

# 1 Reports to Greater New Jersey

## 3 Archives and History, Commission on

5 **Mission:** The Commission on Archives and History (CAH) engages in the ministry of memory. We  
6 advance our Wesleyan heritage by doing extensive outreach and providing consistent resources for  
7 GNJC at a minimal impact on the shared ministry budget, thanks to the tremendous dedication and  
8 exceptional stewardship of our team. With changes to commission membership and restrictions on  
9 physical access to our archives collection at Drew University created by Covid-19 social distancing  
10 measures, 2020 has been a year of transition. As the keepers of our missional memory, we support vital  
11 congregations by resourcing clergy, lay leaders, and church historians with the tools to strengthen our  
12 Wesleyan identity. We fulfilled our Disciplinary mandate to identify, preserve and make available the  
13 historic record of ministry within GNJC. Our extensive physical archival and digital collections serve as  
14 resources within which local churches can research their “Methodist DNA,” and also function as  
15 repositories where churches can safely and securely maintain their historical records and artifacts.  
16 Additionally, we post guidelines for Church Historians, suggestions for writing church histories, records  
17 retention schedules, and provide other valuable resources online through the CAH webpage on the  
18 GNJC website.

20 **Archival Collection:** We preserve the historical records of closed churches within the bounds of GNJC  
21 and its antecedents and provide for the retention of the corporate records of GNJC boards, agencies,  
22 and committees. We manage a 1,100+ cubic foot archival collection located in the fire-safe, climate  
23 controlled, archival depository in the vault of the General Commission on Archives and History (GCAH)  
24 of the UMC, in the Archives and History Center at Drew University in Madison, NJ. Our archival space is  
25 secured through a unique and cost-effective rental agreement with GCAH. We look forward to Covid-19  
26 restrictions being lifted and our materials again being available through Drew University’s Archival  
27 librarian.

29 **Ancestry.Com:** Our GNJCAH page on Ancestry.com received a total of **430,693 page-views, 224,992**  
30 **image views** and **205,701 text views** during 2020. As a result, our closed church vital statistics (births,  
31 baptisms, deaths, and marriage records) are easily accessible, highly utilized, and extend our CAH  
32 influence far beyond GNJC. **On Ancestry.com, our GNJC records are identified as: New Jersey, United**  
33 **Methodist Church Records, 1800-1970.**

35 **Internet Archive:** We support a digital library of historical journals and resources on Internet Archive (IA)  
36 and maintain a link to this resource from the GNJC website. IA is a free portal that allows us to post an  
37 unlimited amount of material online without impacting GNJC data rates. Digital copies of The Historical  
38 Trail and The Circuit Writer, the respective historical journals of the former SNJ & NNJ Annual  
39 Conferences, are available on Internet Archive. Since 2016, the GNJC materials on IA have generated  
40 **4,390 page-views; 1,196 page-views** were made in 2020.

42 **Work of The Archivist:** Our commission assisted local churches in documenting their past ministry,  
43 individuals seeking church and family genealogical information with the help of our volunteer archivist,  
44 Walt Jones. Walt and Mark Shenise also assist the Conference Trustees with clarification of issues of  
45 boundaries and deeds, etc. In addition to processing records for our collection, Walt also responded to  
46 21 search requests in 2020: 7 for vital statistics (marriage and baptismal records), 7 for church history, 5  
47 for genealogy, and 2 for GNJ records.

1 **Church History Awards:** We inspire the celebration of our Wesleyan heritage and the preservation of  
2 local church history by hosting three annual church history awards; **The Robert B. Steelman Church**  
3 **History Award, the Morris L. Smith Ethnic Church History Award, and the John C. Goodwin Multi-**  
4 **Media History Award.** Each award is dependent upon qualified submissions. **In 2020, we awarded the**  
5 **first-ever John C. Goodwin Multi-Media Award to Haddonfield UMC. for their video, “The Heritage**  
6 **Project (190th Anniversary).”**

7  
8 **Conference Historic Sites:** Recognizing churches as conference historic sites inspires congregations to  
9 celebrate their place in the mission of GNJC. The commission has now completed the multi-quadrennial  
10 task of formally recognizing the conference historic sites of the former Northern New Jersey Annual  
11 Conference.

12  
13 **Nominate Your Church:** We welcome congregations to request nomination as a Conference Historic  
14 Site. A church must demonstrate that a site played a significant role in the historic development of our  
15 conference or denomination to be considered. We believe that there are other possible candidates for  
16 this honor in GNJ, especially within our growing diversity of ethnic churches, and invite congregations to  
17 reach out to the commission to explore this opportunity.

18  
19 **GNJ Conference Historic Sites:**

20 *[GNJC sites currently listed on the General Commission on Archives and History (GCAH) Conference*  
21 *Historic Site roster. Sites listed in order registered by GCAH. GCAH Historic Site Number precedes the*  
22 *church name.]*

- 23 1) 44 Cape May Monument, Cape May, NJ
- 24 2) 174 Mt Zion UM Church, Lawnside, NJ
- 25 3) 175 First UM Church, Trenton, NJ
- 26 4) 176 Head of the River UM Church, Estell Manor, NJ
- 27 5) 177 First UM Church, Salem, NJ
- 28 6) 178 Ocean Grove Camp Meeting, Ocean Grove, NJ
- 29 7) 207 Broad Street UM Church, Burlington, NJ
- 30 8) 214 Old First UM Church, West Long Beach, NJ
- 31 9) 223 Batsto-Pleasant Mills Meeting House, Pleasant Mills, NJ
- 32 10) 224 Gloucester Point, Gloucester, NJ
- 33 11) 272 First UM Church, Sea Bright, NJ
- 34 12) 273 John Wesley UM Church, Swainton, NJ
- 35 13) 274 Trinity UM Church, Merchantville, NJ
- 36 14) 284 Pemberton UM Church, Pemberton, NJ
- 37 15) 291 Old Stone Church, Woolwich Township, NJ
- 38 16) 320 Mt. Hope UM Church, Salem, NJ
- 39 17) 426 "Old Main", Pennington School, Pennington, NJ
- 40 18) 483 Mount Tabor Camp Meeting, Mount Tabor, NJ
- 41 19) 500 South Seaville Camp Meeting Association, South Seaville, NJ
- 42 20) 509 Flanders UM Church, Flanders, NJ
- 43 21) 510 The Neighborhood Center in Camden, NJ
- 44 22) 511 Port Elizabeth UM Church, Port Elizabeth, NJ
- 45 23) 513 McCullough House, Asbury, NJ
- 46 24) 514 Asbury UM Church, Asbury, NJ
- 47 25) 519 Franklin-St. John’s UMC, Newark, NJ
- 48 26) 520 Morristown UM Church, Morristown, NJ

- 1 27) 522 The Theological School, Drew University, Madison, NJ
- 2 28) 537 Frankford Plains UMC, Frankford Plains, Sussex County, NJ
- 3 29) 538 Old Stone Church, Upper Nyack, NY
- 4 30) 539 St. John UM Church, Fairfield Twp., NJ (Fordville)
- 5 31) 551: Evangelical UM Church, Clarksboro, NJ
- 6 32) 552: Kingwood UM Church, Stockton, NJ
- 7 33) 553: Emanuel UM Church, Union City, NJ
- 8 34) 556: Centenary College, now Centenary University, Hackettstown, NJ

9  
10 **NEJCAH:** We continued to have a representative, Donald DeGroat, on the Northeast Jurisdiction  
11 Commission on Archives and History Executive Board, which gave GNJ CAH a leadership role on the  
12 jurisdictional commission.

13  
14 **Consultation And Speaking:** We also stand ready to provide consultation on historical issues and  
15 assistance in planning and celebrating significant anniversaries and events, including providing speakers  
16 to lift up the historical significance of the church or explore other topics related to our Wesleyan  
17 tradition, American Methodism and GNJ history.

18  
19 **Personal Privilege:**

20 I wish to thank all of the current and former members of the commission for their dedicated and faithful  
21 efforts to advance our ministry of memory within GNJC. I want to specifically thank the Rev. Nick Petrov,  
22 who moved out of state to assume a professor’s position in Missouri. We will miss his quiet and  
23 thoughtful presence. I would also like to especially thank the Rev. Donald DeGroat, our former Vice-  
24 Chairperson and Treasurer, who rotated off the commission this year. I am deeply grateful for Don’s  
25 faithful leadership and support these past four years. He has led many of our initiatives during this time,  
26 including our Conference Historic Site process and our Church History Awards, as well as expended  
27 much energy on our Conference Table displays, supporting me in shaping the commission agenda and  
28 laboring to keep an accurate accounting of our commission budget. We are grateful that he will  
29 continue to actively support the ministry of the commission as a consultant.

30  
31 I feel privileged to have served as chairperson of the Greater New Jersey Conference (GNJC) Commission  
32 on Archives and History (CAH) throughout this quadrennium and beyond.

33  
34 Submitted by,  
35 John D. Callanan, Chairperson

36  
37 **Cabinet**

38  
39 *“God is our refuge and strength and help always near in times of great trouble. That’s why we won’t be*  
40 *afraid when the world falls apart.” Psalm 46: 1-2a CEB*

41  
42 Psalm 46 is a psalm of trust and self-assurance in God during difficult times and circumstances. What a  
43 powerful text this is! We all have experienced challenges and difficult moments since the pandemic  
44 began. COVID-19 has affected many people, communities, and the church. Life as we knew it is no more  
45 and we are adapting to an emerging new normal. This pandemic has changed the way we gather, how  
46 we plan and do ministry, how we worship, do evangelism and mission. With confidence, we can testify  
47 that God indeed has been our strength and help during these troubled times so that we continue to lead  
48 in our communities in the name of Jesus Christ.

1 The Cabinet would like to thank all clergy and laity from our Conference as you have led your local  
2 congregations with faith, courage, and resilience. You have been committed to the mission of Jesus  
3 Christ for such a time as this! We have continued to witness how you are doing God’s work in a new way  
4 with flexibility and creativity. Since the beginning of this pandemic, churches closed their buildings but  
5 NOT the ministries and missions. Now, more than ever, the words of the hymn, **“We Are the Church”**  
6 has become a reality in our midst, **“The church is not a building, the church is not a steeple, the church  
7 is not a resting place, the church is a people.”**  
8

9 GNJ congregations have adapted and creatively found ways to be the church. Pastors and leaders have  
10 continued to be open, flexible, and adaptable to our current realities. Many churches have transitioned  
11 between online, outdoor, and inside worship services as the numbers of infections changed. District  
12 Superintendents continue to be engaged with congregations in their districts via Zoom, YouTube,  
13 Facebook, and other media platforms to praise God and worship together, to offer support and to let  
14 the church and pastors know that they are not alone. As a cabinet, we have experienced powerful and  
15 creative worship services. GNJ congregations continue to do Spirit-filled, creative, and life-giving work in  
16 their communities and beyond.  
17

18 During this time of pandemic, the Cabinet continues to experience God’s power, endurance, and  
19 wisdom as we lead our districts and regions for such a time as this! We completed all of our Charge  
20 Conferences by Zoom. Our districts and regions have engaged in meaningful workshops and trainings to  
21 continue equipping laity and clergy for the task ahead and to help churches to continue doing ministry in  
22 their communities. As “missional strategists”, District Superintendents continue to strategize with the  
23 Connectional Ministry Resource team and the Circuit Elders to coach and develop resources like pace  
24 groups, workshops, training, Foundational or Days of learning, Financial Seminars, small groups, and  
25 many other district/regional events to strengthen and equip local congregations to remain vital during  
26 these unprecedented times. This year we continue moving towards the regional approach. This method  
27 will help us to provide quality and meaningful resources in a more effective way.  
28

29 Our regular Annual Conference, originally scheduled for the month of May, was postponed to the Fall  
30 (October 5-6) and by special resolution and mail vote, we held our first virtual Annual Conference,  
31 “Courage”. We celebrated the commissioning and ordination of siblings in Christ that God continues to  
32 call into the ministry, celebrated retirements of pastors that have served faithfully, and a service of  
33 remembrance. The Journey of Hope legislation was put forward and passed. This is an audacious plan  
34 for GNJ to work collectively to i) end the sin of racism in our conference and churches, ii) equity and  
35 inclusion, iii) and sustainable congregational vitality. We are planning and soon will start working with  
36 congregations to develop their Journey of Hope ACT Plans. The GNJ strategic plan, along with the  
37 Journey of Hope, solidify GNJ’s commitment to create a culture of intercultural competency in our  
38 conference.  
39

40 Since our last Annual Conference in October 2020, District Superintendents have continued working and  
41 giving out COVID-19 grants to the Districts/Regions to alleviate financial difficulties in the local churches  
42 due to this devastating pandemic. So far, we have given more than \$1.1 million dollars in grants. We  
43 witness how local churches continue to be engaged in mission and ministry, and some churches have  
44 increased their efforts during the pandemic to serve the increasing needs. We praise God for your hard  
45 work and faithfulness to the mission. The Bishop and Cabinet encouraged churches once again to offer  
46 two weeks of Renewal Leave to pastors at the beginning of the year 2021. The Conference along with  
47 Bishop Schol, and the District Superintendents, created two worship services with Korean and Spanish  
48 translations for the churches to use while pastors were taking their Renewal Leave.

1 The cabinet recognizes and grieves the new financial challenges before us as a Conference, and trust  
2 that God is with us during this difficult season and that God will lead and help us so that the mission can  
3 continue moving forward.

4  
5 We also adapted the way we meet by holding all our Cabinet meetings, Cabinet Retreats, Charge  
6 Conferences, Special Charge Conferences, appointments, and consultations by ZOOM. God is faithful!

7  
8 During the appointment season the Cabinet and Bishop Schol enter into a season of discernment as we  
9 seek God's guidance to match the pastors' gifts and graces with the congregations needs. There are  
10 good appointments this year that will continue to advance the mission of the church forward. We pray  
11 for pastors and congregations that will receive a new appointment this year. We pray for a good and  
12 healthy transition even in the midst of the pandemic.

13  
14 We continue to mourn the loss of our colleague and friend, Rev. Myrna Bethke – we deeply miss her  
15 contagious laughter, wisdom, hard work and strategic and missional mind. Losing her so suddenly was,  
16 and still is, very hard but we continue trusting in God for healing. She, and her legacy of love and service,  
17 will forever live in our hearts. Since Myrna left us in July 2020, her position has been vacant. Glenn  
18 Conaway and Brian Roberts took her district under their wings by caring, directing, leading, and  
19 supporting the pastors and churches-that she was so devoted to in the Gateway South District. We are  
20 so thankful for their faithfulness and hard work.

21  
22 Now in 2021, we find ourselves in another time of transition as two of our District Superintendents will  
23 be moving on to what God has next for them in their journey. The Rev. Dr. Gina Hendrickson from  
24 Northern Shore will start a new missional appointment as the Lead Pastor for the First UMC of  
25 Moorestown and Rev. Gina Kim from Palisades will retire. We give God thanks for both of these strong  
26 and faithful women of God. They have served their districts, regions, and the Cabinet faithfully and with  
27 excellence. We pray God’s blessings on their next steps of their lives and ministry. We will miss you!

28  
29 Finally, there will be a significant adjustment moving forward in the area of superintending and  
30 resourcing, but we trust that God will sustain us for the days, months, and years ahead!

31  
32 Submitted by,  
33 Rev. Dr. Eunice Vega-Perez on behalf of the GNJ Cabinet

## 34 35 **CAMP YDP**

36  
37 On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I am extremely pleased to report that in the very challenging year of  
38 2020, CAMP YDP has proven to be relevant, resilient, and instrumental, supporting the children and  
39 families in the neighborhood. In the last 12 months, thanks to the hard work and collaboration of the  
40 director, staff, board of trustees and with generous support from GNJUMC, CAMP YDP was able to meet  
41 the challenges that developed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Even though our doors closed for  
42 three months due to a state health mandate, CAMP reopened for summer and fall programming.  
43 Through teamwork, faith, and persistence this year has resulted in a vital program that has found clear  
44 purpose during a year of cultural hardship and chaos. I gratefully report this year’s developments.

45  
46 **Licensing** : All state licenses and certifications are to code. CAMP YDP is in good standing with the city  
47 and state.

48

1 **Staffing:** We have had an exciting new development at CAMP with the hiring of Kenrick Wagner as our  
2 new director. Kenrick is dedicated to providing top quality youth programming and building a generation  
3 of leaders who will use creativity to learn and thrive. He is a passionate, creative, effective leader. He  
4 has expertly picked up the CAMP YDP mission and moves us one step closer to transforming the  
5 neighborhood.

6  
7 **Programming:** CAMP YDP is currently supporting Paterson Public School students daily as they attend  
8 virtual school, homework support and after school fun. A dynamic summer program is in the works.

### 9 10 **Building and Grounds**

11 During this past year the playground and building have had many upgrades. We are currently working  
12 with PSE&G, The Bergen County Women’s Junior League, and local professionals to maintain and  
13 improve the building, the playground, and the future sacred green space where St. Phillip’s Church once  
14 stood.

15  
16 **Finances:** In lieu of holding any in-person fundraising events, due to gathering constraints and concerns,  
17 the board set up fundraising letter campaign and an on-line donation button on the website. We are  
18 grateful to our donors for their generous support. This includes many United Methodist Churches, The  
19 United Methodist Women, and a generous Community Outreach Grant from GNJUMC. We received  
20 three other grants.

21  
22 **Partners :** While we have had to temporarily pause all in-person volunteerism, we are grateful for the  
23 steadfast support of our partners; GNJUMC, A Future With Hope, Bishop Janes UMC, MPUMC,  
24 Ridgewood UMC, Christ Church UMC, Teaneck UMC, The United Methodist Women, Hawthorne  
25 Christian Academy, Indian Hills High School, Ramapo High School, the Unitarian Society of Ridgewood,  
26 Realtors Care Foundation of Bergen County, Inner Faith Performing Arts, The Paterson Alliance,  
27 Rebuilding Together North Jersey.

### 28 29 **President’s Comments**

30 Keeping it real, this has been a hard year. It has been for most people and organizations. But when I step  
31 back and reflect on the last year at CAMP YDP, I am grateful for the difficult moments and decisions. It  
32 has been a year of learning, development, grace and resilience and CAMP is better off for these reasons.  
33 My sincere gratitude goes out to the board of trustees, Sherise, our previous director, Kenrick, our new  
34 director, the staff, GNJUMC and all of our donors and partners. Because of you CAMP YDP continues to  
35 make a difference!

### 36 37 **Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns, Commission on**

38  
39 I am deeply humbled to present my report as the Chairperson of the CCUIC for year 2020-2021. Under  
40 the new structure approved by the 2021 GNJ Annual Conference, I or my representative represented  
41 within the Leadership Team of the Conference Connectional Table, but due to the COVID situation we  
42 were unable to meet as the committee for this past several months.

43 As members together in the Body of Christ, we seek to “work toward the full reception of the gift of  
44 Christian unity in every aspect of the Church’s life and to foster approaches to ministry and mission that  
45 more fully reflect the oneness of Christ’s church in the human community. We also seek to “work for the  
46 establishment and strengthening of relationships with other living faith communities, and to further  
47 dialogue with persons of other faiths, cultures, and ideologies”. Our responsibilities are listed in

1 paragraph 642 of the 2016 Book of Discipline, and our Commission is in connectional relationship with  
2 the General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns.

3  
4 This is an interactive, online training designed to support Christian Unity and Interreligious Relationship  
5 (CUIR) Chairs in Annual Conferences across the UM Connection. The training consists of every-other-  
6 month, hour-long Zoom gatherings. Subjects chosen by the CUIR Chairs are explored during some  
7 gatherings, and other gatherings are times of relationships-building and idea-sharing among the  
8 participants. Participants must pre-register for the live engagements, but teaching times are recorded  
9 and uploaded to bishops' website.

10  
11 The 2021 UMEIT: Zooms will be monthly, last about 20 minutes, will have a brief teaching and will  
12 conclude in prayer for unity. Rev. Dr. Jean Hawxhurst will be leading this month's session.

13  
14 During 2020, three CUIC members were asked to attend the National Workshop on Christian Unity in  
15 Texas, an ecumenical event hosted by the United Methodist Ecumenical and Interreligious Training  
16 (UMEIT. This year, all the CUIC members will be encouraged to attend the National Workshop on  
17 Christian Unity to be held (TBA) with an aim of continuing to raise up a new generation of ecumenical  
18 leadership.

19  
20 In recent years, ecumenical ties between the UMC/Episcopal Church (USA) and UMC/ELCA (Evangelical  
21 Lutheran Church in America) have been strengthened through establishment of Interim Eucharistic  
22 Agreements.

23  
24 Finally, we affirm the work of many local congregations throughout the GNJ Annual Conference in  
25 fostering Christian unity and strengthening our relationships with people of other faiths. Indeed,  
26 through our ministry, we seek “to advance and strengthen ecumenical and interreligious commitments  
27 that are essential to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, by forming and inspiring the clergy and lay leadership  
28 within the Annual Conference.”

29  
30 Submitted by,  
31 Vijaya Kumar, Chairperson

### 32 33 **Church and Society Report, Board of**

34  
35 The Board of Church and Society worked closely with the Commission on Religion and Race this year to  
36 sponsor a series of anti-racism discussions and initiatives. This initiative included weekly panel  
37 discussions featuring clergy and lay leaders in addressing various aspects of anti-racism activism. These  
38 conversations created the impetus for the crafting and publication of “A Letter Confronting Racism,”  
39 endorsed by over one hundred and fifty clergy members of the Annual Conference, addressing racism  
40 and recommendations for congregational engagement and calling for pastoral leadership in addressing  
41 congregational and community concerns with racism and its systemic effects. The BCS also worked with  
42 the New Jersey Coalition of Religious Leaders and Salvation and Social Justice in engaging United  
43 Methodist participation in a “Say Their Names Funeral Procession,” a four hundred and fifty car  
44 procession calling attention to deaths within the New Jersey State Prisons from Covid-19 and calling for  
45 early release of prisoners.

1 In consultation with allied groups, N.J. Coalition of Religious Leaders, Salvation and Social Justice, the  
2 BCS worked to resource and advocate for legislative initiatives addressing issues of systemic racism,  
3 including school desegregation efforts. These efforts were further supported by the social justice cohort  
4 project. This project is a partnership between the GNJ BCS and the General Board of Church and Society  
5 of the UMC. Currently based in the Capital District, it is hoped that the social justice cohort model will  
6 become a model to be replicated throughout the GNJ to activate local congregations and other districts  
7 to address local social justice concerns, particularly regarding race and discrimination.

8  
9 Several BCS members participated in Black Lives Matters rallies held throughout GNJ over the course of  
10 the summer. These included community gatherings held in Woodbridge promoted by Rev. Dave  
11 Delaney, Camden led by lay member Ed Martin, and Willingboro organized by the Capital District and  
12 featuring a number of lay and clergy speakers from the GNJ, including Rev. Gil Caldwell. Rev. Caldwell, a  
13 giant in the Civil rights movement who called GNJ his home conference, went on to next life. Rest in  
14 power, Rev. Caldwell.

15  
16 **Board of Church & Society Grants 2020**

17 In 2020, the GNJAC Board of Church and Society awarded two grants of \$2,500 each to the "Write, Read,  
18 Achieve Power" (WRAP) Literacy Program of UMC of New Brunswick and Justice for Our Neighbors of  
19 the Delaware Valley (JFON-DV).

20  
21 The WRAP Literacy Program used the grant to provide 15 mobile hotspots to Lincoln Elementary School  
22 students and their families during the Pandemic. These students and their families benefited from  
23 having high speed internet access. Without these hotspots these students would have been unable to  
24 complete their schoolwork this year.

25  
26 JFON-DV used the grant to help fund immigration intake clinics at United Methodist Churches. These  
27 clinics provoked immigrants with legal services and counseling services.

28  
29 Submitted by,  
30 Rev. Dr. Tanya Linn Bennett, Chair  
31 Rev. Sammy Arroyo  
32 Rev. Jonathan Campbell  
33 Rev. Dave Delaney  
34 Rev. Jack Johnson  
35 Mollie James-Vickery  
36 Aaron Wilson

37  
38 **Disaster Response Committee**

39  
40 The Disaster Response Committee convened under new leadership following the October 2020 session  
41 of Annual Conference. The Committee wishes to thank Tom O’Hearn, lay member of Annual Conference  
42 from Brick who served as the Chairperson of the committee for several years, for his faithful and diligent  
43 service.

44  
45 The Committee currently consists of District Disaster Response Coordinators from 6 of our 9 districts:  
46 Rev. Cricket Denton Brennan - Cape Atlantic  
47 Frank Friend - Capital



1 Hee Young Lim - Gateway North  
2 Pastor Kevin Davis - Gateway South  
3 Rev. Dr. Robb Shoaf - Palisades  
4 Pastor Scott Maat – Skylands

5  
6 We are currently seeking District DRCs for Delaware Bay, Northern Shore, and Rarity Valley. Please  
7 contact your District Superintendent if you are interested in serving in this capacity.

8  
9 These District DRCs have plugged in to their local and county-level VOADs (Voluntary Organizations  
10 Active in Disaster) and are keeping abreast of ways that UMCs in their area can be prepared and helpful.  
11 The committee is also coordinating closely with A Future With Hope, the GNJ Communications staff, and  
12 United Methodist Volunteers in Mission so that we can operate effectively in the event of a disaster.  
13 UMCOR continues to be an important partner and a source of funding should the need arise.

14  
15 So far, we have repositioned disaster response trailers to northern and southern positions in the  
16 conference and are keeping them ready for action with monitoring, upkeep, and inventory.  
17 We are beginning an effort to get all Early Response Teams in the conference re-certified and badged to  
18 be ready for deployment at a moment’s notice. Currently we have about 300 volunteers in GNJ who  
19 have been trained. Nearly all of them require re-certification.

20  
21 We will also review and update the Conference Disaster Response Plan. When it is ready, we will bring it  
22 before the Annual Conference for approval and it will be published on the GNJ website.

23  
24 Thankfully we have not experienced large-scale disasters in GNJ from October 2020 up to the time of  
25 this writing. We pray that this will remain true in the year ahead, but we stand ready if called upon. It is  
26 also true that many annual conferences in the US were not spared from natural disasters during this  
27 pandemic time. The gulf coast was hit hard at the end of hurricane season, Tennessee had devastating  
28 tornadoes, and wildfires raged in the West. Our goal is to deploy our trained volunteers to assist with  
29 the long-term recovery operations in these areas as vaccination rates increase and as quarantine and  
30 travel restrictions allow.

31  
32 In the meantime, we encourage all churches to continue making UMCOR Relief Supply Kits like Cleaning  
33 Kits, Hygiene Kits, and School Kits. You can deliver these to any of the three HUBs in Greater New Jersey  
34 - the Skylands Outreach Depot in Newton, the Central Jersey Outreach HUB in Edison, or the Good  
35 Shepherd HUB in Northfield.

36  
37 Submitted by,  
38 Rev. Tom Lank, Chairperson

## 39 40 **Discipleship, Board of**

41  
42 The goal of the Board of Discipleship of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference is to help resource,  
43 support and affirm clergy, laity, and congregations in making disciples for Jesus Christ for the  
44 transformation of the world.

45  
46 This past year, the year of the pandemic, was especially challenging for us all on many different levels.  
47 However, the Church will persevere. Last year as we entered the second week of Lent we were faced

1 with a shut down that we have never experienced before. Churches were forced to close their doors.  
2 Clergy and laity in churches big and small had to adapt on a dime. Within days, worship services were  
3 offered via Facebook, YouTube, Zoom and other platforms. Small groups went from in-person to Zoom  
4 in a matter of days. Meetings of all kinds happened via Zoom. Zoom, a platform that had been used  
5 once in a while for convenience became a necessity and a gift that allowed us still to connect with one  
6 another.  
7 Our ministry as disciples of Jesus Christ calls for us to connect, to be in relationship with others and now  
8 we were faced with making that happen through our devices and screens. We had affirmation that  
9 when we do the work in earnest and excellence God blesses our efforts. The church I serve has seen an  
10 average of 12 small groups meeting per week with over 100 participants each week. Most churches are  
11 seeing higher attendance that includes people from farther distances with livestreamed services.  
12 Missions continue as we feed, clothe, and connect with others.

13 The Board of Discipleship will be updating its webpage to include book recommendations and other  
14 things that people have tried during the pandemic that worked. It is important that we share our  
15 successes and learn from one another. That is the beauty of the connectional church. Now more than  
16 ever we must seek out our colleagues, our sisters, and brothers to affirm and support all of the work we  
17 are doing throughout GNJ. If you have a great discipleship success story please share it with us. We  
18 want to celebrate you.

19 Also keep in mind that the Board of Discipleship for the GNJ honors people every year who are living,  
20 breathing sermons who by virtue of the way they live their lives and minister are evangelizing to the  
21 world around them. Stay tuned for this year's recipients of the Harry Denman Award for Evangelism in  
22 the categories of clergy, laity, and youth.

23 Finally, please check out the Board of Discipleship page on the GNJ website. Included there are links to a  
24 variety of resources to aid churches and individuals in their discipleship journey. These include the Walk  
25 to Emmaus communities within GNJ, the Upper Room's offerings of the Two-Year and Five Year  
26 Academies, Junius Dotson's Soul Reset, the Be A Disciple webpage, Search, Tres Dias, and the Order of  
27 St. Luke. All of these are resources for discipleship.

28 The BOD desires to continue to resource and support lay and clergy spiritual leaders to make and  
29 mature disciples that grow vital congregations and transform lives as well as their communities. We  
30 continue to explore how the BOD can best serve in this way.

31  
32 Submitted by,  
33 Rev. Dr. Debra A. De Vos, Chair  
34

## 35 **Drew University Theological School**

36  
37 As with most other schools in the northeast of the U.S., Drew University evacuated its campus in early  
38 spring 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Drew Theological School faculty and staff adapted  
39 to this challenge with resilience, compassion, and creativity. The Theological School faculty put their  
40 courses all online, led development workshops for faculty across the university, and, in order to  
41 accommodate our many international admits who would not be able to enter the United States for fall  
42 2020, designed an asynchronous Master of Divinity program.

43  
44 As a result of this work, the Theological School welcomed 147 new students, its largest entering class in  
45 a decade, with an enrollment of 380 for the current academic year. Our chapel team has also led the  
46 way in creating online worship experiences that connect the Drew community now across the globe. All  
47 degree programs at the Theological School include interdisciplinary courses that demand out-of-the-box

1 thinking, apprenticeship training that addresses real-world issues, and modes of learning that promote  
2 adaptability and innovation. Our MDiv and MATM degrees include a required gateway year, vocational  
3 pathways, and experiential learning that develops and deepens adaptive leadership skills.

4  
5 The curriculum features a team-designed and taught interdisciplinary sequence of core courses  
6 reflecting the integration of the theological disciplines and practices characteristic of the life of faith. The  
7 faculty have also articulated shared values that are infused across the teaching and learning at Drew: a  
8 commitment to anti-racism; gender and sexual-identity equality; eco-sustainability and environmental  
9 justice; and interfaith understanding and cooperation.

10  
11 Drew cultivates pastors, preachers, deacons, activists, teachers, and thought leaders who go all over the  
12 world to take their place as the next generation of faith leaders and change agents.

13  
14 Submitted by,  
15 Melanie Johnson-DeBaufre, Interim Dean

## 16 17 **Duke University Divinity School**

18  
19 Edgardo Colón-Emeric, the Irene and William McCutchen Associate Professor of Reconciliation and  
20 Theology, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Director of the Center for Reconciliation will become  
21 Dean of Duke Divinity School (DDS) July 1, 2021. Dean Gregory L. Jones will leave DDS to become  
22 president of Belmont University.

23 Duke Divinity School (DDS) continues to discern fresh strategies to respond faithfully and wisely to the  
24 changing church and the world. The disruptions, challenges, and injustices of 2020 occupied enormous  
25 attention as the school adapted to different modes of teaching/learning and interacting while also  
26 managing financial challenges both to DDS and Duke University.

27 DDS announced a new hybrid version of its Master of Divinity (M.Div.) program that will give students  
28 the opportunity to earn the M.Div. degree without relocating to Durham, N.C. The hybrid learning  
29 curriculum combines remote coursework with week-long residential intensives, where students connect  
30 in-person. The first cohort will begin coursework in fall 2021.

31  
32 DDS welcomed the largest incoming class in school history with 257 new students from 35 different  
33 states and seven countries, including China, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Nigeria, South Korea and the United  
34 States. Our Master of Arts in Christian Practice (28 students) and Doctor of Ministry (52 students)  
35 programs received record enrollments. The Master of Theology (13 students), Master of Theological  
36 Studies (34 students), and Doctor of Theology (6 students) had strong enrollment. Our new Certificate in  
37 Theology and Health Care will enroll 6 students, all of whom are TMC Fellows. Across all degree  
38 programs, 31 percent of the incoming class identified as a race/ethnicity other than white. Black  
39 students made up 21 percent of all students, Asian students, 5 percent; and American Indian students, 2  
40 percent. 45 percent of students in the incoming class were female, and 55 percent were male. The  
41 Master of Divinity (M.Div.) degree program gained 113 new students. Students from minority groups  
42 comprised more than 25 percent of incoming M.Div. students, with black students making up 19  
43 percent. Female students made up 46 percent of incoming M.Div. students, while males were 54  
44 percent. There were 30 denominations represented in the M.Div. entering class, with 30 percent  
45 affiliated with the United Methodist Church. Nondenominational students made up 16 percent of the  
46 new M.Div. students; Baptists, 16 percent; and Anglican-Episcopalian, 9 percent.

1 2020 also witnessed an expansion of DDS's partnerships, including the Kern Family Foundation  
2 partnership with the Office of Wesleyan Engagement to provide accelerated pathways for  
3 undergraduate students to pursue the Master of Divinity degree at Duke. DDS welcomed its first cohort  
4 of students at Martin Methodist College, taking classes at Duke. The Americas Initiative, a fellowship of  
5 organizations, scholars and practitioners convened by the Center for Reconciliation, is working on  
6 peacebuilding among Latin American and Latinx communities, particularly those of Indigenous and  
7 African descent. The five-year Black Pastoral Leadership Collaboration, begun in the fall of 2019 and  
8 jointly funded by DDS and the Provost's Office, is working to harness the research and experiential  
9 wisdom of Black pastoral leaders nationally through a leadership school and practical theology archiving  
10 project.

11 DDS sought to reckon in deeper and broader ways with systemic racism and injustice, particularly in light  
12 of the overlapping pandemics of COVID-19, economic crisis, and mental health challenges, and the  
13 school sought opportunities to strengthen its partnership and racial justice work across Duke University.  
14 A Story Listening and Gathering project solicited past or present students, faculty, and staff to share  
15 stories of how race and racial discrimination affects daily life at DDS with a goal of understanding the  
16 experiences of the community and to inform the school's broader anti-racism efforts. A new Race and  
17 the Professions Fellowship, in partnership with the Kenan Institute for Ethics, and the Churches  
18 Promoting Recovery Project, in partnership with the Theology, Medicine, and Culture Initiative, provided  
19 new opportunities for students to deepen their vocational formation and reimagine community  
20 transformation beyond campus.

21 DDS hired eight new faculty members in 2020. Peter Casarella is a Professor of Theology and has  
22 published widely on medieval Christian Neoplatonism, contemporary theological aesthetics,  
23 intercultural thought, and the Hispanic/Latino presence in the U.S. Catholic Church.

24 Sarah Barton is an Assistant Professor of Occupational Therapy and Theological Ethics whose scholarly  
25 work is focused in theological ethics, with special attention to theological anthropology, disability,  
26 liturgy, and pastoral care. She has a joint faculty appointment as assistant professor of occupational  
27 therapy at Duke University Medical Center.

28 Quinton Dixie, Associate Research Professor of Church History and Black Church Studies, specializes in  
29 American religious history and has written on a wide range of topics, from the African American Civil  
30 Rights Movement to the history of Black Baptists in the U.S.

31 Zebulon Highben is Associate Professor of the Practice of Church Music at Duke Divinity School and  
32 Director of Chapel Music at Duke University Chapel, and his research interests include hymnody, liturgy,  
33 music and exegesis, the musical heritage of the Reformation.

34 Alma Tinoco Ruiz is a Lecturer in Homiletics and Evangelism and Director of the Hispanic House of  
35 Studies. She a practical theologian whose work centers on the intersection of homiletics, pastoral care,  
36 and evangelism and she is a provisional elder in the United Methodist Church.

37 Janet Martin Soskice is the William K. Warren Distinguished Research Professor of Catholic Theology and  
38 for the past 30 years was on The Faculty of Divinity at the University of Cambridge. Her work lies at the  
39 intersection of Christian theology and philosophy.

1 Norbert Wilson is Professor of Food, Economics, and Community, and his research explores food issues  
2 such as access, choice, and food waste. He is an ordained vocational deacon in the Episcopal Church  
3 USA.

4 Wylín D. Wilson is an Assistant Professor of Theological Ethics, and prior to joining the Duke faculty, she  
5 was on faculty at the Harvard Medical School Center for Bioethics and was a senior fellow at the Center  
6 for the Study of World Religions at Harvard Divinity School. Her research focuses on religion, gender,  
7 and bioethics, including rural bioethics and Black Church studies.

8  
9 Submitted by,  
10 Dean Jones, Duke University Divinity School

11

## 12 **Educational Society**

13

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

24

25 In 2020 the Educational Society was delighted to award \$7,000 in scholarships and loans to 2 recipients  
26 in order to further their seminary and leadership development education. Applications for GNJ  
27 Educational Society scholarships and loans can be downloaded from the conference website at  
28 <https://www.gnjumc.org/resource/2016-educational-society-application/>

29

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

33

34 Submitted by,  
35 Rev. Donald M. Stevens, President

36

## 37 **Equitable Compensation, Commission on**

38

39 The work of the Commission on Equitable Compensation has been challenging over the past year as we  
40 have struggled with the realities of COVID-19 for both pastors and local churches. After our initial  
41 discussions in the fall and winter a year ago, the commission reluctantly made the decision to hold the  
42 2021 basic minimum compensation for clergy at the 2020 level for this year only, with a goal of catching  
43 up in 2022. The recommendation for adoption by the annual conference reflects that goal.

44

45 The responsibilities for the Commission on Equitable Compensation as outlined in ¶625.2 of the 2016  
46 Book of Discipline are four-fold: 1) To recommend conference standards for pastoral support; 2) To  
47 administer funds used in base compensation supplementation; 3) To provide counsel and advisory

1 material on pastoral support to district superintendents and committees on pastor-parish relations; and  
2 4) submit an arrearage policy to be adopted by the annual conference. Last year, we developed a new  
3 arrearage policy that will bring to light situations where pastors are not receiving their salaries in full.  
4 Failure to do so puts a burden first on the pastor, and tangentially on the conference. Judicial Council  
5 rulings do not allow a pastor to receive less than the basic minimum salary even voluntarily, and when  
6 such situations occur, they need to be addressed as soon as possible.

7  
8 You will find that policy in our recommendations for 2021 with some slight editorial changes. Parsonage  
9 standards are updated annually with a few minor changes for clarification. Copies of these standards  
10 should be in the hands of the SPRC, the Board of Trustees, and, if applicable, the Parsonage Committee.  
11 Upkeep for the parsonage is not just for the benefit of the pastor, it is a protection of the investment  
12 that the church has in one of its properties. While there are drawbacks to the parsonage system, the  
13 benefit to the church is that its pastor lives within the community that she/he serves, something that  
14 would be extremely difficult to guarantee particularly in an area such as GNJ with such a wide span of  
15 real estate costs.

16  
17 Over the next few months, the commission will be working on updating resources to guide SPRCs in  
18 setting salaries. While the pastor's compensation is most often the largest single line-item in a budget,  
19 the pastor is a primary resource for ministry through worship and preaching, administration, pastoral  
20 care, community engagement, Christian formation, stewardship education, and many other ministries  
21 that often go unnamed. Congregations need to be in serious conversation on how they set clergy  
22 compensation and planning for the future in a way that considers years of service, educational levels,  
23 effectiveness, responsibilities and expectations, cost of living in a specific community, family needs and  
24 equity with pastors serving comparable sized congregations. A conversation that begins and ends with  
25 what's the least amount we can pay a pastor is a surrender to a mind-set of scarcity rather than a focus  
26 on the abundance of God's blessings. In the next few months, the commission will provide resources so  
27 that these conversations can start within the congregation as they are looking to setting their  
28 compensation packages in preparation for the 2022 Church Conferences.

29  
30 As part of the Journey with Hope legislation, a significant part of our work in the coming year will be to  
31 begin to address the inequities in compensation across GNJ. In some of our most economically  
32 challenged communities, a pastor will serve in less than full time status (and therefore compensated  
33 accordingly) even though the congregation and area served is significantly larger than smaller  
34 congregations in more affluent communities. This has disproportionately affected churches and pastors  
35 in urban areas, and particularly communities of color. It is our desire to work with others in GNJ to  
36 provide new ways for ongoing, sustainable ministry that makes disciples and transforms communities  
37 for Jesus Christ.

38  
39 My thanks to the members of the Commission on Equitable Salary for their time and energy in our work  
40 together on behalf of United Methodists of Greater New Jersey.

41  
42 Submitted by,  
43 Steven G. Bechtold, Chair

## 44 **Finance and Administration, Council on**

45  
46  
47 As 2020 started, we had every expectation that that it would be a strong year for GNJ and that we would  
48 be able to build on the faithful stewardship and giving of GNJ congregations in prior years to fund local

1 and global mission. In February 2020, the former treasurer announced his retirement but we still did not  
2 expect any major disruption as the former treasurer promised to continue working till June 2020 and  
3 help with the transition. On March 11, 2020, the WHO declared COVID 19 a global pandemic - its first  
4 such designation since declaring H1N1 influenza a pandemic in 2009. That is when a year of uncertainty  
5 and adjustment started for everyone.

6  
7 Once the potential scale and length of the pandemic was understood by April, the GNJ's financial and  
8 cabinet leadership developed a plan to support the congregations through the pandemic. Five million  
9 dollars was set aside through a portion of a property sale (Belmar) worth \$0.8 MM, through borrowing  
10 \$1.4 MM from our GNJ designated funds and through expense cuts for the rest. With those resources,  
11 GNJ offered congregations a four-month shared ministry holiday and assisted them to receive PPP  
12 funding. The budget was recast based on a 60% shared ministry collection rate vs the originally  
13 approved 92% collection rate.

14  
15 Churches responded faithfully with courage and conviction. For the whole of 2020 we received 74% in  
16 shared ministry (14% more than we had projected in May) and GNJ congregations and ministries  
17 received more than \$8 million in PPP funding, and GNJ received 94% vs 90% with respect to billables in  
18 2020 vs. 2019 from our congregations.

19  
20 A new CFO/Treasurer, Rob Zuckerman, joined us mid-year and he is providing strong leadership for  
21 which I am very grateful.

22  
23 Unfortunately, because of the pandemic and newly discovered financial constraints, GNJ was not able to  
24 pay 100% of general church apportionments in 2020. We did pay 66%, 16% points more than we  
25 projected in April but this was the first time in more than 15 years that GNJ did not give 100%. Going  
26 forward, we plan to apportion the churches for the General Church and pass through exactly what we  
27 collect.

28  
29 In November, we realized that GNJ was significantly under-billing congregations with respect to billables  
30 – specifically in the areas of current employee healthcare insurance and property insurance. This  
31 shortfall in billings was being made up with draws from designated funds and property sales. Over a  
32 period of nine years, GNJ has spent down its reserves by \$10 million dollars. The under-billing led to a \$6  
33 million shortfall in the 2021 budget.

34  
35 GNJ's financial leadership and cabinet took a lot of steps to address the present challenges and the long  
36 term needs of GNJ.

37  
38 Steps taken:

- 39 1. Previously the budget would only cover the shared ministry piece of the finances which is under  
40 the domain of CF&A. Now we have created a 2021 consolidated budget that includes the  
41 domains of CF&A, Board of Pensions and Health and Board of Trustees. We have also ensured it  
42 is balanced by making the expense adjustments necessary.
- 43 2. A plan was developed to help transition churches over five years to paying the full cost of the  
44 benefit programs.
- 45 3. Worked with the Bishop, the cabinet, and the connectional table to update/implement the JOH  
46 legislation.
- 47 4. CF&A approved and organized an independent financial team to investigate the financial  
48 matters of the recent past and make policy and corrective recommendations.

- 1 5. A designated fund policy has been approved by CF&A to rebuild the reserves within 5 years  
2 which is being presented as legislation for the May 2021 Annual Conference to approve.  
3

4 Major projects ahead:

- 5 1. Develop comprehensive policy and procedures manual covering all financial matters at GNJ.  
6 2. Recommend a long-term funding plan with respect to shared ministry apportionments and  
7 billings necessary to implement the “Journey of Hope” legislation.  
8 3. Establish a team in partnership with the Centenary Fund Board to work on generating a long-  
9 term stream of income to pay for retiree health.  
10

11 We are at a state of maximum economic uncertainty – on one hand we are very aware of how COVID  
12 impacted our churches recently but on the other, we know that as vaccines are administered more  
13 widely, and the stimulus efforts of the Government take effect, things will likely return to greater  
14 normalcy in the next 3 to 4 months.  
15

16 As a result, we think it prudent to delay putting together a 2022 budget till the fall of 2021 by which  
17 time we will know better how well our churches are indeed faring.  
18

19 We expect to have a special Annual Conference to review and approve our 2022 budget in October of  
20 2021.  
21

22 Submitted by,  
23 Vasanth Victor , CF&A President  
24

25 **First Friends of NJ and NY**  
26

27 Since its founding in 1997, the mission of First Friends of NJ and NY has been to uphold the inherent  
28 dignity and humanity of some of our nation’s most vulnerable populations -- immigrants and asylum  
29 seekers detained in the four U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) facilities in northern New  
30 Jersey: the Elizabeth Detention Center, Essex County Correctional Facility, Bergen County Jail and the  
31 Hudson County Correction Center. A volunteer-based organization, we strive to reduce detainees’  
32 isolation and provide compassion and hope through visitations; a telephone hotline set up in each of the  
33 facilities; commissary funds, bonds, the provision of funds for phone calls to family and attorneys;  
34 supplying folders of stamps and writing materials to enable detainees to stay in contact with family  
35 members; resettlement assistance upon release; and advocacy.

36 Most of the approximately 750 immigrants and asylum seekers currently detained are people from  
37 Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean, and Africa. They come to the US seeking safety and freedom  
38 but are unjustly detained for months, sometimes even years. Most have no money to pay an attorney,  
39 post bond or even telephone their families. In the facilities we serve, crowded conditions are common  
40 and have become a serious health risk during the COVID pandemic. Upon release, most former  
41 detainees work at minimum wage jobs which they lost when the pandemic hit.  
42

43 In 2020, First Friends volunteers made 133 visits to detainees before the pandemic lock-down. 7,689  
44 phone calls were received from detainees through our toll-free hot-line. Despite the challenges brought  
45 on by the pandemic, First Friends has been working harder than ever to continue to provide hope and  
46 healing for our detained friends. Although visitations in March 2020 were paused, 186 volunteers have  
47 served as pen pals, with 415 letters having been received from detainees. We posted 59 bonds that  
48 enabled immigrants to be released from jail while they await their immigration hearings. 93 newly



1 released immigrants have been provided with hygiene supplies and transportation to their families or  
2 volunteer hosts, and 45 were provided with food, utilities, and rental assistance.

3  
4 First Friends NJ/NY is an Advanced Special in GNJ, and as a Hope Center has strong partnerships with  
5 many United Methodist churches across the state. Morrow UMC in Maplewood began visiting  
6 immigrants held in detention almost ten years ago and continues to assist in training volunteer visitors,  
7 coordinate visits to detention centers, assist in post release support, collect donations, and fundraise for  
8 the organization. Chatham UMC participates in our Stamp Out Despair program that provides writing  
9 materials and postage to detainees to stay in touch with friends and families which is especially  
10 important during this pandemic. The UMW in Palisades have donated funds and signed up for volunteer  
11 visitations. Sparta UMC, Sparta UMW, New Dover UMC have all contributed to First Friends either  
12 through donations or direct service to immigrants. First Friends NJ/NY has a strong presence  
13 throughout GNJ and is supported by many congregants in our conference.

14  
15 To learn more about the mission of First Friends and how you can be a part of this important mission,  
16 please visit [www.firstfriendsnjny.org](http://www.firstfriendsnjny.org) or contact us at [info@firstfriendsnjny.org](mailto:info@firstfriendsnjny.org).

17  
18 Submitted by,  
19 Giselle Holloway, Executive Director

## 20 21 **Fund Balance Evolution Over Time**

22  
23 The tables below show the projection of balances in the various designated funds over the next 10  
24 years. These model projections will be reported each year after the model is updated.

25  
26 The model makes an initial allocation to each of the 13 funds; then it sequentially directs excess  
27 property sale proceeds to the various funds to achieve the fund goals over time.

28  
29 Once a fund is fully funded, it will be invested as its own fund through Wespath from that time onwards,  
30 and the draws for the particular ministry will come directly from that fund.

31  
32 Over time shared ministry will be focused on supporting the core mission of GNJ which includes  
33 superintending, leadership, and congregational development.

34  
35 Model assumptions:

- 36 1. \$3.7 million in property sales in 2021 increasing to \$4.5 million in 2035.
- 37 2. Investments will return on average 7% per year and draws of 5% per year will be made to  
38 support the designated ministries.
- 39 3. Congregations will transition to full payment of billables by 2026 – so the last year requiring  
40 subsidies from GNJ to churches towards billables will be 2025.
- 41 4. Full funding of the St. John’s Native American church by 2023.
- 42 5. Full funding of all funds except for Harvest Mission Fund, Strategic Disciple Making Fund, Retiree  
43 Health Care and Property Redevelopment Fund by 2027.
- 44 6. The goal is to return to the GNJ approved allocation funds as follows:  
45 Harvest Mission Fund (50%), Strategic Disciple Making Fund (20%), Retiree Health Care  
46 (15%) and Property Redevelopment Fund (15%).
- 47 7. The model may be affected by any or all of the following:  
48
  - Changes in the number and value of property sales.

1  
2  
3  
4  
5

- Market disruption.
- Extraordinary crises or change in the denomination.

This model will be updated annually as needed and new projections will be made.

	Annual Return	7%	Annual Draw	5%					
	Year	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
<b>Funds \$ to Budget</b>	Property Sales	3,700,000	3,700,000	3,800,000	3,800,000	3,900,000	3,900,000	4,000,000	4,000,000
		3,182,000	2,442,000	1,748,000	988,000	234,000	0	0	0
<b>Mission and Ministry Funds</b>	<b>Fund Goal</b>								
Harvest Mission Fund	25,000,000	10,700	10,877	32,294	149,244	531,137	943,551	2,656,520	4,770,352
Strategic Disciple Making Fund	20% of Prop	10,700	10,877	11,056	127,655	509,193	921,244	1,350,445	2,200,727
Mosaic Ministries Fund	1,000,000	1,070,000	1,087,655	1,105,601	1,123,844	1,142,387	1,161,237	1,180,397	1,199,873
Episcopal Office Fund	500,000	160,500	163,148	505,651	513,995	522,476	531,096	539,859	548,767
Tanzania Mission Partnership Fund	500,000	535,000	543,828	552,801	561,922	571,194	580,618	590,198	599,937
<b>GNJ Funds to Other Organizations</b>									
St. Johns Native American Preservation	1,000,000	225,175	775,743	1,000,924	1,017,440	1,034,227	1,051,292	1,068,638	1,086,271
Next Gen Fund	1,500,000	1,605,000	1,631,483	1,658,402	1,685,766	1,713,581	1,741,855	1,770,595	1,799,810
<b>Benefits Reserves</b>									
Benefits Operational Reserve	750,000	802,500	815,741	829,201	842,883	856,790	870,927	885,298	899,905
Retiree Health Fund	56,000,000	2,161,875	2,744,398	3,681,685	4,964,809	5,615,875	6,314,012	7,039,193	7,776,340
<b>Property Funds</b>									
Property Operational Fund	6,000,000	37,507	103,227	402,265	1,136,507	3,052,415	5,121,029	5,992,126	6,090,997
Redevelopment Reserve	5,000,000	37,507	103,227	402,265	1,136,507	1,724,406	2,358,334	3,018,246	3,689,047
Superintendent Parsonage Reserve	1,000,000	1,070,000	1,087,655	1,105,601	1,123,844	1,142,387	1,161,237	1,180,397	1,199,873
Episcopal Residence Fund	1,000,000	834,668	926,562	1,005,564	1,022,156	1,039,022	1,056,166	1,073,592	1,091,307
<b>Total Invested Funds</b>	99,250,000	8,561,130	10,004,419	12,293,312	15,406,571	19,455,090	23,812,599	28,345,506	32,953,207

6  
7  
8

	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035
<b>Funds \$ to Budget</b>	4,000,000	4,500,000	4,500,000	4,500,000	4,500,000	4,500,000	4,500,000
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Mission and Ministry Funds</b>							
Harvest Mission Fund	6,919,063	9,501,703	12,685,856	15,922,547	19,212,644	22,557,028	25,956,594
Strategic Disciple Making Fund	3,065,039	4,047,112	5,045,390	6,060,139	7,091,631	8,140,143	9,205,955
Mosaic Ministries Fund	1,219,671	1,239,796	1,260,253	1,281,047	1,302,184	1,323,670	1,345,511
Episcopal Office Fund	557,822	567,026	576,382	585,892	595,559	605,386	615,375
Tanzania Mission Partnership Fund	609,836	619,898	630,126	640,523	651,092	661,835	672,755
<b>GNJ Funds to Other Organizations</b>							
St. Johns Native American Preservation	1,104,194	1,122,414	1,140,933	1,159,759	1,178,895	1,198,347	1,218,119
Next Gen Fund	1,829,507	1,859,694	1,890,379	1,921,570	1,953,276	1,985,505	2,018,266
<b>Benefits Reserves</b>							
Benefits Operational Reserve	914,754	929,847	945,189	960,785	976,638	992,753	1,009,133
Retiree Health Fund	8,525,650	9,364,948	10,218,094	11,085,318	11,966,851	12,862,929	13,773,792
<b>Property Funds</b>							
Property Operational Fund	6,191,498	6,293,658	6,397,503	6,503,062	6,610,362	6,719,433	6,830,304
Redevelopment Reserve	4,370,917	5,001,937	5,084,469	5,168,363	5,253,640	5,340,326	5,428,441
Superintendent Parsonage Reserve	1,219,671	1,239,796	1,260,253	1,281,047	1,302,184	1,323,670	1,345,511
Episcopal Residence Fund	1,109,313	1,127,617	1,146,223	1,165,135	1,184,360	1,203,902	1,223,766
<b>Total Invested Funds</b>	37,636,935	42,915,445	48,281,050	53,735,187	59,279,317	64,914,926	70,643,522

9

## 1 Higher Education and Ministries of the Greater New Jersey Conference, Board 2 of

3  
4 *The Board of Higher Education and Ministries (BHEM) has mandates and responsibilities listed under*  
5 *¶1634 in The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church and is the leadership development agency*  
6 *of The United Methodist Church. “Its mission is preparing global leaders for a global church and the*  
7 *world. Every elder, deacon and licensed local pastor benefits from our training and candidacy programs.*  
8 *Many young adults find help in clarifying their vocation and God’s call on their lives through our*  
9 *leadership and discernment programs.” (gbhem.org)*

10  
11 *“UM Collegiate Ministries are the missional presence of The United Methodist Church on college and*  
12 *university campuses around the world. Through a network of chaplaincies, Wesley Foundations,*  
13 *ecumenical ministries and church-based ministries, The United Methodist Church reaches more than*  
14 *1,300 campuses around the world!*

15  
16 *“We are called to share with our campuses the transformational nature of Christ in a way that raises up*  
17 *a new generation of thoughtful, articulate Christians who care about making the world a better place.*  
18 *While this calling looks and feels very different across our campuses, it is central to our identity and it*  
19 *compels us to provide intentional, student-led ministries that reach this emerging generation of leaders.”*  
20 *(gbhem.org)*

21  
22 The Board of Higher Education and Ministries of Greater New Jersey has continued its work with Next  
23 Gen Ministries. Our partnership towards the development of campus ministries includes funding  
24 through grants from GNJ BHEM that will provide resources, directly and indirectly, for retreats,  
25 coaching, trainings, and other events sponsored and hosted by the General Board of Higher Ed for GNJ  
26 campuses and ministers.

27  
28 As a GNJ Agency, the Board of Higher Ed will continue to promote and award scholarships to GNJ  
29 students aspiring to attend Methodist colleges and universities and other schools while growing into  
30 their call to mission and ministry in the areas of youth ministry, outreach, mission, service, and a call to  
31 pastoral leadership.

32  
33 This past year scholarship applications transitioned to online and the application verification process of  
34 documents was reviewed and submitted by GNJ Connectional Ministries’ administrator following CDC  
35 safety guidelines due to COVID19.

36  
37 BHEM agency members met via Zoom to process the completed applications which were received  
38 electronically for review and awards process. BHEM received 36 completed electronic scholarship  
39 applications of which thirteen (13) GNJ students were awarded between \$1,500 and \$2,500 for a total of  
40 \$22,000 in scholarships awarded. The students who were awarded scholarships submitted complete  
41 applications by the deadline.

42  
43 Every year members of BHEM are inspired with the mission and ministries that students engage in and  
44 are so passionate about. Due to limited amount of grant funds, the awarding process is not an easy one.

45  
46 Every year BHEM encourages clergy and laity to nominate a person for the Francis Asbury Award. The  
47 Francis Asbury Award is a non-monetary award that recognizes those who encourage and support

1 higher education and campus ministries within the United Methodist Church. It is for all clergy or lay,  
2 employed or volunteer, who are active in supporting, strengthening, and promoting higher education  
3 ministries. This year no nominations were received due to the transition between BHEM and NextGen  
4 Ministries who are now overseeing directly, while reporting to BHEM, the works and ministries of  
5 campus ministers in their respective campuses.

6  
7 It is GNJ BHEM's commitment to continue to encourage new relationships with congregations and  
8 college campuses, and especially with students who are active members of congregations pursuing  
9 careers inspired by mission and ministries and those who have a personal call to ministry.

10  
11 Your continued prayers and support for our campuses, ministers, and chaplains; our faithful and  
12 dedicated board members, and our conference youth and leaders will be greatly appreciated!

13  
14 Submitted by,  
15 Iraida Ruiz de Porras, Chair

## 16 17 **A Journey of Hope**

18  
19 **Objective:** To integrate and deepen the mission and ministry of Greater New Jersey (GNJ)--to make new  
20 disciples of Jesus Christ, make transformational leaders and make fruitful and sustainable congregations-  
21 -by dismantling the systems and structures within the church that perpetuate racism and in turn,  
22 developing a more racially just, inclusive, and equitable church.

23 The above objective is driven by the "why" stated at the outset of the Journey of Hope plan as part of  
24 our urgent calling:

25 *As baptized Christians, we renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of*  
26 *this world, and repent of our sin. We accept the freedom and power God gives us to resist evil,*  
27 *injustice and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves. We confess Jesus Christ as*  
28 *our Savior, put our whole trust in his grace, and promise to serve him as our Lord, in union with*  
29 *the church which Christ has opened to people of all ages, nations, and races.*

30  
31 **Journey of Hope Scope:** The Plan calls for a \$5.1 million investment to end the sin of racism in five areas:

- 32 • Increase and grow Leadership of Color.
- 33 • Start new and developing Congregations of Color.
- 34 • Develop resources to lead all leaders and congregations to integrate ending the sin of racism  
35 with the mission of Greater New Jersey.
- 36 • Review all policies and procedures of GNJ for bias and to ensure equity and inclusion.
- 37 • Invest financially in repairing harm and engage in the long-term work of racial justice, inclusion,  
38 and equity.
- 39 •

### 40 **Accomplishments & Ongoing/Next Steps**

- 41 • **One consultant organization**, which meets the key criteria as identified in the Plan's legislation, has  
42 been identified following a series of vetting of all candidates. The Journey of Hope team is currently  
43 in the process of identifying a consultant to assist GNJ in the implementation of the Journey of Hope  
44 plan, including the training of facilitators.
- 45  
46 • **Journey of Hope Planning Guide:** The Journey of Hope ACT (Aspire. Comprehend. Transform) Plan  
47 is a congregational resource that will guide churches on a path to vitality that matches their

1 strengths and needs and moves them towards a more sustainable future alongside ending the sin of  
2 racism. The two primary resources that will facilitate this work are The Leadership Academy and the  
3 Journey of Hope ACT plan. This spring churches will be invited to begin this process. The Journey of  
4 Hope ACT plan will guide congregations to assess their strengths, recognize the current realities of  
5 ministry and the future probabilities for vitality, reflect on how God is calling the congregation into  
6 the community, become culturally competent and take meaningful steps to end the sin of racism.  
7 Congregations will be supported by a trained resource coach that will help coordinate and facilitate  
8 their work. Congregations will then create a unique culturally competent plan for their ministry  
9 based on increasing sustainability and vitality, community engagement, organizational leadership,  
10 and ending the sin of racism.

- 11  
12 • **Forbearance Plan (5a from the Journey of Hope Legislation) & Reductions in Shared Ministry**  
13 **(Apportionments) and Billings (5e from the Journey of Hope Legislation):** The Journey of Hope  
14 team’s intent and impact are to ensure racial and economic equity for all congregations in low-  
15 income communities. Pending the approval of updated legislation in section 5e, the Finance and  
16 Benefits Department is ready to begin invoicing congregations who meet the five criteria (5.a.i-v)  
17 outlined in the legislation at the reduced rate for shared ministry and billings and to begin the  
18 implementation of the forbearance program (5a), which outlines that “GNJ will permanently forbear  
19 collecting on billable debt for all African American/Black and Native American congregations and all  
20 other congregations that meet the criteria.”

21  
22 May we all remember our baptismal covenant as we work together to live out our GNJ Mission.

23  
24 Submitted by,  
25 The Journey of Hope Team  
26 Cabinet  
27 Connectional Table, Kay Dubuisson, Chairperson

28  
29 *March 17, 2021*

## 30 31 **Justice For Our Neighbors of The Delaware Valley (JFON-DV)**

32  
33 *No human being is illegal.*

34  
35 Justice For Our Neighbors of the Delaware Valley (Delaware Valley JFON) was established in 2019 and  
36 became an affiliate of National Justice For Our Neighbors in 2020. National JFON is an immigration  
37 ministry of the United Methodist Church composed of 20 affiliates across the United States that  
38 provides low-cost and no-cost legal services to immigrant communities. Initially, the Delaware Valley  
39 affiliate of JFON will serve communities in Southeast Pennsylvania and Southern New Jersey. It is a  
40 cooperative effort among three annual conferences - Greater New Jersey, Peninsula-Delaware, and  
41 Eastern Pennsylvania.

42  
43 We are committed to providing exceptional immigration legal services to vulnerable and low-income  
44 immigrants and refugees in the Delaware Valley, as well as strengthening communities through  
45 education and family unification. Our attorneys can help those who are eligible obtain work permits  
46 through protective programs like Temporary Protective Services (TPS) and Deferred Action for

1 Childhood Arrivals (DACA). Victims of domestic abuse, violent crime, and certain civil strife and natural  
2 disasters are eligible under U.S. immigration laws to apply for protective visas. Our attorneys can help  
3 victims fleeing dangerous homes and situations start life again with a clean slate. Our attorneys  
4 understand the importance of keeping families together and will guide family members through the  
5 immigration system and back into the arms of loved ones.

6  
7 The New Jersey Council of JFON-DV has begun holding legal clinics on a monthly basis in Bridgeton and  
8 will never turn an immigrant away because they cannot afford to pay legal fees. Our clinics are held with  
9 the support of local churches and community volunteers to determine if those seeking help are eligible  
10 to apply for a permanent residence, naturalization, work authorizations or any other form of  
11 immigration relief.

12  
13 JFON-DV became a Hope Center in October 2020 and has received a Peace With Justice grant and other  
14 financial support from GNJ and local churches throughout the conference. We are hoping to raise  
15 \$10,000 from supporting churches in GNJ in 2021 as we gradually expand our services from the  
16 Southern Region to the Northern Region. Churches that would like to support JFON, donors, and  
17 individuals who would like to volunteer their legal expertise or translation skills should contact New  
18 Jersey Co-Chairs Rev. Cricket Denton Brennan (cbrennan1@drew.edu) and Rev. Tom Lank  
19 (tom.lank@gmail.com).

20  
21 Delaware Valley JFON plans to expand its services throughout Pennsylvania, New  
22 Jersey, Delaware, and the eastern shore of Maryland. We are committed to providing  
23 unparalleled excellence in legal services to unite families, enable eligible immigrants to  
24 work and help victims of violence live safely and permanently in the United States.

25  
26 Submitted by,  
27 Rev. Cricket Brennan & Rev. Tom Lank, NJ Council Co-Chairs

## 28 29 **Laity, Board of**

30  
31 *“Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord,*  
32 *knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.”- 1 Corinthians 15:58*

33  
34 The past year has brought many challenges to us, our churches, our families, and our workplaces as we  
35 faced the unprecedented health crisis brought on by the pandemic.

36  
37 We have seen firsthand the ingenuity of our laity in continuing to bring light to the communities they  
38 serve through different outreach ministries such as establishing community care pantry/food pantry,  
39 buying and bringing groceries to the doorsteps of elderly members, calling members who were sick,  
40 quarantined or hospitalized and checking in on members virtually. Others brought the story of Christmas  
41 to the neighborhood, narrating the true meaning of this season and singing carols and reading the  
42 Christmas story during virtual worship. Technology became essential in order to gather together for  
43 weekly worship and host Bible Studies. Still others started prayer groups, small groups, and study groups  
44 through Zoom ministry. We praise God for your leadership in your churches in navigating through the  
45 most challenging times!

46  
47 The Board of Laity has been meeting monthly via zoom to continue the strategic conversation, planning,  
48 and in identifying ways to be an effective resource to all our lay leaders and laity in GNJ. We started to

1 envision together how we can advance the participation and ministries of laity at such a time as this  
2 when we are challenged with the COVID 19 pandemic, social and racial justice unrest, economic  
3 downturn, and political divide. We strongly support all the laity ministries that are responding to these  
4 priority needs and encourage all of us to be the hands and feet of Jesus Christ to bring more people to  
5 Christ!

6  
7 The Board of Laity reviewed its purpose, work, and goals for this quadrennium.  
8

9 **The Purpose of the Board of Laity shall be:**

- 10 a. To foster an awareness of the role of the laity both within the local congregation, and through  
11 the ministries in the home, workplace, community, and world in achieving the mission of the  
12 Church; to develop and promote programs to cultivate an adequate understanding of the  
13 theological and biblical basis for lay life and work among the members of the churches of the  
14 annual conference.  
15 b. To develop and promote stewardship of time, talent, and possessions within the annual  
16 conference in cooperation with the conference council on ministries or other appropriate  
17 conference bodies.  
18 c. To provide for the training of laity and lay leaders in partnership with clergy through the  
19 Leadership Academy to promote change and identify opportunities in mission with new ideas  
20 and methods to reach more for Jesus Christ.  
21 d. To provide support and direction for the ministry of the laity on the local, district, and annual  
22 conference levels and to promote the observance of Laity Sunday.  
23 e. To provide organization, direction, and support for the development of local churches.

24 -(Paragraph 631 of TBOD-UMC. #2)

25 **Important Work and Goals**

- 26 1) The Laity Board will review and ensure that lay representation at Annual Conference 2021-2024 is  
27 equal in membership in accordance with the GNJAC Rules of Order/ Book of Discipline. New  
28 Quadrennial "At-Large Members" will apply online and agree to be faithful to process as well as  
29 commit to attend Annual Conference and report back to local congregation.  
30  
31 2) The Leadership Academy will continue to work to create a culture of learning in which laity  
32 throughout the Annual Conference will have an opportunity to become engaged, equipped and  
33 empowered to be **effective** partners with each other and their clergy partners to lead the church  
34 and reach the community as disciples of Jesus Christ.  
35  
36 3) The Laity Board will continue to celebrate the ministry of faithful laity with a format called "Lay  
37 Ministry Recognition." This program recognizes a person or group that has been creative and  
38 innovative in transforming lives and making disciples of Jesus Christ. This is for the purpose of  
39 resource sharing and encouraging congregations in their ministries. The Laity Board will choose  
40 ministries from each district to be highlighted in April each year, at GNJUMC Mission and Resource  
41 Center. This program will be reviewed on a yearly basis.  
42  
43 4) The Laity Board will work with the Connectional Ministry Team and District Superintendents to  
44 ensure Christian leaders are offered vital and vibrant educational programs that develop  
45 a) Fruitful and transformational leaders  
46 b) Communication and interpersonal skills  
47 c) Passionate faith and biblical understanding  
48 d) 100 laity who make disciples who make disciples (Leadership 100)

1 e) missional mindset that connects with the community

2 f) Lay Servant ministries

3 *\*The lay servant ministries quickly adapted to the changes and challenges brought on by the*  
4 *pandemic and had 188 persons successfully complete basic and advanced classes. The ministry is*  
5 *exploring new ways to offer classes. Six persons completed the certified Lay Minister courses.*

- 6  
7 5) The Laity Board will work collaboratively with all boards, committees, agencies, and the conference  
8 leadership to support the strategic goals of GNJ and align its work to advance the A Journey of Hope  
9 plan and other areas of focus from GNJ's strategic plan.

10  
11 Let us encourage one another to continue the work we have been doing to make disciples for Jesus  
12 Christ for the transformation of the world. Let us work together to have a significant impact on our  
13 churches, our communities, and our workplaces. Let us be active participants in the work of God in our  
14 midst. To God be the glory!

15  
16 Submitted by,  
17 Judy Colorado, Chair Board of Laity & Conference Lay Leader

## 18 19 **Native American Ministries, Committee on (CONAM)**

20  
21 Challenge has been the most frequently used word this year for just about everyone. The most  
22 rewarding experience for CoNAM was inclusion in the Journey of Hope process. Native American people  
23 with historical roots to St. John United Methodist Church, the only Native American designated  
24 Methodist Church in New Jersey and the fifth oldest in the Nation, can celebrate its 180th birthday in  
25 2021 with a feeling of support for the future. There have been times when Native American people all  
26 over the United States wonder if they are really included in Methodism. GNJUMC has assured us we are  
27 an important part of the Church.

28  
29 Unfortunately, our committee membership has been depleted for various reasons and we are looking  
30 forward to new appointments to fill those empty slots and share the excitement of the Journey for  
31 Hope. We are anxious to get started, first of all with the education structure at Pinelands Center.

32  
33 CoNAM continues to have a supply of awareness materials to educate communities about the tragedy of  
34 Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women(MMIW). These materials would be excellent for NAMSunday.  
35 Contact Cynthia Mosley (cmosley19@hotmail.com).

36  
37 CoNAM members continue to participate in the Northeast Jurisdictional CoNAM activities as well as the  
38 NAIC (Native American International Caucus) projects.

39  
40 Submitted by,  
41 Cynthia Mosley

42



# 1 New Jersey Coalition of Religious Leaders

2  
3 The New Jersey Coalition of Religious Leaders seeks to build informed relationships and collaborate  
4 around sacred values uniting us in action for the Common Good. The Coalition membership reflects the  
5 religious diversity of our state including religious leaders from the Christian Orthodox, Hindu, Jewish,  
6 Muslim, Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Sikh faith traditions. United Methodist membership includes  
7 Bishop John Schol, Rev. Dr. Tanya Bennett – Chair of the Conference Board of Church and Society, and  
8 The Reverend Jack Johnson, who serves as Coordinator for the Coalition.

9  
10 The work and program of the Coalition over the past year has been focused on issues of anti-Semitism  
11 and racial justice. Both of these issues have had a significant impact in our state over this past year. Our  
12 initial meeting, “Fighting Hate and Anti-Semitism” included member panelists from the Latino Coalition  
13 of Ministers, The African American Advocacy group Salvation and Social Justice, the Religious Action  
14 Center of Reformed Judaism, the Sikh American Legal Defense Fund, and the Council of Imams in New  
15 Jersey, addressing this issue. The Keynote speaker was new Jersey State Attorney General, Gubir Grewal,  
16 addressed the issue of bias crimes in New Jersey. He reported that 50% of known offenders of hate  
17 crimes are high school and college age persons and affirmed the need for faith leaders to partner with  
18 county prosecutor’s offices and local school districts.

19  
20 Our fall program, “Cultivating a Moral Consciousness ... How does our Religious Imagery perpetuate  
21 Racism in America” was one of storytelling by three distinguished members of the Coalition, The  
22 Reverend Charles Boyer – founder of Salvation and Social Justice, Bishop Caryle Hughes – Bishop of the  
23 Newark Episcopal Diocese, and Imam Wahy-Deen Shareef – Convener of the Council of Imams in New  
24 Jersey. A distinguished panel of moderators included three members of the Drew Theological faculty  
25 and Temple’s University Professor of Islamic Studies. The program provided opportunities of story  
26 sharing and the impact of racism experienced as religious leaders.

27  
28 Our most recent virtual gathering of some sixty religious leaders addressed the issue of “Racism  
29 Revealed: The attack on the Capitol ... what we need to learn and do as Religious Leaders.” Addressing  
30 the group, Congresswoman Bonnie Watson-Coleman (12th NJ Congressional District) spoke of the  
31 harrowing experience she had on January 6th as well as encouraged leadership to use their pulpit and  
32 media platforms to speak out against racial injustice. The Primate of the Episcopal Church of America,  
33 Bishop Michael Curry, also addressed the group reflecting on the current challenges confronting  
34 religious leaders at this time in our nation. He too challenged us to address the issues of racial  
35 inequities.

36  
37 Over the past year the Coalition has worked in partnership with other civic organizations and leaders.  
38 The Coalition partnered with the Brave Angeles program “With Malice Toward None”, seeking to bring  
39 people together to build goodwill and friendships after the divisive national election. We shared in a  
40 partnership with the New Jersey Ambassador Program designed to address issues around re-entry of  
41 incarcerated persons in communities throughout New Jersey. One partnership was the development of  
42 a “virtual care program”, coordinated by the Governor’s office of outreach in response to mental  
43 hardships caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

44  
45 A Coalition editorial appearing in the Newark Star Ledger, “No Time for Retribution”, was in response to  
46 the tragic death of Floyd George. Statements of support and collaboration were issues throughout this  
47 past year reflecting our sacred values that unite us as a Coalition of diverse religious leaders. In the

1 ensuing year our focus will include a strategic plan of networks advocating for issues of criminal justice,  
2 fair share housing, environmental justice, and reparations study.

### 4 **Next Generation Ministries**

6 Throughout 2020 and 2021, Next Generation Ministries has remained passionate to fulfill its mission to  
7 *cultivate and catalyze new generations of enthusiastic disciples of Jesus Christ who connect, grow and*  
8 *lead in their congregation and community for the transformation of the world.*

9 Connect: Through Family Camps, IGNITE Communities, Fall Family Days and IGNITE Watch  
10 Parties, hundreds of students and families came together (in person and virtually) to connect  
11 with God.

12 Grow: Through learning cohorts and IGNITE Communities Leadership Teams, youth and youth  
13 group leaders grew in faith and learned together.

14 Lead: Through internships, Family Camp and in local churches, young people continue to be the  
15 leaders for their church and community today.

17 While COVID-19 has created challenges for Camping Ministry, Campus Ministries, and events such as  
18 IGNITE, congregations around GNJ continue to find creative ways to connect with youth and young  
19 people. We celebrate the many pastors, part-time church staff and volunteers who have hosted Zoom  
20 youth gatherings, socially distanced and outdoor events, created regular online content for young  
21 people and more.

23 Next Gen's greatest learning since its beginning in 2017 is that synergy is the most important element to  
24 raise up new generations of disciples (other than God, of course!). Many churches and campus  
25 ministries have a good program, or group who meets, or a major event or retreat they do each year.  
26 However, we know that faith formation does not happen one weekend or major event each year. Faith  
27 formation happens through relationships developed over time through intentional planning and  
28 gathering. Truly, Next Gen's original formation was to align the efforts of youth, camping and campus  
29 ministries to create synergy across expanding ministries with young people.

31 This year we're so excited to give your congregation one tool that makes this synergy possible: the  
32 IGNITE Discipleship Calendar. Using the Discipleship Calendar, your church will be able to create a year-  
33 round plan for your people to connect with God, grow in faith and lead in the church and community  
34 today. Through events such as IGNITE, Camping Ministry and more, as well as gatherings and events  
35 specific to your church, this summer your church will be able to create its own, contextually specific  
36 Discipleship Calendar to be in ministry with youth for the next whole school year. Now it is easy for you,  
37 your leadership, and volunteers to have a great plan to reach young people in your church and  
38 community.

40 We invite you to learn more about the IGNITE Discipleship Calendar by visiting [www.gnjnextgen.org](http://www.gnjnextgen.org).  
41 There you'll be able to download a copy for free, connect with a Next Gen Team Coach to help create  
42 your own calendar, download the IGNITE Discipleship App for youth leaders and volunteers, learn about  
43 upcoming events and more.

1 We're all discerning what ministry will look like coming out of the pandemic. This summer plan an entire  
2 year of discipleship for young people in your church and community. Next Gen has all the tools to help.

3  
4 Submitted by,  
5 Samuel Perez, Next Generation Ministries Board of Trustees, President/Chairperson & Eric Drew  
6 Executive Director

## 7 8 **Religion and Race, Commission on**

9  
10 *He has told you, human one, what is good and what the Lord requires from you: to do justice, embrace*  
11 *faithful love, and walk humbly with your God. Micah 6:8*

12  
13 The GNJ Commission on Religion and Race (GNJ CORR) advances the mandate of the General  
14 Commission on Religion and Race (GCORR). "GCORR is the core agency within the United Methodist  
15 Church tasked with empowering the Church to pursue racial equity and cultural competency to build a  
16 stronger, more vibrant UMC." GNJ CORR is charged with this same task in the Greater New Jersey  
17 Conference (GNJ) by promoting full and equal participation of the racial and ethnic constituency in the  
18 total life and mission of the church GNJ CORR seeks to empower clergy and laity to develop  
19 transformational leaders and vital congregations.

20  
21 I am honored to have been appointed as chair of GNJ CORR and I am grateful to lead such an  
22 exceptional team. I am happy to give a report on the work done since our last Annual Conference in  
23 October 2020. Because of COVID 19, my transitioning to becoming the chair was delayed until the  
24 month of October, but that was a blessing in disguise.

25  
26 During the summer months I had the privilege of working hand in hand with Rev. Vanessa M. Wilson,  
27 who was the chair of our committee for 8 years. During that same time, we strengthen our partnership  
28 with the members of GNJ's Board of Church and Society. We met every week for about two months to  
29 strategize on how to respond to the news on police brutality in our nation and other racial issues  
30 affecting our churches and communities. In these meetings we drafted the legislation on Black Lives  
31 Matter that was approved in our Annual Conference in October. We also worked on the drafting of the  
32 open letter from white clergy.

33  
34 During the Summer and Fall we continued the series of *Conversations About Race*, where members of  
35 our team and special guests led the members of our Annual Conference in dialogue about race issues  
36 that are affecting our churches and the communities that we serve.

37  
38 Our team continued to review and give input to the Journey of Hope (JoH). In January, we met to discuss  
39 the financial effects of the January 2021 Special Session on churches and clergy of color. GNJ CORR was  
40 invited to collaborate with the director of worship to create the "Not Soon Forgotten" service on legacy,  
41 love and leadership honoring Black History.

42  
43 I am very thankful for our GNJ GCORR team. Each member is doing special work in their communities to  
44 combat the sin of racism. Our members are leading efforts to end school segregation in our schools,  
45 others are pushing for police reform, and others are advocating for immigrant rights. These are just  
46 examples of ways that we seek for God's justice for those who are hungry and thirsty for it.

47

1 During this coming year, GNJ CORR will continue to lead our Annual Conference in dialogue by re-  
2 instating the Conversations About Race in the Fall. The team has been charged by the JoH plan to revise  
3 the legislation that comes to Annual Conference for any racial biases they may contain. We will continue  
4 to strengthen our relationship with other agencies of our Annual Conference, so that, in working  
5 together, we will continue to fight the sin of racism.

6  
7 Submitted by,  
8 Rev. Dr. Sammy Arroyo

9

## 10 **Saint Paul School of Theology**

11

12 Saint Paul School of Theology , a seminary of the United Methodist Church, is committed to the formation  
13 of people for innovative, creative ministry. We are one institution, online and on-campus, in Kansas and  
14 Oklahoma.

15

16 This past year, we have all faced new challenges amid these unsettled times. Saint Paul School of Theology  
17 began the 2020-2021 academic year offering students an online option for all courses. With many  
18 students choosing to attend class solely online, our Student Council created a monthly “Chat & Chew”  
19 where students, faculty, and staff come together to eat lunch and talk about life, seminary, and ministry.  
20 In addition, Rev. Rod Newman, our Oklahoma Campus Chapel Coordinator, crafts a weekly Community  
21 Prayer to provide encouragement and faithfulness as the school seeks to provide spiritual formation in  
22 new ways.

23

24 Kansas Campus Chapel Coordinator Dr. Casey Sigmon took worship to new technological levels by  
25 introducing our weekly online worship service via Zoom, bringing our separate campus chapel services  
26 together for one service where all are invited to create a sacred atmosphere from wherever they are.  
27 Along with our featured alumni worship preachers, the community was blessed this fall by the presence  
28 of Musician in Residence Hannah Rand, from The Many, who led the music each week for worship. In  
29 Spring 2020, Odell Talley, Director of Music for Swope Parkway United and organist for Zion Travelers  
30 Missionary Baptist, served as Musician in Residence. For those who cannot join us live, chapel recordings  
31 are available on the Saint Paul YouTube channel.

32

33 Saint Paul staff and faculty continue to contribute to the academy, church, and society. This year, we have  
34 added new adjunct professors, including Rev. Dr. Carol Cook-Moore and Rev. Dr. Tiffany Nagel Monroe  
35 both of the OKUMC, Rev. Dr. Robert Turner of Vernon Chapel AME, UMC Deaconess Cindy Johnson of Rio  
36 Grande Conference, Rev. Adam Hamilton and Debi Nixon both of Church of the Resurrection, Rev. Chebon  
37 Kernell of the UMC Native American Comprehensive Plan, and Rev. Dr. Shannon Fleck of the Oklahoma  
38 Conference of Churches.

39

40 The faculty of Saint Paul School of Theology continue to maintain high standards of scholarship, research,  
41 publication, and engagement. Their many activities and publications over the past year are so numerous  
42 that space permits only the sharing of selected highlights.

- 43 1. Dr. Jim Brandt, Professor of Historical Theology, will publish “Schleiermacher’s Christian Ethics”  
44 in the forthcoming Oxford Handbook of Schleiermacher, which will appear in 2022 from the  
45 Oxford University Press.
- 46 2. Dr. Nancy Howell, Professor of Theology and Philosophy of Religion and Oubri A. Poppele  
47 Professor of Health and Welfare Ministries, continues her service on the Executive Committee of

1 the International Society for Science and Religion, working on several committees advancing the  
2 aims of the Society.

- 3 3. Rev. Dr. Israel Kamudzandu, Associate Professor of New Testament Studies, will see the  
4 publication of his book, Reading and Interpreting the Bible with Global South Christians: A 21st  
5 Century Model for Europe and North America Christendom, by Wipf and Stock Publishers this  
6 summer. He has also written four Commentaries on 2 Corinthians and Ephesians which  
7 appeared on WorkingPreacher.org in April.
- 8 4. Dr. Hal Knight, Donald and Pearl Wright Professor of Wesleyan Studies, continues his work as a  
9 contributing writer in *The Missouri Methodist* magazine.
- 10 5. Dr. Kristen E. Kvam, Professor of Theology, serves as co-chair for the American Academy of  
11 Religion's Program Unit "Martin Luther and Global Lutheran Traditions." Over the last several  
12 months, she has conducted invited presentations to the Great Plains UMC Clergy and its Clergy  
13 Excellence in Liminal Time Conversations and the Fall Theological Conference of Central States  
14 Synod (ELCA) on October 14, 2020.
- 15 6. Dr. Casey Sigmon, Assistant Professor of Preaching and Worship and Director of Contextual  
16 Education continues to contribute regularly to WorkingPreacher.org and served as the keynote  
17 speaker at the Wesleyan Liturgical Society in Kansas City in March 2020. Her scholarly writing will  
18 appear in the Preaching the Manifold Grace, Vol. 2, edited by Ronald J. Allen and published by  
19 Wipf and Stock.

20  
21 This year, we have faced several challenges that turned into opportunities for new recruiting spaces and  
22 partnerships to enhance students' seminary experience. With the change from in-person to virtual events,  
23 Rev. Shannon Hancock, Director of Admissions and Communications, has expanded her reach to  
24 prospective students by participating as a virtual exhibitor at online conferences. Rev. Hancock engages  
25 with prospective students via apps such as Whova and HopIn to highlight Saint Paul's unique course  
26 delivery system and formative community.

27  
28 In February, Saint Paul held the 2021 Slater-Willson Lecture online featuring Rev. Dr. Miguel A. De La  
29 Torre. His lecture, "Why Do They Come?" explored the political, economic, and social causes of our current  
30 immigration crisis. Before the lecture, Rev. Dr. De La Torre participated in a student-led forum, entering  
31 a conversation centering around the practical aspects of ministry and immigration. Later in April, Saint  
32 Paul Evangelical Society, led by Dr. Hal Knight, hosted a lecture given by Dr. Sammy G. Alfaro, Associate  
33 Professor of Theology at Grand Canyon University and Pastor of Iglesia Nuevo Dia (New Day Church), on  
34 the "Pastoral Strategies for Ministering Among Latinx Immigrant Communities." And for the first time, on  
35 May 22, Saint Paul held a virtual commencement celebration with videos, cap and gown photos, online  
36 congratulatory messages from friends and family, and a commencement address by Rev. Chebon Kernell.

37  
38 The class of 2021 had 22 graduates, including 16 Master of Divinity and 1 Doctor of Ministry graduates.  
39 Due to the pandemic, for safety concerns, Saint Paul has postponed our 60th Anniversary Celebration.  
40 However, we have rescheduled the event for Friday, October 22 and look forward to coming together as  
41 a community for a safe, in-person gathering.

42  
43 For the 2020-2021 fiscal year, Saint Paul Course of Study (COS) School educated 255 individual students,  
44 40 of which were new students, with a total registration of 520 classes and offering a total of 51 courses.  
45 Due to Covid-19, the school quickly pivoted its course offerings and delivered lessons in both  
46 asynchronous and synchronous online formats. In Winter 2019, Saint Paul began a hybrid (online and on-  
47 campus) schedule for six courses. Although for 2021, this went fully online, plans to increase the number  
48 of hybrid course offerings are in development.

1 Saint Paul Board of Trustees added three new members to their ranks: Bishop James D. Tindall, Sr., Pastor  
2 Emeritus at Metropolitan Spiritual Church of Christ Kansas City; Ms. Sharon Cleaver, Senior Director of  
3 Marketing, Communications, and PR for the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Kansas City; and Mr. Rogers  
4 Strickland, Founder/CEO of Strickland Construction.

5  
6 Through a Board initiative related to diversity and inclusion, Saint Paul created a working group on Native  
7 American theology and ministries comprised of Native theologians and church leaders. Their efforts are  
8 focused on how the church and academy can work together toward healing generational trauma related  
9 to the spread of Christianity and the genocide of Indigenous North Americans.

10 As we have happily reported in past years, Saint Paul is financially sound and operates with a balanced  
11 budget. The changes made these last years have established a solid financial foundation for years of  
12 sustainability. We continue to be grateful for donations from the community that provide technology,  
13 scholarships, and emergency assistance to students. Our significant investments in technology have  
14 recently allowed our staff, faculty, and students to transition to a fully hybrid educational delivery model  
15 providing a safe learning environment during the pandemic. Our faculty was uniquely adept at managing  
16 technology in the classroom before the pandemic, making the transition to all online courses a smooth  
17 process.

18  
19 With the Board's assistance, led by Board Chair Rev. Dr. Tex Sample, the seminary focuses on its mission.  
20 Our trustees work to continuously enhance and evaluate the strategic plans in place to guide us into the  
21 future. Perhaps most importantly, we have learned much and grown closer as a community due to the  
22 pandemic.

23  
24 Saint Paul School of Theology is blessed to be your partner in ministry and help those seeking more to  
25 answer the call. We are a seminary that offers online and on-campus classes with a flexible schedule to  
26 help our students manage pastoral leadership demands in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We are grateful for your  
27 support of our students and our seminary. May we continue to live into the call of Jesus Christ to be  
28 faithful witnesses for healing in these unsettled times and for generations to come.

29  
30 President Neil Blair, Saint Paul trustees, faculty, staff, alumni, and students thank you for your prayers and  
31 support.

32  
33 **United Methodist Men**

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37 **Redacted as of 5.25.2021**  
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**Redacted as of 5.25.2021**

**United Methodist Stewardship Foundation**

We at the Stewardship Foundation like everyone else are glad that 2020 is behind us. We experienced an unprecedented loss in investments, as performance dropped by 22% in March 2020. By the end of 2020 performance was at 19.43%. As a result of Wespath’s excellent investment strategy and churches opening new accounts, at the end of January 2021 the investment balance of the Foundation totaled over \$53 MM. This is a milestone for the Stewardship Foundation.

Services for Churches & Related Organizations

- Socially Sustainable Investment Management Services
- Donor Advised Funds
- Planned Giving Resources (Including Legacy (Estate) Planning Seminars
- Stewardship Education & Resources
- Capital Campaign Services

For Clergy

- Clergy Personal Financial Literacy Training
- Stewardship Education & Resources
- Coaching

The Stewardship Foundation continues to manage the Miracles Everywhere Campaign, and is funding important connectional ministries, Next Generation Ministries, A Future with Hope, Hurricane Recovery,

1 and the Tanzania Partnership. In 2020 we added the COVID relief fund to support GNJ congregations  
2 that continued in mission and ministry. We are available to assist congregations in running the  
3 campaign.

4  
5 We are grateful to be a partner in ministry with GNJ and its churches and look forward to serving  
6 alongside you as we journey through 2021 and beyond. No matter the course of The United Methodist  
7 Church, our Foundation is strategically aligned to continue our ministry with all churches and ministry  
8 organizations in the Wesleyan tradition. Our mission to help faithful people live generous lives is  
9 unwavering even during these uncertain times for our church.

10  
11 Vision: To enable individuals, congregations and Conference mission organizations experience the joy of  
12 generosity and facilitate the generation of increased financial resources to make new disciples, provide  
13 inspiring worship opportunities, grow faith groups, and engage disciples in mission to the community.

14 Mission: The Foundation enables disciple making, increased congregational vitality and community  
15 mission engagement by assisting congregations and mission organizations grow their financial assets by  
16 providing stewardship resourcing and investment opportunities.

17  
18 The Foundation Board of Trustees monitors and establishes policies for the operation of the Foundation;  
19 supports the work of the Foundation with their time, and expertise, and encourages the ministry and  
20 mission of the Foundation as representatives in their churches, districts, and annual conference.

21  
22 Officers of the Board of Trustees: President – Virginia Harriett (Laity), Secretary – William Markert  
23 (Laity), Treasurer – Rob Zuckerman (Conference Staff)

24 Board Members: Jie Hayes (Laity), Roxy Hammett (Laity), David Montanye (Clergy)

25  
26 Brief History: Created in 1992 by action of the 135th Session of the Northern Annual Conference, with  
27 the first investment made by the Conference. In 2000, became the UMF of Greater NJ after the merger  
28 of the Southern and Northern Conferences.

29  
30 Wespath Investment Management became the Investment Manager in August 2015. As of the end of  
31 2017, the amount of investment in the foundation was \$44.3 MM.

32  
33 Developments in 2018: The focus of the Foundation is three-fold – to increase conference wide fund  
34 raising especially by providing planned giving opportunities; to resource congregations encouraging  
35 commitment to a 12-month Stewardship Plan; to provide socially sustainable investment opportunities  
36 for congregations and conference mission organizations.

37  
38 Submitted by,  
39 Jana Purkis-Brash, Executive Director UMSF

## 40 41 **United Methodist Women**

42  
43 It is my great honor to be the new president of the United Methodist Women of Greater New Jersey. I  
44 want to express my appreciation to our past president, Kathy Schulz, for her four years of service. She  
45 left the organization in wonderful shape, making my job much easier. For example, we have a full slate  
46 of officers including the Nominations Committee. Also, we met our “Pledge to Mission” for work in our  
47 conference, our country, and our world, with our focus on mission to women, children, and youth.



1 This “COVID year” has been extremely unusual and difficult for everyone. That is why it is so remarkable  
2 that we made our Pledge to Mission of \$130,000, when many fundraising events had to be cancelled or  
3 creatively re-imagined as virtual or curbside. Many United Methodist Women stepped up to literally  
4 serve the needs in their communities as people lost their jobs and hunger reared its ugly head. Soup  
5 kitchens and food pantries multiplied and served more people than ever before.

6  
7 There were many cancellations in the spring as the pandemic spread. For example, the spring meeting  
8 was to have been held in Sparta on April 4th on “Breaking the Cycle of Poverty.” Mission u, held in  
9 cooperation with GNJUMC, was to have been held at Georgian Court University, but became virtual on  
10 Zoom. The theme, “Finding Peace in an Anxious World” was just what we needed in these anxious  
11 times. Four single-day events were held with the following numbers attending: July 11th – 63 & July  
12 18th – 54 (we thank Rev. Vaneekoven for leading these), Korean event on July 26th- 172 (thank you,  
13 Rev. Yi), and Hispanic event on Oct 31st- 10 (thank you, Rev. Santiago).

14  
15 This quadrennium, United Methodist Women will focus on climate justice and the criminalization of  
16 communities of color. Our postponed-to-virtual Northeast Jurisdiction UMW meeting was in June. The  
17 quadrennial election included Marilyn Powell becoming the Chair of Nominations, Bethany Amey Sutton  
18 as the Secretary on the Board of Directors, and Yvonne Bouknight as an alternate. These women serve  
19 us in new ways, and we said goodbye this year to two in particular who now serve with God in heaven.  
20 June McCullough was a past conference president and Standing Rules Chairperson. Mary McLemore was  
21 president of the Capital District. The deaths of many other persons, especially due to COVID19, were  
22 remembered at our fall meeting.

23  
24 The civil unrest following the death of George Floyd was just one impetus for our Charter for Racial  
25 Justice Committee to act. Over the summer, we held four sessions entitled “Understanding What We  
26 Don't Understand” : June 20 - A History of Slavery & Racism in America, July 25 - Healthcare Disparities,  
27 August 15 - Engaging the Community in Racial Justice, and September 12 - Hope for a New Generation. I  
28 want to thank all the committee members, facilitators they invited, and those who participated in these  
29 and the still-continuing conversations on race.

30  
31 We are proud to have supported the Resolution for Black Lives Matter at GNJ Annual Conference in  
32 2020, as presented by the Commission on Religion and Race. This legislation has become “A Journey of  
33 Hope” for GNJ to end the sin of racism. Likewise, “United Methodist Women condemns the culture of  
34 White supremacy and the racism it nurtures” - read the entire statement at  
35 [https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/news/black-lives-matter-to-god-and-united-methodist-](https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/news/black-lives-matter-to-god-and-united-methodist-women)  
36 [women.](https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/news/black-lives-matter-to-god-and-united-methodist-women)

37  
38 The theme continued at our fall annual meeting on October 17th, with Emily Jones, UMW Executive of  
39 Racial Justice, as our guest speaker. Fifty-three people attended on Zoom and watched the video, “Say  
40 Her Name.” Important business included the election of myself as president, Pat Schutz - Vice-President,  
41 Barbara Miller - Spiritual Growth, Leslie Bivins - Nominations Chair, with Mary Bland Marilyn Beres,  
42 Cynthia Lydon, Ivy Daniels, and RosaLee McNair added to the Nominations Committee.

43  
44 Submitted by,  
45 Sue Zahorbenski, President, GNJUMW  
46  
47

## 1 United Theological Seminary

2  
3 *"I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?" — Isaiah 43:19*

4  
5 It appears God is doing some new things at United Theological Seminary, even in the midst of health,  
6 racial, and political crises.

7  
8 **God is doing a new thing at United financially.** United continues to make progress toward its goal of  
9 becoming debt-free by the Seminary's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary on October 11, 2021. Thanks to the faithfulness  
10 and generosity of alumni/ae and donors, less than \$1 million remains of the original \$4 million mortgage  
11 debt. After the mortgage is paid in full, the Seminary plans to convert those mortgage payments into  
12 money for student scholarships.

13  
14 **God is doing a new thing in enrollment.** Over the last five years, United's Doctor of Ministry program  
15 has grown by 48%, from 170 students in the 2016-17 academic year to 251 in 2020-21. In Fall 2021, Dr.  
16 Elvin Sadler, General Secretary of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, will become the  
17 Associate Dean for Doctoral Studies, upon the retirement of Dr. Harold Hudson who has been a vital  
18 leader at the Seminary for 17 years.

19  
20 **God is doing a new thing with partners in church renewal.** In the 2020-21 academic year, United has  
21 partnered with Fresh Expressions US and the Mosaix Global Network to introduce two new Houses of  
22 Study. These houses oversee specialized tracks in the Doctor of Ministry and Master of Divinity  
23 programs. Rev. Dr. Michael Beck is director of the Fresh Expressions House of Studies, and Dr. Harry Li is  
24 director of the Mosaix House of Studies.

25 In collaboration with the Northwest Texas Conference of The United Methodist Church, United also  
26 introduced Rooted/Enraizados, a certificate program for coaches and mentors of Hispanic/Latino church  
27 planters. In 2020-21, the program served students from more than five annual conferences.

28  
29 **God is doing a new thing with the establishment of The Bishop Bruce Ough Innovation Center.**  
30 Beginning in 2021, the Innovation Center honors the ministry of Bishop Bruce Ough by providing a hub  
31 of learning for church leaders seeking the framework, support, and courage to introduce the Gospel of  
32 Jesus Christ in new and creative ways. Rev. Sue Nilson Kibbey joins United as the inaugural director of  
33 the Innovation Center.

34  
35 United's prayer is that United Methodists will perceive the new things that God is doing in our  
36 communities, congregations, and ministries as we strive to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the  
37 transformation of the world.

38  
39 Submitted by,  
40 Dr. Kent Millard, President

## 41 Wesley Theological Seminary Annual Conference Report 2021

42  
43  
44 For the world, 2020 was a year like no other. In the midst of a global pandemic, plus resurgent racism,  
45 mass unemployment, and politically challenging times in the US, Wesley remained committed to  
46 fostering wisdom and courage, preparing graduates to lead innovative ministries while remaining  
47 grounded in our biblical and theological traditions for the sake of God's inbreaking kingdom. The mode

1 of educational delivery changed overnight, as we became an all-online seminary on March 15, 2020 and  
2 have remained so to keep students, faculty, staff, and all members of the Wesley community safe from  
3 COVID-19 exposure on campus. This is simply Wesley modelling what we teach our students: to be  
4 committed to our God-given mission while being innovative and responsive in the delivery of ministry.  
5 Here are some of the ways we are accomplishing that with our many partners in this mission, as we seek  
6 to faithfully minister to the world in the future.

### 7 8 ***Research projects support congregational community engagement and envision future*** 9 ***ministry***

10 Wesley is pleased to announce new opportunities for UMC congregations to explore, clarify, and pursue  
11 thriving in their communities. Through **The Source Collaborative**, Wesley will work with three cohorts of  
12 regional congregations in a two-year process of prayer, community engagement, congregational  
13 visioning, and coaching, with the goal of following Jesus in mission and ministry. Interested  
14 congregations can contact [innovation@wesleyseminary.edu](mailto:innovation@wesleyseminary.edu) for more information. This work, funded by  
15 a \$1 million Lilly Endowment, Inc, grant, raises Wesley's role as a leading research and development  
16 seminary for the whole church and complements Wesley's other Lilly Endowment-funded projects  
17 focused on congregational vitality.

18  
19 The **Religious Workforce Project** is an expansive study of the current and future nature of religious  
20 work, particularly in local congregations, so as to understand what opportunities and constraints may  
21 exist in the future and to adapt resources and training accordingly. Through the **Wesley Innovation Hub**,  
22 the seminary has worked with 18 congregations in the greater Washington area to experiment with  
23 ministries with young adults outside the church. Together, these projects forge insight into future  
24 ministry and local church development, influencing the way students are trained in master's, doctoral,  
25 and course of study education, but also informing workshops, podcasts, articles, and training for church  
26 leaders working in their communities across the country.

27  
28 We invite you to discover the latest research and conversations generated by the Wesley community  
29 through our new web portal, #EngageInTheseTimes, at [www.wesleyseminary.edu/#engage](http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/#engage).

### 30 31 ***Using research and partnerships to reach and equip the next generation of ministers***

32 Research shows that the primary way people learn about and begin to consider seminary options is  
33 through their pastor or an alumnus. Whether you feel called or you know someone who does, **Wesley is**  
34 **ready to work with you** as we make theological education more accessible and relevant to the realities  
35 of ministry today—for laity and clergy, for those seeking a degree or certification or continuing  
36 education, and for ministry from within or beyond the church.

37  
38 Wesley offers an 81-hour Master of Divinity, a 36-hour Master of Arts, and a 60-hour Master of  
39 Theological Studies, any of which can be focused around specializations in public theology, urban  
40 ministry, arts and theology, missional church, children and youth ministry and advocacy, or African  
41 American church leadership.

42  
43 For full-time students, we offer a modern and affordable residential community in the nation's capital.  
44 Our **Community Engagement Fellows** program prepares students to engage in entrepreneurial,  
45 community-based ministry. Generous stipends are available for each Fellow while they complete their  
46 MDiv degree. Our **3+3 Fast Track BA/MDiv program with Shenandoah University** allows students to  
47 complete both degrees in six years, entering ministry more quickly and with less debt.

1 For people with work, ministry, and family commitments, **Wesley's Master of Divinity degree can now**  
2 **be completed via online, weekend, short-term intensive, and weeknight courses in 5 years.** Check out  
3 upcoming flexible course offerings for Summer and Fall 2021 at  
4 [www.wesleyseminary.edu/admissions/try-a-class-3](http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/admissions/try-a-class-3).  
5

6 Wesley works with each student to make seminary affordable. Thanks to the consistent support of  
7 graduates, congregations, and friends, Wesley provides more than \$2 million annually in scholarships. In  
8 addition to our regular merit awards, ranging from 25% to 100% tuition with stipends, Wesley has  
9 released special additional scholarships: **full-tuition scholarships** for people recommended by Wesley  
10 alumni, campus ministers, or Christian camping or service ministries who feel called to leadership in the  
11 church as it is becoming; **Next Call in Ministry scholarships** for students who have worked in a non-  
12 ministry setting for at least 10 years; and **Generación Latinx Scholarships** for emerging Latinx/Hispanic  
13 leaders for ministries both within and beyond the church.  
14

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

16 In addition to full master's degrees, Wesley offers graduate certificates for those preparing for  
17 specialized ministry! The new **Certificate for Children and Youth Ministry and Advocacy (CYMA)** is  
18 designed for people who work with and advocate for children and young people, whether in churches,  
19 schools, or non-profit organizations. The **non-residential certificate can be completed in 12 to 15**  
20 **months** through online coursework and up to two residential sessions. For more information, visit  
21 [www.wesleyseminary.edu/admissions/cyma-3](http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/admissions/cyma-3). The **Certificate in Faith and Public Life** explores the  
22 foundations of public theology, religious freedom, and civil discourse through graduate courses. For  
23 more information, visit [www.wesleyseminary.edu/ice/programs/public-theology/public-life/](http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/ice/programs/public-theology/public-life/)  
24

25 Wesley is a leader in **Doctor of Ministry programs** in specialized tracks that can include international  
26 study. Wesley is pleased to announce three new Doctor of Ministry tracks for 2022: Ministry in a  
27 Digital Age, a timely new track exploring the new opportunities and challenges of online  
28 ministry; Justice, Compassion, and Witness in a Turbulent World, hosted in Cambridge, England;  
29 and a program focused on Latinx ministry. As well, new 2022 cohorts for our popular DMin  
30 areas of focus will be offered for Military Chaplains and CPE chaplains, our international mission-  
31 focused Global Church Leadership program, and Wesley's premiere DMin program in innovative church  
32 administration "**Church Leadership Excellence.**" Find out more or apply  
33 at [www.wesleyseminary.edu/doctorofministry/](http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/doctorofministry/).  
34

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

36 The **Lewis Center for Church Leadership** continues to be on the leading edge of research for the local  
37 church. The Lewis Center's **Leading Ideas e-newsletter** is the go-to source for over 20,000 people in  
38 ministry each week. Stay on top of their latest developments by subscribing to their podcast or  
39 newsletter at [www.churchleadership.com](http://www.churchleadership.com). Also look for new practical online courses at  
40 [www.lewisonlinelearning.org](http://www.lewisonlinelearning.org).  
41

42 The **Community Engagement Institute** embraces a vibrant vision to be the premier center for churches  
43 and faith-based organization engaging their communities. The innovative online **Health Minister**  
44 **Certificate Program** prepares congregations for public health work in their parishes. Contact Dr. Tom  
45 Pruski at [tpruski@wesleyseminary.edu](mailto:tpruski@wesleyseminary.edu) for more information or to register for future certificate classes.  
46

1 The **Center for Public Theology** equips pastors, seminarians, people of faith, and the media to create  
2 spaces for civil dialogue at the intersection of religion and politics. For more information, visit  
3 <http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/ice/programs/public-theology/>.

4  
5 **The Henry Luce III Center for the Arts and Religion** works with students, religious communities, artists,  
6 and scholars exploring the intersection of the arts and theology. By engaging in innovative research,  
7 staging challenging exhibitions in our Dadian Gallery, and hosting visiting artists in our on-campus  
8 studio, the Luce Center seeks to promote dialogue and foster inspired creativity. For information on  
9 upcoming workshops and shows at the Dadian Gallery, visit [www.luceartsandreligion.org](http://www.luceartsandreligion.org).

### 10 11 ***Faculty leading the way***

12 Our internationally regarded faculty are the heartbeat of transformative education at Wesley. Our  
13 faculty continue to advance theological scholarship with new research, publications, and courses. During  
14 this past year, we celebrated the ministries of retiring faculty member Dr. Sondra Wheeler. We also  
15 welcomed New Testament professor Dr. Laura C. Sweat Holmes to the Wesley community.

### 16 17 ***Stay connected***

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

20  
21 Ready to join in our mission? Find out more about how you can be part of the future of Wesley  
22 at [www.wesleyseminary.edu/support/](http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/support/). Join the Wesley Community online via Wesley's social media,  
23 [www.facebook.com/wesleyseminary](https://www.facebook.com/wesleyseminary), on Instagram @wesleyseminary, and on Twitter @WesTheoSem ,  
24 or sign up for our electronic newsletter, *eCalling*, at [www.wesleyseminary.edu/ecalling](http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/ecalling).

### 25 26 **Young Adult Ministry, Council on**

27  
28 The Council on Young Adult Ministry champions young adult ministries at the local church, district, and  
29 annual conference levels. We strategically partner with other conference agencies and NextGen  
30 Ministries to benefit the young adults of the Greater New Jersey Conference by encouraging their  
31 spiritual development and developing their leadership skills. And as per the Discipline, we also advocate  
32 for the free expression of the convictions of young adults on issues vital to them (Para. 650, 3b).  
33 This year we celebrate that GNJ young adult voices were lifted to dismantle racism as they supported  
34 the forming and passing of the legislation "A Journey of Hope."

35  
36 We celebrate that building upon the successful launch last year of NextGen's Cultivate: College Intern  
37 program, there are 8 GNJ young adults participating in this year's program.

38  
39 We celebrate that despite challenges of online only curriculum presently in New Jersey colleges, five  
40 campus ministries are nevertheless moving forward to make young adult disciples of Jesus Christ for the  
41 transformation of college campuses.

42  
43 We celebrate that Mosaic ministries continues to equip and supply GNJ young adult leaders for ministry  
44 in the local church.

1 As we move forward and emerge from the pandemic, we will continue to partner with NextGen  
2 Ministries. We will encourage young adult involvement in the work of local churches, in camping and  
3 campus ministries, and in the forming of Ignite Communities. And we will continue to support GNJ  
4 young adults advocating for issues of social justice.

5  
6 Submitted by,  
7 Rev. Blair Goold, Chair, Council on Young Adult Ministry

8  
9