual Conference, Continuation Coverage for health insurance may be available through application to HealthFlex.

- B. Loss of Dependent Status** - If a dependent's participation in the Plan ceases due to divorce or to attaining the limiting age, Continuation Coverage may be available through application to HealthFlex.
- C. Medical Leave** - See #2 under Eligibility.
- D. Leave of Absence** (Book of Discipline ¶1353 and ¶1354) - Clergy placed on voluntary leave of absence (personal, family, or transitional) or involuntary leave of absence may continue in the Plan for a period of twelve months, provided they pay the premiums. Continuation Coverage for up to an additional 12 months may be available through application to HealthFlex. Leave of absence is not an appointment, causes a break in appointment years, and does not accrue annuity credit towards health benefits in retirement.
- E. Sabbatical Leave** (Book of Discipline ¶1351) Clergy placed on sabbatical leave may continue in the Plan for a period of twelve months, provided they pay the premiums. Continuation coverage may be available through application to HealthFlex. Sabbatical leave is not a break in appointment years for the purpose of health benefits in retirement.
- F. Death** - Surviving spouses of clergy members are subject to the same rules (see Eligibility Guidelines #1 and 3) as the clergy member. Surviving spouses of lay employees of the Conference and District offices are subject to the same rules (see Eligibility Guideline #4 c) as the lay employee.

IV. ADMINISTRATION

All concerns, issues, requests, etc., relating to premiums, benefits, and coverage (including voluntary termination of coverage, additions, or deletions to policies) must be "in writing" from the Plan participant to be considered official. Such correspondence, concerns, or requests for changes in coverage must be sent to the Plan Administrator or their designated coordinator. Commitments or resolutions of issues must come in writing directly from the Plan Administrator or their designated coordinator.

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

Submitted by,

Rev. Elouise Hill-Challenger, Chair, Board of Pension and Health Benefits

2026 Retiree Health Insurance Guidelines, Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits

The “Retiree Plan” is the provision of a HRA fund (Health Reimbursement Account) to eligible retirees to purchase coverage that best suits their individual needs through the marketplace with consultation from our chosen partners, Via Benefits. For those who have retired early and are not yet eligible for Medicare due to age, primary health insurance coverage is through the same plan as those in active ministry. The Retiree Plan is a non-vested current benefit for retired pastors and lay employees. *Note, to receive the HRA Fund, the participant must utilize Via Benefits.*

I. ELIGIBILITY

1. Clergy in Retired Status are eligible for the Retiree Plan if they were under full-time appointment for 20 years and appointed full-time through the Conference for the last 10 years with prior annuity credit in Wespath Benefits and Investments and/or Compass plan immediately prior to retiring, however, provided 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:
 1. *Such retirees will have access to Via Benefits and receive a portion of the annual HRA Fund as may be established annually by the Board of Pension 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, and
 - iii. they had at least 7 but less than 15 years of service of full-time appointment; provided that:
 1. Such retirees will have access to Via Benefits professionals to assist in choosing a marketplace plan; they will not receive an HRA Fund from the Conference. Retired individuals under age 65 will remain on the Active Medical plan until age 65.
- d. 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, 2019,
 - ii. they were at least 62 years old as of July 1, 2019, and
 - iii. they served in part-time and/or full-time appointments and have accumulated at least 20 years of full-time equivalent service, as determined by their Wespath service record (for example, a clergyperson who served half-time for 40 years would satisfy the 20-year full-time service requirement for enrollment in retiree health insurance), provided that:
 1. Such retirees will have access to Via Benefits and receive a portion of the annual HRA Fund as may be established annually by the Board of Pension and Health Benefits.
- e. As of January 1, 2026, for Clergy who are appointed to positions outside the GNJ Conference, the receiving conference or clergy person will be required to annually remit to GNJ the full value of the current year HRA contribution, as payment for future Retiree Medical HRA payments on behalf of the Clergy. Clergy appointed to shared EPA/GNJ conference staff roles, are exempted from the requirement of conference HRA contributions. Payments received will be deposited in GNJ’s Retiree Health designated fund.

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).

2. Lay Employees in Retired Status may be in the Retiree Plan (the Plan):

- a. 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 (United Methodist Personal Investment Plan) 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 immediately prior to retiring *provided, however, that* 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 below);
 - b. Lay employees in retired status may also be in the plan (subject to the provisions 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 will have access to Via Benefits and receive a portion of the annual HRA Fund as may be established annually by the Board of Pensions and Health Benefits.*
 - c. Lay employees in retired status may also be in the plan (subject to the provisions 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 will have access to Via Benefits professionals to assist in choosing a marketplace plan; they will not receive a HRA Fund from the Conference*
- 3.** 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. HRA Fund (Health Reimbursement Account) – ANNUITANTS

The Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits shall establish an annual HRA Fund for the participants.

Unless it has already been stated above under Eligibility, the Conference shall provide an HRA Fund 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 is eligible as defined in section 1, shall receive HRA Fund under the Retiree 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 receive a prorated HRA Fund which will be reduced 5% for each year short of 20 full-time years of eligible service as defined in section 1.
 2. Annuitants age 65 or older who retired on or before July 1, 2019 with 20 Full Time Equivalent years of eligible service as defined in section 1 will receive 50% of the HRA Fund. Please refer to 1.(d).iii.1 above.
- 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 HRA Fund under the Retiree Plan. Monthly premium for Part A if any, and for Part B (both required) is a personal expense.

1. A lay retired participant age 65 or older who retired on or before July 1, 2021 shall receive a prorated HRA Fund which will be reduced 5% for each year short of 20 full-time years of eligible service as defined in “B” above.
- c. **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 HRA Fund upon retirement.

III. PREMIUM PAYMENT RESPONSIBILITY – PRE-ANNUITY RETIREES

For those who have retired early and are not collecting an annuity, the retired enrollee is responsible for the full Active Plan premium payment until they reach Medicare age.

IV. ADMINISTRATION

All concerns, issues, requests, etc., relating to benefits at retirement must be “in writing” from the Plan participant to be considered official. Such correspondence, concerns, or requests for changes in coverage must be sent to the Plan Administrator or his/her designated coordinator. Commitments or resolutions of issues must come in writing directly from the Plan Administrator or his/her designated coordinator.

Submitted by,

Rev. Elouise Hill-Challenger, Chair, Board of Pension and Health Benefits

GNJ IMPLICIT BIAS REVIEW TEAM REPORT

The Greater New Jersey Annual Conference (GNJ) remains committed to ending the sin of racism through our shared ministry as clergy and laity and through our engagement with the communities we serve. Since the adoption of the Journey of Hope Plan in 2020, GNJ has continued to take meaningful steps toward fostering racial justice, equity, and inclusion throughout the Conference.

An important part of this ongoing commitment is the review of Conference reports, and all legislation to ensure alignment with our shared values of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

This work was carried out through the collaboration of the Connectional Ministries Team. The review process was led by the Commission on Religion and Race and the Committee on the Status and Role of Women, with support from the Board of Church and Society and the Committee on Local Ethnic Church Concerns.

This year marks the fifth year of the Implicit Bias Review (IBR) Team's work. As the process continues to develop, our commitment remains strong to deepen awareness of implicit bias and to promote a more inclusive, respectful, and equitable Conference.

Review Process

After reports and legislation were submitted to the Conference Secretary, the documents were forwarded to the Implicit Bias Review Team. The team held a meeting to establish the boundaries of our work and confirm the review process and procedures. Each document was reviewed by at least three team members to ensure careful and thoughtful cross-reading.

Following the review, the team provided recommendations and feedback to the authors. Authors were given the opportunity to revise their documents accordingly before submitting final versions for publication.

The primary goal of this process was to ensure that all Conference materials reflect our commitment to the Journey of Hope and are free from implicit or explicit bias, discriminatory language, or language that undermines our shared values of inclusion and justice.

Recommendations

We strongly encourage all authors to ensure that reports and legislation reflect the Conference's commitment to racial justice, equity, and inclusion. Written materials should demonstrate professionalism, ethical care, and respect for all people.

1. Implicit Bias Education: Educational opportunities remain available through resources such as the self-study course offered by the General Commission on Religion and Race. We encourage Conference members to take advantage of these tools to deepen their understanding of implicit bias and its impact on our ministry and communication.

2. Inclusive Language: Implicit bias can be reflected not only in specific words but also in tone and assumptions. To promote clarity and inclusion: Spell out acronyms before using abbreviations. Use language that respects all people and communities. Avoid terminology that may be exclusionary, culturally insensitive, or unintentionally harmful. Be mindful that our words reflect our shared identity as the Body of Christ.

3. Professionalism: Authors are encouraged to carefully review their documents before submission. Cross-reading for grammar, spelling, clarity, and tone strengthens the quality and effectiveness of Conference communications. While the primary focus of the IBR Team is implicit bias, we also offer suggestions to improve overall clarity and professionalism.

4. Timely Submission: Timely submission of reports and legislation is essential. Late submissions place additional strain on the review process and may limit the opportunity for thorough feedback. We ask all authors to carefully follow submission deadlines and procedures.

The Implicit Bias Review Team remains deeply grateful for the dedication of our Conference leaders, clergy, and laity who share in this important work. Together, we continue to grow as a Conference that reflects God’s justice, love, and welcome for all people.

Submitted by

Miso Park (Chair, Commission on Religion and Race)

Isabel Quezada (Chair, Committee on the Status and Role of Women)

KOREAN CAUCUS REPORT TO GNJ ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Korean Caucus serves the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference by providing connection, mentoring, and equipping opportunities for Korean clergy. The Caucus supports clergy who serve across the conference through diverse programs and worship experiences conducted in the Korean language, fostering community, leadership development, and spiritual renewal.

In 2025, the Korean Caucus offered a variety of meaningful gatherings and programs, including annual leadership training for Korean clergy and laity serving Korean United Methodist Churches. These included a New Year's Worship Service, a Korean clergy gathering during the Annual Conference session, and Cross-Racial/Cross-Cultural (CRCC) training for clergy newly appointed to local churches. The Caucus also hosted a summer family retreat, a gathering for women clergy, and a Thanksgiving Worship Service, among other opportunities for fellowship and spiritual growth.

As many Korean clergy are immigrants serving in cross-racial and cross-cultural ministry contexts, the Korean Caucus plays a vital role in providing a trusted space for connection, sharing concerns, and receiving coaching in small-group settings. This ministry contributes significantly to the mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being of clergy, enabling them to sustain healthy and faithful ministry.

The Korean Caucus will continue to work closely with Korean clergy throughout the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference to strengthen leadership, equip clergy to serve effectively, and support ministry in local churches, districts, and the conference. Guided by the Holy Spirit, the Caucus remains committed to nurturing resilient, faithful leaders for the mission and ministry of the United Methodist Church.

Submitted by
Rev. Miso Park, Chair
Korean Caucus of GNJ

LAITY BOARD REPORT

“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.” 1 Peter 4:10

This verse affirms the heart of our ministry as laity—whereby members offer their unique gifts, time, and witness to strengthen the life of the church and to serve our community. Through our collective efforts, we continue to steward God’s grace with gratitude, humility, and a commitment to building up the body of Christ. These ultimately align with the church’s mission of **making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.**

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 Leadership Academy, Lay Servant Ministries classes, Laity Session at the Annual Conference, Lay Ministry Recognition and Laity Sunday celebration. 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.

OBJECTIVES of the Laity Board:

The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church 2024, ¶1630 States that the purpose of the conference board of laity shall be:

1. To foster an awareness of the role of the laity both within the local congregation and through their 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.
2. 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.
3. To provide for the training of lay members of annual conference.
4. To provide support and direction for the ministry of the laity on the local, district, and annual conference levels and to promote the observance of Laity Sunday.
5. To provide organization, direction, and support for the development of local church leaders.

Laity Board in 2025

Through the Leadership Academy the Lay Servant Ministries program provides three training levels: Basic Lay Servants, Certified Lay Servants and Certified Lay Ministers. The program is designed to provide training opportunities and experiences to equip disciples of Jesus Christ to realize and respond to their personal call to ministry. Lay Servant Ministries strive to help disciples become aware of their particular gifts and talents by offering educational opportunities to enhance and develop the skills necessary to bring them to fruition. It is an excellent way for people to be better servants of Jesus Christ, to become stronger church leaders, and to more capably assist the clergy and the congregation.

1. 45 persons successfully completed the Basic Lay Servant class, 41 completed the Advanced Lay Servant class and 11 completed the Certified Lay Minister program in 2025. The Lay Ministries classes are now offered both in-person and online.
2. The Leadership Academy currently offers a variety of teachable courses online. In 2025 about 1625 participants registered in the Leadership Academy classes. There are additional courses to be released to include versions in Spanish and Korean.

Greater New Jersey has implemented a professional ethics development program to aid appointed clergy and assigned laity (which includes supply pastors and certified lay ministers) in understanding ethics and in the ability to make healthy and appropriate decisions. This program offers trainings in safe

sanctuaries, sexual ethics, and financial ethics. 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. The Clergy ethics program began in the Fall 2024, and Ethics course designed for the Elected Laity is scheduled to be implemented in 2026.

The Laity Board continues to celebrate the outstanding performance of the Laity through our annual Lay Ministry Recognition Award. The 2025 Lay Ministry Recognition Awards recognized individuals or ministry teams demonstrating Christ-like ministry that focused on support ministries of healing, prayer, and/or care for those experiencing loss. 8 exceptional leaders/groups engaged in the Ministries of Healing were honored with the Laity Ministry Recognition Awards in 2025.

The GNJ Laity Board continues to team up with our EPA counterpart to partner with the Breakthrough Worship Series in developing resource materials for the celebration of Laity Sunday. We anticipate this collaboration to continue in the future.

Some Aspirations of the Laity Board

- A church where **every member feels valued and called** — each person, regardless of background has a role in ministry.
- Faith communities that are **vibrant, inclusive, and living out the gospel** — welcoming to all, committed to social justice, generosity, and real-world mission.
- A renewed sense of **shared vocation and responsibility** — where laity aren't passive observers, but active agents of transformation in church and society.
- Leadership that reflects **diversity, equity, and representation** — so that leadership includes youth, women, persons of different ethnicities, socioeconomic backgrounds, and abilities.

Laity Board Goals for 2026:

1. The Laity Board will continue to work with the Connectional Ministry Team and District Superintendents to ensure Christian leaders are offered vital and vibrant educational programs.
2. 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.
3. The Laity Board will continue to collaborate with other organized Lay Groups such as the United Women in Faith, United Methodist Men, and Youth and Young Adult group by coordinating and supporting their activities to enhance collective ministry efforts.
4. 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 other, to lead the church and reach out to the community as disciples of Jesus Christ.
5. 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.
6. 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 the past three years, we have met our goal of more than 50% of board and agency chairpersons being people of color.
7. The Laity Board will continue to ensure that lay representation at Annual Conference 2025-2028 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 the process as well as commit to attend the Annual Conference and report back to their local congregation.

Submitted by: Dr. David A. Yamoah, Chair- Laity Board, & Conference Lay Leader

LEADERSHIP ACADEMY PREACHING INSTITUTE (LAPI)

Conference Report for EPA & GNJ 2026

God is revealing to me that everything I had hoped to achieve in my preaching can actually happen through this program. It's like God is saying, "You are in the right place, and I can guide you to reach those goals."—2025 LAPI participant

What is LAPI?

LAPI is a hybrid lifelong learning program for ordained clergy, commissioned clergy, local pastors, certified lay ministers, and other lay preachers. The program is designed for preachers of all levels of experience to cultivate compelling preaching that leads to congregational vitality.

LAPI preaching fellows* focus on honing their craft alongside exceptional preachers, instructors, and peer cohorts. Each LAPI fellow sets their own preaching goal and is supported by coaches, mentors, and peers. (*Note: While an archaic definition of the word "fellow" refers to a boy, modern usage is gender-neutral, according to Merriam-Webster, referring to a peer, colleague, associate, or person receiving a stipend for advanced study or research.)

Testimonials

- When asked, "What is God revealing to you and your listeners through this experience of the Leadership Academy Preaching Institute?" fellows answered:
- *God is reminding me that preaching is both a craft and a calling, rooted in the Spirit's leading and sharpened through intentional practice. My listeners are showing me that sermons are not just heard in the moment but shape how they live, act, and hope in the days that follow.*
- *This experience gives me confidence that what I dreamed of for my ministry is possible here. The feedback that I received from my membership has been positive, and they have noticed growth in my preaching.*
- *I have heard God's voice through the change I have experienced when sharing the word of God every Sunday. A mix of confidence and vulnerability have been extremely powerful. In addition, I have received a positive message in terms of the way the congregation understands and receives the message.*
- *God is showing me that preaching is not only speaking but growing together with the listeners in faith. Through this experience, I see the Holy Spirit helps us to build confidence with each other, sharing hope and trust in God's Word. I want to bring this format into my pastoral appointments so the church and I can go deeper and stronger together in Christ.*

What to Expect

During the 10-month program, LAPI preaching fellows commit to:

- Attend an in-person two-day preaching summit hosted by LAPI
- Participate in a cohort of 6–10 preachers, meeting twice monthly via video conference, facilitated by a LAPI preaching coach.
 - Learn through asynchronous online courses designed especially for the LAPI program. Courses include:
 - "Sacred Listening and Appreciative Critique" taught by the Rev. Dr. Leah Schade
 - "Imaginative Preaching" taught by the Rev. Dr. Jake Myers
 - "Context and Community" taught by the Rev. Olu Brown
 - "Exemplary Preaching Unveiled"—multiple preachers
- Create a listener feedback group in their ministry setting. LAPI will train listeners to provide constructive feedback.
- Receive constructive feedback from a LAPI preaching coach and cohort peers.

Anticipated Outcomes

LAPI promotes proclamation and holy listening through the development of collaborative preaching practices. This multi-year initiative within EPA & GNJ promises to contribute to a renewed ethos of faithful and compelling preaching within United Methodism.

Preachers and listeners will be empowered and equipped in the following ways:

- Preachers will cultivate practices and develop skills that enable them to engage congregations, both in-person and online, in compelling ways that lead to measurable congregational vitality.
- Preachers will become more adept at delivering sermons that effectively reach more diverse listening communities, including cross-generational and cross-cultural/cross-racial listeners.
- Preachers will view the craft of preaching not as having a goal of “arrival,” but one that requires ongoing reflection and lifelong learning as they adapt their practice to various contexts, seasons of ministry, and the demands of a hurting world in need of the gospel.
- Preachers will learn how to incorporate the practice of listening and watching sermons from other preachers (as well as their own) in order to develop their own skills and strategies in the pulpit.
- Listeners will cultivate practices and develop skills that enable them to provide timely, honest, thoughtful, and insightful feedback, leading to more effective preaching.
- Preachers and listeners will have a clearer understanding of the role of preaching in the life of the church and its direct impact on congregational vitality.
- Preachers and listeners will learn how to work together to develop preaching that is relevant to their specific context, speaks to the needs of their community, and provides a true reflection of the all-welcoming reign of God.

Congregations will be empowered and equipped to make the Word of God come alive in their contexts through faithful participation in the preaching event—as listeners, discerners, conversation partners, and proclaimers of the gospel.

Project Updates

In 2025, 45 preaching fellows successfully completed the 10-month LAPI program and received a certificate for 4.6 CEUs. The 2026 class includes 40 LAPI fellows.

Bring your preaching to the next level! Applications for the 2027 LAPI cohort are open May–August 2026. **Apply Now!** <https://www.epaumc.org/lapi/> OR <https://www.gnjumc.org/lapi/>.

Mary Cranwell, LAPI Coordinator

The Rev. Dr. Darryl W. Stephens, LAPI Director

NEXT GENERATION MINISTRIES BOARD OF TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT

To the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference

The Board of Trustees of Next Generation Ministries is pleased to present this annual report to the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference, providing an update on significant property transactions and celebrating the ongoing ministry with young people across our connection.

Property Transactions and Asset Management

The Board of Trustees reports the completion of significant property transactions in fulfillment of its fiduciary responsibilities. On October 16, 2025, the Board successfully closed on the sale of the Main Camp property at Aldersgate Camp and Retreat Center for a net total of \$1,378,555.82, after closing costs (\$1,378,685.00 gross). This transaction was conducted in accordance with applicable state laws, with appropriate legal counsel and due diligence throughout the process. The net proceeds of \$1,116,119.54 from this sale, after paying down the amount owed to GNJ and holding funds to care for remaining properties (\$172,436.28 and \$90,000 respectively), has been invested in the Next Gen Designated Fund which will be transferred to GNJ upon the formal dissolution of Next Generation Ministries as a nonprofit entity.

The Board is currently engaged in the sale process for two remaining properties: Pinelands Camp and Retreat Center and the Dietz Property. Both properties are under contract and progressing toward closing. Closings for these properties are anticipated to occur during the 2026 calendar year but based on experience with dealing with the state, may be further delayed. Upon completion of these final sales and the transfer of all net proceeds to the GNJ Next Gen Designated Fund, the Board of Trustees will complete the dissolution of Next Generation Ministries, Inc., ensuring that all assets are properly transferred to support ongoing ministry with young people under the administration of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference. All three property transactions have been coordinated with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) so that these lands will be incorporated into the state parks system and remain accessible to the public. The Board celebrates that these sacred spaces where generations of young people encountered God will continue to be available for public use, allowing God's creation to be enjoyed and appreciated by future generations.

Celebration of Mission Transition

The Board celebrates the successful transition of Next Generation programming and ministry responsibilities to the Greater New Jersey and Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conferences. This transition has affirmed a fundamental truth of our United Methodist connectionalism: we can accomplish more when we work together. Through collaboration and God's guidance, both Annual Conferences have expanded programming not only at the conference level but also developed resources and support for local churches and districts. The active engagement and leadership of District Youth Coordinators, along with the vital work of the Youth Council and Young Adult Council, have been instrumental in this success. These dedicated leaders are connecting local churches, creating regional opportunities for young people, and ensuring that youth and young adult voices shape the direction of ministry. This strategic realignment has strengthened young people's ministry across both conferences while preserving and enhancing the collaborative spirit that has defined Next Generation Ministries. The growing engagement of youth leaders, increasing participation in regional events, and the development of new district-level initiatives demonstrate that faithful partnership under the guidance of the Holy Spirit produces abundant fruit.

Ministry Highlights and Continued Impact

The Youth and Young Adult Councils took the lead on Y+YA delegates to the Annual Conference Session as well as a Young Adult Bible Study and active young adult connectional WhatsApp Group. District Youth Coordinators worked together on several collaborative youth group events including Re:Connect at Haddonfield UMC and the GNJ Six Flags Takeover.

The IGNITE Conference in Wildwood drew over 700 participants, creating transformative experiences for young people and their leaders. Camp and retreat ministries at EPA camps continue to provide sacred spaces where young people encounter God, build community, and develop as leaders. Additionally, expanded resourcing initiatives including youth leader cohorts, the Cultivate internship program, and collaborative events have strengthened the capacity of local churches to engage young people in meaningful discipleship.

Conclusion and Looking Forward

As the Board of Trustees continues its work to complete the remaining property transactions, we remain committed to faithful stewardship of the assets entrusted to our care. We express deep gratitude to the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference for its continued support and partnership in ministry with young people. The Board will provide updated reports on property sales after closings occur. We look forward to the continued flourishing of young people's ministry under the leadership of the Eastern Pennsylvania and Greater New Jersey Annual Conferences.

Respectfully submitted,

Braedon Dobrynio, Chair
The Board of Trustees
Next Generation Ministries
January 2026



Overview

Local United Methodist Churches of Eastern Pennsylvania (EPA) and Greater New Jersey (GNJ) are invited to participate in the Pathways Bridges Program which equips congregations with tools that help foster empathy, joy, community, and vitality within our local churches and communities as we engage the diversity of our neighbors. We have noticed that without these tools, a lack of community engagement turns to fear, then insularity, irrelevance, and closure.

Pathways Bridges was designed to creatively motivate leaders and congregations to connect and engage with a diverse group of people in their communities through fostering curiosity and love across lines of difference, storytelling, and spiritual practices. This program seeks to bridge the gap between the demographics of the church and those of the broader community, ultimately seeking to ensure congregations reflect the diversity of their surroundings.

2025 Highlights & Celebrations

In 2025, Pathways Bridges journeyed alongside 23 congregations throughout EPA and GNJ. Each congregation participated in the cohort with their pastor(s) and a team of 2-6 lay people.

Of the 23 congregations:

- 12 congregations are part of the Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference
- 11 congregations are part of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference
- A total of 106 faithful leaders - pastors and laity - have participated in Pathways Bridges sessions.

In our work alongside congregations, we often hear deep truths: “*Church is home.*” “*Church is family.*” “*Church is the people.*” These convictions still matter – and yet, the landscape of ministry has changed. Gone are the days when people simply stumble into our church buildings on Sunday mornings. In this season, being the church requires more than maintaining spaces; it requires cultivating relationships.

Pathways Bridges exists because faith today must be lived *with* the community, not just *for* it. It calls pastors and laity to lift their gaze—to look around, notice who is already there, and discern where God is already at work. Our aim is to equip leaders with practical tools, shared stories, and theological grounding they can carry back to their congregations, empowering them for the mission field that exists right outside their doors.

At its heart, Pathways Bridges is about helping congregations rediscover connection—across differences, generations, and lived experiences. As one lay participant shared,

“I realized how deeply connected we all are. We often think we’re so unique that no one can understand us but through these conversations, I saw that others have hearts and stories just like mine. They carry good memories and profound experiences that shape who they are. It reminded me that we’re all swimming in the same lake; even if our strokes differ, we share the same water. It’s comforting to know we’re not alone.”

Pathways Bridges exists to help churches move from isolation to relationship, from assumption to listening, and from fear to faithful presence—so that God’s love may be made visible through communities willing to walk alongside their neighbors.

Upcoming 2026 Cohort - *Applications for the 2026 Cohort are open! Visit our website, www.pathwaybridges.org, for more information and to apply!*

In 2026, Pathways Bridges will continue to Cultivate Curiosity & Community with a special emphasis on Intergenerational Ministry. We believe that intergenerational ministry is essential for vibrant discipleship and community engagement. When children, youth, adults, and senior adults intentionally share life and faith together through mutual relationships, shared learning, mission and ministry, they model the fullness of the body of Christ and create natural bridges into their neighborhoods. Without these connections, churches risk insularity, fear, and irrelevance – but with them, congregations can thrive as places of welcome, wisdom, and hope.

We hope you will join us on this journey – bringing generations together to embody God’s love and connect more deeply with our neighbors.

Contact us for more information:

Alyssa Ruch, Director (aruch@epagnj.org)

Ashley Wilson, Program Coordinator (awilson@epagnj.org)

PENSION AND HEALTH BENEFITS, BOARD OF

The Greater New Jersey Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits (the Board) is authorized by *The Book of Discipline* of the United Methodist Church to contribute to the support, relief, assistance and pensioning of clergy and their families, as well as other church workers and lay employees of the United Methodist Church.

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

Pension

Pre-1982 Pension Plan:

The 2026 Past Service Annuity Rate for pre-1982 annuitant payment is \$775 per year of pre-1982 service. The 2027 Past Service Annuity Rate for pre-1982 annuitant payment will be \$787. The pre-1982 pension program continues to be fully funded and in a strong position.

CRSP/MPP and CPP:

The General Conference's pension plan, Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) is a hybrid of defined benefit and defined contribution approaches which took effect in 2007 and ended 12/31/2025, replaced by the new Compass plan effective 1/1/2026.

For 2026, churches pay for the Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP) at 3.3% of clergy's plan compensation, and UMLife Options at 2.2% of plan compensation for ½ time clergy.

The 2012 General Conference enacted changes to the Clergy Retirement Security Program. Effective 1/1/2014 for all contributions going forward through the plan ending on 12/31/2025, the CRSP Defined Benefit component was reduced from 1.25% of DAC to 1.0% of DAC. Under the CRSP Defined Contribution component, contributions were reduced from 3% to 2% of clergy plan compensation and, in addition, match up to 1% of compensation if clergy contributed 1% to UMPIP. Contributions previously made will not be affected by this change and benefits paid upon retirement will be based on the previous formula for all benefits accrued prior to 1/1/2014. Any benefits accrued from that date forward through the plan ending on 12/31/2025 are based on the new formula.

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

The rates of remittance for the Clergy Retirement Security Program/Ministerial Pension Plan (CRSP/MPP) and Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP) remained the same as last year's rates, at 95% for both 2025 and 2024. Sixteen percent of churches were unable to pay these bills on time. Below is a summary of 2025 remittances:

Type	Remittances Rate	2025 Shortfall	# of Churches Paying < 100%	% of Churches Paying < 100%
CRSP/CPP	95%	128,490	58	16%

To maintain clergypersons' participation in CRSP/UMPIP and CPP/UMLife Options, the Greater New Jersey Conference fully pays delinquent church accounts. Churches not fully meeting their obligations shift the burden to other churches via the "uncollectable fee" added to billings.

By 2025 year-end, the cumulative delinquent amount for years prior to 2025 for CRSP/MPP and CPP was a total of \$1,932,383, an increase of \$160,833.

We thank those churches that maintained faithful stewardship, paying 100% of their obligation. We also appreciate the continuing efforts of our district superintendents, Robert Zuckerman, CFO, Alexa Taylor, Insurance and Benefits Services Manager, to collect past due balances.

Compass:

Effective January 1, 2026, the Greater New Jersey Conference adopted the new United Methodist Pension plan known as "Compass" for full-time, three-quarter time and one-half time clergy and continues to sponsor UMPIP for those clergy in one-quarter time appointments. The Conference Board of Pension and Health are authorized to adopt the required plan choices and publish these choices in the Conference Journal and Yearbook.

In 2026, churches will be billed for Compass as follows:

- 5.47% of clergyperson's Compensation (salary plus 35% housing value or housing allowance) which covers the mandatory \$150/month, 3% of Compensation and conference administrative and uncollectable fees.
- 4% of clergyperson's Compensation for the "matching contribution" which assumes the full match. In the first quarter of the following year (2027), the Benefits department will reconcile this billed amount to the Pastor's actual contribution. If the actual contribution was less than 4% of compensation, a refund will be issued.
- Clergyperson's actual contribution

Pre-Retirement Seminar

The Board sponsored a retirement education session which was held in-person on March 19, 2026. The pre-retirement seminar focuses on those anticipating retirement within five years. Presentations by Robert Christophel of Wespath Benefits and Investments. Special thanks to Rev. Elouise Hill-Challenger, Chair, for organizing and Alexa Taylor, Insurance and Benefits Services Manager, and Tahnesia Gayle, Benefits Assistant for assisting and providing support.

Health Insurance

In 2021, the Board introduced the HealthFlex Exchange medical plan sponsored by Wespath Benefits and Investments. The options consist of six medical plans, three dental plans and three vision plans. Also available through the HealthFlex Exchange are Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA) and Health Savings Accounts (HSA). The medical provider network is Blue Cross/Blue Shield PPO; the pharmacy benefits are provided through OptumRx. Since 2022, participants have been paying a portion of the cost of their plan depending on the coverage selection (i.e., the amount that exceeds the premium credit approved by The Board each year).

For 2026, the default medical plan will remain the C2000 with HRA funding. Selection of another tiered plan potentially provides an opportunity for excess premium credit that may be used for qualifying medical expenses (such as co-pays and deductibles). The excess premium credit is accessed through a Visa branded debit card, or via a reimbursement form.

In 2026, the “Retiree Plan” will transition to a provision of an HRA fund contribution to eligible retirees to purchase coverage that best suits their individual needs through the marketplace with consultation from our chosen partner, Via Benefits.

Premiums and Remittances:

The following chart shows church premium rates in effect for 2026. These rates reflect a Cabinet-requested blended rate for all categories, which the Board has been using for several years, so that health insurance premiums are not a factor in determining clergy appointments.

Health Insurance Premiums for 2026	
Employee	\$27,100
Employee & Child(ren)	\$27,100
Employee & Spouse	\$27,100
Employee & Family	\$27,100

The Board thanks all churches that fully paid their health insurance premiums in 2025. Overall, churches paid 95% of the total \$4,567,858 health insurance billings, the same as the 2024 remittance rate of 95%. The 2025 shortfall was approximately \$228,816 and the amount owed from years prior to 2025 is \$2,291,002.

Churches failing to fully pay their premiums burden all churches and result in higher health insurance premiums for all. Thanks go to the Conference/BOPHB, CFO Robert Zuckerman, Insurance and Benefits Services Manager, Alexa Taylor and the Cabinet for their continued efforts to collect health insurance arrearages.

The Board and the Conference staff have continued their efforts to ease the continued transitions in healthcare. The Health Insurance Guidelines included in these 2026 Conference Reports and Recommendations have been updated.

Annuitant Healthcare Liability:

As of the end of 2025 (timing of this report), the Financial Accounting Standards Board FAS 158 liability for annuitant healthcare costs (retiree health liability) was \$21.3 million. This liability is the estimated present value of the future costs of annuitant healthcare. The Annuitant Health Insurance Contingency Fund (Retiree Healthcare Fund) described below has been set up to address this large liability over time.

Annuitant Health Insurance Contingency Fund (Retiree Healthcare Fund):

In 2002-2003 the Board, recognizing the growing magnitude of annuitant healthcare costs, together with the Centenary Fund, representatives of the Council of Finance & Administration (CFA), the Cabinet and the Association of Retired Ministers and Spouses (ARMS), developed a plan for a long-term Annuitant Health Insurance Contingency Fund that begins to offset the liability and ensure that retirees continue to enjoy conference-paid health insurance. The Fund was initiated by the 2003 GNJ Annual Conference and earmarked exclusively for healthcare costs for annuitants to cover higher premium costs expected in future years. During 2021, members of the Board of Pension and Health Benefits, CFA, Board of Trustees, Centenary Fund, the Cabinet, and Wespeth reviewed and updated the financial model being used to manage funding the annuitant healthcare liability; they all agreed that GNJ has a realistic plan to fund the liability. The model was shared with the Annual Conference at the October 2021 Adjourned session.

This is a critical initiative since it is clear that the Conference cannot continue to fund retiree health insurance on a cash basis out of the Conference Budget.

As of December 31, 2025, the Annuitant Health Insurance Contingency Fund (Retiree Healthcare Fund) held a balance of \$11.3M inclusive of net property proceeds of \$139.6K deposited in accordance with the GNJ Designated Fund legislation passed at the October 2021 Adjourned Session of the Annual Conference. In partnership with the Centenary Fund's investments and GNJ's designated fund, at the end of 2025, the retiree health liability is fully funded.

In 2025, \$647,000 of the premiums paid were from the Centenary Fund's approval of an annual contribution to the Conference.

The Board Itself

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

Current leadership is Rev. Elouise Hill-Challenger, Chair; Rev. Sunghyuk Kim, Vice Chair; Rev. Jesse Ruch, Secretary

Submitted by,
Rev. Elouise Hill-Challenger, Chair

What does God require of us? To act justly, love mercifully, and walk humbly with God. At Saint Paul School of Theology, this call from Micah 6:8 shapes everything we do—from preparing pastors to serve rural communities to fostering a beloved community where all belong. Centered in Christ and rooted in the Wesleyan tradition, we are committed to forming innovative leaders who make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

A Year of Growth and Vitality

2025 has been marked by remarkable momentum. Our Course of Study School educated 248 students—a 6% increase—with 628 course registrations, representing a 14% growth. These servant leaders are making a tangible difference: 42% serve rural communities with populations under 2,500, and 22 students serve as pastors of three or more churches. We celebrated 21 students completing the 20-course program, equipping them for licensed ministry.

Seminary enrollment grew by 9%, with a 33% increase in new students for Fall 2025. With a continued commitment to a more racially diverse student body, racial diversity increased to 29% of the student body identifying as one of a traditionally racially or ethnically minoritized group. Students from 31 states and 220 cities connect with us through flexible online and hybrid learning options, while 16 graduates of the Course of Study School have transitioned into our degree programs.

Living Our Strategic Vision

Our Board of Trustees has recently endorsed a strategic plan that reflects our values and responds to the changing contexts of the church and the world. We are striving to become a beloved community that embodies belonging, justice, equity, and inclusion. Our new Doctor of Ministry track in Spirituality, Innovation, and Adaptive Leadership exemplifies this vision, developing change agents grounded in contemplative spirituality and equipped with emotional intelligence and intercultural competence. These same principles permeate our Master of Divinity and Master of Arts in Christian Ministry programs.

Saint Paul remains financially healthy, operating with a balanced budget, no debt, and an endowment ten times our annual expenses. This sustainability, rooted in community donations, enables us to invest in scholarships, technology, and evolving academic programs that serve our students and the church.

Looking Ahead

In 2026, we are strengthening our foundation and expanding our horizons by cultivating a vibrant alum network—a lifelong professional and spiritual home. Through mentorship, resource sharing, and collaborative ministry, we are building a dynamic ecosystem that empowers graduates from their first day of classes through retirement and beyond.

Saint Paul School of Theology invites you to join us in this journey of formation, innovation, and transformation. Together, we are preparing leaders who embody justice, mercy, and humility as they serve Christ and His church.

STRENGTHENING THE BLACK CHURCH FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Strengthening the Black Church for the 21st Century (SBC21) is a vital ministry initiative of **The United Methodist Church** that exists to equip, empower, and resource Black congregations for faithful, effective, and sustainable ministry in today's context. Rooted in the historic witness of the Black Church, SBC21 affirms the spiritual, cultural, and prophetic leadership of African American congregations and seeks to strengthen their capacity for transformational ministry in the 21st century.

SBC21 emphasizes leadership development, congregational vitality, community engagement, and the advancement of justice-centered ministry. Through training, advocacy, and strategic collaboration, SBC21 supports Black churches as they respond to the spiritual, social, and economic challenges facing their communities while remaining grounded in Wesleyan theology and the liberating message of the Gospel.

Strengthening the Black Church in Greater New Jersey

The SBC21 ministry within the **Greater New Jersey Annual Conference** has engaged in intentional, prayerful, and strategic work to reimagine how Black congregations can be strengthened, revitalized, and positioned for long-term impact. This work has been shaped by deep listening, contextual analysis, and a commitment to honoring the unique histories and lived realities of Black churches throughout Greater New Jersey.

The committee affirms that Black congregations are revitalized most effectively through a holistic and intentional approach that includes:

- **Developing strong, spiritually grounded leaders** who are equipped for adaptive, trauma-responsive, and mission-focused ministry
- **Establishing a training hub** focused on key areas that equip and support Black congregations, including financial literacy and intergenerational leadership development
- **Deepening community engagement** so churches become trusted partners, anchors of hope, and agents of transformation within their neighborhoods
- **Becoming evangelistically intensive**, reclaiming a bold, culturally relevant, and justice-oriented witness to the Gospel
- **Strengthening economic sustainability** through sound stewardship practices, innovative funding strategies, and asset-based ministry models
- **Investing in technology** to enhance worship, discipleship, administration, and digital outreach
- **Promoting Afrocentric and liberation-based curricula** that affirm Black identity, history, and theological perspectives while forming disciples committed to justice, healing, and liberation

Through this reimagined vision, **SBC21 of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference** seeks to strengthen Black congregations not merely to survive, but to thrive, as centers of spiritual power, cultural affirmation, and community transformation for this generation and those to come.

Faithful Next Steps

In the year ahead, SBC21 of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference will focus on moving from vision to implementation by strengthening leadership pipelines, launching targeted training opportunities, and deepening partnerships with local congregations and conference ministries. Intentional attention will be given to equipping clergy and lay leaders, supporting congregational sustainability, and expanding community-centered and justice-focused initiatives.

As this work continues, SBC21 remains committed to prayerful discernment, measurable outcomes, and transparent communication with conference leadership, trusting God to guide the ongoing strengthening of Black congregations for faithful ministry in the 21st century.

Prayerfully Submitted by
Rev. Dr. Dennis Blackwell

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:

- 2025 GNJ Schedule of Properties Sold listing the details of the property sold during 2025, 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 1/9/26 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.
 - We are very happy to report to the Conference that the 2026 renewal will **decrease by 25%** driven by three key drivers:
 - GNJ's losses the past couple of years have trended more favorable, with 2025 potentially ending under \$1M; the lowest going back more than 10 years.
 - Overall softening in the insurance market. While the past two years we've seen several of our sister conferences across the US get dropped entirely and/or saw increases beyond what GNJ has experienced, this year, carriers are looking to add accounts.
 - Most importantly, increased competition. For the 2026 renewal, a company that, in the past could not offer the type of group program GNJ has, came forward with a very competitive bid. It was a very challenging decision that Board of Trustees discerned on and, for a number of reasons, ultimately chose to continue with Church Mutual and our 20+ year relationship with Sovereign Insurance as our brokers.
- Continue to be apprised of ongoing lawsuits. At the end of 2025, the Conference is party to two remaining lawsuits: One sexual abuse claim pending a resolution with the Boys Scouts of America, and one case (7 plaintiffs) regarding property dispute.
- Contracted with the Township of Long Branch, through an investment partner they are using, to purchase the property in Long Branch NJ. With this purchase, we were assured the church building will remain intact and the property will be used for community functions.
- Returned three properties to the Nanticoke Lenni Lenape Tribal Nation, keeping with the Journey of Hope legislation.
- Donated the following properties to advance the missions:

- Bethel UMC Church to Amani Hope Center
- Stratford UMC Parsonage to Unity in Christ Church
- 15 N 1st St, Paterson (empty lot) to Camp YDP

Submitted by,
Mathew Enzler, Chair, Board of Trustees

2025 GNJ SCHEDULE OF PROPERTIES SOLD

Property Name	Net Proceeds (HUD)		Due to GNJ (1)		CMA Average (2)		Listing Price	Buyer's name	Buyer's relationship with GNJ
	Gross Sales Price	Net Cash	Net Cash	Net Cash	Net Cash	Net Cash			
135 Fairmount, Califon NJ - Fairmount UMC- Parsonage	\$416,000	\$387,646	\$15,708	\$403,355	\$395,000	\$395,000	\$395,000	OMG Ventures, LLC	N/A
Woodruff UMC- Church, Cemetery and Parsonage	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	N/A	N/A	N/A	Nanticoke Lenni Lenape Tribal Nation	Journey of Hope (JOH)
Deepwater UMC	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	N/A	N/A	N/A	Nanticoke Lenni Lenape Tribal Nation	Journey of Hope (JOH)
Leesburg UMC- Church, lot and additional hall	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	N/A	N/A	N/A	Nanticoke Lenni Lenape Tribal Nation	Journey of Hope (JOH)
New Sharon UMC- 1831 Delsea Dr- Deptford NJ	\$170,000	\$159,083	\$3,189	\$162,272	\$249,000	\$249,000	\$249,000	NZN, Investment Group, LLC	N/A
Elwood Gaskill UMC- 422 Elwood - Hammonton NJ	\$335,000	\$312,887	(\$2,965)	\$309,922	\$335,000	\$335,000	\$335,000	New Jerusalem Church of God Inc	N/A
Stratford Parsonage- 9 sleepy Hollow Rd, Stratford NJ	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	N/A	N/A	N/A	Unity in Christ Church	New Church Start
Total	\$ 921,000	\$ 859,616	\$	\$ 875,548	\$	\$	\$		

2025 Operating Budget Cash Usage

\$ 177,750

Net Cash Invested

\$697,798

- Investment allocation per 2025 budget:
- Harvest Mission Fund
- Strategic Disciple Making
- Pension & Benefits Operational
- Retiree Health
- Property Operational

Budgeted Investment
\$3,672,250

2% \$13,956
 2% \$13,956
 1% \$6,978
 20% \$139,560
 75% \$523,349

(1) Due to GNJ = past due billings, maintenance/repair work completed and/or initial investment (in conference purchased parsonages/buildings). Could be offset by rental income, if applicable, which could result in net positive.

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

(3) We had multiple offers; gross price above asking, unfortunately due to underground storage tank and old septic, we made some concessions

(4) Returned to Nanticoke Lenni Lenape Tribal Nation

(5) Condition of the property significantly reduced price

(6) Deed donated to Unity in Christ Church

BOARD OF TRUSTEES, CURRENT HOLDINGS

AVAILABLE PROPERTIES						
Church Name	Address	County	Realtor	Listing Price	Notes	
Fairmount UMC Church	228 Old Turnpike Rd. Califon NJ	Hunterdon County	John Brito 908-242-7063	\$999,000	Deed restricted for religious organizations	
Dover UMC	37-41 E Blackwell St. Dover NJ	Morris County	John Brito 908-242-7063	\$1,950,000	Potential buyer cancelled contract; back on the market.	
Florence UMC	209 Broad St Florence	Burlington	Bryan Vurgason 609-828-4397	\$750,000		

UNDER CONTRACT						
Ellisdale UMC	926 Province Line Rd Allentown NJ	Monmouth	Valerie Vargas 917-217-0599	\$200,000	U/C \$170,000 Waiting for subdivision approval from TWP	
Sharptown -	22-24 Church & 8 Chapel Pilesgrove	Salem	Bryan Vurgason 609-828-4397	\$925,000 \$60,000	U/C Selling together	
Centenary UMC	108 N Union Ave, Lambertville	Hunterdon	Bryan Vurgason 609-828-4397	\$799,999	U/C \$850,000	
Trinity UMC	47 E Main St, Stony Point NY	Rockland	Chris Scibelli 845-494-3749	\$600,000	U/C \$525,000	
Asbury UMC	61 Atlantic Ave Long Branch NJ	Monmouth	Valerie Vargas 917-217-0599	\$2,850,000	U/C \$1,500,000 Being sold to Township for community use; town restricted re-zoning which could have sold for more.	

Properties with issues					
Church Name	Address	County	Realtor	Listing Price	Notes
House in Mansfield	267 Main St. Port Murray	Warren			Not ours. However, TWP thinks it is
Land in Roxbury	6 Oneida Roxbury	Morris			Property has no value

Rentals					
Church Name	Address	County	RENTED		Notes
Centenary UMC	108 N Union Lambertville	Hunterdon	Rented to IPUL		Month to month lease \$650/month (already sent notice to terminate)

Other Conference Properties:

- I. District Parsonages:
 - Capital
 - Raritan Valley
 - Gateway North
 - MRC – partially rented to UM Communities

- 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

- III. Other properties:
 - Lord's Grace- Bishop, Trustees and Chancellor Lynn Caterson working through dispute over closed property.

- IV. JOH Properties – offered/offering to Nation:
 - Zion UMC- Diving Creek
 - Cedarville UMC- Cedarville
 - First UMC - Bridgeton

- V. Other closed properties:
 - Trinity UMC- South Dennis – District Superintendent Derrick Dohery to present proposal to Trustees
 - Sharpton UMC properties – newer building under contract with County as of December 2025 after about a one-year “visioning team” review of potential usage; remaining properties (older church with two cemeteries and new parsonage) still under discernment. Decision expected by May 2026 Annual Conference.
 - Bethel UMC Church - donated to Amani Hope Center
 - Stratford UMC Parsonage – donated to Unity in Christ Church
 - 15 N 1st St, Paterson- empty lot donated to Camp YDP

UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Dr. Kent Millard, President

Since 1871, United Theological Seminary has prepared faithful and fruitful Christian leaders who make disciples of Jesus Christ. In the 2024-25 fiscal year, the seminary served 642 graduate students, 275 doctoral and 375 masters,* reflecting approximately 30 percent enrollment growth since 2021 and placing United among the largest United Methodist seminaries in the United States.

A diverse community of many denominations, races and nationalities, United welcomed students from 38 states, 24 nations, and 54 denominations, with United Methodists representing the largest denominational group within the student body.

Academics

United's academic programs remain grounded in the historic Christian faith, scriptural holiness, and a commitment to the renewal of the church, preparing graduates to serve with wisdom, integrity, and hope.

United introduced a Doctor of Theology in 2024 to support pastor-scholars called to ministry at the intersection of the church and academy. The new degree program welcomed 13 students in its first year.

The seminary's Doctor of Ministry program continues to attract experienced ministry leaders seeking advanced professional education focused on faithful leadership. In the 2024-25 school year, 262 students participated in the mentor-led program.

Master's programs include eight houses of study, serving nearly 200 students in the United States and around the world, with programs offered in English, Spanish and Korean. In July 2025, 11 students attended the first Contextual Ministry Retreat for the African House of Study, held at the Kenya Methodist Conference Center in Nairobi. The Hispanic House of Study will celebrate its first class of graduates in May 2026, with candidates from across the United States, Mexico, Colombia, and Peru.

Through rigorous scholarship, intentional mentoring, worship, and community life, as well as practical engagement with the church's needs, academic life at United advances the seminary's vision of *Spirit-led leaders, a Christ-like Church, and a transformed world*.

Finances

United continues to focus on reducing the educational debt of its students. The Fresh Wind Campaign to raise \$10 million for the endowment is expanding scholarship opportunities for current and future students. The campaign has raised more than \$9 million toward this goal, by the grace of God and through the generosity of alumni/ae, churches, and friends of the seminary.

Looking Ahead

United enters the coming years with gratitude for God's faithfulness and confidence in God's future. Several senior leaders have answered new calls, and President Dr. Kent Millard has announced his retirement effective June 30, 2026, concluding ten years of service marked by encouragement, vision, and stability. A Presidential Search Committee is at work to identify United's next president, who will begin service on July 1, 2026.

Trusting God's promise spoken through the prophet Isaiah, "I am about to do a new thing" (Isaiah 43:19), United remains committed to preparing Christian leaders who boldly proclaim the gospel and make disciples of Jesus Christ. Thanks be to God!

*12-month unduplicated headcount enrollment for the 2024-25 fiscal year from July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025.



United
Women
in Faith

**Greater New Jersey United Women in Faith
2025 Events**

November 21 –23	Leadership Development Days via zoom with National
January 11	Conference Leadership Development with Leadership Team Meeting via zoom.
April 12	GNJUWFaith Annual Spring Meeting with Emily Jones “For Such a Time as this”: Call to interrupt the School-to-Prison Pipeline Wesley UMC, South Plainfield, NJ
May 18 – May 22	26th EPA & GNJ Annual Conference Wildwood Convention Center, Wildwood, NJ with Virgie Williams talking about GNJUWFaith
July 18-20	Mission “u” Three Day School - Theme “Practicing Hope Together” with Dean Rev. Elizabeth Vaneekhoven Centenary University, Hackettstown, NJ
October 18	GNJUWFaith Annual Fall Meeting with Suzanne Toma talked about the UWFaith Legacy campaign and Ebony Diaz talked about Membership Growth and our new Unstoppable campaign Mission Resource Center, 205 Jumping Brook Road, Neptune, NJ
December 10	Cape Atlantic District received a grant for “Stopping the School to Prison Pipeline” from National.



United
Women
in Faith

**Greater New Jersey United Women in Faith
2026 Upcoming Events**

- January 10** **Conference Leadership Development Event and Leadership Team Meeting** via zoom.
- April 11** **GNJUMW Annual Spring Meeting with Joyce Pratt talking about the grant for “Stopping the School to Prison Pipeline”**
Central UMC, 5 Marvin Ave, Linwood, NJ.
- May 15-17** **Assembly in Indianapolis, IN. with Theme “Dream it! Believe it! Do it!”**
- May 17 – May 21** **27th EPA & GNJ Annual Conference**
Wildwood Convention Center, Wildwood, NJ
- July 17-19** **Mission “u” Three Day School – Theme “A Deep Knowing: Experiencing Emmanuel through Every Part of Our Lives”**
with Dean Rev. Bernadette Cataline
Centenary University, Hackettstown, NJ
- October 17** **GNJUMW Annual Fall Meeting**
Mission Resource Center, 205 Jumping Brook Road, Neptune, NJ

Website address for newsletters: GNJUWFaith.org

WESLEY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Rev. Dr. David McAllister-Wilson, President

As I complete my tenure as president of Wesley Theological Seminary, I am confident in handing the leadership to Dr. Carla Works, the 11th President of our school. Dr. Works, Dean and Woodrow and Mildred Miller Professor of Biblical Theology at Wesley DC, is a distinguished New Testament scholar, educator, and church-centered theologian.

Wesley Theological Seminary (Wesley DC) remains steadfast in its mission to equip persons for Christian ministry and leadership in the church and the world, to advance theological scholarship, and to model a prophetic voice in the public square. In a season marked by institutional change, civic uncertainty, and renewed hope for the United Methodist Church, Wesley DC actively forms leaders who are spiritually grounded, intellectually rigorous, and engaged with the world God loves through the following programs.

Master of Divinity, Master of Arts, Master of Theological Studies Degrees: Wesley DC offers Master of Divinity, Master of Arts, and Master of Theological Studies degrees through residential, hybrid, and fully online formats. Our programs serve a diverse student body representing a wide range of denominations, cultural contexts, and vocational callings. Across all modalities, Wesley DC emphasizes ministerial formation that integrates theological depth, spiritual practice, and contextual engagement. <https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/study/>

Doctor of Ministry Degree: Wesley DC remains one of the largest Doctor of Ministry programs in the United States and serves experienced ministerial leaders from across the world. In May 2025, ten chaplains from southern Africa graduated through a landmark partnership with Africa University, reflecting Wesley DC's growing global reach. Our DMin tracks for military chaplains continue to grow, including through a renewed partnership with the U.S. Army Institute for Religious Leadership. New tracks in Church Leadership Excellence, Soul Care, Global Church Leadership, and others begin in 2027. Learn more about how you can grow in wisdom and leadership at: <https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/doctorofministry/program/>.

Course of Study: As the regional Course of Study school for the Northeast Jurisdiction, Wesley DC delivers the full Course of Study curriculum online. Scholar-practitioners teach these courses, equipping Local Pastors across the denomination with flexible, high-quality preparation for ministry. <https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/degree-programs/course-of-study/>

Ministry Certificates and Lifelong Learning: Wesley Pathways for Ministry offers online courses and certificates to help you discover your passion for ministry and strengthen your leadership skills, whether you are a layperson or a pastor. Courses and certificates help people gain ministry and leadership skills for church, community, and specialized ministry settings. Many courses/certificates are stackable for master's or doctoral credit and/or can be taken for CEUs. <https://www.wesleypathways.com/>

Office of Admissions: Are you ready to explore your next faithful step? The Admissions Office regularly holds in-person and online open houses for potential master's and DMin students, and admissions officers are available to answer your questions and help you discern. <https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/admissions/explorewesley/>

The Hub for (Re)imagining Ministry: Is your church ready to engage new generations or journey toward thriving in new ways? The Hub is currently accepting applications for its [Engaging Young Adults](#) nationwide, virtual cohort for congregations beginning August 2026, and will be recruiting new cohorts of congregations for [Bringing Church Home](#) (helping churches better accompany and support parents/caregivers in sharing their faith) and [Children of Faith](#) (helping churches center children in worship and formation) in fall 2026. The Hub is also entering into partnerships with UMC districts and annual conferences, equipping leaders to experiment, learn, and adapt faithfully in their local contexts. <https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/wesley-innovation-hub/>

The Lewis Center for Church Leadership: The Lewis Center welcomed Rev. Dr. Jonathan Page as its new Director in 2025. Dr. Page brings deep experience in leadership development across ecclesial and secular contexts and is guiding the Center into its next chapter of service to the Church. Through its widely read *Leading Ideas* newsletter and the *Leading Ideas Talks* podcast, the Lewis Center reaches thousands of leaders across the denomination. <https://www.churchleadership.com/>

The Henry Luce III Center for the Arts and Religion: The Luce Center welcomed Rev. Timothy Chon, MDiv, MFA as its new Director in 2025. Since Spring 2025, the Luce Center, which serves as a vital intersection of theology, creativity, and public imagination, has presented four exhibitions in the Dadian Gallery. In 2025, the Luce Center completed a major studio renovation that expanded capacity to support multiple artists-in-residence simultaneously. The Center welcomed professional Artist-in-Residence Khaleelah Harris alongside new Student Artists-in-Residence, strengthening its commitment to nurturing artists at every stage of practice. <https://www.luceartsandreligion.org/>

Center for Public Theology (CPT): CPT builds on its nearly fifty-year legacy by equipping faith leaders for thoughtful, courageous public witness. In collaboration with the Florida Annual Conference and with support from Trinity Wall Street, CPT leads a Public Theology Fellowship addressing immigration and public witness in politically diverse congregations. CPT continues to offer its flagship course, *Faith and Politics in the Public Square*, which remains open to seminarians nationwide. The course brings participants to Washington, DC for sustained engagement with policymakers, journalists, scholars, and activists. This year's cohort engaged leaders including Senator Chris Coons, NPR's Michel Martin, Judge Thomas Griffith, and Tope Folarin of the Institute for Policy Studies—preparing leaders to serve faithfully amid rapidly shifting public realities. <https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/ice/programs/public-theology/>

Community Engagement Institute): CEI forms leaders for justice-centered, community-rooted ministry. In March 2025, CEI hosted *Fostering Urban Vitality and a Heart for the City*, a two-day urban ministry conference in Baltimore, with support from City Seminary of New York and the Lilly Endowment. CEI offers traditional courses and immersive travel seminars open to all master's-level students. With grants from the General Board of Global Ministries, CEI continues to offer the *Heal the Sick* Health Minister's Certificate. Since its inception, the program has trained more than 500 health ministers across 38 states and seven countries. In Spring 2026, CEI will offer *Trauma-Informed Congregations*, equipping leaders to address trauma with theological, cultural, and communal wisdom. <https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/ice/about-us/overview-2/>

Wesley Theological Seminary remains deeply committed to the United Methodist Church and to the formation of leaders who serve with humility, imagination, and courage. As the Church continues to discern its future, Wesley stands ready—faithful to its mission, responsive to the moment, and hopeful in God's ongoing work. For the Church. For the world. For such a time as this.

Call us: (202) 885-8659 Email us: admissions@wesleyseminary.edu

Follow us: Facebook/IG: @WesleySeminary and YouTube/LinkedIn: @WesleyTheologicalSeminary
Submitted by Lyvonne Briggs, Director of Strategic Communications and Marketing

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RULES OF ORDER

Paragraph (¶) references are to the 2020-2024 Book of Discipline. 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 [United Women of Faith], the conference president of United Methodist Men, the conference lay leader, district lay leaders, the conference director of Lay Servant 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 (12) and seventeen (17) and one young person between the ages of eighteen (18) and thirty (30) from each district to be selected in such a manner as may be determined by the annual conference. Each charge served by more than one clergy shall be entitled to as many lay members as there are clergy members.” (¶ 33) 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 (¶332), provisional members (¶326), associate members, (¶321). (See also ¶ 33).” (¶ 602.1)
 - a) “Clergy members in full connection shall have the right to vote on all matters in the annual conference 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. Provisional clergy members who have completed all of their educational

requirements may vote to elect clergy delegates to General and jurisdictional or central conferences.” (§602.1b)

- 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. (§ 634.1) Affiliate clergy members shall have the right voice but not vote in the annual conference.” (§602.1c)
- d) “Full-time and part-time local pastors 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. (§634.1) Local pastors who have completed course of study or an M.Div. degree from a University Senate Approved theological school or its equivalent as recognized in the central conferences 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.” (602.1d)

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 § 33), 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.” (§ 33) 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)

I 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 59a. 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 clergyperson 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 submit all submissions to the following: CORR and COSROW for review for explicit or implicit bias; to CFA to ensure

that 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 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, CF&A and conference chancellor 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. The determination 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 Workbook. If the maker of the submission refuses to make suggested changes, the suggestions made will be printed next to the Resolution in the Pre-Conference Workbook.

- 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.

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 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.¹
- 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)

¹ See Judicial Council decision 1328

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/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 ¶ 508 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.

The conference secretary will publish these nominations on the conference website and by any additional methods of her/his choosing, there shall be a continued opportunity to place names in nomination up until March 31st, particularly in order to assist the conference members in fulfilling our desire to nominate a diverse and inclusive pool of candidates. An individual who desires to be a delegate shall download and complete

candidacy nominations form from the web page. At the bottom of nominations for Lay Delegates shall be the names of two Lay Members of the Annual Conference who endorse the nomination of the candidate. On the bottom of nominations for Clergy Delegates shall be the names of two Clergy Members who are eligible to vote for such delegates, and who endorse the nomination of the candidate.

- 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 69.
- 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 –

- a) 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.
- b) 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.

- c) 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, ¶ 36 (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, ¶ 37 (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 83(a) above). If no other nominations have been submitted as indicated in Rule 83(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 83(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.