

## VIII. REPORTS

### A. CONFERENCE SUPPORT

#### 1. COUNCIL ON FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

The purpose of the Council on Finance and Administration (CFA) is “to develop, maintain, and administer a comprehensive and coordinated plan of fiscal and administrative policies, procedures, and management services for the annual conference” (¶ 612.1, 2016 *Discipline*). This mission statement drives the work of CFA.

CFA sees itself as a vessel for resource management of the Western North Carolina Conference. It is its role to wisely discern available and potential resources that match with the vision and implementation of the conference’s ministry. It is the council’s deepest hope to ensure funds and other resources are available for the Western North Carolina Conference to achieve its mission.

The past two years have brought substantial challenges to the work of the conference and all its churches. The pandemic, uncertain economy, international conflicts, and the future of The United Methodist Church have all weighed on its ministries. Yet, its connexionalism remains strong and vibrant. CFA continues to believe that apportionments are solid pathways to join together resources resulting in fruitful engagement that achieves far more than could ever be accomplished alone. Yet, CFA acknowledges that local congregations are engaged in vibrant ministries in their communities. Therefore, CFA strives to balance the needs of the local congregations and the needs of the annual conference.

Rather than regurgitate what apportionment funds are realizing, CFA simply invites all to further explore and keenly discern what teams, committees, boards, agencies, institutions, and organizations are doing in the Book of Programs and Reports.

It almost goes without saying that CFA urges every local church to support the fair share askings by paying 100 percent of its funds apportioned. It commends those churches in the conference that fully supported the connectional ministry of the church in 2021, sometimes at great sacrifice and in the throes of the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2021, 79 percent of all congregations in the conference paid 100 percent of the total amount apportioned.

CFA resists a rigid pushing of the mandate for local congregations to follow the standards of *The Book of Discipline* that each congregation must pay 100 percent of the total monies apportioned through the district, conference, jurisdiction, and general church. CFA simply reminds clergy and lay members of the annual conference to interpret and promote 100 percent payment of apportionments. Churches and their leaders can access the WNCC web site ([www.wnccumc.org/administration](http://www.wnccumc.org/administration)) and review their local congregation’s apportionment allocations, remittances, and descriptions of each of the funds. In the conference’s average congregation, based on 2021 statistical data, the total 2023 apportionment payment (district, conference and general church) is not quite six percent of the total expenditures of the annual conference churches. Adding district apportionments as a whole raises the amount another one percent. Congregations retain 93 percent of their expenses for use in the local church. In using the biblical language of the tithe, apportionments are less than a tithe and they do not represent the full 10 percent of the expenses of conference congregations.

For 2023, due to reports from many general agencies that they are reducing their budgets significantly, CFA is recommending a return to the general church apportionment amounts from 2021. This will result in an approximate \$1 million reduction from the WNCC budget. Further, the conference apportionment segment of the budget is a five percent reduction from 2022.

CFA also recommends in its report that the conference adopt a change in the apportionment calculation formula. CFA is proposing that the apportionments paid expense be excluded from calculations. Thus, apportionments paid would no longer be a part of the average expenditures used to determine a local congregation’s ability to be apportioned the budget of the annual conference.

To these ends, CFA commends to the annual conference the 2023 budget which is focused on accomplishing the vision of the conference, with the ultimate focus of developing vital disciples and vibrant churches. At a total of \$13,332,430, the 2023 conference apportioned budget represents a full decrease of 10 percent over 2022.

The 2023 budget does include for the second of three years the removal of the jurisdictional apportionment. In 2021, the decision was made by the Council on Finance and Administration of the Southeastern Jurisdiction to return a surplus of apportionment funds collected over the last eight years to the Southeastern annual conferences. WNCC will use that surplus in the years 2022, 2023 and 2024, as much as feasible, to pay the jurisdictional apportionment.

CFA is confident that it will be able to provide for growth in the ministries of the conference. This budget represents the best efforts of the conference staff and ministry teams of the Western North Carolina Conference as a funding ministry plan to achieve the goal of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

**a. Proposed 2023 Conference Funds and Financial Policies****(Petition 1a)** *Approved June 18, 2022*

The Council on Finance and Administration proposes:

1. That each of the funds described in the section of this report headed “Conference Funds for 2023” be approved and that the traditional decimal formula be used in determining the apportionments for 2023 for each chartered church/charge for these funds. (New church starts will participate in the apportionments in a “phasing” period and churches deemed “mission churches” are excused from apportionments):

District Support Fund	Africa University Fund
Equitable Compensation Fund	Black College Fund
Conference Support Fund	Episcopal Fund
Mission and Ministry Fund	General Administration Fund
District Administration Fund	Interdenominational Coop. Fund
District Mission Engagement Fund	Ministerial Education Fund
District Benevolence Fund	World Service Fund
District Church Vitality Fund	

The decimal formula shall be based on the average of the amounts paid by each chartered church/charge during 2019, 2020, and 2021 on the following items:

**Items from Table Two of the Year-end Statistical Reports**

Pastor(s) Pension Premiums (39)

Pastor(s) Health Insurance Premiums (40)

Salaries, Housing, Utilities, Travel, and Other Cash Allowances Paid to Pastor and Associate(s)(41-44)

Compensation of All Other Church Employees and Diaconal Ministers (45)

Local Church Expenses for Program (46)

Other Local Church Operating Expenses (47)

2. That the following policy be approved and observed: At the beginning of the calendar year, the Council on Finance and Administration shall determine which portions of the Conference Support Fund and the Mission and Ministry Fund are “fixed costs” (salaries, benefits, etc.) and shall be paid at 100 percent of the approved budget. The District Support Fund will be funded at 100 percent of the approved budget. Based on prior year receipts to these funds, CFA shall then determine a percentage of the approved budget to be authorized for expenditure of the remaining items of the budget, so that expenditures shall not exceed income.
  - a. Each church is expected to support all funds at 100 percent of the apportioned amount. (¶ 247.14 of the 2016 *Book of Discipline*)
  - b. The churches are requested to make payments thereon aggregately, with the understanding that the conference treasurer will allocate such payments according to the appropriate percentage due the fund according to the conference budget.
3. That an Unrestricted Fund Balance Account be maintained by the annual conference at a goal level of 30 percent of the current total of the conference funds and that any undesignated interest income plus unused balances in budget accounts be transferred to the undesignated fund balance at the end of the fiscal year.
4. That all apportioned funds, pension, and health benefits costs, both receipts and disbursements, be managed through the office of the conference treasurer and that all districts, boards, agencies, committees, and commissions use the conference treasurer as fiscal agent.
5. That the group medical insurance plan be continued and that all churches be required to participate, based on the eligibility requirements of the plan, through the payment of premiums to the office of the conference treasurer.
6. That local churches should be aware that, for apportioned funds for bishops (Episcopal Fund), district superintendents (District Support), and the Equitable Compensation Fund, the church has an obligation to observe the rule of proportional payment (¶¶ 622 and 639.4, 2016 *Discipline*), and that ¶ 639.4(c) be observed by the statistician in reporting these apportionments. The rule of proportional payment requires that each local church/charge makes payments for these apportioned funds in the same proportion as payment for the support for the clergy appointed to the charge, i.e., if a church pays their clergy monthly, then these apportioned funds are to be submitted monthly.
7. That, for 2012 and beyond, the Conference Staff Relations Committee (CSRC) set the salary and benefits (including clergy housing allowances) for district superintendents, and district and conference staff within the approved total salary budget. The salary of the district superintendents for 2023, as recommended by CSRC, is to be set at \$119,635.
8. That conference—related travel expenses of all members of conference boards, agencies, committees, and commissions and conference and district staff will be reimbursed per the Per Diem Reimbursement Policy approved by the annual conference. Church-related travel by local church clergy will be paid by voucher on a mileage basis at the business mileage reimbursement rate allowed by the Internal Revenue Service. This will be considered as a church-related business item and will not be factored into any compensation package by the cabinet.
9. That the amount of compensation designated as housing allowance for ordained staff members and district superintendents be set by an annual resolution of the Conference Council on Finance and Administration after consideration of a statement of amounts to be used during the year.

10. That the governing boards of:

- Aldersgate United Methodist Retirement Community, Inc.
- Arbor Acres United Methodist Retirement Community, Inc.
- Givens Estates United Methodist Retirement Community, Inc.
- Crossnore School & Children’s Home
- UMAR-WNC, Inc.
- The United Methodist Foundation of Western North Carolina, Inc.
- Methodist Youth Camp of Western NC Conference, Inc. (Camp Tekoa)
- Guilrock United Methodist Camp, Inc.
- Mount Shepherd Retreat Center
- Bennett College
- Brevard College
- Greensboro College
- High Point University
- Pfeiffer University
- Western North Carolina Conference Brotherhood/Sisterhood
- Western North Carolina Conference Historical Society
- Sanctuary Counseling Group, Charlotte
- Chrysalis Counseling Center, Greensboro
- Disciple Bible Outreach Ministries of NC, Inc.
- NETworkX
- Methodist Home for Children
- New Faith Communities Fund, Congregational Vitality Team
- Campus Ministries to include Appalachian State University, UNC-Asheville, NCA&T, UNC-Charlotte, UNC-Greensboro, Western Carolina University, Winston-Salem Wesley Foundation, Common Ground Lees McRae College

be granted the privilege of soliciting and receiving funds from churches, individuals, and other sources (but not from conference-wide offerings except as indicated in the list which follows) in keeping with *The Book of Discipline*; no capital campaigns be approved for 2023; and that the following, and only the following, conference-wide offerings be approved for 2023:

Human Relations Day .....	General Conference
UMAR Sunday .....	Annual Conference
UMCOR Sunday.....	General Conference
Native American Awareness .....	General Conference
Mother’s Day (Aldersgate, Arbor Acres, Givens) .....	Annual Conference
Disciple Bible Outreach.....	Annual Conference
Project AGAPE .....	Annual Conference
Peace with Justice .....	General Conference
Crossnore School and Children’s Home Sunday .....	Annual Conference
World Communion .....	General Conference
United Methodist Student Day.....	General Conference

11. That clergy be reimbursed for moving expenses in the following manner, effective upon adjournment of the 2022 conference session:
  - a. IN-CONFERENCE MOVES: The conference shall pay a moving allowance, plus \$2.50 per mile, one way, on those moves which are required from one appointment to a new appointment. If an appointment requires a move from one parsonage/home into another parsonage/home, the moving allowance will be set at \$500. If the appointment does not require a move from a parsonage/home, the moving allowance will be set at \$150.
  - b. MOVES INTO THE CONFERENCE: The conference shall pay on the same basis as in item 11a above. The moving allowance will apply to the number of miles on the most direct route traveled from the conference boundary to the pastoral appointment.
  - c. MOVING AT RETIREMENT: Retiring clergy, surviving spouses of active clergy who died during the year, and clergy who go on medical leave during the year shall receive a moving allowance of \$750, plus \$2.50 per mile, from the pastoral appointment to the retirement residence or the conference boundary. A retiree who moves to a parsonage and serves a pastorate in retirement is eligible for an in-conference moving allowance upon approval of the district superintendent.
  - d. MOVES OUT OF THE CONFERENCE (moving to another conference, withdrawing from conference membership, leave of absence, or not receiving an appointment, etc.): No allowance will be paid.
  - e. SABBATICAL LEAVE: No allowance is granted when the leave begins; however, an allowance will be given when the leave is completed, and the clergy person is again available for appointment by the bishop. The amount will be consistent with items 11a and 11b above.
  - f. In many instances, the moving allowance will not cover the total expense of the move. This reimbursement is given to help with the over-the-road cost of the move. **Each church/charge receiving a new pastor is strongly urged to pay any out-of-pocket expenses incurred by the new pastor because of the move.** The district superintendent will negotiate the request with the church/charge well in advance of moving day.
  - g. The district superintendent is asked to make a very special appeal for each church/charge to be especially sensitive to both parsonage families during this stressful time. The appeal should include assistance with meals, packing, unpacking, loading, and unloading where helpful and appropriate for the parsonage family.
  - h. Due to the Federal Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017, clergy should continue to be aware of the provisions of moving reimbursements that may impact their tax situation and are urged to consult with their tax advisor.
12. That each local church makes a very special effort to undergird the meal, transportation, and lodging expenses of annual conference members attending annual conference by adding a minimum of \$100 to the church budget for each lay and clergy delegate. The district superintendents are asked to encourage such support at each charge conference.
13. That the Council on Finance and Administration be authorized to appoint a conference auditor.
14. That the president, vice-president, and secretary of the Conference Council on Finance and Administration, the chairpersons of the Audit Review Committee and the Investment Committee, the conference treasurer-director of administrative services, a cabinet representative, and one lay member of the CFA constitute the executive committee of the Council on Finance and Administration. The principal duties of the executive committee include annual review, compensation and benefits of the conference treasurer, and review and recommendation to CFA all statements of relationship for ministries relating to the conference.
15. That conference funds are not permitted to carry over unspent funds from one conference year to another unless specifically authorized by the Council on Finance and Administration. Agencies receiving funds from sources other than apportioned funds, such as fee-based events, may carry over such unspent funds into the next year.
16. That the Conference Council on Finance and Administration be authorized to grant amounts from the Conference Contingency Fund or Permanent Reserves to meet any individual emergency or unanticipated need.
17. That 3:00 pm., Wednesday, January 4, 2023, be the cutoff time by which all payments from local churches must be in the office of the conference treasurer to be applied to the 2022 year. Apportionment payments must be in the conference or the district offices by this time to receive credit.
18. That each conference board, agency, or institution receiving, or disbursing funds not managed by the conference treasurer maintain adequate financial records and prepare and submit annual audit reports to the conference treasurer and the Conference Council on Finance and Administration. All treasurers should be properly bonded.
19. That the conference fiscal year begins on January 1, 2023, and ends on December 31, 2023.
20. That the Conference Council on Finance and Administration be responsible for designating depositories for conference funds.

George Coates, President  
R. Mark King, Treasurer

**b. Approved Budget for 2023**

(Petition 1b) Approved June 18, 2022

Fund Name	2021	2021	2021	2022	2023	Less 2023	2023	
	Approved	Actual Receipts	Actual Expenses	Approved	Initial Proposed	Supplemental Sources/Grants	Apportionment Budget	
<b>Conference Funds</b>								
District Support	\$ 1,890,945	\$ 1,687,408	\$ 1,776,632	\$ 1,872,120	\$ 1,994,935		\$ 1,854,935	-0.92%
District Superintendents Salaries	908,945		908,945	927,120	954,935		954,935	
Benefits and District Staff Costs	982,000		867,687	945,000	1,040,000	140,000	900,000	
Conference Support (Schedule 1)	4,135,400	3,618,710	3,297,015	4,186,985	4,186,835		4,098,835	-2.11%
Conference Services Support	603,350		215,410	618,635	596,635		596,635	
Conference Staff Support	2,625,000		2,554,992	2,646,400	2,655,700		2,655,700	
Conference Administrative Support	907,050		526,613	921,950	934,500	88,000	846,500	
Equitable Compensation Support	125,000	114,211	96,577	125,000	225,000		225,000	80.00%
Connectional Ministries Support (Schedule 2)	2,500,000	2,173,649	2,003,608	2,550,000	2,829,185	724,945	2,104,240	-17.48%
<b>Total Conference Funds</b>	<b>8,651,345</b>	<b>7,593,978</b>	<b>7,173,833</b>	<b>8,734,105</b>	<b>9,235,955</b>	<b>952,945</b>	<b>8,283,010</b>	<b>-5.16%</b>
<b>General Church Funds</b>								
Africa University	81,362	92,870	87,021	94,322	81,362		81,362	
Black College	361,899	306,300	323,758	421,465	361,899		361,899	
Episcopal Fund	1,003,978	853,842	719,594	926,416	1,003,978		1,003,978	
General Administration	307,910	261,973	284,130	371,459	307,910		307,910	
Interdenominational Cooperation	10,825	9,088	52,225	82,633	10,825		10,825	
Jurisdictional Conference Administration	46,980	41,375	46,980	-	-		-	
Ministerial Education	783,110	666,908	800,781	1,056,593	783,110		783,110	
World Service Fund	2,500,336	2,066,847	2,376,334	3,128,295	2,500,336		2,500,336	
<b>Total General Church Funds</b>	<b>5,096,400</b>	<b>4,299,203</b>	<b>4,690,823</b>	<b>6,081,183</b>	<b>5,049,420</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>5,049,420</b>	<b>-16.97%</b>
<b>Grand Total of all Conference- Apportioned Funds</b>	<b>\$ 13,747,745</b>	<b>\$ 11,893,181</b>	<b>\$ 11,864,656</b>	<b>\$ 14,815,288</b>	<b>\$ 14,285,375</b>	<b>\$ 952,945</b>	<b>\$ 13,332,430</b>	<b>-10.01%</b>
Increase (decrease) in budget from 2021 to 2022; 2022 to 2023				1,067,543	2,392,194		(1,482,858)	
				7.77%	20.11%		-10.01%	
<b>District Apportioned Funds</b>								
District Administiry	\$ 685,000	\$ 644,333	\$ 644,333	\$ 685,000	\$ 685,000		\$ 685,000	0%
District Mission Engagement	409,000	404,870	404,870	409,000	409,000		409,000	0%
District Benevolence Grants	584,000	532,669	532,669	584,000	584,000		584,000	0%
District Church Vitality	564,000	524,708	524,708	564,000	564,000		564,000	0%
<b>Total District Funds</b>	<b>\$ 2,242,000</b>	<b>\$ 1,462,247</b>	<b>\$ 1,462,247</b>	<b>\$ 2,242,000</b>	<b>\$ 2,242,000</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 2,242,000</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Grand Total of all Conference &amp; District Apportioned Funds</b>	<b>\$ 15,989,745</b>	<b>\$ 13,355,428</b>	<b>\$ 13,326,903</b>	<b>\$ 17,057,288</b>	<b>\$ 16,527,375</b>	<b>\$ 952,945</b>	<b>\$ 15,574,430</b>	<b>-8.69%</b>



Approved Budget for 2023, Continued

Fund Name	2021 Approved	2021 Actual Receipts	2021 Actual Expenses	2022 Approved	2023 Initial Proposed	Less 2023 Supplemental Sources/Grants	2023 Apportionment Budget	
<b>Schedule One</b>								
<b>Conference Support</b>								
Conference Services Support:								
Cabinet Support	55,000		19,753	55,000	55,000		55,000	
Archives and History	14,350		4,951	14,635	14,635		14,635	
Resource Center	52,000		32,456	52,000	52,000		52,000	
Committees Support	10,000		999	10,000	10,000		10,000	
Annual Conference								
Conference Sessions	102,000		58,023	102,000	105,000		105,000	
General & Jurisdictional delegate expenses	-		477	15,000	-		-	
Ministers Moving Fund	120,000		77,629	120,000	110,000		110,000	
Contingency	250,000		21,121	250,000	250,000		250,000	
<b>Total Conference Services Support</b>	<b>603,350</b>		<b>215,410</b>	<b>618,635</b>	<b>596,635</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>596,635</b>	<b>-3.56%</b>
Conference Staff Support:								
Salaries	1,760,000		1,556,831	1,865,625	1,865,700		1,865,700	
Related Benefits costs	865,000		998,161	780,775	790,000		790,000	
<b>Total Conference Staff Support</b>	<b>2,625,000</b>		<b>2,554,992</b>	<b>2,646,400</b>	<b>2,655,700</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,655,700</b>	<b>0.35%</b>
Conference Administrative Support:								
Office Operations								
Episcopal Office	85,000		5,077	85,000	120,000	75,000	45,000	
Assistant to Bishop	3,800		1,132	3,800	3,000		3,000	
Treasury Services	10,000		7,350	10,000	10,000		10,000	
Communications	96,000		47,747	91,000	91,000		91,000	
Ministerial Services/Conference Secretary	17,250		5,676	14,000	14,000		14,000	
Information Technology	315,000		250,716	318,150	271,500	3,000	268,500	
General Support								
Liability & Property Insurance	30,000		14,073	35,000	25,000		25,000	
Legal	60,000		60,000	75,000	85,000		85,000	
Audit	45,000		26,000	45,000	45,000		40,000	
Staff Travel/Education	125,000		23,986	125,000	100,000		100,000	
Episcopal Residence	20,000		(3,455)	20,000	25,000	10,000	15,000	
Conference Office	100,000		88,311	100,000	150,000	-	150,000	
<b>Total Conference Administrative Support</b>	<b>907,050</b>		<b>526,613</b>	<b>921,950</b>	<b>934,500</b>	<b>88,000</b>	<b>846,500</b>	<b>-8.18%</b>
<b>Total Conference Support</b>	<b>\$ 4,135,400</b>	<b>\$ 3,618,710</b>	<b>\$ 3,297,015</b>	<b>\$ 4,186,985</b>	<b>\$ 4,186,835</b>	<b>\$ 88,000</b>	<b>\$ 4,098,835</b>	<b>-2.11%</b>
<b>Schedule Two</b>								
<b>Connectional Ministries Support</b>								
Connectional Table								
Connectional Table	5,000		-	5,000	5,000		5,000	
Connectional Table Ministries	80,000		81,645	80,000	80,000		80,000	
Contingency	17,030		-	67,030	110,000		110,000	
Council on Camping & Retreat Ministries	83,300		78,900	83,300	162,200	78,900	83,300	
Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries	518,039		467,205	518,039	518,040		518,040	
Ordained Ministry	233,417		64,218	233,417	171,000		171,000	
Board of Laity	6,665		3,980	6,665	25,400		25,400	
<b>Total Connectional Table</b>	<b>943,451</b>		<b>695,949</b>	<b>993,451</b>	<b>1,071,640</b>	<b>78,900</b>	<b>992,740</b>	
Church Vitality								
New Faith Communities Ministry and Grants	608,000		608,115	608,000	996,045	646,045	350,000	
<b>Total Church Vitality</b>	<b>608,000</b>		<b>608,115</b>	<b>608,000</b>	<b>996,045</b>	<b>646,045</b>	<b>350,000</b>	
Mission Engagement								
Ministry and Grants	386,500		367,248	386,500	216,500		216,500	
Mission Response Center	21,000		24,640	21,000	25,000		25,000	
<b>Total Mission Engagement</b>	<b>407,500</b>		<b>391,888</b>	<b>407,500</b>	<b>241,500</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>241,500</b>	
Leadership Development								
Ministry and Grants	281,000		157,593	281,000	200,000		200,000	
<b>Total Leadership Development</b>	<b>281,000</b>		<b>157,593</b>	<b>281,000</b>	<b>200,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>200,000</b>	
Equity and Justice								
Equity and Justice Ministry	-		-	-	110,000		110,000	
Justice and Reconciliation Ministry and Grants	160,049		45,063	160,049	110,000		110,000	
<b>Total Equity and Justice</b>	<b>160,049</b>		<b>45,063</b>	<b>160,049</b>	<b>220,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>220,000</b>	
Partnership Fund with WNCC-UMC Colleges, Retirement								
Communities, Crossnore and UMAR	100,000		105,000	100,000	100,000		100,000	
<b>Total Partnership Grants</b>	<b>100,000</b>		<b>105,000</b>	<b>100,000</b>	<b>100,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>100,000</b>	
<b>Total Connectional Ministries Fund</b>	<b>\$ 2,500,000</b>	<b>\$ 2,173,649</b>	<b>\$ 2,003,608</b>	<b>\$ 2,550,000</b>	<b>\$ 2,829,185</b>	<b>\$ 724,945</b>	<b>\$ 2,104,240</b>	<b>-17.48%</b>

## 2. BOARD OF PENSION AND HEALTH BENEFITS

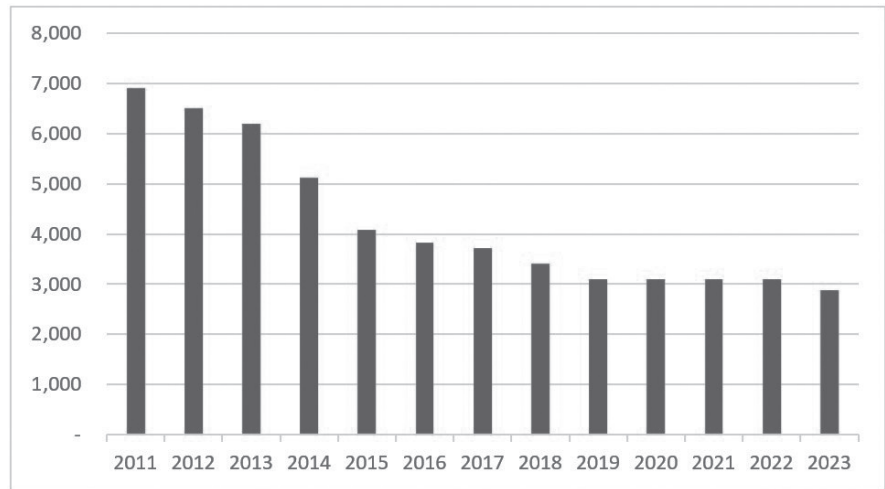
### Pension Program and Policies

The Board of Pension and Health Benefits, Inc., Western North Carolina Conference, The United Methodist Church, acting as an auxiliary to Wespath Benefits | Investments, is charged with caring for the work of providing for and contributing to the support, relief, assistance, and pensioning of clergy and their families in the Western North Carolina Conference.

In 2023, the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits will send invoices monthly to the churches for clergy appointed in accordance with the Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) adopted by The United Methodist Church.

Since the implementation of direct billing for pension and health benefits in 2007, the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits have been investing the net proceeds from these billings in various investment vehicles with the United Methodist Foundation. Over the years, these investments have provided better than projected earnings for the conference. As a result, the board has approved the sharing of these resources with the local church by reducing the cost of pension benefits (without reducing any pension benefits to the pastors) by \$2,228 per full-time pastor in 2023, invoicing \$2,880 to the local church. The actual cost invoiced to the conference for the CRSP DB full time benefit will be \$5,108. This is the 10th year of reductions in the CRSP defined benefit pension billings to each local church for each full-time pastor as shown in the table below:

2011 .....	\$ 6,903
2012 .....	\$ 6,504
2013 .....	\$ 6,200
2014 .....	\$ 5,118
2015 .....	\$ 4,092
2016 .....	\$ 3,824
2017.....	\$ 3,713
2018 .....	\$ 3,402
2019 .....	\$ 3,093
2020 .....	\$ 3,093
2021 .....	\$ 3,093
2022 .....	\$ 3,093
2023 .....	\$ 2,880



The board rejoices in the ability to share these resources with the local church so that more of their resources may be used for ministry within their communities.

As published in the report in 2013, new provisions of the Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP), enacted at General Conference 2012, became effective January 1, 2014, as follows:

- **Eligibility:** Full-time clergy are eligible to participate and earn benefits. Annual conferences may elect to cover clergy who are appointed as three-quarters or one-half time. Clergy who are appointed one-quarter time are no longer eligible to earn CRSP benefits. Any benefits already earned through December 31, 2013, remain in place.
- **Benefit Formulas:** The formula for determining the defined benefit (DB) component was reduced for the multiplier from 1.25% to 1.0% to be applied to Denominational Average Compensation (DAC) per year of service beginning January 1, 2014. Additionally, for the defined contribution (DC) component, the local church will contribute 2% of the clergy’s compensation, reduced from 3% in 2013. If the clergy person contributes up to 1% of his/her plan compensation, the local church will also contribute an additional 1% amount as a dollar-for-dollar match of the UMPIP contributions, up to 1%.
- **Surviving Spouse Benefits:** Beginning January 1, 2014, the initial dollar amount of the benefit paid to a married participant will be reduced to offset the value of spousal benefits.
- **Disabled Adult Child Benefits:** Beginning January 1, 2014, participants may designate a disabled adult child as a secondary contingent annuitant. After the participant and his or her spouse die, the disabled adult child would continue to receive DB benefits for life. The initial participant benefit would be reduced to pay for this extra benefit.

The Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits, in consensus with the Cabinet of the Western North Carolina Conference, recommends that the annual conference approve the continuation of eligibility of those clergy who are appointed to three-quarter or half-time designations.

Based on the above, invoices will be prepared using the following criteria:

- A. Pension Plan Compensation (PPC) is the total annual compensation reported by the charge conference for 2023; included in the PPC is the housing component. The housing is either 25% of the aforementioned annual compensation, if a parsonage is provided, or the cash paid in lieu of a parsonage.
- B. Clergy Retirement Security Program – In 2023, the Core Defined Contribution Part (CRSP-DC) is 3% of PPC. Continuing from 2014 (the effective date of this change) CRSP-DC will continue to be invoiced at 3% of PPC, with 2% being an employer contribution and 1% as a matching contribution to the pastor’s United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP).

- C. Clergy Retirement Security Program – Core Defined Benefit Part (CRSP-DB) is an actuarially determined normal cost provided by Wespath. For 2023, the cost is \$2,880 for each full-time clergy. For those clergy appointed  $\frac{3}{4}$  and  $\frac{1}{2}$  time (based on the eligibility approved by this session of the annual conference), the cost is that percentage times \$2,880. Wespath has provided that the conference actuarially determined normal cost contribution due December 31, 2023, will be \$3,515,331. Effective January 1, 2014, as approved by General Conference 2012, clergy appointed to  $\frac{1}{4}$  time positions will **not** be eligible to earn benefits under the CRSP – DC plan and will not accrue benefits in the CRSP – DB plan after that date. (All previously earned benefits will remain in place.) The Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits of Western North Carolina highly recommends that any local church which is served by a clergy person appointed to a  $\frac{1}{4}$  time position sponsor the United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP) and provide an employer contribution on behalf of the clergy person under appointment.
- D. Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP) is the death and disability program administered through Wespath. In 2013 and prior years, premiums of 3% of PPC have been required to be paid for full-time clergy. The premium is 3% of PPC to a maximum amount of 200% of Denominational Average Compensation (DAC). General Conference 2016 approved a change that would permit Annual Conference Boards of Pension to enroll clergy appointed to  $\frac{3}{4}$  time and full-time positions in the CPP. General Conference 2016 also changed the minimum compensation to 25% of DAC. For the year 2023, the CPP premium will be invoiced to the churches with full-time and  $\frac{3}{4}$  time clergy at the rate of 2.50% of PPC, and the remaining 0.50% will be funded from Conference Board reserves.

The Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) provides that the Past Service Annuity Rate (PSR) for service years prior to 1982 will increase 2% per annum. The conference board is proposing that the 2023 PSR be set at \$857.00 per service year, which represents the 2% increase and is greater than 1% of Conference Average Compensation as provided by Wespath for the Western North Carolina Annual Conference.

Paragraph 1506.6 of *The Book of Discipline*, 2016, requires each annual conference to develop, adopt and implement a formal comprehensive funding plan or plans for funding all its benefit obligations. Such funding plan must be submitted to Wespath Benefits | Investments for review to obtain a favorable written opinion from Wespath. Under this requirement, the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits has developed, adopted, and implemented such formal comprehensive funding plan upon obtaining a favorable written opinion from Wespath. By approval of the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits and inclusion of a summary of the Comprehensive Funding Plan, with the favorable written opinion received, this plan is deemed to be approved by the Annual Conference of Western North Carolina.

### a. Proposed Pension Programs and Policies

**(Petition 2a) Approved June 18, 2022**

The conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits proposes:

1. That the basic cost of pastor's pension be invoiced to churches in 2023 as pension responsibility to support the Clergy Retirement Security Program.
2. That costs of the Clergy Retirement Security Program – Core Defined Benefit Part (CRSP-DB) for clergy appointed on medical leave be borne by the board, and not included in the 2023 conference apportioned budget.
3. That the Past Service Annuity Rate for service years prior to 1982 be set at \$857.00 per service year, effective January 1, 2023, and that the eligibility for the Clergy Retirement Security Program be determined to include clergy appointed for full,  $\frac{3}{4}$  and  $\frac{1}{2}$  time positions. That the eligibility for the Comprehensive Protection Plan be determined to include clergy appointed for full and  $\frac{3}{4}$  time positions earning a minimum of 25% of the DAC in pension plan compensation (PPC).
4. That the following resolution be adopted for calendar year 2023:

#### **Resolution Relating to Rental/Housing Allowances for Retired, Disabled, or Former Clergypersons of the Western North Carolina Conference**

The Western North Carolina Conference (the "Conference") adopts the following resolution relating to rental/housing allowances for active, retired, terminated or disabled clergypersons of the conference:

*Whereas*, the religious denomination known as The United Methodist Church (the "Church"), of which this Conference is a part, has in the past functioned and continues to function through ministers of the gospel (within the meaning of Internal Revenue Code section 107) who were or are duly ordained, commissioned or licensed ministers of the Church ("Clergypersons");

*Whereas*, the practice of the Church and of this Conference was and is to provide active Clergypersons with a parsonage or a rental/housing allowance as part of their gross compensation;

*Whereas*, pensions or other amounts paid to active, retired, terminated, and disabled Clergypersons are considered to be deferred compensation and are paid to active, retired, terminated and disabled Clergypersons in consideration of previous active service; and

*Whereas*, The Internal Revenue Service has recognized the Conference (or its predecessors) as the appropriate organization to designate a rental/housing allowance for Clergypersons who are or were members of this Conference and are eligible to receive such deferred compensation; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*:

THAT an amount equal to 100% of the pension or disability payments received from plans authorized under *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church* (the "*Discipline*"), which includes all such payments from Wespath, the United Methodist Foundation of Western North Carolina Conference Superannuate Endowment Fund, and The Duke Endowment during the period January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023 by each active, retired, terminated or disabled Clergyperson who is or was a member of the Conference, or its predecessors, be and hereby is designated as a rental/housing allowance for each such Clergyperson; and THAT the pension, severance, or disability payments to which this rental/housing allowance designation applies will be any pension,



severance or disability payments from plans, annuities, or funds authorized under the *Discipline*, including such payments from Wespath and from a commercial annuity company that provides an annuity arising from benefits accrued under a Wespath plan, annuity, or fund authorized under the *Discipline*, that result from any service a Clergy person rendered to this Conference or that an active, a retired, a terminated or a disabled Clergy person of this Conference rendered to any local church, annual conference of the Church, general agency of the Church, other institution of the Church, former denomination that is now a part of the Church, or any other employer that employed the Clergy person to perform services related to the ministry of the Church, or its predecessors, and that elected to make contributions to, or accrue a benefit under, such a plan, annuity, or fund, for such an active, a retired, a terminated or a disabled Clergy person's pension, severance, or disability plan benefit as part of his or her gross compensation.

NOTE: The rental/housing allowance that may be excluded from a Clergy person's gross income in any year for federal income tax purposes is limited under Internal Revenue Code section 107(2) and regulations thereunder to the least of: (1) the amount of the rental/housing allowance designated by the Clergy person's employer or other appropriate body of the Church (such as this Conference in the foregoing resolution) for such year; (2) the amount actually expended by the Clergy person to rent or provide a home in such year, or (3) the fair rental value of the home, including furnishings and appurtenances (such as a garage), plus the cost of utilities in such year. Retired Clergy are encouraged to consult their tax advisor concerning this resolution.

### Clergy Debt Reduction Peer Program

The Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits is working in partnership with the United Methodist Foundation of Western North Carolina, Inc. (the Foundation) on a Clergy Debt Reduction Peer Program. The program is sponsored and funded by the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits and administered by the Foundation. The board is excited about the impact the program is having already on participants, and about the possibilities the program will hold for improving general welfare and well-being of clergy. As of December 31, 2021, loans outstanding for clergy debt reduction and refinancing totaled \$1,594,392.

### Balances Due from Churches

Beginning in 2007, direct clergy benefit costs were invoiced to each local church. According to conference action, recorded in the 2004 journal, page 234, "Non-payment of direct clergy benefit costs (pension and health benefits) result in a default recorded against the church (see ¶639.4, *The Book of Discipline* 2016). While individual clergy will not lose benefits, the church will incur a liability to the conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits. The default will be reported by the conference benefits officer to the district superintendents, and the church will be led to correct this situation.

The following is the 2021 list of churches with balances greater than \$50.00 as of May 4, 2022, resulting from non-payment of direct clergy benefit costs:

District	Church	2021 Balance	District	Church	2021 Balance
Appalachian	Shiloh (Statesville)	\$889.97	Uwharrie	Oak Grove (Mt. Pleasant)	\$921.75
Blue Ridge	Avery's Creek (Arden)	\$6,759.52	Yadkin Valley	Blackwater (Ararat)	\$435.80
Catawba Valley	Kadesh (Lawndale)	\$2,379.80		New Hope (Pilot Mountain)	\$83.62
	Kistler's (Lawndale)	\$4,911.67		New Mount Vernon (WS)	\$1,208.52
	Knob Creek (Lawndale)	\$2,379.80		Stanford (Siloam)	\$277.61
	Linville (Morganton)	\$4,722.80		Zion (Mt. Airy)	\$73.45
	Mountain Grove (Morganton)	\$3,864.10	<b>Total</b>		<b>\$ 31,288.21</b>
	St. Peter's (Lawndale)	\$2,379.80			

### Health Benefits Committee

The Health Benefits Committee serves as a sub-committee of the Board of Pension and Health Benefits (BOPHB), with responsibility in two specific areas: health benefits and group term life insurance.

The committee is composed of at least 12 members appointed by the board to quadrennial terms, as follows: three from BOPHB, one serving as chair of the committee, one being an officer of BOPHB, and one being the cabinet representative to BOPHB; one from the conference Board of Ordained Ministry; one from the conference Council on Finance and Administration; two retired clergy persons; and five professional persons involved in the insurance industry. Typically, there are six lay members and six clergy members. The various agencies represented nominate their representatives to BOPHB for appointment.

#### Group Life Insurance

Wespath, through the Comprehensive Protection Plan, provides a death and disability benefit for eligible clergy, along with death benefits for members of clergy families. In addition to this coverage, the conference offers basic life insurance coverage of \$10,000 for active clergy enrolled in the conference group health plan, with premiums for this coverage collected through the invoice. Clergy members may elect to increase their coverage by enrolling in additional coverage in the amounts of \$25,000, \$50,000, \$75,000, \$100,000, \$125,000 or \$150,000. A new feature to the plan is critical illness and accident coverage. As an added benefit, a clergy member may elect to enroll his/her spouse and dependent children. This additional coverage is available from a group policy secured by the committee for a monthly premium to be collected by the insuring company. The continuation of this optional benefit is dependent on normal participation of those eligible. Newly eligible clergy will receive information about this coverage from the Treasury Services Office. To obtain coverage without evidence of insurability, enrollment must be made within 30 days of eligibility.

#### Enrollment Deadlines for Health and Life Insurance

Responsibility rests with the individual to make application in writing for the group health insurance and the group life insurance. In addition, any changes in dependents' status must also be submitted in writing. The effective date of coverage for new applicants is July 1 following the session of annual conference. Applications must be made within 30 days of appointment at annual conference. Anyone seeking to apply following the 30-day grace period will have a 12-month waiting period for all pre-existing conditions.

*Health Benefits Continuation Policy*

The conference benefits plan provides for group members and eligible beneficiaries to continue coverage if they become ineligible for the plan. The policy is available from the plan administrator.

*Premium Collection Policy*

Payment of the medical/health insurance premiums for pastors is the responsibility of the local church(es). This premium payment is invoiced monthly. For churches with more than one pastor on the staff, the church is responsible for the payment of the insurance premium for each eligible pastor. It is the responsibility of the pastor to pay the premium costs for dependents.

The Health Benefits Committee requires the conference treasurer to notify dependent accounts which are delinquent by sixty (60) days or more that their coverage is immediately subject to termination. If full payment is not made by thirty (30) days after the delinquency, coverage will be terminated.

**2021 Financial Summary of Health Benefits Plans through December 31, 2021**

	<b>Active</b>	<b>Retirees</b>
<b>Sources of Funds</b>		
Premiums -		
Active-Church Contributions	9,738,523	0
Active-Clergy/Dependent/Conf. Personnel	1,033,720	0
Medical Leave/Apportionments	0	0
Retiree Contributions	0	948,495
Cole Foundation	0	164,104
Other -		
Stop Loss Claims	0	0
Flexible Spending Account Direct Invoice	402,844	0
Drug rebates/Misc	56,107	0
Clodfelter Trust	0	0
Retiree Stabilization Fund	0	0
<b>Total Sources</b>	<b>11,231,194</b>	<b>1,112,599</b>
<b>Uses of Funds</b>		
Benefit Payments	9,159,056	1,250,941
Wellness program	29,652	0
Stop Loss Fees	385,703	0
Administrative Charges	447,984	46,789
HSA Seed Expense	13,500	0
Flexible Spending Claims	399,615	0
Life Insurance Premium	90,200	0
Operating Expenses	3,975	2,083
ACA Fees	3,884	0
Change in Claims Incurred but not received	-136,964	0
Miscellaneous	0	29,503
Bad Debt Expense	0	0
<b>Total Uses</b>	<b>10,396,605</b>	<b>1,329,316</b>
<b>Sources less Uses</b>	<b>834,589</b>	<b>-216,717</b>
Fund Balance, January 1	-4,909,626	1,546,539
Excess/Deficit	834,589	-216,717
Fund Balance Adjustment	0	0
<b>Fund Balance, December 31</b>	<b>\$ -4,075,037</b>	<b>\$ 1,329,822</b>
<i>Retiree Stabilization Fund</i>		
Beginning Balance, January 1	\$	10,289,661
Investment Income		1,414,030
Grant Payment		0
Current Balance, December 31		<u>11,703,691</u>
<b>Combined Total Fund Balance</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>13,033,513</b>

**Conclusion**

The board appreciates the fine spirit in which subscribers and local churches are supporting the work of the Health Benefits Committee. The board seeks your continuing support as it makes every effort to provide a health benefits program that meets your needs. Members of the committee are Lori Wilson (chairperson), Frank A. Stith III, Marvin Melton, Rey Rodriguez, J. Zachery Christy, Phillip B. Cole, Andrea Conder, Ken Poe, Rennie Salata, Dave Ogden, Mark Key and Beverly Copley, Cabinet Representative, R. Mark King, Conference Treasurer, Dale C. Bryant, Benefits Administrator, and M. Lynne Gilbert, CBOPHB Treasurer.

**b. Proposed Health Benefits Program and Policies****(Petition 2b)** *Approved June 18, 2022*

The Health Benefits Committee proposes:

1. That the Board of Pension and Health Benefits be authorized to secure a hospital/medical insurance contract for 2023 that will be advantageous in terms of coverage, premium rates, and administrative costs.
2. That the hospital/medical insurance program be continued for all eligible persons working 30 hours or more per standard workweek.
3. That each local charge and eligible pastor be expected to participate in the conference program of hospital/medical insurance by contributing an amount equal to the pastor's coverage premium for each eligible pastor appointed to that charge and that these premium payments be remitted to the conference Treasury Services Office rather than to the pastor or other insurance carrier. The participant participation schedule should be used to calculate the eligible pastor's portion.
4. That premium cost information is made available to local churches and pastors immediately after the 2023 plan has been determined and rates established.
5. That a pastor may exclude himself/herself from coverage by signing a written waiver, releasing the conference and any local church from legal or moral responsibility for medical or accident claims.
6. That, in the discussion of salaries and benefits for 2023 and all succeeding years, local church committees on staff-parish relations consider designating a portion of compensation for dependents' healthcare coverage.
7. That medical/hospital coverage be provided for persons terminated from the plan for not more than a 12-month period, with the premium costs to be paid by the person terminated.
8. That continued endorsement be given to the optional life insurance program provided by a top-quality life insurance company as supplemental coverage for active clergy.
9. That the following Retired Clergy Medical Plan, which became effective on January 1, 2003, and was amended at the special session of the conference on February 2, 2008, be continued:
  - a. *Benefit Design:* The basic benefit design for all participants will be a comprehensive Medicare supplement (complete benefit description available from the conference Treasury Services Office).
  - b. *Funding Design:*
    - (1) *Creation of the Retiree Security Supplement Fund*, which was created December 31, 2008. This Restricted Fund shall be vested with a minimum of \$5,000,000. Subsequently, additional contributions to this Fund (corpus or principal) shall be made of all free reserve available at year-end. Free reserve is defined as the fund balance in excess of the Claims Reserve required by the Plan. The Claims Reserve is 25% of the prior year's claims paid.
    - (2) The purpose of the Retiree Security Supplement Fund is to secure the retiree medical benefit by contributing 4% of the fund balance (which consists of corpus or principal and earnings from dividends, interest, and appreciation) each year to the Retired Clergy Medical Plan. The Fund's contribution will reduce the Net Estimated Claims Cost of the Retired Clergy Medical Plan to the Base Estimated Claims Cost.
    - (3) Net Estimated Claims Cost is defined as Total Estimated Claims Costs (including administration, stop-loss insurance and other operating expenses), less all contributions from other charitable trusts, foundations or individuals, such as The Cole Foundation.
  - c. *Premium Design:*
    - (1) Participants enrolled **prior to January 1, 2003** will contribute the Base Estimated Claims Cost.
    - (2) Participants enrolled in the retiree plan **on or after January 1, 2003**, will contribute based on "years enrolled in the Active Health Benefits Plan". The contribution will be based on a percentage of the plan year's Net Estimated Claims Cost, as follows:
      - (a) 1-10 Years: 100% of the Net Estimated Claims Cost.
      - (b) Beginning in the 11th year, the contribution will decline approximately 1% per year to an amount equal to the Base Estimated Claims Cost.
      - (c) All of the years prior to 2003 that a clergyperson has been appointed to a local church or conference position will be considered "years enrolled in the Active Health Benefits Plan".
      - (d) Participants must be enrolled in Medicare Parts A & B to be eligible for the Retired Clergy Medical Plan.
10. That each participant electing dependent coverage be required to remit premium payments in the method established by the Health Benefits Committee and that dependent coverage remain in effect only when premium payments are current.
11. That each participating participant be required to remit premium payments in the method established by the Health Benefits Committee and approved by the 2009 Annual Conference and coverage remain in effect only when premium payments are current. The current participating participant method is a progressive scale percent of premium based on salary.
12. That sufficient funds for hospital/medical coverage be included in the appropriate 2023 apportioned funds to pay premiums for district superintendents and administrative, program, and support staff members of the conference headquarters.
13. That costs for insurance for clergy on medical leave shall be borne by the Board and not included in the 2023 conference apportioned budget.

*Words of Appreciation*

The board expresses its gratitude and that of the conference to Dale C. Bryant, Benefits Administrator since October 1998.

Questions dealing with pension, health insurance or group life insurance should be directed to Mr. Bryant at 704-714-2332 or e-mail [dbryant@wnccumc.org](mailto:dbryant@wnccumc.org).

Sarah B. Kalish, President of the Board  
Lynne Gilbert, Treasurer of the Board  
R. Mark King, Conference Benefits Officer  
The Board of Pension and Health Benefits, Inc.

### 3. COMMISSION ON EQUITABLE COMPENSATION

Policies and Guidelines for Administering the Equitable Compensation Fund (Calendar Year 2023)

#### 1. Policies Pertaining to the Commission on Equitable Compensation:

¶¶ 342 and 625 of *The Book of Discipline* (2016), direct the Commission on Equitable Compensation (CEC) to recommend a minimum level of pastoral compensation for clergy serving as local church pastors under episcopal appointment and to administer the Equitable Compensation Fund (ECF) as a source of funding of last resort for pastors-in-charge to maintain a living, equitable level of compensation for these itinerant ministers.

##### a. Executive Committee:

During each quadrennium, at its organizational meeting, the CEC shall elect an executive committee consisting of a chairperson, a vice-chairperson, a secretary, and additional members from the full commission as needed, so that the executive committee consists of an equal number of clergy and laypersons. The assistant to the bishop and a cabinet representative will serve as ex-officio members of the executive committee.

##### b. Definition of Compensation:

As used by the CEC, the term "compensation" includes the annual amount designated as cash salary for service rendered, additional insurance premiums over and above the conference-approved program of individual medical insurance for clergy, accountable professional expenses, household expenses paid by the local charge, and other fringe benefits. Compensation does not include housing allowance in lieu of parsonage to the extent of actual housing, fair market value of supplied parsonages, reimbursement for parish-related travel expenses paid by the local charge to the extent of actual travel expenses or use of an automobile for parish travel purposes, funds provided for continuing education to the extent they are used for that purpose, bona fide gifts or honoraria for special services, allowances for moving expenses paid by the annual conference or local church, or individual medical insurance premiums in the amount of the conference-approved program of insurance for clergy.

#### 2. Types of Grants

Two categories of support are available from the ECF: emergency sustentation grants and regular grants.

a. *Emergency sustentation* grants are available under the provisions of ¶626, which states that each church or charge has an obligation to pay in full compensation, as approved by the charge conference, to its pastor(s). If it becomes apparent that a church or charge will be unable to so provide the compensation approved by the charge conference, the church shall immediately notify the district superintendent and may request consideration for a short-term emergency grant from the Equitable Compensation Fund (cf. also ¶625).

b. *Regular grants* are available for those churches or charges which, at their annual charge conferences, determine that they will be unable to provide compensation at the minimum level set by the annual conference. In cooperation with the bishop and cabinet, the CEC offers grants, on a declining schedule, totaling no more than 30 percent of the appropriate minimum pastoral compensation for a period of five or fewer years.

c. In 2021, 13 churches received regular grants. One charge received an emergency sustentation grant when one of the churches closed on the charge. A total of \$96,577.44 was allocated in grants.

#### 3. Definitions and Classifications of Pastors

Subject to these policies and guidelines, pastors appointed to full-time service under ¶338.1 or ¶318.1 shall have a claim on the ECF and shall not receive less than the minimum compensation specified in the current schedule (¶342).

a. *Pastors Serving Less Than Full-Time*: Subject to these policies and guidelines, elders and provisional members serving as pastors appointed to less than full-time service under the provisions of ¶338.2 shall have a claim upon the ECF if serving at least  $\frac{3}{4}$ -time as negotiated by the district superintendent at the time of the appointment, receiving not less than this percentage of the minimum compensation specified in the current schedule. Local pastors serving  $\frac{3}{4}$ -time shall also have a claim upon the ECF, receiving not less than this percentage of the minimum compensation specified in the current schedule.

b. *Pastors Attending School*: Subject to these policies and guidelines, a pastor appointed to a church or charge who is enrolled in good standing in a college or seminary for a minimum of nine hours per semester or equivalent in fulfillment of the requirements for conference affiliation and who is not otherwise gainfully employed shall have a claim upon the ECF if serving at  $\frac{3}{4}$ -time as negotiated by the district superintendent at the time of the appointment. In determining the compensation for a pastor attending school, grants received for education expenses shall not be considered as part of compensation. Pastors who discontinue or complete their studies and intend to be considered as serving full-time shall be compensated at that level only after certification by the CEC.

c. *Part-Time Local Pastors and Retired Supply Pastors*: Since the ECF is designed to support those in full-time services as pastors of local churches, those charges utilizing part-time local pastors at  $\frac{1}{2}$ -time or  $\frac{1}{4}$ -time as negotiated by the district superintendent at the time of the appointment and retired supply pastors shall not have a claim upon the ECF.

- d. *Pastors Engaged in Continuing Education:* Inasmuch as continuing education is required of all ordained clergy, no pastor engaged in a program of continuing education under ¶351 shall by reason of such study leave be denied the minimum compensation support as specified in the current schedule, except that in cases of educational leave in excess of one month, the supplement shall be adjusted as negotiated by the district superintendent and the CEC.
- e. *Deacons in Full Connection:* As provided in ¶331.10b, deacons in full connection serving within the local church “shall receive salary from the local church, charge, or cooperative parish not less than the minimum salary established by the equitable compensation policy of the annual conference for full-time or part-time pastors,” although these entities should be reminded that they are fully responsible for the compensation of these individuals. If the bishop and cabinet appoint a deacon in full connection to a position as pastor-in-charge of a local church or charge, that individual shall have a claim upon the ECF and shall not receive less than the minimum compensation specified in the current schedule for elders in full connection.

**4. Request Procedures**

Regular grants from the CEC must be requested by a formal action of the charge conference, supported by an electronic grant application through the conference grant software. Requests must be completed in full and be accompanied by all required documentation in order to be processed by the CEC. Required documentation must include but is not limited to: a written plan for decreasing reliance on equitable compensation, letters of support from the pastor, church leadership, and district superintendent. The more information the CEC has about a local church situation, the better equipped the CEC is to provide support. For emergency sustentation grants, the district superintendent is responsible for submitting documentation to the cabinet and CEC executive committee for immediate processing, approval, and payment authorization.

**5. Guidelines for Recommending Minimum Compensation**

The CEC desires to recommend minimum pastoral compensation that is equitable for both churches and pastors. It is acknowledged that economic conditions vary across the annual conference. To be equitable, therefore, there must be awareness of the financial impact of these recommendations upon the local churches in order not to make pastoral support an excessive burden while providing clergy with fair, living, and equitable compensation.

In making these recommendations, the CEC refers to changes in the North Carolina Per Capita Income (NCPCI), as maintained by the United States Bureau of Economic Analysis, on a two-year-lag basis (the earliest time for which data are obtainable). The NCPCI offers a true measure of the underlying economy in which congregations exist and is independent of Western NC Conference actions. Additional consideration is given to the two-year-lag Conference Average Compensation (CAC) and other measures of the health of churches and the economy as deemed necessary, segmenting the minimum compensation levels into the following categories:

- o Elders and Deacons in Full Connection;
- o Provisional/Associate Members;
- o Local Pastors who have completed the Course of Study or Masters of Divinity;
- o Local Pastors who have not completed the Course of Study.

Charlene Curtis, Chairperson  
*Commission on Equitable Compensation*  
 Brandon Lazarus, Chairperson  
*Just Compensation Task Force*

**Proposal: Equitable Compensation Policies and Guidelines**

**(Petition 3)** *Approved June 18, 2022*

The CEC proposes the adoption of these policies, definitions, and classifications for administering the ECF and these guidelines and schedules for recommending minimum compensation for 2023.

**A. Allocation of Requested Equitable Compensation Fund Budget for 2023:**

Regular Grants .....	\$197,000
Emergency Sustentation Grants .....	\$25,000
Expenses of the Commission .....	\$3,000
Total .....	\$225,000

**B. Schedule of 2023 Minimum Compensation for Clergy Serving Full-Time Appointments:**

*Longevity Increases:* New this year, CEC is recommending longevity increases to the base minimum compensation for all clergy serving Full-Time Appointments. This longevity increase will go into effect beginning the January after reaching 5 years of service and will increase each January following each additional 5 years of service with a maximum increase achieved after 20 years of service. The proposed increase would reflect a .75% increase for each year of service. CEC is projecting for that increase to double to 1.5% for each year of service in 2024 and to remain at that rate in the future. The increases for 2023 will go into effect on January 1, 2023. Recognizing that for some churches this salary adjustment might require additional financial planning, a grace period will be given until July 1, 2023, if needed.

This proposal comes from the combined work of the Commission on Equitable Compensation and the Just Compensation Task Force. The proposed longevity increases would decrease the pay gap between male and female clergy by about 13% and will decrease the pay gap between white and non-white clergy by about 15%.

**January 1, 2023, proposed base minimum compensation with longevity increase:***0-5 years of service:*

Elders and Deacons in Full Connection .....	\$43,260
Provisional/Associate Members .....	\$38,934
Local Pastors who have completed the Course of Study/M.Div. ....	\$36,230
Local Pastors before completion of Course of Study .....	\$34,608

*After 5 years of service:*

Elders and Deacons in Full Connection.....	\$44,932
Provisional/Associate Members .....	\$40,439
Local Pastors who have completed the Course of Study/M.Div. ....	\$37,630
Local Pastors before completion of Course of Study .....	\$35,945

*After 10 years of service:*

Elders and Deacons in Full Connection .....	\$46,733
Provisional/Associate Members .....	\$42,059
Local Pastors who have completed the Course of Study/M.Div. ....	\$39,138
Local Pastors before completion of Course of Study .....	\$37,386

*After 15 years of service:*

Elders and Deacons in Full Connection .....	\$48,673
Provisional/Associate Members .....	\$43,805
Local Pastors who have completed the Course of Study/M.Div. ....	\$40,763
Local Pastors before completion of Course of Study .....	\$38,938

*After 20 years of service:*

Elders and Deacons in Full Connection .....	\$50,762
Provisional/Associate Members .....	\$45,686
Local Pastors who have completed the Course of Study/M.Div. ....	\$42,513
Local Pastors before completion of Course of Study .....	\$40,610

*The tentative proposal for 2024 would then be:***January 1, 2024 projected base minimum compensation with longevity increase:***0-5 years of service:*

Elders and Deacons in Full Connection .....	\$43,260
Provisional/Associate Members .....	\$38,934
Local Pastors who have completed the Course of Study/M.Div. ....	\$36,230
Local Pastors before completion of Course of Study .....	\$34,608

*After 5 years of service:*

Elders and Deacons in Full Connection .....	\$46,603
Provisional/Associate Members .....	\$41,943
Local Pastors who have completed the Course of Study/M.Div. ....	\$39,030
Local Pastors before completion of Course of Study .....	\$37,283

*After 10 years of service:*

Elders and Deacons in Full Connection .....	\$50,205
Provisional/Associate Members .....	\$45,185
Local Pastors who have completed the Course of Study/M.Div. ....	\$42,046
Local Pastors before completion of Course of Study .....	\$40,164

*After 15 years of service:*

Elders and Deacons in Full Connection .....	\$54,085
Provisional/Associate Members .....	\$48,677
Local Pastors who have completed the Course of Study/M.Div. ....	\$45,296
Local Pastors before completion of Course of Study .....	\$43,268

*After 20 years of service:*

Elders and Deacons in Full Connection .....	\$58,265
Provisional/Associate Members .....	\$52,439
Local Pastors who have completed the Course of Study/M.Div. ....	\$48,797
Local Pastors before completion of Course of Study .....	\$46,612

#### 4. CONFERENCE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, INC.

The Board of Trustees, Western North Carolina Conference, United Methodist Church, Inc., is a nonprofit corporation incorporated under North Carolina law, in accordance with *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church*, and is subject to the authority of the *Discipline*. The current class of the board of trustees held an organizational meeting on August 13, 2020, and has been meeting monthly since then.

The primary responsibilities of the board of trustees are to hold title to, manage, sell, lease, and operate annual conference real property, including closed churches, and hold and invest other securities and funds on behalf of the annual conference. The board of trustees, per the *Discipline*, has the authority to legally protect the rights of the annual conference in a wide variety of legal settings, including litigation.

##### Investments

A. The Jesse Spencer Bell Fund, under trustee management, is invested through The United Methodist Foundation of Western North Carolina, Inc.

B. Earnings during 2021 were distributed to the following designated beneficiaries:

Western North Carolina Conference Board of Pensions .....	\$4,715.93
Western North Carolina Conference United Methodist Women .....	\$2,660.95
Brevard College .....	\$5,796.12
Total Distribution .....	\$13,173.00

##### Conference Center

###### Property Management

All conference property management and broker services are handled by Wesley Community Development Corporation, a nonprofit that helps North Carolina churches develop or repurpose real estate to best meet church and community needs.

###### Leasing

The lease with NVR, Inc. (parent company of Ryan Homes and NVR Mortgage) for occupation of 80 percent of the first floor conference center building in Huntersville is continuing for the third of seven years. The total yearly lease payments will cover most, if not all, of the operational expenses of the conference center building.

##### Episcopal Residence

The Episcopal Residence Committee cares for the conference-owned Episcopal Residence, constituted according to the provisions of the *Discipline*. The trustees send a representative to this committee. Bishop and Rev. Ken and Pam Carter live in the Episcopal Residence located at 3416 Maryhurst Lane, Charlotte, NC 28226.

##### Duke Endowment Grant for the Church Legacy Initiative

Among other duties, the trustees hold, management, lease and/or sell discontinued and abandoned churches. The Church Legacy Initiative, with a staff of four persons, continued to assist local churches with discerning possible paths forward. This project completed the fifth of a five-year grant from the Duke Endowment in 2020, and due to excellent stewardship, were funded for an additional year in 2021. The trustees affirm the benefits of this transition team, even as their work slowed significantly by the COVID-19 pandemic, and gratefully thank the cabinet, the Duke Endowment, and The United Methodist Foundation for their endeavors in this area.

##### Discontinued Churches

Please note that ¶2548.4 of *The Book of Discipline* specifies that all deeds, records, and official and legal papers of a discontinued church shall be deposited for permanent safekeeping with the Commission of Archives and History of the Annual Conference. The central repository is currently housed at Pfeiffer University in Misenheimer, NC. A list of the local churches that have been discontinued since the last annual conference can be found in the Cabinet Resolutions of the Daily Proceedings of the Annual Conference.

##### Heritage Cemetery Association, LLC

The Heritage Cemetery Association was established to hold, manage, and maintain certain cemeteries belonging to closed, abandoned, or discontinued churches in the Western North Carolina Conference. Funds for this association are managed by the United Methodist Foundation of Western North Carolina, Inc., and the properties are managed by Wesley Community Development. As of December 31, 2021, the association was comprised of 12 cemetery properties.

##### Disaffiliated Churches

At the Special Session of General Conference in February 2019, a pathway for a local church to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church was adopted. Paragraph 2553 of the *Discipline* is now effective and will be in effect through December 31, 2023.

This provision allows a local church to leave the denomination, i.e., disaffiliate, under certain circumstances and subject to a series of agreements and required approvals of other denominational bodies along with payment of 24 months of apportionments and a pro rata share of aggregate unfunded pension obligations. Under this provision, the main body of decision-making and negotiating on behalf of the conference is the annual conference board of trustees. The 2022 Annual Conference will be asked to approve the disaffiliation agreements reached with 18 local churches: (AP) Grassy Creek (Grassy Creek); (BR) Carson's Chapel (Marion); (BR) Gray's Chapel (Rutherfordton); (BR) Nesbitt's Chapel (Fairview); (BR) West Marion (Marion); (CV) Bethlehem (Cherryville); (CV) Lafayette Street (Shelby); (CV) Mary's Grove (Kings Mountain); (NP) Burnett's Chapel (Greensboro); (SM) Bellview (Murphy); (SM) Ledford's Chapel (Hayesville); (SM) Martin's Creek (Murphy); (UW) Lineberry (Denton); (UW) Maple Springs (Ramseur); (UW) Midway (Monroe); (UW) Pleasant Grove (Denton); (YV) Cornatzer (Mocksville); (YV) New Union (Mocksville).

**Vehicle Leasing**

In order to more effectively steward the conference's resources, the trustees ended the Honda leases with Vann York Auto Mall in High Point, NC and resold the vehicles (eight Honda CRVs, two Honda HRVs, and one Accord) back to the dealership in September 2021. The conference then purchased 11 vehicles from Subaru (seven Outbacks, two Foresters, and two Crosstreks) with a plan to keep these vehicles in service for at least five years. These vehicles are used by the district superintendents, bishop, bishop's assistant, and director of church development.

**Boy Scouts**

In 2020, The Boy Scouts of America filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in Delaware. One result of that bankruptcy was that long-standing obligations of the BSA to provide certain insurance coverage and indemnification to sponsoring churches were cast into doubt. In 2020, the conference trustees engaged with the law firm of Bradley Arant Boult Cummings, LLP ("Bradley") to file proofs of claims for WNCC local churches who sponsored troops. This was done so the rights of local churches to BSA insurance coverage and indemnification would be an issue before the bankruptcy court and protected (otherwise those rights would have been extinguished).

In 2021, the conference trustees engaged with The United Methodist denomination in a coordinated effort across conferences to present a unified legal position. The UMC legal position was directed by a committee of conference chancellors who coordinated with the Council of Bishops, GCFA, and other conference chancellors and treasurers.

In December 2021, United Methodist leaders reached a settlement with the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) in their pending bankruptcy proceedings as to the treatment of sexual abuse claims related to the UMC and other chartered organizations. United Methodists across the United States agreed to contribute \$30 million over three years to youth harmed in Boy Scout programs, as well as committing to prayers and a willingness to listen to the experiences of abuse. Upon final court approval of the BSA bankruptcy reorganization plan, through the BSA victims fund, UMC churches and organizations would be released from claims of sexual abuse that may have occurred in congregation-sponsored scouting programs. In March, the bankruptcy court held hearings regarding the confirmation of the plan. Closing arguments of plan advocates and opponents were heard in April. Plan confirmation or rejection by the court may be appealed to the United States District Court in Delaware for further review. Further appeals may be possible.

In December of 2021, a number of local churches and the conference itself were joined as defendants in a series of lawsuits in North Carolina state courts related to alleged occurrences of BSA related sexual abuse. These lawsuits were based on a 2019 law passed by the NC legislature called the SAFE Child Act (the "Act"). The act purported to "revive" sexual abuse claims that were barred by the applicable statute of limitations, and victims of past abuse were allowed to file lawsuits based on the act through the end of 2021. While the board cannot comment on certain pending litigation matters, it can comment on matters of public record. The board helped affected local churches arrange legal representation to protect the rights of the local churches involved. Further, the board took coordinated steps with legal counsel for the BSA and its local councils to have state court cases "stayed" or halted for the duration of the BSA bankruptcy proceedings.

**Insurance Matters**

*The Book of Discipline* requires local church trustees to annually review and report on the adequacy of local church property and liability insurance coverage "to ensure that the church, its properties, and its personnel are properly protected against risks." To assist local church trustees with this requirement, GCFA guidelines for minimum insurance policies and coverage limits are available on the conference website ([wnccumc.org](http://wnccumc.org)) under Administration/Forms, Documents, and Publications and are recommended for comparison with existing local church policies.

Liability coverage for sexual misconduct has been eliminated, altered, or only provided under separate policies by many insurance companies. The trustees continue to admonish all churches to confirm that required Safe Sanctuaries policies and procedures are in place, and to reevaluate all insurance programs with their insurance agents. Such coverage is typically purchased through a property and casualty insurance provider.

The board of trustees works with the conference insurance provider, Church Mutual Insurance Company, a nationally recognized and specialized provider of property and casualty insurance to churches and religious organizations, to provide a new cost-effective program for worker's compensation for WNCC churches. WNCC congregations now have the option to participate in the Church Mutual program at a reduced rate as well as to save on the expense constant fee.

Eric Lane, President



## 5. CONFERENCE RESOURCE CENTER

The WNCC Resource Center is proud to be a free lending library for all churches in the Western North Carolina Conference. The mission of the Resource Center is to provide a deep well of engaging, relevant books and media supporting the mission of the local church in making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Circulation rose seven percent from 2020 to 2021. As of January 2022, the Resource Center boasts 6,642 resources on its shelves, including books, DVDs, worship aids, vacation Bible school starter kits, stewardship campaign programs, Caring Congregation and grief program support, and curriculum for all ages and stages of life. Additionally, congregations continue to enjoy borrowing the Resource Center's two 24-foot portable canvas labyrinths, especially during Lent.

The Resource Center continues to purchase new, quality resources recommended by staff, clergy, and laity for use by churches and individuals for the education, leadership training and spiritual formation of children, youth, and adults. In addition to the physical resources available for lending through the library, the Resource Center partnered with two publishers to provide discounts on digital church resources this year:

- *Amplify Media* is an online video platform from the United Methodist Publishing House (UMPH). This platform is home to thousands of small group, training, and devotional videos for all ages from publishers like Cokesbury, Abingdon, and more. The Resource Center partnered with the UMPH to offer this platform to WNCC churches/charges at a deeply discounted rate that included two free months plus four months at 75% off the regular price. Learn more at <https://www.wnccumc.org/amplify>.
- *Bake with the Bible* is a six-week curriculum published by Edible Theology. Each session includes a recipe, discussion questions, and book recommendations, as well as Scriptural and cultural-historical lessons. The Resource Center partnered with Edible Theology to offer this curriculum at a discounted rate of \$25. Learn more at <https://www.wnccumc.org/bakewiththebible>.

Clergy and laity alike can turn to the Resource Center staff for help and guidance in selecting resources that fit their needs. Contact the Resource Center at [resourcecenter@wnccumc.org](mailto:resourcecenter@wnccumc.org) or 704-535-2260 with any questions or to set up a free patron account, update contact information, or rent one of the labyrinths.

Resource Center materials are managed and supported by Surpass software. The online catalog, <https://wncc.library.site>, is open to all for browsing, but you must have a patron account to make reservations.

Havaleh Havelka, Training and Resource Specialist

## 6. COMMISSION ON ARCHIVES AND HISTORY

The Commission on Archives and History continues its work of collecting, recording, and preserving the story of the people called Methodists in The Western North Carolina Conference. The work is a "Ministry of Memory," so that everyone may continue to learn from the past and anticipate the future.

As the Covid-19 pandemic conditions waxed and waned during 2021, the commission met virtually via Zoom in March and September. The commission continues to oversee the work of the Conference Archives, located in the G. A. Pfeiffer Library at Pfeiffer University in Misenheimer, N.C. Highlights this year include:

- Rev. James Pyatt continues as the part-time Conference Archivist. He supervises the work of an archival assistant, Mrs. Sonja Clough, who works in the archives on a part-time basis.
- The archives houses documents and information available to those wishing to conduct research and/or to explore United Methodist history. Research requests have risen somewhat during 2021, with information being sought by district offices, the Church Legacy Initiative, conference staff, conference trustees, the conference chancellor, local church historians, genealogists and others. This indicates a healthy and active archives.
- While the commission has approved the digitization of archival records during this quadrennium, the project has not gotten off the ground. Working with librarians at Duke Divinity School, Rev. Pyatt has worked on the details for the project to make some resources available and searchable in electronic format. When the Duke library closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the project was put on hold. The commission anticipates moving forward with digitization as soon as possible.
- Because Pfeiffer University has been closed to most outside visitors during the pandemic, the Conference Archives has also been generally closed to the public. Research requests and other queries have been handled mainly by phone and online. In-person visits are now available by appointment.

**Grave Markers:** The commission continues to provide a clergy grave marker upon the passing of any clergy member of the conference. During this conference year, markers have been presented to nearly three dozen affected families. We anticipate continuing this ministry on behalf of the Conference.

**Training Videos:** The commission has produced a series of six training videos intended to provide a ready resource for local church historians. Topics include an introduction to the historian's task, how to set up an archive (two parts), working with pastors to preserve church records, resources available from the Conference Archives, and how to write a church history. The videos are available through a link on the conference website.

**Historic Site:** The annual conference of 2021 approved the Shook House/Louisa Chapel as a historic site for the Western North Carolina Conference. The General Conference Commission and Archives will provide one marker for this newly designated site and the conference commission has voted to provide a second one so that each building will bear this identification.

**Anniversary Churches:** The Commission on Archives and History continues its tradition of recognizing those churches within our conference who are celebrating significant anniversaries this year.

- Salem in Stanly County and Muir's Chapel in Guilford County are identified as celebrating their bicentennial, having been organized in 1822.
- Those identified as celebrating sesquicentennial anniversaries this year include Elbaville (Davie County), Harper's Chapel (Caldwell County), Laurel Hill (Lincoln County), Main Street (Rockingham County), Morrow's Chapel (Iredell County), Mott's Grove (Catawba County), Mount Pleasant (Winston-Salem, Forsyth County), Oak Hill (Burke County), Philadelphia (Alexander County), Ruffin (Rockingham County), and Shady Grove (Burke County).
- Fairview (Thomasville, Davidson County), Linville (Avery County), and Maple Springs (Randolph County) are celebrating their centennial this year.
- A more complete list of churches celebrating significant anniversaries will appear in the Conference Journal.

The Southeastern Jurisdiction (SEJ) Commission on Archives and History met virtually via Zoom in November of 2021.

- Sandra Williamson, chairperson of the conference commission, serves as a member.
- The SEJ Historical Society was scheduled to meet at Epworth-By-the-Sea in Georgia during the summer of 2021 but the meeting was postponed due to the pandemic. The next meeting is scheduled for July 26-29, 2022 at St. Simons Island, Georgia.
- The General Commission on Archives and History met virtually in September 2021 with Rev. Pyatt in attendance.

God is at work in and through the people called United Methodist in Western North Carolina. This commission pledges to continue to collect the documents, preserve the materials, equip local historians, and tell the story.

Sandra Williamson, Chairperson  
Charles Curtis, Vice Chairperson

## 7. COMMISSION ON COMMUNICATIONS

The primary work of the commission is to support and communicate the annual conference's mission of "Follow Jesus, Make Disciples, Transform the World." The commission strives to do this by the following: "Building relationships through communication, the commission will help create space for people to interact and have conversation in safe spaces. It will share the stories of how God is at work among us as United Methodists in Western North Carolina, that in turn shares the Good News of Jesus Christ."

Traditionally, the Commission on Communications provides leadership for the Western North Carolina Conference in communications, public relations, social media, and promotional awareness of the programs of the conference. The commission assists with managing the image of the conference, and working to provide resources for local churches. Whether in the form of training, sharing news, or crisis management, the commission exists to equip and encourage the ministry efforts of local churches, districts, and the annual conference to achieve identified goals.

In the past year, the communications and IT departments have been involved in several projects and collaborations. Under the guidance of Director of Communications Melissa McGill, the conference relaunched the Stories of Faith magazine after a pandemic pause in 2020. The 2021 issue celebrated Bishop Leeland's retirement, welcomed Bishop Ken Carter and Director of Equity and Justice Ministries Rev. Dr. Bill White Jr. and featured stories from Melissa McGill, Aimee Yeager, Rev. Luke Edwards and Rev. David Lee on current topics and ministry in the local church. The Means of Grace podcast continues to equip church leaders through expertise and examples with 21,585 listener downloads. This collaborative project includes a wide range of topics from ministry leaders around the conference. With input from commission members and conference leaders, Director of IT Services Chris Hampton led a redesign of the conference website, [www.wnccumc.org](http://www.wnccumc.org). The Western NC UMC Enews has increased frequency to weekly, serving as a primary news medium, under the guidance of Aimee Yeager.

Communications efforts this year were recognized by the United Methodist Association of Communicators. Stories of Faith tied for third in Annual Conference/Local Church Print Special Publications. The Means of Grace episode, Q&A with Bishop Carter, placed second in the podcast subcategory and was among the top scorers for Audio. The WNCC website redesign took second place in its Visual Design subcategory and was among the top scorers in Visual Design.

There are changes to report in staff and commission leadership. Aimee Yeager was promoted to Associate Director of Communications and Carl Martin joined the team as Support Associate. Doug Peninger stepped down as Chairperson of the Commission. Shonnie Streder, previously Vice-Chairperson, will serve as Chairperson, and Juston Smith will remain as Secretary. The group will elect a new Vice-Chairperson this fall. Additionally, the commission will assist with the communications efforts at annual conference as it has in past years with photography, story writing and other needs.

Melissa McGill, Conference Director of Communications

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#WNCCUMC  
WWW.WNCCUMC.ORG

## 8. COMMITTEE ON CONFERENCE STAFF RELATIONS

The Conference Staff Relations Committee (CSRC) provides support for the conference office staff and the staff of the district offices.

The committee met remotely on November 18, 2021 to discuss and approve an update to the Salary Band Descriptions used by the conference for establishing salaries for conference staff. Mark King, Conference Treasurer and Director of Administrative Services, was instrumental in researching salary data in the region to update the document. The committee also discussed and approved an updated Recommended Increase Ranges document for all staff across the conference.

In March 2022 the committee approved a small budget increase for 2023 staff salaries, including recommending to the annual conference a three percent salary increase for district superintendents.

The committee continues their work of reviewing the current personnel and policy handbook and plans to have a new document in place by summer 2022. The CSRC is grateful for the creative ways the conference and district staffs have fulfilled their mission of developing and supporting vital congregations during this challenging season of ministry.

Amy Coles, the Assistant to Bishop Carter, and Mark King continue in their responsibilities with Human Relations for the conference staff. The conference is grateful for the work they do on behalf of CSRC.

Nancy Miller Campbell, Chairperson

## 9. COMMITTEE ON THE EPISCOPACY

In late August of last year Bishop Ken Carter and his wife Rev. Pam Carter “came home” to Western NC when they moved into the episcopal residence in South Charlotte. There was nothing normal about the move! Due to Covid-19, there had been no General Conference in 2020, and the re-scheduled General Conference for 2021 had also been postponed. Thus, the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference had not met to elect new bishops to replace those retiring in 2021. The SEJ Committee on the Episcopacy had an unprecedented scenario in which to make some difficult decisions. The committee and other annual conference Committees on the Episcopacy were consulted. The solution they came to was original and creative. Bishop Carter had been bishop of the Florida Conference for nine years, and he was assigned to continue that work as well as serve as the WNCB bishop. To serve two conferences was not a new thing, but to do so when the two conferences are not contiguous was. Thanks to modern air travel and thanks to virtual connections, which had come to be very useful in times of shutdown, this was and is a workable solution for a challenging time.

COVID also affected the welcome to the Carters upon their arrival, making it impossible with restrictions and protocols to extend the kind of welcome the committee would have liked. It did what it could, including bottled water, flowers, and restaurant cards. Also, the conference had the episcopal residence in excellent condition, and available funds allowed a few touches to make the house the Carters' home.

Bishop Carter would not allow the pandemic to affect his work. Within weeks, he met via Zoom with the clergy. In these few short months, he has been a champion of the local church, has led us in the journey of anti-racism, has helped us and supported us in times of pandemic, and has called us to mutual respect and civility in times of division. Bishop Carter has led us in this extraordinarily difficult time with a pastor's heart and with a prophet's vision. He has brought hope in darkness, healing in brokenness, and encouragement in exhaustion. He has challenged us to grow deeper in faith. He has communicated well through both traditional and new channels.

The committee encourages to regularly read the annual conference website ([wnccumc.org](http://wnccumc.org)) to both stay informed and to benefit from his leadership. For those on Facebook, Bishop Carter makes a post on Saturday mornings, updating readers on what he has been doing, who he has been meeting with, what he has been reading, and what his favorite sports teams and TV shows are. And readers are always reminded to drink good coffee, always freshly ground! In other words, you have ample opportunity to learn much about your bishop.

At the time of this writing, the committee does not know when the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference will meet for the election and assignment of bishops. What is known is that, in the meantime, the conference is in excellent hands! This committee gives thanks to God for the leadership of Bishop Ken Carter, and the committee and conference leadership will continue to consult with the Southeastern Jurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy concerning the episcopal leadership for future mission and ministry.

Sandy Giles, Chairperson  
Hank Dozier, Vice-Chairperson  
Linda Linfors, Secretary

## 10. EPISCOPAL RESIDENCE COMMITTEE

The Episcopal Residence Committee is pleased to report that Bishop and Mrs. Kenneth H. Carter have been comfortably using and enjoying the residence at 3416 Maryhurst Lane in Charlotte. The Episcopal Residence Investment Fund now stands at \$51,012 (as of 12.31.2021). For 2023, the amount of \$15,000 will be included in the apportioned conference budget. The committee, in consultation with Bishop and Mrs. Carter, will continue to monitor expenses and request funding as is appropriate and necessary.

Shirley Canty, Chairperson

**11. NOMINATIONS REPORT: 2020-24 AD INTERIM CHANGES****Board of Laity**

Kenny Bumgarner  
Beth Hinson

**Board of Ordained Ministry**

Susan Heafner-Heun, Elder  
Mary Hatley, Local Pastor

**Church Vitality Team**

Monique Luckey

**Commission on Communications**

Matt Garfield

**Justice & Reconciliation Team**

David J. Lee

**Leadership Development Team**

Shirley Canty, Chair  
Mark Conforti, Vice Chair  
John Henry Jr.  
Mandy Jones  
Kyle Sigmon

**B. CONFERENCE MISSION & MINISTRY****1. CONNECTIONAL TABLE**

The Connectional Table (CT) exists to “connect the ministry and resources of the annual conference to increase and strengthen the number of vital congregations and conference entities and to coordinate, promote, and encourage the development of faithful disciples and fruitful leaders across the conference, so that lives and communities are transformed by the power of God” (Plan of Organization and Rule of Order and Procedure of the Western NC Conference, Section C.2).

During 2021, the CT executed the following activities:

- Approved the WNCC Conflict of Interest Policy, and had all members execute signed agreements to the policy.
- CT members were able to begin taking the RISE! Anti-racism Ethics Training following the transition of the program to an online format.
- The CT confirmed the conference’s ongoing focus to furthering the work of anti-racism by approving funding for a WNCC Racial Healing and Reconciliation Cohort, which assisted in equipping leaders and congregations that were ready to move deeper into the work of anti-racism within their church and community to do so.

With the change in episcopal leadership, the CT welcomed Bishop Ken Carter’s framework for ministry, focused on four key “pathways”:

- Creating Vital, Sustainable Local Churches
- Dismantling Racism
- Increasing the well-being of clergy and spiritual leaders
- Living into the vision of the continuing United Methodist Church

As the CT looks for ways to better align ministries around these four pathways, it also begins preliminary conversations around how to make the link between the conference program and ministry budgets and missional priorities more intentional and transparent. The CT looks forward to continuing this work in 2022.

John Crane and Caroline Wood, Co-Chairpersons

**2. COUNCIL ON CAMP AND RETREAT MINISTRY**

The Council on Camp and Retreat Ministry (CCRM) continues to support, encourage, and cultivate resources for camp and retreat ministries in the Western North Carolina Conference. The CCRM accomplishes this work through partnerships with four camp and retreat ministry locations. These locations include Camp GuilRock in Reidsville, Mount Shepherd in Asheboro, Camp Tekoa in Hendersonville, and Tekoa Foothills in Casar. Each location continues to operate independently, and all camp and retreat ministries of Western North Carolina continue to experience growth and are blessed with incredible directors, staff, and volunteers.

A chief concern for the CCRM this year was in developing a more robust ability to support the ongoing ministry and continued growth of camp and retreat ministry within the conference. One way that the CCRM developed this year was by participating in the MLab program. A group of CCRM members attended this cohort which focused on innovation in ministry. As part of the MLab program, the group facilitated several robust conversations with stakeholders. These stakeholder conversations led to the development of a robust list of ideas that the stakeholders believe will help further the reach and impact of camp and retreat ministry within the conference. The MLab experience has provided the CCRM with a set of tools to move these ideas into actionable opportunities.

As the CCRM continues to deepen its relationship of support and encouragement, the tools attained through MLab will continue to provide for the further development of resources that will be meaningful to each camp and to camp and retreat ministry in general within the conference. The CCRM will continue to celebrate the incredible ministry of each camp and remains committed to supporting, encouraging, and cultivating resources to further the work of God through camp and retreat ministry in and across the conference.

Jason Boggs, Council Member

## a. Camp Directors' Reports

### i. Camp GuilRock

Camp GuilRock centers its ministry on its mission statement "Discover Creation, Experience God, and Grow in Faith." With this focus, Camp Guilrock strives to provide meaningful outdoor experiences. Youth groups, churches, scouts, and families are given the opportunity to enjoy the facilities and develop lasting relationships with each other and with Christ.

Camp GuilRock has continued to grow and reach more people throughout our surrounding community. In the past year, the Day Camp Program has expanded from two weeks in 2017 to a full ten weeks in 2022 including a brand new week of Middle School programming. This allows Camp Guilrock to serve over 160 campers over the summer. The camp has also continued to improve the rental experience which has led to continued growth in usage of the property throughout the year. This includes a full renovation of the cabin space, new event venues, and brand new waterfront equipment. 2021 closed with a successful fundraising appeal which raised nearly \$10,000 dollars thanks to a generous matching gift. The Director and Board of Directors are excited by the growth seen in the ministry and are continuing to implement new programs and strategies to help continue the growth in the coming year.

Eric Hearn, Director  
[www.campguilrock.org](http://www.campguilrock.org)

### ii. Mount Shepherd Retreat Center

The mission of Mount Shepherd is restoring souls, strengthening hearts, and transforming lives. Mount Shepherd achieves this mission primarily through Christian camp and retreat programs. This organization was thankful in 2021 to serve 227 more children through summer camp than were served in 2019. Mount Shepherd is committed to its evangelistic role in a post-COVID world. Especially as church membership and attendance wanes in our society, spaces like Christian camp remain indispensable places of evangelism and Christian formation. For a family that attends church twice per month, just one week of camp provides the time equivalent of an entire year of Christian worship.

In many ways, 2021 was a bounce-back year from the pandemic. While its retreat ministry was heavily impacted by the delta and omicron variant surges, Mount Shepherd's summer camp enjoyed 73% growth from pre-pandemic enrollment numbers. This is a testament to the hard work of Mount Shepherd's staff, as well as a validation of the needs that Mount Shepherd satisfies.

Empirical data nationwide confirms the devastating impact the past two years have had on young people. The DHHS estimates that children experiencing "persisting feelings of sadness" increased by 40%. More concerning, suicidal behaviors in young people has increased 44% since 2019. Mount Shepherd, and the other camps of the WNCC, remain uniquely situated to address this crisis. Summer camp programs—faith-based programs in particular—consistently provide positive outcomes for youth mental health.

Mount Shepherd is thankful for the ongoing support of the WNCC, which supplied \$21,375.04 in apportionment support. Further, the Conference Council on Camp and Retreat Ministry granted \$7,500 for scholarships and \$8500 in training grants through its camp ministries endowment. Lastly Mount Shepherd is grateful for the Uwharrie District's grant of \$5000 to serve more than 40 children in an off-site camp program. Combined, these welcome resources were able to fund about nine percent of Mount Shepherd's expenditures. Although Mount Shepherd continues to move toward operational sustainability in its program fees, the Western NC Conference still provides a critical means of support.

A stellar Board of Directors stewards Mount Shepherd's ministry. The board changed leadership in 2021, voting Nikki Domally as the new chairperson of the organization. She follows Katie Robinson, who provided two years of faithful leadership through the pandemic. Among the many essential decisions made last year, the Board of Directors notably approved a statement affirming the organization's work toward anti-racism. Mount Shepherd continues its work toward diversity, equity, and inclusion in its programs and leadership.

The staff and leadership of Mount Shepherd is excited about its future. As camp programs increasingly reach capacity limits and waitlists grow, the organization is taking steps to grow its site to accommodate more guests. The organization asks for prayers for God's blessing as it engages in yet another season of fruitful ministry. To God be the glory.

Josh Britton, Executive Director  
[www.mtshepherd.org](http://www.mtshepherd.org)

### iii. Camp Tekoa

Camp Tekoa had a wonderful year of ministry in 2021. After going through many challenges and transitions in 2020, the 2021 season was one of continued financial recovery, growth of program planning and meeting the needs of campers, retreat guests and families.

- Camp Tekoa offered a summer camp experience to over 1800 campers, which represented an intentionally smaller summer to manage the effects of the pandemic. They managed the health crisis with new program modifications, portable outdoor shelters for meals, and new bathroom and health facilities.
- Donors continued to support the work and ministry of camp with donations that totaled \$182,487.25. Scholarships made up \$40,693.93 of these gifts. Many donors continued to give to the Raise Your Candles High Emergency Fund as Tekoa recovers from the financial losses of 2020. These gifts totaled \$93,359.72.
- Camp Tekoa continued to offer Family Camp and welcomed many new families, including foster families who received scholarships through the James and Jerrilyn Johnson Scholarship Fund.
- The Camp Tekoa Afterschool Program saw unprecedented growth and regularly averages 40 campers or more each day. Camp Tekoa also offers break camps for children when they are out of school. In the fall of 2021, Camp Tekoa launched a Homeschool program to meet the needs of families in the community.

- Tekoa honors the work of Rev. Dan Lyons, the long-term chair of the Board of Trustees that has finished his time serving on the board. Tekoa welcomes the new chair, David Mitchell, who has deep roots in both Camp Tekoa and Tekoa Foothills.
- Camp Tekoa will operate camp this summer at full capacity. It is anticipated that this will be one of the largest seasons ever. Families are ready to experience God's creation once again. Tekoa continues to extend the mission of Touching Hearts. Changing Lives. Sharing the Light of Christ.

John Isley, Executive Director  
[www.camptekoa.org](http://www.camptekoa.org)

#### **iv. Tekoa Foothills**

Tekoa Foothills continues to grow and thrive. In 2021, many retreat guests returned to the site and the summer program expanded with summer camp and Tekoa Missions experiences.

- Using the support of a \$30,000 donation, Tekoa Foothills rebuilt the road and added a parking lot in the center of camp. Through the labor of the maintenance staff and volunteers, there was a new playground added overlooking the lake. Asbury lodge was renovated.
- Foothills Summer Program offerings have expanded again for 2022! Tekoa Foothills has a diverse summer season planned in 2022 as programs continue to evolve with each new calendar year; two major offerings are Tekoa Missions (June) and Summer Camp (July).
- Tekoa Missions is a turn-key youth missions program where groups register together for a shared week-long mission experience in June. Days are spent on worksites while evenings are spent recreating on the Foothills property and worship. Every group works with homeowners to ensure the felt needs of neighbors in and around upper Cleveland County are cleaner, safer and dryer. In 2022, in addition to homeowners, Foothills will partner with Habitat for Humanity, Keep NC Beautiful, and Fostering Hope NC to expand the missional reach of participants. Projects include home repair, home improvements, community outreach and works of mercy.
- Foothills Summer Camp runs through the month of July with some of the most popular offerings of 2021: Into the Wild, Horseback Riding, Paddle Palloza, Creation Station and Bullseye Blitz are all skill based education sessions in which resident campers can explore and develop a new passion over the course of the week. More than a "taste-and-see" adventure opportunity, campers revisit program areas hosted by local experts affording them the opportunity to strengthen capability and competence.
- Day Camp is offered to the youngest campers in an effort to plant seeds for future resident campers and offer an option for local students to enjoy outdoor recreation and discipleship. New in 2022 is Camp Gemma: (Jeh.muh). Gemma is the patron saint of helping others. This session is a residential camp experience for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities; similar to Hendersonville's "Barnabas" experience, Gemma is the Foothills version where adaptive camp activities offer greater inclusivity for campers.

Jennifer Bingham Hampton, Director  
[www.tekoafoothills.org](http://www.tekoafoothills.org)

### **b. Proposed Boards of Directors for Western NC Conference Camps**

**(Petition 4) Approved June 17, 2022**

#### **Camp GuilRock**

President: Rhonda Lee  
 Lori Buck  
 Mike Shelton  
 Hil Peel

Vice President: Stan Hollis  
 Bobby Jones  
 Todd Freeland  
 Jen Carter  
 Suzanne Massey

Secretary: Lenora Graves  
 Doug Berlin  
 Cole Perkinson  
 Marc Cobb

#### **Mount Shepherd Camp Retreat Center**

**Class of 2022**  
 Nikki Domally  
 Angie Kern  
 Christopher Smith  
 Michael Smith  
 Frances Pariz  
 Katie Robinson

**Class of 2023**  
 Dennis Carroll  
 Gifford Del Grande  
 Charlie Lyons

**Class of 2024**  
 Celia Harris  
 Carla Freemyer  
 Katie Lineberger  
 Ben Morgan  
 Ryan Nunn  
 Paul Strahan

#### **Camp Tekoa/Tekoa Foothills**

David Mitchell, Chairperson  
 Candis Walker, Secretary  
 Karen Kurtz  
 Carl King

Dan Lyons, Vice-Chairperson  
 Brad Cunningham  
 William D. Porter III  
 Courtney Sanders

Jimmy New, Treasurer  
 Mike Watson  
 Whitney Jacobs  
 William Van Wieren

### 3. CHURCH VITALITY TEAM

As leadership in the Office of Church Development changed this year, the Church Vitality Team focused on the following areas: Core Vision, Both/And Hybrid Worship, New Church Starts, Fresh Expressions of Church, the Transformation Journey, and partnerships with Equity and Justice Ministries.

#### Core Vision of Church Vitality

The vision of the Congregational Vitality Team is to prayerfully Notice, Nurture, and create New communities of faith in the WNCC where the Holy Spirit is sparking creative ways that are producing vital, sustainable local churches. The team strengthens and creates faith communities that are continually evolving to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

#### Both/And Hybrid Worship

The pandemic quickly revealed a fundamental shift in how churches gathered and conducted their basic purpose and functions. The Church Development office identified this shift early on and contracted with Jason Moore to resource churches as they grappled with the complex applications of Both/And Hybrid ministry. So, with partnering funds from the WNCC Office of Church Development, the WNCC Foundation, and the Reynolds Ministry Fund, the team developed a grant process to equip WNCC churches to grow in their understanding and practice of Both/And hybrid worship by providing a framework for experimenting, discovering, and implementing best practices, and upgrading equipment (as needed). This grant process and experience is intended to support churches as they explore and implement best practices for faithfully developing and deploying BOTH In-Person AND Online worship. The foundational core of this grant is about building relationships through hybrid digital ministries that create worship participants, not viewers. The first cohort had 58 participating churches; 27 hours of cohort calls; 40 individual church worship consultations, and \$134,000 spent on new equipment, seminars, practicums, and consultation.

#### New Church Starts

The Western North Carolina Conference continues to create new places for new people through church planting. This process continues to be the most effective way to reach and disciple unchurched persons. Due to the pandemic, planting has been challenging. However, one plant did begin during this conference year.

- Growth Company (a campus of West UMC, Pastor Lexi Hernandez) is pursuing what it looks like to plant a church in today's world - specifically for people in their 20s and 30s.
- The conference's other active church plants are Checkpoint Church (Nathan Webb), As It Is (Vince Ross), The Good Neighbor Movement (Brandon Wrencher), Hope Fellowship (Ben Gatton), Francis Street Ministries (Alexis Coleman), The Place (Charlie Riven), Way in The Wilderness (Kevin Miller and Kevin Bates), Wellspring (Ashley Crowder Stanley), and With All (Rob Parsons).

As the team continues to pursue best practices for church planting, it is moving towards increased churches being rooted in "Anchor" churches. It is developing recruiting and equipping processes that will stimulate more church plants from this model.

#### Fresh Expressions

After an incredibly difficult year of lockdowns and outreach hesitancy from churches, the mass vaccinations of early 2021 seemed to open the flood gates for churches primed and ready to start fresh expressions. The fresh expressions launched this year include dinner churches, Messy Churches, a hiking group, art groups, and several fresh expressions on community college campuses. The team hosted three dinner church training sessions across the conference with Kendal Vanderslice and Verlon Fosner. The Church Development Office and Smoky Mountain District hosted a weekend retreat based on the Fresh Expressions Journey that is hoped to be offered twice a year. In partnership with the Florida and North Georgia Conferences and United Seminary, the team launched the Adventurers Learning Academy, an advanced fresh expressions cohort. The team developed a three-week Zoom class based on Luke's newly published book *Becoming Church: A Trail Guide for Starting Fresh Expressions*. The team is continuing to see the Holy Spirit form new faith communities through the fresh expressions model and believes it is an important way to live out the mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

#### Transformation Journey

In addition to planting new faith communities, the Church Vitality Team is also helping to strengthen existing congregations with an ongoing initiative called Transformation Journey. The Transformation Journey is a three-year process of partnering with congregations to discern and live into God's future for the church. They have twenty churches engaged in the Transformation Journey process thanks to a grant from ministry partners at the United Methodist Foundation of Western North Carolina and the Reynolds Endowment Fund. Churches that participate in the Transformation Journey will receive up to five recommendations for their church's future. More than 85 guides and four new Discovery Team members have been trained in this process to partner with churches to help them fulfill their recommendations. A new application process will be offered this year which will make the Transformation Journey Process available to more churches. The Transformation Journey Team has adapted to offering a hybrid process offering the convenience of online and in-person interactions with churches. The Rev. Dr. Nancy Rankin is the Transformation Journey Coordinator, and she is providing excellent leadership to this ministry initiative. While this has been a tough and challenging year for the church in general, the Church Vitality Team has enjoyed the opportunity to respond with ways to help their local churches. Strengthening existing congregations is part of their calling as a team, and they will continue to explore new ways to help the local church. .

#### Equity and Justice Ministries Partnerships

Church Development and the Office of Equity and Justice Ministries have several natural intersections. The team has made a commitment to be a funding partner with EJM as well as to share planning and equipping resources with them. Church vitality has always been contextual, and it will continue to commit resources in ways that will not be "One size or One Way fits all." The team adapted its processes for Transformation Journey, sought input and leadership for approaching Fresh Expressions differently, and remains focused on planting more intentional multicultural churches – all with culture and context in mind.

Frank Ramos, Chairperson  
Rob Hutchinson, Director of Church Development

#### 4. BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND CAMPUS MINISTRY

The purpose of the Western North Carolina Conference Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry is to empower those responsible for ministries on the campus so that students will become “disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.”

In 2021, the board awarded the Francis Asbury Award to Larry Jones for his years of service as the Campus Minister of the Wake Forest Wesley Foundation. Larry has retired after over two decades of serving the campus of Wake Forest University, Salem College, Winston Salem State, and NC School of the Arts. His presence will be missed.

Also in 2021, 47 students in the conference received \$94,441 in GBHEM Scholarships. These scholarships are in addition to all other scholarships administered by the Western North Carolina Annual Conference. The board is thankful to the General Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry for their generosity.

The board celebrates that after an extensive search, Rev. Oliver Helsabeck has been appointed as the new Campus Minister of the Wake Forest Wesley Foundation. The board looks forward to the gifts he will bring to this ministry.

The board wishes to express its gratitude to the eight campus ministers and five college chaplains for the work they do to minister to the students on their unique contexts. They work tirelessly to shepherd students even in the most difficult times.

The board appreciates the financial support of the conference to fund these ministries. Even in times of change and uncertainty in the world and denomination, Campus Ministry is still a strong and vital ministry in this conference. The board is committed to its mission and looks forward to what God has in store for the future of Campus Ministry in the Western North Carolina Conference.

John F. Howard Jr., Chairperson

##### a. Campus Ministry Reports

###### i. *Appalachian Wesley Foundation*

The Appalachian Wesley Foundation has had a remarkable 2021-2022 school year. The board of directors, district superintendent, school officials, and campus pastor worked diligently to appropriately follow all conference and Appalachian State University guidelines to safely move toward a post-COVID-19 ministry. Beginning in August 2021, App State navigated classes, clubs, and student organizations in a pre-COVID-19 world. This meant returning to in-person classes, allowing clubs and organizations to use university rooms and spaces, instituting new and safe guidance for club expos and spiritual life expos to engage new and returning students. Thanks to this and the conference’s guidance, App Wesley has been able to engage and share ministry with the greatest number of students since March 2020.

App Wesley lived into the 2021-2022 theme, “Let’s Find Community Together.” Having come back to some normalcy in this school year, it has had to identify what it meant and continues to mean to make and form community together. It continues to do so by asking the question for any planned program or ministry area, “How does this help form or find community together?” This has been a great foundational start to not just plan and implement “fun” activities; it is a foundational start in how to make Jesus and growing together spiritually integral to everything that the Wesley Foundation does. Moving into the 2022-2023 academic and ministry year, it will build on this theme with “Fan into Flame, the Gift of God Which is in You.” This theme is based on 2 Timothy 1:6, “For this reason I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands” (NRSV).

App Wesley’s building has been an integral part of the App State community since 1963. December 1, 1963 is when the building was opened on the First Sunday of Advent, with a special worship service. In August 2021, another special worship service was held - A Reconsecration Worship Service - celebrating the conclusion of the building renovations. In this building’s 58-year history, it has had its ups-and-downs, but all celebrate being able to use this space with other organizations on campus and in the church. This fall semester it solidified its connection with App Builds A Home (App State’s Habitat for Humanity organization) by giving them office space and a place to store all of their promotional and office materials. In addition, it also solidified a connection with Sanctuary Counseling, by having rooms available for therapists and counselors to have office hours three times a month. This helps to fulfil the task from the dean of students, as App Wesley was told there were limited counseling services for students through the App State health services. The student food pantry was also ramped up, through a connection with Food Donation Connection, it receives fresh foods from the local Starbucks three times a week - this is not only for App Wesley students, but for any student that walks by and needs food.

As far as mission and ministry at App Wesley – something each semester! There was the October 2021 Fall Retreat led by Unscripted Life at Holston Camp and Retreat Center in Banner Elk. It celebrated an Advent Festival before winter break. At the festival it had student vendors, snack foods, Advent wreath-making, and worship celebrating the beginning of Advent with a Moravian Love Feast. It is anticipated to be a new yearly event before everyone departs for winter break. During spring break App Wesley had the great opportunity to visit Atlanta, Selma, and Montgomery. This was an edu-mission trip facilitated by Gammon School of Theology, Candler School of Theology, Edmundite Missions, Church Street UMC (Selma), and the Equal Justice Initiative museum and memorials in Montgomery. For student testimony from that opportunity, watch the video here: <https://youtu.be/MdAVYK1h480>.

App Wesley is beyond excited for next year and the opportunities that lie ahead in ministry with the App State community.

Here are what App Wesley students say about this impactful community:

“I love the family that I have here and all the spiritual joy it adds to my life.”

“The Wesley Foundation and its community has been like having a family away from family.”

“Wesley makes me smile and I love coming to Wesley, even if it is just to do homework.”

“It keeps my head on straight and helps me step out of my comfort zone and build my relationship with Christ.”

“You can’t leave the building without someone putting a smile on your face or making you laugh.”

“Wesley has helped me grow in my faith.”



“The warm feeling I have whenever I walk through the door - along with the people in the building - has allowed me to grow into the best I can be.”

“As an incoming freshman, Wesley provided a safe, open community that let me find a home.”

“My experience at Wesley has been as close to agape as it can be because of the students, the pastors, and the way that you’re personally able to help others.”

The App Wesley Foundation is blessed with an active board that has been a source of encouragement to Director Juston Smith, and most importantly, the students. The App Wesley Foundation is blessed with active students who take leadership seriously, and actively participate in the ministries of App Wesley. The foundation is always grateful for all alumni, parents, local churches, and friends for their support; and the foundation would be remiss if not to thank this annual conference for their support of this vital extension ministry. This sentence may be a copy-and-paste from last year’s report, but remains certain: the mission, the message, and the place for openness in such a vulnerable time never wavered.

Juston Smith, Director

### ***ii. Asheville Wesley Foundation***

This year UNCA returned to all in-person classes, which has been a breath of fresh air for ministry and campus life. This has given Asheville Wesley a sense of normal and allowed the ministry to re-engage students in ways that have been sorely missed. Many students are entering into new chapters of life and the last two semesters have brought a lot of big life decisions regarding the future. Asheville Wesley has walked with students in that discernment and helped them think proactively about what they want their lives to look like. This has been a season of growth in maturity, resiliency, and vision-casting for new students stepping into leadership.

Asheville Wesley continues to be known as a campus ministry that is seeking to be an authentic community that is accepting, affirming, and open to all God’s children. With that being stated, the foundation would like to thank both its old and new friends for their support of the campus ministry. Thanks for continuing to help make Asheville Wesley a place where students can be known, seen, and loved as individuals of sacred worth.

Jeff McCumber, Director

### ***iii. Common Ground at Lees-McRae College***

The year 2021 was a year of transformation and growth for Common Ground. Strict protocols regarding COVID-19 paid off for Lees-McRae College and the associated student organizations. The school year began with a renewed enthusiasm as in-person gatherings were allowed and face-covering requirements were dropped midway in the year.

Thursday gatherings of Common Ground and Sunday Worship services on campus were able to continue with an in-person format and are reaching 13% of the on-campus population. The average attendance on Thursday has been steady at twenty students and the Sunday evening worship averages eighteen to twenty. The student leadership at Common Ground oversees the maintenance of the food pantry on campus and has continued to serve at Hosp House Boone, working in the garden and food pantry.

The Rev. Ted Henry also serves in extension ministry as the chaplain at Lees-McRae College, and as such has greater access to connection with the students. Chairperson Susan Staton shared her enthusiasm for the many new connections being made on campus, the spiritual growth opportunities that are being offered through the efforts of Common Ground and expressed gratitude for the financial support provided by the Western North Carolina Conference, the Appalachian District, Banner Elk United Methodist Church, parents, and alumni.

Ted Henry, Campus Minister

### ***iv. Niner United at UNC Charlotte***

Niner United is the United Methodist campus ministry at the fast-growing University of North Carolina in Charlotte, which works ecumenically with the Episcopal, Lutheran (ELCA), and Presbyterian (USA) churches. UNC Charlotte is a vital population to reach and serve, with over 35,000 students, faculty, and staff. Niner United has a vast and vibrant ministry program and presence. Weekly worship, Christian formation through retreats and a variety of small groups, various outreach and service opportunities and connections locally and beyond, community building, and vocational discernment events are all planned, implemented, and overseen by a two-person staff, a Duke Divinity intern, a team of 21 student leaders, and a board of directors. During the 2021 academic year, the university gradually eliminated COVID-19 limitations, and the campus ministry is returning to pre-COVID levels of engagement, including the first mission trip since February 2020. Niner United reached over 3,000 students through in-person events, programs, and activities, with over 170 students active in the ministry.

Steve Cheyney, University Pastor

### ***v. Wesley Foundation at East Market***

WesleyFoundation at East Market (WFEM): WFEM is the Wesley Foundation to North Carolina A&T State University. The past year for WFEM has continued to be a unique experience. It was finally able to see students in-person in a limited capacity, but began developing relationships with new students. It was able to continue meeting needs of students and cultivated new missional opportunities for students to begin to participate in 2022 and beyond. WFEM continued its partnership with the Good Neighbor Movement in assisting with the Harbor City Village. WFEM is continuing its relationship with Metropolitan (Greensboro) and developing more relationships with the faculty and staff of NC A&T State University. It has continued partnering with A&T entrepreneur students offering avenues for students to network their products and resources.

It also added a videography team to worship leaders/musicians’ program for the purpose of training the next generation to assist local faith communities with the new normal of doing ministry. Additionally, it is still looking at future collaboration with another denomination for a possible ecumenical campus ministry position or looking at unique, more direct partnership with NC A&T State University.

Diron Chloe, Executive Director of the Campus Ministries

**vi. Wesley-Luther Foundation at UNC Greensboro**

Wesley-Luther has seen a great deal of transformation and transition over the past two years. From March 2020 to March 2022, UNC Greensboro limited meetings to all online except for a narrow set of important programs. Students worked hard to develop creative ways to continue weekly worship, fellowship, and scripture study online. The annual “Light the Night” suicide awareness event and a support prayer vigil were moved and expanded and attracted more than 200 students. Wesley-Luther partnered with UNCG Recreation and Wellness to build the first meditative walking labyrinth on UNCG’s Piney Lake campus. This will serve as a resource to students for years to come. Wesley-Luther also continued to partner with the university to ensure students had the opportunity for free S.T.I. testing on campus each semester. The annual Meal of Thanksgiving was served, offering full to-go meals for 133 students with the help of more than 23 volunteers and student staff. Wesley-Luther’s student leaders worked to ensure students were not alone during this time of separation; many of them were working at the Spartan Open Pantry to make sure their classmates had the food they needed.

Wesley-Luther’s largest focus was service work through their programs at the Spartan Open Pantry. These efforts continued as the financial effects of the pandemic deepened for UNCG students. During the pandemic, nearly two out of three UNCG students experienced basic-needs insecurity, and one in four students experienced food insecurity each month. With the support of the Wesley-Luther student staff and volunteers, campus partners, local churches, the community, the WNCC, and the NC Synod of the ELCA, Wesley-Luther distributed 34,929 lbs. of food in 2021 and 2,739 hot meals. Wesley-Luther also expanded the number of mini-pantries on campus to five. Since the beginning of the pandemic, Wesley-Luther has distributed 77,449 lbs. of food from the pantry at College Place UMC. While distributing food as well as household items, clothing, and frozen meals, this historic Wesley Foundation has continued to work for the transformation of the world through the engagement of students in Christ’s work at UNCG and served the Spartan neighbors in need. Through this ministry, the WNCC has impacted the lives of thousands of UNCG students over the past two years.

In 2022, Wesley-Luther is transitioning back to in-person worship, fellowship, and scripture study on the campus. The foundation is also opening its first unit of an emergency homeless student apartment, to help students experiencing housing insecurity have a safe and caring place while long-term solutions can be found. Wesley-Luther is incredibly thankful for the opportunity to serve UNCG students and staff on behalf of the WNCC. Through the cultivation of passionate disciples of Christ who have a commitment to service, justice, and the transformation of this world, the foundation remains hopeful it can impact the UNCG and Greensboro community for generations to come.

Andrew Mails, Director

**vii. Wesley Foundation at Western Carolina University**

The Wesley Foundation at Western Carolina University is grateful for all of the support it received from the Western North Carolina Annual Conference, The Smoky Mountain District, local churches, its board of directors, and all friends and alumni. This academic year the ministry helped college students connect with each other and the world around them in many creative and new ways. Students spend time with each other daily at the ministry and at Cullowhee United Methodist Church. They participated in thousands of hours of service work over the year including splitting and delivering over 100 loads of firewood to local residents and delivering meals weekly via the Department on Aging Meals on Wheels program. Students continue this year with cooking class, helping at the local food pantry, and roadside litter clean-up with a local veterans group. The Wesley Foundation was able to hold their annual haunted house in October 2021 and the Wesley Golf Classic in the spring. Each week during the school year the student worship team and Wesley staff plan and hold worship for college students. This year they’ve been back to in-person worship and eating meals outdoors. Wesley staff helped college students learn how to plan and give a sermon almost every week of the school year. Three years ago Wesley staff started planning their next trip for the Holy Land in December 2020. It was postponed until December 2021 and is now slated to take place in December 2022. As is always the case with constant turnover, the staff plan to maintain focus on in-depth student leader development, board development and student involvement, increased intentional student outreach, and student worship leadership training. All of this would not be possible without the generous grant from the WNCC, the Smoky Mountain District, friends and alumni of the Wesley Foundation, and their own fundraising efforts.

Jay Hinton, Director

**viii. Winston-Salem Wesley Foundation**

The summer and academic fall semester of 2022 have noted some significant milestones for the Winston-Salem Wesley Foundation. One such milestone is the fact that the Rev. Larry Jones, while officially retiring August 1, 2021, has actually continued to work as the campus minister from August 1, 2021, until April 30, 2022. The first hiring process did not end successfully, hence the need for Rev. Jones to stay on for 99 percent of the 2021-2022 academic year in a contract position status. However, the foundation is pleased to report that Rev. Oliver Helsabeck will start in the campus minister/director position May 1, 2022.

Another significant milestone is that all three campuses that make up the Winston-Salem Wesley Foundation were back fully in-person for the 2021-2022 academic year. In the fall semester, many necessary COVID-19 restrictions were still in place, but the students were able to meet in-person for the most part both semesters. Several students have commented on how much more effective and meaningful it has been to be able to meet in person. At Wake Forest University, home to the largest group of students, university regulations prevented the serving and eating of meals together until February, 2022; however, for the fall semester, the foundation was able to give away to-go meals for students to eat after the large group meetings.

Another significant milestone in the (mostly) post-COVID time span is that Wake Forest Wesley was able to reinhabit their Wesley Lounge on the campus of Wake Forest, after an over two-year period of not having access to it (because of university COVID restrictions and university renovations of the residence hall at which the lounge is situated). Being able to use a space dedicated solely to the Wesley Foundation’s use has enabled it to expand programming significantly and provide a more “cozy” atmosphere for large group worship.

Many challenges remain, of course. The Wesley Foundation's programs at Salem College and the University of North Carolina School of the Arts will need to be rebuilt post-COVID; the transition to Oliver Helsabeck as the campus minister, while truly welcomed by all, still involves a season of change for the students; transitions in organizations often can mean a lessening of financial donations until the "new person" builds his/her own lines of support. To that end, Rev. Jones is continuing to work as a part-time contract worker for the foundation until August 1, 2022 to help make the fundraising aspect of the position a little less daunting for the incoming campus minister.

A personal note: each pastoral position has been filled with many blessings of meaningful work and wonderful co-workers; working as a college campus minister has been exciting, rewarding, and truly in a place where the work is an important cog in the ongoing vitality and "rebirth" of The United Methodist Church. Thanks to the conference and fellow campus ministers for all their support and friendship since 2005. Please support Oliver Helsabeck in the same wonderfully meaningful way!

Larry V. Jones, Campus Minister and Director

## **b. Proposed Campus Ministry Boards**

**(Petition 5) Approved June 17, 2022**

### **Appalachian Wesley Foundation**

*Class of 2023:* Wes Austin (Deerfield UMC, pastor), Fred Fonville (Boone UMC), Dodie Glowa (Boone UMC)

*Class of 2024:* Ben Caviness (alumnus), Rachael Gossett (alumna), Aaron Prillaman (alumnus)

*Class of 2025:* John Cope (West Jefferson UMC), Ben Fitzgerald (Boone UMC, alumnus), Dustin Mailman (Boone UMC, alumnus)

*Student Members:* Zach Green, Garrett Hoyt, Aleya Hunnell

*Pastor of Local United Methodist Church:* Tracy Love (Mount Hermon UMC, Cedar Valley UMC, pastor)

*Ex officio:* Lory Beth Huffman (Appalachian District Superintendent), Kyle Sigmon (FaithBridge associate pastor, BHECM representative)

*Campus Minister:* Justin Smith

### **Asheville Wesley Foundation**

*Class of 2022:* John McCullough (Treasurer), Austin McNeil (Student Intern), Alison Sink (Student Intern), Kelley Woehl (Student Intern)

*Class of 2023:* Ashley Crowder Stanley (Chair), Lindsay Rosson, John Smith

*Class of 2024:* Suzie Dittenber, Kathy Robinson

*Ex officio:* Mark Ralls (Blue Ridge District Superintendent)

*Campus Minister:* Jeff McCumber

### **Common Ground at Lees-McRae College**

Susan Staton (Chair), Jana Greer, Vicki Lott, Jim Hart (Chaplain), Gracie Brindle, Michelle Scott, Gina Phenneger (Finance Treasurer).

*Campus Minister:* Ted Henry

### **Niner United at UNC Charlotte**

Ian Binns, Anne Brown, Jesse Caldwell, Olanda Carr, Beth Hardin, Mike Hoffman, Lyn Holt (chair), Sonya MacAuley-Allen, Trey O'Quinn, John Richards, Taylor Simmons, Ethan Smith, Beth Whitaker

*Ex officio:* Cailee Franklin, Stephen Cheyney (Campus Pastor)

### **Wesley Foundation at East Market (North Carolina A&T State University)**

William Waddell (Chair), John Henry (Secretary), Dottie Troxler (Treasurer), Lauren Cunningham, Brandon Wrencher, Drew McIntyre, Vernita Alvord, TJ Exford

*Recent College Graduate Members:* Emmanuel Carmichael, Garren Dearman

*NC A&T Students:* Jaylon Allen, Phillip Omo-Taiga

*Ex Officio:* Beverly Copley (Northern Piedmont District Superintendent)

*Executive Director of the Campus Ministries:* Diron Chloe (Campus Minister)

### **Wesley Luther at UNC Greensboro**

Jessica Gregory (College Place UMC), Jill Alventosa-Brown (West Market UMC, Council on Campus Ministry), Tom Herin (Retired), Jay Hilbinger (First Lutheran Church), Don McCrickard (Christ UMC), Carolyn Miller (Trinity Lutheran Church), Catherine Sevier (West Market UMC), William Parish (St. Timothy UMC, Director of Elliot University Center), Paul Freeman (College Place UMC)

*Students:* George Knight, Beth Hall

*Ex Officio:* Beverly Copley (Northern Piedmont District Superintendent)

*Director of Wesley-Luther Campus Ministries:* Andrew Mails (College Place UMC)

*Associate Director of Wesley-Luther Campus Ministries:* Emily Mails Saine (College Place UMC)

### **Wesley Foundation at Western Carolina University**

*Class of 2022:* Drew Carnes (Chair), Liz Davis, Jay Ruebel (Vice Chair)

*Class of 2023:* Nathan Borchelt, Sam McCarter, Mike Poston (Financial Secretary)

*Class of 2024:* Ryan Pless, Sarah Speed (Secretary)

*Students:* Bryan Jarvis, Reagan Tomlinson

*Ex-Officio:* Jae Lee (Smoky Mountain District Superintendent), David Reeves (Senior Pastor, Cullowhee UMC), Jay Hinton (Director of the Wesley Foundation at WCU), Hannah Van Hooser (Associate Director), Scarlet Pless (Associate Director)

### **Winston-Salem Wesley Foundation**

Roger Echols (Chair), Christy Buchanan, Steve Felts, Jonathan Philpot, Nicklaus Ashburn, Ryan Angi, Zechariah Kearns, Sara Miller, Annamae Giles, Heater Phillips, Alexandra Stephanis, Meri Claire West, Kiyu Takahashi

*Ex Officio:* Sam Moore (Yadkin Valley District Superintendent), Oliver Helsabeck (Director of the Campus Ministries)

## 5. JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION TEAM

The Western North Carolina Conference Justice and Reconciliation (J&R) Team is fully engaged in the ministry of Jesus Christ, in order to make Christian Disciples for the transformation of the world. Their ministry impacts many areas of the WNCC and varied communities throughout western North Carolina. They are organized for mission and ministry within a framework of 11 key areas:

- Social justice - Church and Society
- Environmental creation care – Earthkeepers
- Peace with justice
- Matters of religion and race (CORR)
- Commission on the Status and Role of Women (COSROW)
- North Carolina Council of Churches (NCCOC)
- Christian Unity and Interreligious Relationships (CUIR)
- Native American ethnic caucus Ministries
- African-American Ministries
- Hispanic/Latino American Ministries
- Asian-American Ministries

Since the last annual conference meeting, COVID-19 continues to challenge and hamper many in-person mission and ministry experiences. However, the primary work of serving Jesus Christ continues through every challenge. The work of the J&R Team did not stop. Team members continue to envision and plan for mission and ministry. The J&R Team has worked collaboratively with partners within both The United Methodist Church and in the greater community of faith. Leaning into the vision of making disciples for the transformation of the world, the J&R Team faithfully implements ministries of justice, mercy, and love in a hurting, and often unjust world. Through the loving grace of God, the redemptive presence of Jesus Christ, and the healing power of the Holy Spirit, the J&R Team continues to seek opportunities to witness the redemptive power of Jesus Christ.

With their vision, “Empowered by Christ,” the J&R Team exists to repair that which has been broken. Their mission is to listen, evaluate, initiate, advocate, train, educate, offer grants, and celebrate through acts of God’s love, so the whole church reflects the diversity of each community, with an intentional effort to include all constituencies with respect and equity, while also being inclusive of the work of environmental and social concerns. Their core values are to practice genuine listening and mindfulness, to encourage others to lean into discomfort, to serve as a catalyst for equity in change by compassionate acts, and to practice inclusive language with humility and discipline, speaking and receiving wholeness through Christ. The near-term objective/top-level goal of the J&R Team is to work to build a voice, influence, access, resources, and spirit among caucuses and conveners so that the WNCC will reflect the diverse body of Christ.

The J&R Team continues to partner with the Dismantling Racism Taskforce in developing and implementing opportunities for laity and clergy to challenge the systemic racism that plagues this country and church. These workshops have had a profound impact on those who participate. Working with African-American Ministries and key stakeholders the J&R Team has helped facilitate the new part-time conference position, African-American/Black Church Growth and Vitality. Working closely with the Director of Equity and Justice, this position will execute elements of the African-American Ministries’ Ministry Action Plan related to Black Church growth. The J&R Team also coordinates with leadership in the South Carolina and North Carolina Conferences of The United Methodist Church to fund and develop the annual Black Clergy retreat.

The J&R Team supports the work of Native American Ministries as they address issues of domestic abuse, bullying, and suicide in the context of Christian mission and disciplined living. Likewise, the J&R Team supports the work of Hispanic/Latino ministries as they gather in worship and develop ministries aimed at leadership development and empowerment within their constituent communities. The J&R Team works alongside COSROW as they fulfill their mission to work alongside the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women advocating for full participation in the total life of The United Methodist Church by helping the church to recognize every person – clergy and laity, women and men, adults and children – as full and equal parts of God’s human family. It is anticipated that a fully engaged and empowered membership is vital to The United Methodist Church’s mission to “Follow Jesus, Make Disciples, Transform the World.”

Working with CORR, the J&R Team supported the work of the committee as they organized and planned for the 2021 WNCC Martin Luther King Jr. Commemoration. This event was co-sponsored with Black Methodists for Church Renewal (BMCR). The commission will continue its work of diversity monitoring so that the WNCC may have an accurate understanding of the vision of God’s Kingdom in the world. The goal is to ensure that their words and actions are in alignment with the call of Jesus Christ.

The J&R Team gives yearly financial support to the North Carolina Council of Churches (NCCOC) which is a statewide ecumenical organization promoting Christian unity and working towards a more just society with the motto: Strength in Unity, Peace through Justice. The council enables denominations, congregations, and people of faith to impact the state individually and collectively on issues such as economic justice and development, human well-being, equality, compassion, and peace, following the example and mission of Jesus Christ. NCCOC addresses social justice issues through a faith lens to include immigration and the Sanctuary Coalition, the Opioid Crisis, North Carolina Interfaith Power and Light (NCIPL) and Partners in Health and Wholeness (PHW). The council’s priority areas continue to be Gun Violence Prevention, Raising Wages Campaign, Money Bail Eradication, and Public Education Advocacy.

May God bless the work of the whole J&R Team as they seek to witness to faith in Jesus Christ and make disciples for the transformation of local communities and the world.

Donnell FitzJefferies, Chairperson  
Renee Hayes, Vice-Chairperson  
Nikki Raye Rice, Secretary  
Samuel Moore, Cabinet Representative

## 6. BOARD OF LAITY

While the continued prevalence of COVID-19 presented ongoing challenges to the work of the Board of Laity and churches in 2021, the year was fruitful in many ways.

The board continued its work in support of the three focus areas for this quadrennium:

- **Spiritual Formation:** Discerning, developing, and deploying opportunities that help laity grow in their own spiritual practices and/or engage and equip laity to be more effective disciples.
- **Faith in Action:** Discerning, developing, and deploying opportunities that help laity more effectively live into their faith through active ministry participation within and through their local church, district, and conference in ways that positively impact their community and the broader world.
- **Communications:** Enhancing the practices, tools, and technology associated with laity communications to ensure laity are engaged and informed regarding the work of the church, resources that are available to support them, and how to access those resources.

District and conference leaders demonstrated outstanding commitment and resourcefulness in ensuring that diverse and impactful training and growth opportunities for laity were provided throughout the year, through the Lay Servant Ministries program and other ways. The board continued to be encouraged by laity who embraced online training, and looks forward to continuing to provide online alternatives even as in-person events resume.

The board was excited to re-launch the Conference Committee on Lay Servant Ministries in 2021, which will enable increased collaboration between districts and better share information about class offerings and best practices for LSM course administration. The board believes the need for strong lay leadership will continue to grow in importance as church structures and clergy availability continue to evolve, and the work it is doing now is providing the infrastructure needed to enable and support laity development opportunities in the future.

It also began a review of the Lay Ministries information available on the conference website and will be continuing to work on a redesign of that content in 2022. The goal is to make it easier for laity to find the information they need to help them serve in their various leadership roles and to grow in their discipleship.

Looking ahead, the board knows that ministry context will continue to evolve, but the vision remains unchanged: to see growing numbers of committed United Methodist laity who are maturing in their faith, discipling others, and transforming the church, community, and world in measurable ways. It is committed to engaging, equipping, and encouraging laity to be faithful disciples of Jesus Christ and beacons of light, hope, and love to the world.

The Board of Laity thanks the laity of the Western North Carolina Conference for all they do each day to follow Jesus, make disciples, and transform the world.

John D. Crane, Conference Lay Leader

### a. United Methodist Men

The Western North Carolina Conference United Methodist Men mission is to support spiritual growth among men, helping men to mature as disciples as they encourage spiritual formation in others. The WNCC United Methodist Men goal is to empower the ministry of Jesus Christ through men within the congregations of the WNCC. The Western North Carolina Conference United Methodist Men are proud of the faithfulness and hard work of the local UMM units in each district. The focus of the United Methodist Men is not inward, concentrating only on those who attend a set meeting, but outward to all men, assisting them to engage the process of spiritual growth.

The WNCC United Methodist Men are committed to building relationships and encouraging one another. They continue to encourage men in each of the eight districts to sponsor a variety of events and gatherings such as spiritual workshops, men choir singings, prayer breakfasts, buildings projects, supplying food for pantries to feed the hungry, building accessibility ramps for individuals in need of them, The Class Meeting and many other Christ-centered events that will more effectively connect and fellowship with local and district members and all people in their communities.

The WMCC UMM continue to present information about their emphasis on Scouting.

The WNCC UMM proudly sponsor Ministerial Scholarships for Second Career Pastors for which the UMM give on average \$5000 every year.

This year the UMM continued donations to Food Banks to three areas of the WNCC to feed those that are hungry. Some local UMM units are even sponsoring hot dog dinners to raise funds to help the hungry. The UMM support WNCC disaster and building teams.

The United Methodist Men of the WNCC and the United States are continuing to participate in workshops, webinars, and Jurisdictional National Days of Prayer concerning dismantling racism and how everyone can become a more understanding, loving and caring world.

The WNCC United Methodist Men are very strong advocates against domestic violence and the first week of August they will again ask everyone to observe a week of prayer against domestic violence and pray for strong loving family relationships. The UMM work along with the North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence and the GCUMM partner AMEND Together to help STOP Domestic Violence.

The UMM of WNCC supported "Strength for Service" this year by giving a generous donation so that devotional books could be purchased and distributed at the 2021 Veterans Hall of Fame Induction ceremony in Concord, N.C.

In April 2022 the General Commission on United Methodist Men started an initiative focused on “New Beginnings” where the priority is to provide every church some new ways to connect with UMM, and to offer local church leadership credible resources to help them carry out ministry with men and scouting.

The Western North Carolina Conference United Methodist Men continue to be leaders among the General Commission of United Methodist Men with their continuing to have a high number of life members of UMM, a high percent of churches with a charter and a high number of charters. The Western North Carolina Conference United Methodist Men “Coaching men to THRIVE through Christ, So Others May Know Christ.”

William Waddell, President  
[wiloliwad@yahoo.com](mailto:wiloliwad@yahoo.com) • [www.wnccumm.org](http://www.wnccumm.org)

### **b. United Methodist Women**

The year 2021 was another year of uncertainty and United Methodist Women members have adjusted well to the challenges of the pandemic. The conference team managed to have all the major events through the innovation of Zoom meetings. That would not have been as successful or even possible if it weren't for the technology of today.

The national office continued to fund programs all over the world with six regional missionaries working hard. The Bethlehem Center in Winston-Salem and Alliance Center for Education in Charlotte continued their programs while taking care to follow the safety guidelines for the COVID-19 pandemic. Brooks-Howell Home in Asheville continued their cautious care while following safety procedures. Pfeiffer University and Bennett College continued their classes with great caution.

The June Spiritual Growth Retreat was a virtual event that featured Rev. Lisa Beth White as leader with the theme of “You Lift Me Up.” Members had access to meaningful break-out sessions: Tea and Meditation; Knitting Together; Prayer Journaling; Commemorating Juneteenth; and a book study of You Raise Me Up about the WNCC mission in Armenia. In April United Methodist Women members representing the Blue Ridge and Yadkin Valley Districts and the Western North Carolina Conference were among 300 persons who participated in 80 meetings with their elected officials concerning climate justice in a Legislative Day event. During July a virtual mission spiritual growth study was held, led by Rev. Amy Coles, “Bearing Witness in the Kin-dom: Living into the Church’s Moral Witness through Radical Discipleship.” The social issue study was “Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools.” The virtual conference annual celebration was held in September, with the theme “Light Up Our Spirits with Faith and Hope so Love IS Action.” Deacon Cindy Johnson from Brownsville, Texas, who does amazing work with the immigrant community seeking justice across the Mexican border, was the speaker. The conference leadership team provided training for district officers on Leadership Development Day and sponsored a conference-wide Leadership Development Day for all local officers. Throughout the year they were able to connect with other members of United Methodist Women around the world through Zoom meetings, hence, connecting with people unlikely to be encountered in person.

Many units could not meet but the members were faithful in their giving. Total Mission Giving was \$544,344. They met the pledge of \$500,000 to National Pledge to Mission and exceeded it by \$4,943. In addition, they sent another \$39,401 to National and UMCOR. Western North Carolina Conference was again #1 in the nation for Mission Giving. Hands-on projects through districts totaled \$82,241, this included supplies for the National Institutions and Project Agape. The Legacy Fund was given \$66,530 in 2021. This conference has given a total of \$428,978 to an endowment fund that will undergird the organization and insure the mission work of United Methodist Women well into the next 150 years.

On March 3, 2022, the name of United Methodist Women was changed to United Women of Faith. United Methodist Women members have always been visionary and have acted boldly since the organization began in 1869. The name has changed 25 times, and it has been changed again as a result of five years of research, prayerful discernment and hard work by the member-elected United Methodist Women Board of Directors, with input from the Program Advisory Group.

United Women in Faith addresses the needs and different life stages of new women who for various reasons have not been drawn to the membership of United Methodist Women. The new name is inclusive to current members whose local churches may choose or have already chosen to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church. Women of other faith traditions who want to join because they are drawn to the mission of the organization are welcomed. There is a fresh look of inviting women to connect in new ways, an innovative feel with new and improved programs designed to better nurture current members and welcome new members into the service of faith, action and sisterhood.

There are many things that United Women in Faith did not change. The PURPOSE is an important statement of the organization. They will still be the official women’s organization of The United Methodist Church and the legal name will remain United Methodist Women. The vision will remain the same: Turning faith, hope and love into action for women, children, and youth around the world. The core of who they are remains: they believe love in action can change the world. There will be no age group left out, they continue to lean on the wisdom of seasoned members and seek new ideas from younger women. They will gather for Christian fellowship, prayer, support and study. They remain committed to training through education and providing opportunities for service and advocacy. Most importantly, they will continue to live their faith in lives of action for justice.

Joanie Strohm President  
[www.wnccumw.org](http://www.wnccumw.org)

### **c. Conference Council on Youth Ministries (CCYM)**

The Conference Council on Youth Ministries (CCYM) is a leadership team of youth and adults from around the conference who plan, develop, and implement resources/events/ministries for youth across the Western North Carolina Conference. The mission is to find ways to encourage young people to follow Jesus, become leaders, make disciples, and transform the world. The 2021-2022 executive committee consisted of Nick Hall (co-president), Rebecca Langston (co-president), and Kayla Stewart (secretary). Seven new youth were welcomed to serve on the council this year and their fresh perspective and insight is very much appreciated.

CCYM was supervised and led by a team of great leadership, including Shannon LeMaster-Smith, Carlyn Bell, and Paul Frazier. These leaders brought out the best in CCYM, and heavily contributed to the success of this group.

The CCYM receives Youth Service Fund grant applications and awards Youth Service Funds each year. The Youth Service Fund is money raised by youth, through local churches and different events run by CCYM, and are distributed by grants administered by the CCYM. "Of the funds given, 70% is given back within the Western North Carolina Conference. The remaining 30% is donated to the General Council on Finance and Administration, and this amount is used to fund projects that a team of youth from around the world select. Most importantly, the projects supported are designed and led by youth, for the benefit of their peers." (*Book of Discipline* 2016) Due to COVID and the inability to have the usual events to help raise funds for YSF, no requests were granted this year.

Each year, CCYM is in charge of putting on a conference-wide youth retreat for middle school youth, known as IgniteUS. Because of the global pandemic, this event has been postponed the past two years. CCYM is very thankful that the council was able to reunite this year for IgniteUS 2022. The overnight retreat was held from Friday, April 1st, to Sunday, April 3rd at Camp Hanes in King, NC, and had over 100 participants, including middle schoolers and high schoolers who were invited to attend. The speaker, Jennifer Bingham Hampton, revolved her lessons around the theme of "resurrection", and focused on teaching grace. The First UMC Newton Praise Band led the youth in praise and worship. The staff and leaders planning this event, along with the Camp Hanes staff, helped to make this a successful weekend, bringing the youth closer to God and one another.

CCYM is grateful to the Western North Carolina Conference for the continuous support through these challenging times. CCYM is a growing organization full of leaders who are eager to improve and transform the church into followers of Christ who accept and love all of God's children.

Nick Hall, Co-President  
[www.wnccumc.org/ccym](http://www.wnccumc.org/ccym)

## 7. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TEAM

Emerging from two years of a pandemic coupled with denominational turmoil has brought about the testing of even the best of our clergy leaders. In the midst of it all, the Leadership Development Team (LDT) of WNCC has consistently tried to meet the needs of the of ministry professionals who have had to be resilient and willing to adapt in a quickly changing church environment.

Returning to in person meetings has renewed energy for the task of the LDT which has a mission of building "the capacity of ministry leaders to follow Jesus, make disciples and transform the world." Not only has renewed energy surged, but also a renewed sense of lament for relationships, time, focus and opportunities lost in recent years. In going forward LDT has agreed that a time of lament will accompany gatherings as we move forward.

LDT has taken the need for racial reconciliation seriously. The team has gathered and listened and shared stories of reaching across racial lines that have historically divided. Moving beyond talk to real reconciliation the chair and vice-chair, in the spirit of racial reconciliation have worked side by side as co-chairs to enable equity in conference leadership within the LDT and real presence and voice at the connectional table.

The work of the LDT is fostered in subcommittees. There is great teamwork and plans are facilitated among the program, communications and stewardship subcommittees with a promise to see equity across the board. The stewardship committee oversees the budget to facilitate the many programs offered as well as scholarships for personal development plans, spiritual retreats and opportunities to equip clergy for innovative and resilient leadership. The program team identifies and provides resources for building the capacity of ministry leaders in resilience, adaptive change, clergy care, conflict and many other areas that foster fruitfulness in ministry. The team has offered preaching and peer cohorts, workshops for racial healing, and Navigating Uncharted Waters. Well-known providers offer services from Fresh Expression, The Lombard Mennonite Peace Center, The Arbinger Institute, Acumen Academy as well as the more local WNCC-based Davidson Clergy Center and School of the Spirit. The communications team works diligently to ensure access to programs. From the monthly eLEAD newsletter, the conference website, Facebook posts, and communication tools with district offices the goal is to inform ministry leaders of the WNCC of all the opportunities available. Podcasts covering a multitude of topics continue to be offered and resources are archived on the LDT section of the conference website so that when the ministry leader needs resources for development in a particular subject, timely and appropriate help can be found with an easy-to-use search.

The WNCC has been generous to support the ongoing efforts to develop ministry professionals and clergy leaders. Whether the partnership with a provider has been long standing and faithful over the years or a new opportunity for the WNCC such as a Leadership Expo (watch for this exciting new program ahead) the focus remains to build and encourage ministry leaders for fruitfulness. As Jesus reminded his first disciples, he still speaks to us today: "When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father" (John 15:8, NLT).

Kari Howard and Shirley Canty, Co-Chairpersons

## 8. MISSION ENGAGEMENT TEAM

The Mission Engagement Department of the Western North Carolina Conference has been very active over the last year in Disaster Response. On August 17 and the days after, flooding from Tropical Storm Fred caused significant damage in areas of Haywood County. The Pigeon River near Canton, nearly reached 20 feet in depth, compared to about 2 feet in days leading up to the rainstorm. Cruso, N.C. was hardest hit. In total, 563 residents were impacted; 56 destroyed, 206 homes with major damage totaling an estimated \$300 million. It is also believed, 500 families in the region were displaced – some temporarily, others permanently.

**Western North Carolina Disaster Ministries** has been responding to the flooding from Hurricane Fred since the day after the storm. First, deploying cleaning buckets and a shower trailer to Cruso United Methodist Church, the epicenter of the disaster, and on higher ground above the Pigeon River. A week later the WNCUMC deployed a mold remediation trailer and tool trailer for teams.

In December 2021, WNCUMC disaster ministries received an UMCOR grant of \$393,651.00. These funds were used to hire a case management team to work with flood survivors, a site coordinator, and assistant to work with volunteer teams aiding in the rebuild, building materials, and funds for verified unmet needs. In addition to the UMCOR grant, WNCUMC churches generously donated \$183,434.72 to support disaster recovery efforts from the impacts of Tropical Storm Fred.

**Missional Collective** – In 2021 The WNC Conference continued partnership with The Missional Collective by hosting its annual journey in experiential neighboring. The Journey of 5 immersive learning retreats were held in historically rich locations with an intention to help expand the imagination of participants from relief work into empowerment. Through a combination of online and in-person retreats, clergy and laity explored a theology of mission, asset-based community development, personal discernment, issues of equity and justice, and accountability for missional action planning.

The team partnered with several organizations including the Learning Tree in Indiana, QC Family Tree in Charlotte, Haywood Street Congregation, Faith for Justice Asheville, the beloved community center of Greensboro and others. The immersive journey will continue to be offered annually, an online curriculum is available for local congregational use, and short-term mission experiences are being developed for youth and young adults.

**Northern Haiti Mission Initiative** – The Northern Haiti Mission Connection works through Partners 4 New Hope, Inc. to support the Cap Haitian Ministry Center, Dr. Maklin Eugene, and New Hope Hospital in Plaine du Nord, Haiti. Their financial support has provided for the shipment of over 3,000 masks to Haiti, the funding of many feeding programs through New Hope Hospital to serve the surrounding communities, schools, and the prison population, micro-finance programs, and the installation of clean water wells in the area serving thousands without water. <https://www.partners4newhope.org>

A magnitude 7.2 earthquake struck the South of Haiti on August 14, 2021. The Northern Haiti ministry partners, along with Dr. Eugene of New Hope Hospital, assisted with medical response efforts, mobile clinics, and food distributions in southern Haiti.

**ZOE Empowers** – MET also supports conference sponsorships with Zoe Empowers (serving Africa and Asia), the Central Congo Partnership, and Open Arms Community. MET further assists numerous mission teams from the conference as they journey locally, regionally, and internationally.

**Project AGAPE** – Since the war of 2020, Project AGAPE has continued to serve the people of Armenia and Artsakh. With supplies received in two containers and purchased locally through grants and the Emergency Relief Fund, Project AGAPE continues to help the refugee families with basic necessities of food, clothing, bedding, and kitchen supplies. In 2021 about 800 families were provided with these basic supplies, and now another 600 families are being served from the southern parts of the Kashatagh region.

The team will continue to help the displaced families improve their social conditions with supplies that the families will be able to use for some period until they are able to find jobs and adapt to their changing conditions. This short-term support to these families will forge a path of recovery as Project AGAPE transitions toward long-term development projects. One of these is the Vocational Project which will help families learn new skills and find jobs or start their own businesses in nail, skin, hair care, electrical, plumbing, and carpentry areas.

**Creation Care** – This year the MET expanded its efforts by bringing the missional component of the Creation Care Ministry Team (CCMT) under its umbrella. Together, they and others from the Missional Collective and the Smoky Mountain District, are designing a mission trip for youth to assist flood survivors in Haywood County this June, which will contain an ecological component along with the traditional service component. This trip will then be used as a template for future eco-focused mission trips, including a curriculum for pre-trip, during trip, and post-trip education that will empower participants to continue to engage in eco-focused (creation caring) activities back home in their everyday lives and the life of their church and community. Additionally, the CCMT provided training in September and October 2021, to clergy and laity via Zoom, regarding the call to actively care for God's creation and ways that local churches may answer that call by starting a Green Team or Creation Care Ministry Team. The Green Church Initiative was launched as a tool that local churches can use to find many ways to engage in covenantal acts of caring for God's creation, and the first "Green Church Award" will be presented to West Market Street UMC, Greensboro, for using this tool to guide it in nurturing a creation care ethic in their church throughout the areas of worship, discipleship, stewardship, mission, and evangelism. The CCMT leadership team is now meeting regularly, offering training online and in-person, and seeking others interested in Creation Care, as Creation Care ministries is expanded across the annual conference and in each district, and are participating with the United Methodist Creation Justice Movement at the denomination and southeastern jurisdiction levels. For more information on CCMT go to [www.wnccumc.org/wncc-creation-care-ministry](http://www.wnccumc.org/wncc-creation-care-ministry) or [CreationCareWNCC@gmail.com](mailto:CreationCareWNCC@gmail.com).

Brian Mateer, Associate Director of Mission Engagement



### Advance Specials

**(Petition 6)** *Approved June 17, 2022*

The following ministries have been vetted and are approved as Annual Conference Mission Specials:

Carolina Cross Connection	Youth Service Fund	VIM Mission Connection Teams
Congregations 4 Children	Mission Response Center	WNCC Committee on Relief
Open Arms Community	Northern Haiti Mission Connection Team	Project Agape

Churches are at liberty to support Advance Specials according to the wishes of the individual churches.

## 9. BOARD OF ORDAINED MINISTRY

The Board of Ordained Ministry supports the mission of the Western North Carolina Conference by developing, implementing, overseeing, and evaluating programs that focus on recruiting, training, certifying, examining, recommending, and supporting clergy leadership for the conference and The United Methodist Church. The board is a diverse group of clergy and laity from across the conference. The Director of Ministerial Services and the Associate Director of Ministerial Services serve as staff to the board, along with one district superintendent who serves as the cabinet representative.

The members of the board serve on working teams to care for specific aspects of the board's work and on discernment teams to interview candidates. Due to the pandemic, meetings and interviews were conducted virtually this past year with hopes to return to in-person interviews next year. Members and candidates navigated this process extremely well. Each member volunteers many hours to the important work of the Board of Ordained Ministry.

During the past two years of this quadrennium, the Executive Committee of the Board of Ordained Ministry created a task force to develop a Fair and Equitable Interview Process. This task force was co-chaired by Dr. Ceola Ross Baber (laity, Newlyn UMC) and Rev. Dr. Kevin Turner (clergy, Davidson UMC). This new process for interviews to ensure fair and equitable treatment of each candidate was approved at the fall board meeting and each board member was asked to sign a covenant to adhere to the new policy. One hundred percent of the board members signed the covenant. While additional implementation details are being developed, the board applied the policy during the spring candidate interviews with much effectiveness.

Board members received candidate papers and information in early winter; and met with ordination candidates in February and provisional candidates in March. The board is recommending 11 persons (two deacons and nine elders) for full connection and ordination and 16 persons (four deacons and 12 elders) for commissioning at the 2022 session of the WNCC Annual Conference. In addition to provisional and full connection interviews, the board conducted continuance interviews of 36 provisional candidates.

The work has been extensive and critical for the future of The United Methodist Church. The members of the Board of Ordained Ministry are honored to serve Christ in this important way.

Lynda Ferguson, Chairperson

### a. Local Pastors Completing Course of Study

The Board of Ordained Ministry wishes to recognize those local pastors who have completed the Course of Study since the last annual conference session:

**Name, Appointment, District, COS—School Name**

- **Dennis (Denny) Gray**, Warrensville Charge, Appalachian, COS - The Divinity School, Duke University
- **David Green**, Plains (Canton), Smoky Mountain, COS - The Divinity School, Duke University
- **Jolynn (Jody) Halstead**, Haywood Street Congregation (Asheville), Blue Ridge, COS - The Divinity School, Duke University and Appalachian (Memphis-Tennessee-Holston) Extension
- **James (Eric) Hill**, Pleasant Hill-Rockwood, Smoky Mountain, COS - The Divinity School, Duke University
- **Timothy (Tim) Lee**, Ranger-Tomotla, Smoky Mountain, COS - The Divinity School, Duke University
- **Joe (Dan) Moore**, Heath Memorial (Waxhaw), Metro, COS - The Divinity School, Duke University
- **Presley (Alan) Pruitt**, Lowe's (Reidsville), Northern Piedmont, COS - The Divinity School, Duke University
- **Gary Sowell**, Asbury-Shiloh, Metro, COS - The Divinity School, Duke University
- **Davd (Alan) Thompson**, Center Grove - St. Paul (Concord), Metro, COS - The Divinity School, Duke University

### b. Sexual and Professional Misconduct Policy for Ministerial Leadership

The current policy is published online at <https://www.wnccumc.org/misconduct-policy>.

## C. WNCC DISTRICTS

### 1. APPALACHIAN DISTRICT

The Appalachian District continues to be blessed by the great variety of ways in which the clergy and their leadership teams are leading their congregations through a global pandemic, yet still focused on making disciples for the transformation of the world.

The Appalachian District experienced a transition in district superintendents in July. The district is thankful for the leadership of Rev. Dr. Carl Arrington as he entered retirement and welcomed Rev. Lory Beth Huffman. The installation of Lory Beth as the new district superintendent was celebrated through a unique service of worship via Zoom which highlighted the variety and beauty of the Appalachian District.

Lory Beth brings energy and gifts to the district, and “close to normal” rhythms of gathering in person began happening after the severe threat of COVID-19. The Appalachian District gives God thanks for churches’ persistence in sharing the good news of Jesus, despite of the challenges they faced during the pandemic.

The Appalachian District clergy continue to stay connected for monthly Zoom calls to support, encourage, and pray for one another, congregations, communities, and the world. The district clergy participated in the *Faithful Lent: Connecting the Practices of Lent and Anti-Racism* by GCORR as well as the conference-supported study of *Tempered Resilience: How Leaders Are Formed in the Crucible of Change* by Tod Bolsinger. The Zoom platform also provided a way to celebrate and enjoy a clergy Christmas party, while sharing songs, snacks, hot chocolate, and a great deal of laughter during the Christmas Cookie House competition. Regardless of the occasion, the district thanks God for technology that has enabled leaders to live into United Methodist connexionalism, and journey together through such uncharted waters.

The district began an exploration of rural mountain churches with Rev. Allen Stanton, to help equip churches in the mountain rural culture and to be distinctively vital in their communities. Through the work of Missional Networks, webinars, studies, and exploring Fresh Expressions of Church in the Appalachian Mountain communities, the Appalachian District is moving towards the vision God has for each of these churches.

The district began the deep and important work of helping churches look at their mission, vision, and leadership structure. Churches are asking the hard questions and moving towards the Simplified Accountable System (SAS) model of leadership that allows the mission of the church to drive the structure, freeing up the congregation for mission. It is an ongoing work; however, it is an important step towards vitality.

The *Stories Along the Journey* podcast was launched that enables persons to tell rich stories of how lives have been transformed through connections with the Holy and one another. The stories are beautiful examples of how Appalachian District churches continue to be the body of Christ during the COVID-19 crisis and are making vital connections with the people in their communities.

Thanks be to God for the churches of the Appalachian District and all the ways they have continued to provide vital worship in varying circumstance during the last two years. They have had to be nimble, adaptive, and courageous in trying new ways of staying connected with one another and their communities.

All of this is a testament that the Holy Spirit is alive and at work in the Appalachian District and the promise of Christ is true: “I am with you always, even unto the end of the age.”

Lory Beth Huffman, District Superintendent  
Gloria Hughes, District Vitality Associate

### 2. BLUE RIDGE DISTRICT

From June 2021 to May 2022, the Blue Ridge District continued to focus on working with district leaders toward *Catalyzing a Lay Movement*. As an initial step in this process, Russ Darnall, District Lay Leader, along with a focus team of congregational leaders, designed and conducted a survey to gauge understanding of the lay leader role in congregations, as well as the strength of pastor/lay leader connections. The findings led the team to develop a plan for designing curriculum, training, and conversational guides for incoming lay leaders and their appointed pastor. These materials will be used for new appointments in the Blue Ridge District this upcoming year. Additionally, work is underway for revitalizing Lay Servant Ministries pathways.

In November, 2021 a team of district clergy and lay leaders developed a vision and strategy for reimagining pastoral leadership to support the equipping of laity in ministry. Focus surfaced surrounding: the development of cooperative ministries; support of clergy health; and removing the pressure of statistical storytelling. Work has been and is continuing to be done to realize the desired goals of these focus areas. In response to the need for alternative storytelling, a storytelling workshop was conducted to guide laity in developing and learning to tell faith stories. In response to the need for clergy health support, the Blue Ridge District began offering supplemented YMCA memberships for clergy, as well as supplemented counseling sessions through Spirit Song Counseling. Additionally, a Zoom session was held for SPRC members to discuss the signs and prevention of burnout, and a clergy meeting was held via Zoom to process grief, and dream together about continued ministry. In response to the desire for cooperative ministry, documentation began of the inception and journey of cooperative ministries already in place, and district support was given towards the development of further cooperative congregational partnerships.

To support both *Catalyzing a Lay Movement* and *Reimagining Pastoral Leadership*, 20 Blue Ridge District clergy were trained in the Technology of Participation (ToP) Foundational Methods. These methods help with the design and facilitation of congregational conversations, consensus building, and action planning in a way that helps clergy attend to the role of facilitator while engaging

and empowering laity to take the lead in ministry. To practice these methods, a community of practice was formed which meets monthly. To date, the methods have been used in congregations across the Blue Ridge District to, among other things, facilitate: listening sessions surrounding spiritual needs and expectations of faith communities in spiritual formation; conversational processing surrounding clergy re-appointment; conversation surrounding the use of church grounds for winter weather sheltering; conversations with SPRC members for clergy assessment; the development of consensus for next steps in ministry; and the creation of action plans for Lent and Easter activities among six partnering congregations.

As the hope and realization of in-person connection grows, the Blue Ridge District hopes to see continued efforts to support the equipping of the saints for ministry grow as well.

Mark Ralls, District Superintendent

### 3. CATAWBA VALLEY DISTRICT

The Catawba Valley District has been intentional about celebrating our connection this conference year. The clergy continued to meet in Zoom settings until a big in-person celebration at Tekoa Foothills on April 28. In an effort to say “Thank You,” to the clergy, the district provided an overnight event at Lake Junaluska, complete with spending some time with Bishop Carter. The African American clergy had a breakfast and meeting with Rev. Dr. Bill White to consider ways they can support anti-racism efforts as discipleship and sanctification (in keeping with one of Bishop Carter’s pathways for the conference). Local pastors were also celebrated with a breakfast and anointing for ministry. Retired clergy and spouses were also celebrated with a breakfast during the Advent season. The district sponsored a workshop in Hickory about the post-pandemic church and hosted a day apart for rural clergy at Tekoa Foothills with leadership by Dr. Jonathan LeMaster-Smith.

Special efforts have been made to include laity in the ministry of the district. It hosted Methodism classes and Zoom calls around Tod Bolsinger’s book *Tempered Resilience*. The district has celebrated the connection in many ways, but perhaps none more gratifying than over \$23,000 collected for supporting Ukrainian refugees.

The Catawba Valley District is blessed with 150 churches over five counties.

David Christy, District Superintendent

### 4. METRO DISTRICT

The work of navigating the COVID-19 pandemic has been a primary focus for Metro District laity and clergy over the last year. The district is thankful for the outstanding pastoral leadership of the clergy who responded courageously to the pandemic and have led their churches through making tough choices during challenging times. In-person worship attendance is slowly building, and online worship attendance seems here to stay. Many district churches have participated in the both/and initiative through the Office of Church Development to help churches acquire and operate the technology needed to offer excellent in-person and online worship.

The Metro District has continued to host a podcast, “Sights and Sounds,” with 10 episodes posted this year featuring leaders from across the country who addressed a broad range of topics. The district also offered two Advent studies and a Lenten study that reached well beyond the boundaries of the district serving well over 100 participants and featured studies from Rev. Dr. James Howell, Rev. Olu Brown, and Bishop Sharma Lewis.

Equity and justice continues to be a core value in the district and over 33 churches have participated in virtual justice and equity teaching/training/accountability sessions. This included Methodist, Episcopal AME, and non-denominational participants. The Metro District also partnered with local churches and community organizations to create Wi-Fi hotspots, summer program hubs, and feeding programs for children and those lacking resources in the communities.

The Metro District offered several Basic and Advanced Lay Servant courses, including 13 participants completing the course in Spanish. In an online and in-person event, the Lay Service Awards recognized 78 church leaders for outstanding service. In addition to these wonderful lay leaders, the district received more candidates for ministry this year than any year in recent memory. God is still calling people into service and people are still responding. It is great to see God at work in and through the people of the Metro District.

Dan Pezet, District Superintendent

### 5. NORTHERN PIEDMONT DISTRICT

Like all faithful Western North Carolina United Methodists, the Northern Piedmont District’s mission is to “Follow Jesus, Make Disciples, Transform the World.” This district endeavors to fulfill the mission by emphasizing spiritual maturity and life in the Beloved Community. It supports long-term relationships within its 15 missional networks, confident that neighborhood relationships drive authentic and sustainable discipleship. Strong ministry coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic has been possible in part due to the established relationships between churches, which helped each another with worship, technology, food-related ministries, and critical partnerships with children and schools during their time of need. The district has added innovative platforms for its diverse communities to share their specific concerns, and teams under the leadership of Rev. Maria King have continued their deep work on trauma-informed ministry. In 2022, the district began a fifth year of intentional work to understand trauma through the lens of discipleship. Trauma-Informed Ministry was included in the expansion of the District’s Lay Servant Training curriculum in 2022 and experienced an overwhelming response of affirmation.

Cohorts of churches of similar sizes regularly discuss their specific needs as the church moves forward from pandemic to endemic. The district continues to award proceeds from a \$30,000 technology grant to resource small and medium-sized churches in worship technology and best practices for live-streaming worship. Trainers and consultants are helping churches to take their technology

to the next level to meet the needs of the future. The district continues to give thanks to The United Methodist Foundation for its partnership in this important work. The connection is such a blessing for local churches.

Northern Piedmont continues to lead both North Carolina conferences in cross-cultural appointments. It supports cross-cultural appointments with truth and reconciliation dialogues and the care of souls in transition. Its partnerships with local and regional community leaders and resources allow the district to live into God's vision for all. The relationship with Greensboro's Beloved Community Center continues through virtual gatherings and plans to be back in person in the coming season.

The Northern Piedmont School of Spiritual Direction supports the district's goal of spiritual maturity and includes laity and clergy from all over the conference. Trained directors are mobilized for both personal spiritual direction and group direction for churches in discernment. The district continues to resource congregations, missional networks, and neighborhoods with team development, executive coaching, and teaching cultural intelligence.

District grants support discipleship initiatives in all the counties in which the district does ministry. Recent Congregational Vitality grants, totaling \$48,504, include discipleship development for children, Beloved Community groups, Both/And Discipleship formation, a Community Walking Path, and support for churches doing after-school community outreach for children. Recent Missional Engagement grants, totaling \$123,966, have been awarded for feeding programs in two counties, refugee resettlement, the development of a church-sponsored community center, a campus ministry spring break experience exploring urban poverty, outreach to college students facing hunger, reading programs, English as a Second Language programs, school and community partnerships, and a creative arts partnership between two congregations and a community center. Benevolence grants continue to support UMAR, Carolina Cross Connection, campus ministries across the district, and the Chrysalis Counseling Center.

The Northern Piedmont District is beginning the 2022-2023 conference year with 133 churches in 95 charges, with a total of 118 active clergy and 37,447 laity. The district is proud to have 101 retired clergy consider Northern Piedmont their home district. At the time of this report, the Northern Piedmont District has 15 certified candidates for ministry, 28 local pastors, and eight clergy from other conferences or denominations appointed in the district. One certified lay minister labors in this district, and she will soon begin her second year of appointment.

Bev Copley, District Superintendent

Maria King, District Vitality Associate

Landa Wallace and Lynne Gilbert, District Administrators

## 6. SMOKY MOUNTAIN DISTRICT

The Smoky Mountain District (SMD) has again demonstrated remarkable resilience as it moved into the second year of the pandemic. Church leadership navigated challenging decisions with grace and tenacity, recognizing that God's call to worship, connection, and mission remains even in increasing tension and divisiveness. Through initiatives such as ImagineHub and Laity Engagement Transformation, new opportunities have brought up and been implemented across the district. The churches across the Smoky Mountain District continue to be salt and light in their local communities, collaborating with missional network churches and nonprofit organizations in health, justice, disaster relief, and feeding and housing ministries. Working with communities on the margins, including those under-resourced, has further magnified the witness of UMC churches in the district. Ministry in the face of hardship has strengthened the SMD churches' resolve to be united in their worship and service of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.

The stories people circulate are often laden with anxiety or conflict, stirring up directionless momentum that drains the church of energy for the mission of Christ. The Smoky Mountain District's "Vitality Through Storytelling" is a new project that seeks to flip the script of a narrative of decline and divisiveness while amplifying the faithful stories that affirm an identity rooted in Christ Jesus and witness to the abundance of God. The Vitality Through Storytelling project will work to empower churches to faithfully tell the stories that matter and give hope and promise while training up faithful storytellers. The Smoky Mountain District hopes that over the next year, as it captures these stories through film, it can celebrate the faithfulness and presence of God through a Faith Communities Film Festival beginning in the summer of 2023.

The church-school partnerships continue to grow across the district as they see an expansion of the Early Childhood Literacy Initiative. New virtual cohorts have increased awareness of empowerment models of ministry and contemplative prayer practices. The Duke Endowment Summer Literacy Program now has three sites within the SMD. In addition, churches have supported schools through after-school programs, book distributions, and supporting literacy efforts in partnership with Region A Partnership for Children.

When Haywood County suffered devastating losses from Tropical Storm Fred flooding, the UMC presence was tremendous in coordinating relief efforts immediately. Area clergy demonstrated the strength of connection and community partnerships as they coordinated efforts that revealed the power of collaboration. Through a rural context and partnerships of churches of all sizes and denominations, the SMD churches exhibited sustainable long-term relief and community support. This summer, a pilot mission journey was launched that focused on the intersection of faith, ecology, economy, and culture while equipping teams to be agents of community leadership from a faith perspective within their context. With the generous support from the Western North Carolina Conference churches, the SMD hired five contract workers who serve communities and survivors and coordinate volunteers for flood relief efforts.

The SMD also worked hard to lift diverse voices as they have endeavored to stay innovative and remain committed to traditional, relevant methods. The SMD's communication team has leveraged common technologies and increased its presence and interactions on social platforms. They continue to offer consultation and support to local churches on matters related to technology such as website building, Zoom, social media, etc. Many of the district leaders are now proficient in new skills. By maintaining established methods of communicating and growing social media presence, they have broadened the collective reach and capacity to share the good news and lift the stories of the churches and individuals in the district.

Finally, the SMD vitality team has developed the district's vitality values and action plans based on Bishop Carter's vision sharing for the conference. The SMD will focus on "Strengthening Local Churches," "Rediscovering Evangelism," and "Unity in Diversity." The district will support local churches to renew United Methodist identities as the connecting, discipling, and missioning church, initiate "Evangelism School and Evangelism Pilgrimage" for clergy and lay leaders, and promote unity in diversity by building a culture of inclusiveness and accountability and strengthening lay leadership.

Jae Lee, District Superintendent  
Nicole Jones, District Vitality Associate  
D'Andre Ash, District Communication Coordinator

## 7. UWHARRIE DISTRICT

The mission of the Uwharrie District is to equip clergy and laity to create and lead vital congregations, of all sizes and in every location, who follow Jesus, make disciples, and transform the world. For conference year 2021-2022, the theme of Plow, Enrich, Plant, and Wonder guided district work. The theme is based on Jesus' images of farming to illustrate kingdom truths, especially the parable of the Sower and the Mustard Seed. The act of plowing and turning the soil over is about listening to God's voice and to the needs of communities. The act of fertilizing the soil is about nourishing spiritual leaders. The act of planting is about discerning the kinds of seeds that are being planted. The act of waiting for the seed to sprout cultivates patience and wonder acknowledging that the work of ministry belongs to God. The district reading plan and conversation opportunities undergirded these themes and this work.

Each of the 10 missional networks welcomed new clergy in August and September and participated in a conversation around Kay Kotan's book, *Being the Church in a Post-Pandemic World*. The district vitality associate, Rev. Katie Lineberger, facilitated this conversation. Rev. Lineberger has also created a study guide for congregations about discerning vision and mission. She also leads conversations with churches across the district about moving from the Administrative Board/Council model of church governance to a single board structure or a simplified accountable structure.

The district staff have led several conversations on some of John Wesley's sermons and have promoted the #BeUMC resources for the continuing United Methodist Church. Rev. Kris Mares, the district missional engagement associate, spearheads the communication efforts and works with missional networks while engaging the surrounding communities. This fall and winter, churches and clergy were invited to read together Peter Scazzero's book, *Emotionally Healthy Discipleship*, and Isabel Wilkerson's book, *Caste*, as ways to grow in the ministry of intentional discipleship which includes the work of anti-racism. The spring book selection is *Conversations Worth Having* by Jackie Stavros and Cherie Torres. Reflections on Scripture, book discussions, and conversations have become seeds for growth and vitality.

The Uwharrie District Ministry Council, chaired by the district Lay Leader, Kathy Odell, oversees the work of its Fresh Expressions team, Lay Servant Training, and the its Recovery Ministries team. The Fresh Expressions team produces a podcast, *Afresh: New Ways of Being Church*. A Fresh Expressions Discovery Day will be held this spring. Laina Davis-Harvey, a layperson in the Anson Union Missional Network leads the Recovery Ministries team and is eager to provide support and resources for congregations engaged in addiction and recovery ministries.

Currently, there are 139 churches across eight counties. These churches are about kingdom work as they feed the hungry, support schools, and care for those in need. Specifically, thanks is given for the establishment of a hot meal program in the North Stanly area, an effective recovery ministry at Grace Place in Albemarle, a community-wide effort to establish a Women and Children's Shelter in Asheboro, and an ongoing Mobile Food Pantry in Anson County. Churches in every network and county support teachers, students, and schools. Many churches provide free Wi-Fi services for their surrounding areas. Four churches are participating in the Transformation Journey church revitalization effort.

The Uwharrie District Clergy Care team offers periodic clergy events for fellowship and learning. In November, Dr. Arnetta Beverly presented an inspiring message in thinking about faith as an antidote for fear. Bishop Ken Carter was with the clergy in January talking about leadership, Sabbath, and rest in a context of exhaustion. The spring clergy meeting will be addressing the context of polarization. There is also a clergy hiking group that meets monthly. Kim Hopkins, the district administrator, is invaluable in her assistance to clergy and laity. She fields questions of all sorts and supports the work of the District Committee on Ministry.

The district Grants and Resources team distributed over \$68,000 in ministry grants to networks and congregations including grants for multi-cultural camping experiences and local mission engagement projects. This is possible because of the congregations in the Uwharrie District who are generous and faithful in district apportionment giving.

Every day significant and amazing ministry is accomplished through the committed discipleship of individuals and congregations throughout the Uwharrie District. Thanks be to God!

Laura Auten, District Superintendent

## 8. YADKIN VALLEY DISTRICT

The Yadkin Valley District attempted to live out its mission of equipping pastors and lay leaders so that they could be faithful in making disciples of Jesus for the transformation of their communities and the world. The district's efforts have been in the areas of rebuilding during the COVID-19 pandemic and providing resources so that growth could occur in sanctification regarding the eliminating of racism.

The missional networks were the vehicles in which rebuilding during the pandemic occurred. The staff of the Yadkin Valley District met in the missional networks using Zoom to accomplish the work. Kay Kotan's book, *Being The Church in a Post-Pandemic World*

was the guide. The pastors were introduced to the book in the email notices that invited them to the Zoom gathering and preparing them for beginning their work for Charge Conference 2021. The book was discussed in the Zoom gatherings. The pastors also received information regarding Missioninsite and the Simplified Accountable Structure. The pastors were asked to read the book with their lay leadership team and to provide two traits they would attempt to integrate into their congregation beginning January 2022. They were also told that their 2022 Charge Conference report will include progress and the adoption of two additional traits.

The Missionsite information was presented so that churches could remember who their neighbors were, and they could rebuild outreach ministries when the pandemic allowed. These ministries will bless their community and increase their vitality.

The Simplified Accountable Structure was offered so that churches whose lay leaders had not returned could explore ways to simplify their governance and redirect people resources to the ministries of the church. Several churches have moved to this way of governance.

The district used several means to equip pastors and congregations so they may grow in their work to eliminate racism. During the Missional Network Charge Conference, a lay person from each church answered the question of what the congregation was going to do as a means to equip its members so that they could work to eliminate racism as a part of their discipleship.

The district provided options to equip them for the task. First, each Wednesday of the month the Justice and Reconciliation team held a Zoom meeting that was a “Brave Space.” They held discussions on how they may work to eliminate racism. These discussions were informed by reading and discussing books. They read and discussed the following books: *The Cross and the Lynching Tree*, *Methodism’s Racial Dilemma*, *Who Lynched Willie Earle*, and *The Sum of Us*. The district partnered with Arbor Acres in reading, discussing, and understanding *Who Lynched Willie Earle*. The author, Bishop Will Willmon, came to Arbor Acres for a program on the book.

The final offering was the 10-week program that created the partnership with Jim Melson, from the Cornelius Corps, Inc, The Neighborhood Seminary, and the Yadkin Valley District. It was a Zoom study entitled *Remembering the Real Martin Luther King, Jr.* Persons from the Virginia and Western North Carolina annual conferences participated in this offering.

The Yadkin Valley District used these efforts to increase the number of congregations living out the mission of creating more vital churches that were making disciples of Jesus for the transformation of the world.

Samuel H. Moore Jr., District Superintendent

## D. AFFILIATED MINISTRIES

### 1. HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

#### a. Aldersgate Life Plan Community

Aldersgate is now in its 74th year of serving elders. It is located in the most diverse segment of Charlotte and continues to spearhead diversity, inclusion and equity for residents, team members, board members, and community partners. The first three words of the Aldersgate mission statement, “We honor elders,” establishes their inclusive nature of serving all elders. Comprised of 231 acres in east Charlotte, Aldersgate is one of the largest employers in the area, representing over 30 different nationalities in its team members. Aldersgate continues to hold SAGE certification at a platinum level as part of the intentional journey to become the inclusive flagship of the life plan community sector. Aldersgate’s core values of living in faith, practicing stewardship, serving with compassion, striving for excellence, respecting independence, embracing diversity and inclusion, and building meaningful connections are reflected and modeled, starting with the board of directors and executive team. Aldersgate partners with 149 local, diverse organizations and minority-owned businesses as a continued part of diversity, inclusion, and engagement. As 2021 continued with pandemic ridden precautions, Aldersgate continued with utilizing its space and providing residents opportunities to interact. Aldersgate is fortunate to have the availability of multiple and ample outdoor spaces to circumvent the isolation brought on by the lack of social interactions. Aldersgate has championed social interaction and wellbeing in all areas of wellness, including mental, physical, emotional and cognitive wellbeing. Modifications to previous ‘normal’ activities remained critical and immediate, which led to an outpouring of creativity. Keeping true to the commitment to elders, as well as to community, Aldersgate reached out to local musicians and created Concerts by the Lake. Musicians and bands performed from the lake gazebo with speakers angled toward the surrounding lake, allowing residents to safely distance in an outdoor space. This permitted a semblance of interaction and community, and was especially motivating with several performances by the local opera ensemble. Concerts were made accessible to all residents, whether independent living or not. Concerts were also brought to the skilled nursing residents residing at Asbury Health and Rehabilitation Center, who may have difficulty with ambulation. Asbury residents gathered at the screened porches abutting the courtyards while musicians performed in the center of each courtyard. While these concerts were brought about in response to COVID19, they and many other modifications will remain in place past the pandemic, as they are enjoyed and appreciated by residents and team members alike.

Aldersgate continued the newly founded tradition of the Festival of Lights, originally created in 2020 in response to Covid19 quarantines. Sponsors and vendors of Aldersgate supplemented the typical decorating budget and allowed for a lightshow that brought over 1,900 vehicles on campus over a two-week timeframe, only hindered by adverse weather. This event yielded over 2,500 pounds of donated non-perishable food items to support Loaves and Fishes/Friendship Trays. Aldersgate once again won The Charlotte Observer’s Best Of contest in Independent Living, as well as Skilled Nursing — both for the second year in a row. Aldersgate at Home has continued to serve clients who live both on- and off-campus in Mecklenburg County, expanding to approximately 290

additional lives touched. Aldersgate at Home also won The Charlotte Observer's Best Of for Home Services. Aldersgate broke previous records in philanthropy and giving across all fund options, most especially the Angel Tree Fund. The Angel Tree fund is specifically formatted to assist in supplementing existing residents who have outlived their financial means through no fault of their own.

Brooks Shelley, Chief Branding and Community Engagement Officer, Aldersgate Life Plan Services

**Proposal: Boards of Directors of  
Aldersgate Life Plan Services, Inc.,  
Aldersgate United Methodist Retirement Community, Inc.,  
and Aldersgate At Home, Inc.**

**(Petition 7)** *Approved June 17, 2022*

The board of directors of Aldersgate United Methodist Retirement Community, Inc., proposes that the following persons be confirmed as members of that board. Note the addition of the Board of Directors for Aldersgate Life Plan Services, Inc. is due to the addition of the parent company as its own entity.

*Class of 2022 (\*denotes resident member):*

**(7a) Board of Directors of Aldersgate Life Plan Services, Inc.**

Mary E. Wilson, Thomas R. Lawing Jr., William K. Springs, Patricia Garrett, Stanley Watkins, Robert Dee Vaughn Jr., Fred Longiette, Devire Robinson, Billy Maddalon, Otto Harris, Kevin McKane, Irene Vogelsong, Brad Crossley, Amanda Grimes, Jean Gossett.

**(7b) Board of Directors of Aldersgate United Methodist Retirement Community, Inc.**

Mary E. Wilson, Thomas R. Lawing Jr., Patricia Garrett, Stanley Watkins, Robert Dee Vaughn Jr., Fred Longiette, Otto Harris, Billy Maddalon, Kevin McKane, Irene Vogelsong, Brad Crossley, Eugene Robbins\*, Amanda Grimes, Jean Gossett, Bill Jones.

**(7c) Board of Directors of Aldersgate at Home, Inc.**

Mary E. Wilson, Thomas R. Lawing Jr., Patricia Garrett, Stanley Watkins, Robert Dee Vaughn Jr., Fred Longiette, Billy Maddalon, Kevin McKane, Irene Vogelsong, Brad Crossley, Amanda Grimes, Jean Gossett, George Moffatt\*, Eugene Robbins\*, Bill Jones.

**b. Arbor Acres United Methodist Retirement Community, Inc.**

Through excellence, innovation, caring, and beauty, Arbor Acres cultivates community, culture, and well-being for senior adults.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, its 463 residents and 405 staff members, Arbor Acres is pleased to continue its partnership with the Western North Carolina Conference in its common call to ministry.

In spite of the numerous challenges faced during 2021, Arbor Acres continues to thrive. The community has continued to look confidently to the future, seeing the pandemic and all its associated challenges as an opportunity to self-reflect and position itself for the future. This is evidenced by the board's full support of Arbor Acres' vision for revitalizing the original campus through its Core Redevelopment Plan. The first step in that plan was the development of a building with 54 new apartments, known as Aldersgate Square. Construction commenced in August 2021, with an expected occupancy date of late March 2023. Currently 90 percent of the apartments have been reserved. Upon completion of Aldersgate Square, Arbor Acres will have welcomed nearly 75 new residents to the community. Efforts are now underway to update the community's long-range master plan for replacement of aging infrastructure.

The board of directors has also been engaged in its own self-reflection, evaluating how it can best lead Arbor Acres into the future. As a result of numerous educational sessions and discussions, the board approved changes to its bylaws that it believes will enable it to focus more intently on the numerous complex challenges and demographic changes in senior living. The board has eliminated a number of operationally-focused committees and moved to a taskforce-based approach to leading. The first three taskforces will focus on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; Charitable Giving; and New Development.

Arbor Acres' Home Care Service has continued to grow to meet the growing demand for in-home services. At the end of 2021, 98 residents were served by Arbor Acres through this service. Additionally, Arbor Acres Advantage program currently has 46 participants who are full-fledged residents, but maintain their homes in the community. Unlike many other Life Plan Communities, Arbor Acres continues to see high demand for its services, including independent living homes, apartments, assisted living, skilled nursing, and memory support.

The Resident Assistance Fund continues to be one of the most tangible expression of Arbor Acres mission. Through this fund, Arbor Acres raised \$406,577 to meet the needs of residents who, through no fault of their own, run out of resources. Additionally, this fund enables applicants who would not otherwise qualify financially to move into Arbor Acres to now call this community their home. In support of this important work, Arbor Acres initiated its Heritage Society to recognize donors who commit through donations or planned giving a minimum of \$500,000 toward Arbor Acres' Resident Assistance Endowment. Eighteen donors joined this society in 2021.

Arbor Acres continues to exercise strong financial discipline in the stewarding of the resources with which it has been entrusted. Fitch ratings reaffirmed its BBB+ bond rating, its financial reserves have continued to grow, and in spite of increased wage pressures and inflations, it continues to meet its immediate and long-term financial goals.

Arbor Acres is grateful for the opportunity to serve its community in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Andrew W. Applegate, President/CEO  
Pam Ball, Chairperson, Board of Directors

**Proposal: Board of Directors of Arbor Acres****(Petition 8)** *Approved June 17, 2022*

Class of 2022

LaTanya Afolayan, Sammy Black, Cynthia S. Graham, Christin M.D. Dunn, Donald F. Eppert, Arthur L. Bloom, John Earle, David C. Hinton, Vincent W. Howell, J. Hill Stockton, Wendy Walker-Fox, Courtney H. Douglas, Drewry H. Nostitz, John W. Willingham, Susan C. Elster, John E. Lauer, Carroll McCullough, Christopher Pearce

*Ex Officio:* Ken Carter, Samuel Moore, Judy Reeder, Andrew Applegate

**c. Chrysalis Counseling and Consultation Center**

Chrysalis is **the** Methodist counseling and consultation resource serving all the Districts of the Eastern part of our conference. We are a non-profit, 501(c)(3), fee-based center providing mental health services for individuals, couples, families, and children.

We believe that healing and wholeness is a fundamental part of serving God both as pastoral professionals and caregivers. We provide quality confidential counseling for ministers and their families at an affordable cost. We also serve clergy as a referral source for congregants experiencing a range of emotional problems including anxiety disorders, addiction, depression, marital conflict, relationship issues, and issues related to healing and growth.

In 2021, the Center resumed in person sessions while keeping our online and telehealth abilities. We also resumed our Lunch and Learn workshop series for local ministers in November 2021. Our satellite at Covenant UMC in High Point remains in place under Chrysalis counselor, Cathy Cole, LCMHC.

Chrysalis received a second Payment Protection Program (PPP) loan in January 2021. We also were paneled with new insurance companies to the region and look to add other insurance companies to increase our service to a larger population.

Chrysalis continues to serve as an invaluable resource for those seeking affordable, professional counseling and consultation services. In 2021 Chrysalis reduced service fees by \$27,944 for our clients. We also maintain the **Chrysalis Samaritan Fund** for those with limited income and are without mental health insurance coverage. We invite local churches to help financially support the Samaritan Fund ministry. Please be in prayer that you may be able to contribute to the future growth of Chrysalis Counseling and Consultation Center.

Our appreciation goes out to our Board members listed below. We are poised to increase Board representation in 2022.

Since 1980, Chrysalis Counseling & Consultation Center has provided services to individuals and families in our faith communities. We thank you for your trust in our efforts over the years to make a difference in the lives of people. We appreciate all financial support as we move forward to meet the growing demands of the future!

Please visit our website at [chrysaliscenters.org](http://chrysaliscenters.org) to learn more about the Chrysalis ministry.

Gary L. Kling, Executive Director

**Proposal: Board of Directors of Chrysalis Counseling and Consultation Center****(Petition 9)** *Approved June 17, 2022*

Amanda Kirby (Vice President)  
Jackie Selman

Mary Lu Harmon (Secretary)  
Donna Miller  
TBA (President and Treasurer)

Clarinda Crawford  
Lynda Hodges

**Ex Officio**

Gary L. Kling (Executive Director)

Cathy G. Cole (Staff Counselor)

Leigh Loftin (Office Manager)

**d. Crossnore Communities for Children**

Crossnore Communities for Children, formerly known as Crossnore School & Children's Home, has three locations in Winston-Salem, Crossnore, and Hendersonville, NC. The mission of Crossnore Communities for Children is to grow healthy futures for children and families by providing a Christian sanctuary of hope and healing.

One of the goals of Crossnore's Board of Trustees-led Strategic Plan is to grow the Crossnore brand as the regional leader in high quality, holistic child welfare services. To that end, the board contracted a Winston-Salem marketing consultant to review and update the organization's messaging and branding. The process included interviews with Crossnore stakeholders, the creation of a new message, and an update to the visual identity with a new logo to position it as the way home for the children and families served.

Dedicated to the complex needs of children facing abuse, neglect, or other serious risk, Crossnore is a recognized leader in understanding how trauma at home affects the whole child—emotionally, physically, mentally, and spiritually—and then giving each child whatever support and therapies are necessary to help reclaim, rebuild, or re-imagine the essential belief in a safe and loving home. With a 100-year history of private support and public advocacy, Crossnore has unparalleled resources to help children realize their true selves while they heal, gain perspective, and learn to thrive as resilient and confident individuals. Whether at home with a foster family, or at one of the residential campuses, Crossnore children are encouraged to believe in their own agency and self-worth. Honoring its faith-based heritage, Crossnore values all children equally and believes every child deserves respect, acceptance, happiness, and the opportunity to know and trust a loving place called home.

Crossnore brings clinical expertise and compassionate care to children and families through four interconnected resource communities, each with a specialized focus. Functioning as a responsive, trauma-sensitive continuum of care, these services offer help based on individual circumstances when and how it's needed most.



Therapy Services provides personalized therapy to children and families based on complete assessments to determine individual needs and appropriate plans of care. Crossnore's therapists provide outpatient and school-based therapy to more than 300 children in Winston-Salem, Crossnore, and Hendersonville, including the children living in campus cottages on the Crossnore and Winston-Salem campuses.

Homebuilders Family Preservation provides in-home crisis intervention, counseling, and life skills for families whose children are at imminent risk of being removed from the home. Crossnore staff work with these families to help them learn new behaviors and make better choices for their families.

Foster Care provides a safe and stable home to children who are in the custody of the Department of Social Services by recruiting and training prospective foster parents who are then licensed by the state of North Carolina. Ongoing supervision and support is provided after placement. Families who want to adopt are first licensed as foster families and then work with the adoption team to create a forever family for children who are eligible.

Residential foster care provides on-campus cottage homes for children in foster care. Children are cared for by professional cottage parents who model healthy relationship-building and support children as they define and reach their own goals.

Bridging Families helps birth parents and their children who are in foster care nurture and grow family relationships while the children are in Crossnore's care, providing coaching and educational services to facilitate the gradual return of the children to their homes.

Youth Independent Living supports young adults who are currently in or have aged out of the foster care system by offering age-appropriate assistance to build independent and self-sufficiency as they move into adulthood.

Crossnore's Fostering Communities initiative continues to recruit churches and other community groups to serve foster children and families in their own communities. Crossnore partners with groups to create a fostering community around foster families and to help support them through training and meeting the needs of the foster parents and the children they serve.

Crossnore utilizes The Sanctuary Model®, a trauma-informed model of care, and was re-certified in the model in late spring of 2021. Crossnore is one of only six organizations nationwide that have been certified more than once by The Sanctuary Institute. Utilizing this model, children experiencing trauma have interconnected communities of support that can meet them compassionately and without judgment wherever they are in their journey. It is believed that everyone has an important role to play in fostering resilience in children, and only through collective engagement can trauma be addressed fully and with successful, lasting outcomes.

Crossnore's Center for Trauma Resilient Communities, founded in 2018, works across the nation helping organizations embed and embody the science of trauma resilience. The center uses the current science of trauma resilience and organizational development to move people from information to action.

Brett A. Loftis, J.D., Chief Executive Officer of Crossnore Communities for Children, directs an executive team of four: Angela Woods, Chief Operating Officer, Sarah Norris, Chief Program Officer, and Caroline Hart, Deputy Director and Chief External Relations Officer. Each officer leads a team of talented directors and staff who are committed to the mission of Crossnore Communities for Children. The Board of Trustees is led by Bick Cardwell, Jr., Chairperson; B. Kelly Graves, Vice-Chairperson; Traci D. Royster, Secretary; and Charles O. Izard, Treasurer.

For nearly 113 years, Crossnore Communities for Children has worked to transform the lives of thousands of children in need of hope and healing. With three locations, professional and dedicated staff, and the support of many donors and volunteers, Crossnore Communities for children is the premier provider of children's services in Western North Carolina.

Holly Solomon, Senior Director of Communications  
336.721.7600 • [hsolomon@crossnore.org](mailto:hsolomon@crossnore.org) • [www.crossnore.org](http://www.crossnore.org)

### **e. Givens Communities**

The years 2021 and 2022 have been times of transition for Givens Communities. There have been transitions in and out of COVID-19 protocols, shutdowns, and infection control methods. It has been and remains their top priority to keep residents and team members as safe as possible throughout the pandemic. Givens has seen waves of COVID infection due to several variants, but the residents and team members in the four communities continue to work together, stay positive and remain supportive to overcome this changing new world. Although they have experienced several outbreaks in 2021 and 2022, the infections were much less harmful, and the recovery rates have greatly improved due to vaccinations and continued control procedures.

Givens has also experienced a transition in leadership with the retirement of Ken Partin in September of 2021. He served as CEO for Givens Communities and Givens Estates for 30 years, with 40 total career years at Givens. Residents of all the campuses celebrated those 40 years with Ken Partin at special events on each campus and wished him a fruitful and enjoyable retirement. With the retirement of Ken Partin, in August 2021 Kevin Schwab was hired as the new President and CEO of Givens Communities. Kevin has more than 27 years of finance, accounting, investment, and operations experience in various industries. Before joining Givens Communities, Kevin was the CEO of St. Camillus (Milwaukee, WI) since 2016 and had worked at St. Camillus for over 20 years in multiple capacities, including CFO and COO. He is a Certified Public Accountant and a licensed Nursing Home Administrator in the State of Wisconsin. Kevin earned a bachelor's degree in accounting from Marquette University and a master's in business administration from the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee.

Givens continues to place an emphasis on diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace and in their residential living communities. In 2021 and 2022 they placed a specific focus on inclusion, and for 2022 they have a specific emphasis on gender in the workplace.

Givens Estates completed the renovation of Oxford Commons in 2021, which expanded the dining options and wellness areas of the main building on the campus. Estates also completed construction of Friendship Park phase one in late 2021 and phase two in early 2022. Friendship Park includes 80 one- and two-bedroom apartments and is a more moderately-priced offering on the campus. Full occupancy of Friendship Park should be accomplished by April 2022. In 2022, they are focused on revising the campus master plan, including health service offerings on campus, specifically the health care center and assisted living.

Givens Highland Farms has begun the planning and work for phase two of the campus master plan, which will include demolition of part of Brookside and the construction of new Brookside Commons, which will be the home of new kitchen, dining, and commons areas. The new Brookside Apartments will include 30 one- and two-bedroom apartments. Concurrently, the new Vista Ridge Apartments will be constructed to include 36 one- and two-bedroom apartments and will be connected to the new common areas, dining, and activity areas. Work began on this construction in March 2022 and will complement the newer Meadowmont and Cottage Homes, further enhancing this beautiful community.

Givens Great Laurels continues to emphasize the importance of social connections and being a community. The onsite Manna Food pantry and the access to campus nursing continues to benefit residents. This wonderful community is nearly 100% occupied with a healthy waiting list, which is a testimony to the need and demand for quality affordable housing in Western North Carolina and in Haywood County.

Givens Gerber Park is also fully occupied with a healthy waiting list, which is further evidence of the need and demand for quality affordable housing in Western North Carolina. The focus is on making this a vibrant and lively community and providing a quality of life with support services to enable residents to gracefully age in their homes. Socialization is the cornerstone of resident life with a particular emphasis on nutritious meals, addressing food insecurity, navigating a complex and complicated health system, and accessing community-based services. Residents are collaborating with staff and taking responsibility for making Gerber their home. Two meals are available each weekday in the Go To Café. The medical clinic is transforming to offer further partnerships that provide residents onsite access to primary care and other support services.

Givens LifeMinistries is a Givens faith and community-based outreach program. Givens is committed to a wellness philosophy of whole-person health, not only for their residents, but for many living beyond their campuses. Givens LifeMinistries is actively working to address health disparities of the underserved, diverse, and vulnerable populations in Western North Carolina. LifeMinistries provides access to resources and health education that empower individuals to improve their wellness and quality of life. It enables congregations to share their gifts and talents in addressing the health and other needs of these individuals through Welcome Tables (meal sites), BEAR Closets (baby equipment and resources), medical equipment loan closets, wellness education, and a community nurse program that addresses the needs of lower-income seniors.

Givens Communities continues to be an exciting organization with an abundance of opportunities for serving seniors in Western North Carolina. Givens is grateful for the opportunity to serve those in this region along with the Western North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church. Givens remains enthusiastic about their Life Plan Communities (Givens Estates and Givens Highland Farms), their affordable housing communities (Givens Gerber Park and Givens Great Laurels), their emphasis on keeping residents independent for as long as possible, and their goal of being a responsible employer where team members are welcomed, respected, and appreciated.

Kevin Schwab, Chief Executive Officer

**Proposal: Board of Directors of Givens Communities**

**(Petition 10)** Approved June 17, 2022

It is proposed that the following be elected as members of the Board of Directors of Givens Communities:

**Class of 2023**

Kathryn M. Atkinson  
Donna A. Broadwell  
Alisa J. Brown  
Kathryn R. Durity  
Murphy H. Fletcher  
F. Patrick McGuire  
Miles K. Hoffman  
Rebekah M. Lowe

**Class of 2024**

Margaret A. Kuhn  
Suzanna E. Landis  
Connie B. Martin  
Joseph P. McGuire  
Robby Russell  
Kenneth W. Swayze Jr.  
G. Edward Towson II  
Marjorie J. Tucker

**Class of 2025**

Adam K. Ennis  
Charles L. Frederick  
Larry B. Harris  
Horace S. Jennings  
William W. Mance Jr.  
Robert M. McKown  
Judy P. Phillips  
Christopher B. Taylor

**Ex Officio**

Russell S. Moxley Jr.  
Robert E. Shepherd (Honorary Life)  
Hal F. Starnes (Honorary Life)

Charlie Pine  
Sarah A. Smith  
Alfred J. Whitesides Jr. (Honorary Life)

**Clergy**

Robert M. Blackburn Jr.  
R. Keith Turman

Karen L. Easter Bayne  
W. Mark Ralls, Blue Ridge District Superintendent

### f. Sanctuary Counseling Group

Sanctuary Counseling Group (SCG) is an agency that provides mental health counseling to 13 unique communities in the greater Charlotte and Western Piedmont areas of North Carolina. For over 55 years, SCG therapists have been offering counseling, psychotherapy, pastoral counseling and consultation to individuals, clergy, congregations, and UMC districts in the Western and Central Piedmont areas. SCG works with a variety of issues, including depression, anxiety, stress, trauma, career counseling, abuse recovery, grief/loss, and addiction to name a few. In addition, SCG offers educational programs for congregations and church groups. SCG's Mission Statement is, "to walk with our clients as they journey towards the healing of their minds, hearts, and souls. We believe that health and healing are open to all."

#### SCG's 2021 statistics:

- SCG served 15 communities: Gastonia, Belmont, Harrisburg, Monroe, Pineville, South Charlotte, Center City, University City, Concord, Huntersville, Davidson, Hickory, Salisbury, Winston-Salem, and High Point.
- 7,921 hours of counseling services were provided for over 496 clients.
- 2,301 hours of service provided on a sliding scale and through the Samaritan Scholarship Fund.
- 100 percent of donations went to the Samaritan Scholarship Fund.
- Samaritan Scholarship recipients receive a discounted service rate of \$90 per session; each scholarship recipient receives \$900 per year for services.
- 33 percent of hours provided are at reduced rates.
- SCG put approximately \$345,150 back into the communities.

All SCG therapists are licensed to conduct counseling in the state of North Carolina based on their professional affiliations, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists, Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselors, and Licensed Clinical Social Workers. SCG's goal is to meet people where they are on their walk without judgment or bias. Throughout life there are times that everyone needs some assistance, and SCG values the opportunity whenever someone calls for help in their despair and darkness. As a faith-based organization, SCG offers God's healing grace and hope to all regardless of their beliefs or position in life. SCG serves as an important referral source for pastors, who often do not have the time or the specialized training to work with persons in local congregations who are hurting.

Clinicians at SCG specialize in play therapy, music therapy, abuse and trauma recovery, perinatal and child loss trauma, marital therapy, adolescents and young adults, men's issues, women's issues, coaching, and addiction. While some have specialties, SCG clinicians, for the most part, are generalists who can engage most clients. SCG clinicians are understanding of the issues with which clergy struggle. SCG clinicians are routinely updated on the state of the church and the unique challenges United Methodist pastors face. The clinicians use various theoretical orientations, methodologies, tools, and techniques so that clients can reach the goals they set for themselves. This includes pastoral counseling when directed by the client.

In 2021, SCG donated approximately \$345,150 back, to the various communities where they hold satellite locations, in dollars of service provided at either a reduced or no-cost basis. This was made possible by generous donations from church partners and donors who believe in SCG's mission. In addition to offering Samaritan Scholarships, SCG also accepts insurance from four different insurance carriers, including the conference plan that covers UMC pastors and their families.

The SCG website and social media sites are updated regularly with new information that pertains to the field of mental health. SCG offers a variety of original articles, blog posts, podcasts, and videos that have been created to help individuals, families, and churches with their mental health needs, including information around COVID-19. Their website can be accessed at [www.sanctuarycounselinggroup.org](http://www.sanctuarycounselinggroup.org). SCG encourages you to follow them and to post links to any content found relevant on the church's websites and social media. To learn more about the clinical services and sites, as well as to make contributions to the Samaritan Scholarship Fund to aid persons without financial means who seek mental, spiritual, or emotional assistance, visit the website or any of the social media sites.

SCG is a service center that is accredited by both the American Association of Pastoral Counselors (AAPC) and the Solihun Institute (formerly known as the Samaritan Institute).

Jay Cobb, Executive Director  
704.375.5354 • [info@scgnc.org](mailto:info@scgnc.org)

### g. UMAR Services, Inc.

As a mission and ministry, UMAR promotes community inclusion, independence, and growth for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities through residential, employment, and cultural enrichment opportunities. Providing vital services for adults with a wide range of physical, mental, and emotional disabilities; the mission easily translates into "live, work, and thrive" as UMAR transform lives. UMAR is grateful for the partnership with the Western North Carolina Conference.

Districts, Churches, and individuals welcome UMAR into their hearts, homes, and sanctuaries. While living out *The Social Creed of The United Methodist Church* to be committed to the rights of people with disabilities; the church body advocates, provides financial support and inclusive opportunities for spiritual development, volunteerism, essential items, and social interaction. If it were not for this support, UMAR would be unable to provide the following opportunities and quality services that families and communities rely upon:

- **Live (Residential Services)** – UMAR operates 19 homes, nine apartments and one duplex. Dedicated, trained staff provide residents with 24/7 support, meals, transportation, activities, and other quality of life enhancements – all while fostering independence and responsibility in a family-like setting.

- **Work (Vocational Services)** – UMAR helps adults with disabilities secure and maintain competitive employment with skills assessment, job coaching, placement, training, and support for as long as the individual is employed.
- **Thrive (Art/Day programs)** – UMAR Day Programs focus on art, social, and independent living skills. Because vocational services are not appropriate for everyone, day services ensure meaningful activities that foster learning and growth. With Art centers located in Charlotte, Lincolnton, and Reidsville, community partnerships inspire a variety of art forms such as painting, pottery, culinary, and horticulture. Artists earn a 40 percent commission for every piece sold.
- **Community Services** – Across 11 cities across nine counties UMAR provides individualized or group activities to increase or maintain life skills, self-determination, self-care, and participation in the community. Supports can include community networking, supported living in their own residence, crisis services, respite for family caregivers, and supported employment.

As an outreach ministry, congregations can be engaged in the work of UMAR through hands-on mission activities, donations, and volunteering with participants. For more information on programs or to get involved visit [UMARinfo.com](http://UMARinfo.com).

Because of the ongoing pandemic, 2021 has proven to be a challenging year. During the federal-declared Public Health Emergency, the health, wellness, and safety of the adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities that UMAR serves as well as their caregivers and families have continued to be the top priority. Staff shortages have become the norm throughout all healthcare fields and UMAR has strived to maintain a high quality of care with fewer staff members and a higher-than-normal turnover rate. Residents have been able to return to limited activities in the art centers and community-based services have expanded to meet the needs of individuals within their own homes. This year also saw mandated changes for managed care organizations as part of the state Medicaid overhaul that has created problems in billing and reimbursement for services at the approved provider level. Numerous infectious disease procedures and protocols continued to be in place to prevent, mitigate, and fight the spread of the virus with the organization pivoting to accommodate mandates and suggested protocols. Focus for the year quickly pivoted from helping individuals grow and thrive to also ensuring they had continuity of care and services.

UMAR's inability to host in-person fundraising events has resulted in fewer donations and a loss of expected revenue as well as the need to expand partnerships and host alternative events. A new arts festival has been planned for April 9th in place of a cancelled luncheon in Winston Salem as well as numerous additional marketing strategies to bolster donor support.

- UMAR served 256 individuals and their families.
- With the three arts centers in Charlotte, Reidsville, and Lincolnton closed for a time period at the beginning of the year, arts and day program services were provided in the home to 135 individuals. The art centers have served 100 participants since reopening this year.
- 36 percent of UMAR residents received financial assistance through donations.
- The average cost of living in a UMAR home is \$46,745.
- 97 percent of all donations directly funded UMAR programs and services.
- UMAR's public policy consultant and advocate has continued to lobby state legislators on behalf of all individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families.
- UMAR received a three-year CARF accreditation this year demonstrating a substantial conformance to CARF standards and a dedication to integrating the homes seamlessly into their communities and reflect the preferences and interests of the persons served who reside there.

#### **Focus Areas for 2022:**

- Continue performance improvements in care delivery that embody UMAR's mission while meeting the needs and dreams of UMAR participants.
- Invest in technologies that enhance workforce resourcing and productivity, as well as improve outcomes of the people UMAR supports.
- Implement organizational strategy to reduce annual operational deficit, improve financial strength, and sustainability.
- Increase organizational awareness and image throughout Western North Carolina.
- Advocate and lobby state legislators for appropriations and policy changes benefitting the people UMAR serves.
- Adjusting recruitment strategies and worker compensations to allow for the retention of valuable staff members during this time unprecedented time of healthcare worker shortages.

Marilyn Garner, President and CEO

#### **Proposal: Trustees of UMAR Services, Inc.**

**(Petition 11)** Approved June 17, 2022

It is proposed the following be elected as members of the Board of Trustees of UMAR Services, Inc.:

*Class of 2022/23*

Billy Morton, Leslie Marsicano, Parks Hunter, Max Daniel, Morry Johnston, Gil Middlebrooks, Archie Pertiller, Theresa Hall, Ray Breazeale, Reeves Davis

## 2. BROTHERHOOD/SISTERHOOD OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA

The Brotherhood/Sisterhood, an Affiliate Ministry of the WNCC, was organized jointly by clergy and laity in 1893 to provide collegial support and immediate financial assistance to the families of clergy members when they die. Ideally, the benefit is personally delivered within a day or two of a reported death. Twenty-two families received this support from July 2021 through April 2022.

The BH/SH is funded entirely by clergy member assessments (\$15.00 per death), laity contributions, investment income, and other gifts. When a death occurs, members are encouraged to respond as soon as possible with checks mailed directly to the office in Belmont or with online payments. Heartfelt appreciation is extended to the laity who are directly involved with the BH/SH and to all others supporting this ministry individually or through their churches, Sunday school classes, the UMW, and the UMM. Annually, Brotherhood/Sisterhood Sunday is approved for emphasis in the local churches.

Beneficiary membership is open to elders, deacons, associate members, and local pastors in good standing with the conference. Those thirty-five years of age or older when joining compensate the BH/SH for assessments issued since their thirty-fifth birthday. A permanent note may be signed to cover part or all of this amount.

The election of the Board of Directors and its officers, the approval of the annual operating budget, the death benefit, assessment rates, and other business matters take place during annual conference at the BH/SH's Annual Meeting. This year, the board will propose changes to the Constitution and Bylaws to assure that members who are and remain in good standing with the annual conference and other Methodist churches recognized by the World Methodist Council will continue to be able to be served in future years. The time and place of the annual meeting will be listed on the Special Events Calendar. Members will be informed if attending the annual meeting via Zoom is an option.

Everyone is invited to visit the BH/SH tent outside Stuart Auditorium and the website at [brotherhoodsisterhood.com](http://brotherhoodsisterhood.com) for more information.

### The 2021-2022 Board of Directors:

*Class of 2022:* Kari L Howard, Sarah B Kalish, David J Lee, Jeremiah P Pegram

*Class of 2023:* W Mark Andrews, Oliver W Helsabeck, J Burton Williams

*Class of 2024:* H Donnell FitzJefferies, Barbara B Mayo, Edward D McKinney, Susan H Scales

*Class of 2025:* Mary W Brown, Alphonza Everett, Rodvegas M Ingram Sr., James K Sanders

*Ex-Officio:* Jatana Royster, Director of Laity; N. Fred Jordan, Honorary Member; Roland T Barnhardt, Executive Director; Robbie Carr, Administrative Assistant

Jeremiah P Pegram, President  
Roland T Barnhardt, Executive Director

## 3. THE DUKE ENDOWMENT

The Duke Endowment was formed in December of 1924 by the industrialist and philanthropist James B. Duke, who famously said that if it were not for his father and the Methodist Church, he would not have amounted to anything. When forming his endowment, Mr. Duke named four areas of focus: higher education, health care, child welfare, and rural Methodist churches in North Carolina. For almost 98 years, the endowment has engaged with rural churches to strengthen ministries across the conference and state. Formed by the grace and love of God, and led by the Spirit, rural churches understand what it means to "love their neighbors."

In 2021, the Rural Church program area of the endowment awarded 21 new grants totaling nearly \$12 million. Other highlights of its work are:

1. Endeavoring to cultivate and support clergy for leadership in rural United Methodist churches in North Carolina through several initiatives, including:
  - The **Clergy Health Initiative (CHI)**, begun in 2007 and based at Duke Divinity School, advises and informs the conferences, the denomination, and others on issues of clergy wellness. Most recently, The Spirited Life: Selah program of the CHI served about 300 clergy across the state with stress management interventions that were simultaneously tested for effectiveness among the population. The endowment is pleased that the practices, which are primarily spiritual, measurably reduced stress and anxiety symptoms among the pastors in the program, and it is now working with CHI staff and leaders of both the WNCC and the NCC on a Clergy Wellbeing Council that will plan how to offer the most effective programs to more United Methodist clergy in North Carolina.
  - The **Thriving Rural Communities Initiative (TRCI)** is a collaborative effort among the endowment, the two conferences, and Duke Divinity School. The program forms and networks strong pastors, dubbed "Rural Fellows," for service to rural congregations. This year, Steve Bergkamp, Jason Boggs, Noah Glover, Michèle Hill, Mike Sciascia, Hannah Smith, and Hanna Stamey are graduating from Duke Divinity School as Rural Fellows and beginning their ministry under appointment in the WNCC.
  - The **Hispanic House of Studies** at Duke Divinity School develops pastoral and congregational capacity for engagement with Latino populations, one of the fastest-growing demographic groups in the state.
  - The **Ormond Center**, also based at Duke Divinity, has been relaunched and seeks to contribute scholarship, training and leadership on building thriving communities. Read more at [www.ormondcenter.com](http://www.ormondcenter.com).
2. The endowment is working with both conferences on efforts to support congregations in long-term planning, including helping churches to discern their most faithful and fruitful futures. A partner in this work is Wesley Community Development Corporation, and the endowment celebrates the unique redevelopment programs that have been accomplished so far.

3. The endowment also seeks to build the capacity of United Methodist churches to work with other organizations in addressing community-wide issues at their roots. This happens primarily through system-level grants to nonprofit agencies that are experts in issue areas and whose staffmembers coach congregations to enhance their mission. With an intentional move away from building and construction grants, the endowment now seeks to create the conditions for congregations to thrive and to impact their communities in new and vital ways through grants that support multiple churches engaging in creative ministry. If a church is interested in deepening its work in food system engagement (including all food ministries), community or economic development, or strategic planning for community engagement, check the endowment website for a resource containing details of the supported programs and contact information for the lead staff in the section entitled “Building Congregations’ Capacity to Engage with Community.”
4. Finally, the endowment is identifying and testing selected program models for high-impact community-focused ministry for the 0-8 population in North Carolina. Currently the focus of this work is the Summer Literacy Initiative, which resources 20 congregations (currently 12 in the Western North Carolina Conference) to offer early elementary students summer reading camps that adhere to a set of six guiding principles and two core values. More information can be found at the website in the section entitled “Helping Early Readers Avoid Summer Learning Loss.”

More information about endowment efforts may also be found at the website: [www.dukeendowment.org/our-work/rural-church](http://www.dukeendowment.org/our-work/rural-church).

Robb Webb, Director, Rural Church

#### 4. THE EUGENE M. COLE FOUNDATION

The Cole Foundation was established by the will of Eugene M. Cole in 1944 to provide benefits for retired ministers and surviving spouses for the Western North Carolina Conference. In 2021, the foundation directed monthly payments to the conference treasurer to supplement the cost of health care benefits to retired ministers and spouses.

The foundation is governed by trustees elected by the annual conference: Anthony Orsbon, and Rebecca Douglas.

Anthony Orsbon, Trustee

##### **Proposal: Trustees of Cole Foundation**

**(Petition 12)** Approved June 17, 2022

The Trustees of the Eugene M. Cole Foundation propose that Anthony Orsbon and Rebecca Douglas be re-elected to continue to serve as trustees.

#### 5. WNCC FAITH FORMATION COMMUNITY

The WNCC Faith Formation Community is for laity and clergy, full-time and part-time, professionals and volunteers, and anyone who participates in any form of Christian Education, Youth Ministry, Children’s Ministry, Adult Education, and areas of faith formation. The board continues the process of re-visioning the purpose of how educational opportunities are offered. The group looks forward to planning workshops, gatherings, and retreats in the future. To learn more about the WNCC Faith Formation Community join the WNCC Christians Engaged in Faith Formation page on Facebook or go to [www.wnccumc.org/CEF](http://www.wnccumc.org/CEF) for more information; or email the board at [wncc.cef.membership@gmail.com](mailto:wncc.cef.membership@gmail.com) if you would like to be a part of the group or have ideas that you want to share.

Edward Ramsey, President

#### 6. HINTON RURAL LIFE CENTER

In 2021, Hinton Rural Life Center celebrated 60 years of serving annual conferences in the Southeastern Jurisdiction through equipping clergy and local churches (particularly small, rural churches) and offering opportunities for individuals and church groups to serve in Safe and Healthy Home Repair missions and/or come for retreats and renewal time, experiencing God’s presence and blessing at our 33-acre campus in the Appalachian mountains. (Check out Embracing Our Roots and Sharing the Fruits videos at [www.hintoncenter.org/about-us](http://www.hintoncenter.org/about-us) to learn about Hinton’s beginnings and the impact of our ministries.) The anniversary celebration provided a year-long opportunity to reflect on the many ways that Hinton, the local community, and generations of United Methodist clergy, retreat groups, and mission teams have experienced God’s faithfulness, and continues to experience today!

With the support of local volunteers and mission teams, as well as generous support from individual, organizational, and United Methodist churches (Board of Global Ministries Advance Project #731372), Hinton was able to offer relational and impactful ministries. Highlights of 2021 include:

- Completed 123 home repair projects on 25 different homes and 4 nonprofits in our area, prioritizing and addressing the health and safety of homeowners.
- Hosted over 400 mission participants.
- Installed vegetable gardens for homeowners to support their nutritional well-being.
- Provided over 570 loads of firewood to over 480 families/individuals, who heat primarily with wood.
- Premiered the House on Wheels (HOW) mobile teaching unit to promote home safety awareness and practices in the local community and with the volunteers.
- Provided local and missional leadership training for more than 35 adults and young people.
- Provided over 300 children with new clothes at Christmas through Christmas Care.
- Began installation and enhancements of trails and Sanctuary Gardens on the campus for individuals and groups to experience rest and renewal for mind, body, and soul.

Another exciting highlight was the planning and promotion of Theotokos Confirmation Retreats, which launched in March of 2022. All four weekends filled, with groups from North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Tennessee. Content focus is on the vows of membership (prayers, presence, gifts, service, witness), biblical stories of call, and services of baptism renewal and Holy Communion. Hinton also developed and now offers a digital confirmation resource, *Theotokos Connections*, designed to be small-church relevant and accessible, but available for any size church.

Jacqueline Gottlieb, President and CEO  
[jackie@hintoncenter.org](mailto:jackie@hintoncenter.org) • [www.hintoncenter.org](http://www.hintoncenter.org)

## 7. LAKE JUNALUSKA ASSEMBLY, INC.

In 2021, Lake Junaluska Assembly (LJA) continued to live into its mission to be a place of Christian hospitality where lives are transformed through renewal of soul, mind, and body. As LJA began to emerge from the economic disaster caused by the pandemic in 2020, it resumed hosting events and provided hospitality for individuals from all across the U.S.

In January 2021, LJA learned that the World Methodist Council (WMC) had decided to move its museum and sell its two properties at Lake Junaluska. This was a surprise. One of the properties was the museum, which housed an extensive collection of important artifacts to the Methodist heritage. This building had been a gift to the WMC by the Lake Junaluska community in 1955. The other property was the Reynolds World Headquarters Building. The exterior of this structure is a replica of the rectory at Epworth England where John Wesley was born. It had been gifted to the WMC by Royce and Jayne Reynolds. After several months of discussion with the WMC, LJA was able to reacquire these buildings for \$1.25 million. Plans for the renovation of the former museum building are currently in development.

People began to return to the conference center in May when N.C. Governor Roy Cooper removed restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Leisure travel did not make up for what was lost from groups, however, lodging revenue numbers were closer to what they were two years ago before the pandemic. People came seeking outdoor venues and authentic experiences. It was wonderful seeing families experience renewal on the grounds again! More canoes, paddleboards, and kayaks were rented than ever before. Leisure travel revenue plus the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans have put LJA in a good financial situation.

LJA did not escape the impact of the nationwide hospitality industry staffing shortage. It was a bumpy road at times, but the organization was able to do more with less staff. Before the pandemic, the staffing level was 275 or more employees in the summer season and 190 in the winter. During 2020 the staff level dropped to fewer than 100 employees. Throughout 2021 staff was rehired and, in August, the level was at 217 employees.

In August, Haywood County experienced a devastating flood as a result of Hurricane Fred. Anticipating the storm, LJA was in conversation with county officials and extended its facilities to all in need. Swift-water rescue crews arrived as rain was still falling. LJA provided the first responders with lodging and meals. Prayer ministry leaders and members of the community prayed over every seat before each meal. The impact was phenomenal. The LJA staff and community provided a sanctuary for the rescue workers while they helped those directly impacted by the storm. LJA also partnered with Haywood County Department of Social Services to provide emergency shelter to residents who lost their homes as a result of the storm. The last of those residents moved out of temporary housing in December.

LJA experienced a significant financial transition in 2021 as it began to emerge from the impacts of the pandemic. The organization finished the year with a surplus of \$538,458 in the general budget and \$371,254 in the Assembly Public Works budget. The general budget surplus was made possible by the hard work of the staff in reopening the organization, \$741,203 in unrestricted charitable support, and the forgiveness of the 2021 PPP loan received in February.

Looking toward the future, the board of trustees has adopted the following guiding aspirations:

- **Aspiration 1:** To preserve and enhance the lake and grounds so that more people will recognize the natural beauty of God's creation.
- **Aspiration 2:** To be a conference center that rivals hospitality industry leaders by exceeding guests' expectations through excellence in staff and facilities.
- **Aspiration 3:** To be the place that connects more youth to Christ through meaningful ministry, recreation, and education programs.
- **Aspiration 4:** To identify, uphold, and strengthen the Lake Junaluska tradition of implementing innovative, shared experiences – for both individuals and families – that celebrate faith, recreation, the arts, and education.
- **Aspiration 5:** To be an involved, inclusive community that provides the highest quality of life for residents and guests.

LJA appreciates input into the creation of these aspirations and for the continued support as it lives into God's purpose for this special place.

The leadership and staff invite everyone to visit Lake Junaluska for a conference, retreat, or vacation. The lake and surrounding mountains will provide the perfect setting for you to experience transformation and renewal. To plan a visit, please visit [lakejunaluska.com](http://lakejunaluska.com).

Ken Howle, Executive Director

## 8. THE NORTH CAROLINA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

With 18 denominations representing over 6,200 congregations in North Carolina, the council provides incarnational evidence of Christian unity. By creating unity without expecting uniformity, member bodies collaborate on matters that contribute to the flourishing of God's creation. The council is grateful to the Western North Carolina Conference for their support and for the leadership on the governing board provided by the Rev. Amelia Stinson-Wesley, Memorial UMC, Charlotte, NC, and Ms. Renee Hayes, Trinity UMC, Trinity, NC. Individual congregations are invited to unite more closely with the work of the council by becoming Covenant Partners. For more information about this opportunity, please contact [info@ncchurches.org](mailto:info@ncchurches.org).

Currently, the priority areas include:

- **Reparations to Restoration: A Call to Action.** Grounded in the Christian principle of confession, repentance, and reconciliation, the council hopes to recast the reparations conversation through the lens of Christian restoration. By focusing on restoration, left behind is the language of debtors and creditors, victims and perpetrators, givers and takers. The move to a place of restoration begins by acknowledging the reconciling work that begins with God. Representatives from 10 of the council's member denominations, including The United Methodist Church, are compiling an eight-session resource to help dismantle oppressive systems. Like the Old Testament prophets, they offer this truth as a lament that calls everyone to admit the truth—confess—and turn away from this behavior—repent—leading to the Christian call to restore that which has been lost by those harmed by these systems. For more information, contact [info@ncchurches.org](mailto:info@ncchurches.org).
- **The NC Interfaith Power & Light (NCIPL)** work has expanded to become the Eco-Justice Connection (EJC). This larger program scope is a multi-faith approach focused on environmental and climate justice by building and supporting local community resilience. The work of NCIPL will continue to focus on energy democracy and climate policy. Its purpose is to educate, inspire, and mobilize people of faith and conscience in this state to act on climate change as a moral imperative. For more information, contact [susannah@ncipl.org](mailto:susannah@ncipl.org).
- **Partners in Health and Wholeness (PHW)** bridges issues of faith, health, and justice. The work focuses on four critical areas: the overdose crisis, healthy aging, HIV, and mental health, while continuing to support the tenets of basic health through a focus on nutrition, physical activity, and tobacco use/vaping cessation. Educational events, state and local resource connections, and mini-grants are used to support the health initiatives of faith communities across the state. To assist with COVID-19 vaccinations, it facilitates partnerships between the NC Department of Health and Human Services and faith communities, with an emphasis on rural and marginalized areas to aid in the equitable distribution of the COVID-19 vaccines. In the spring of 2022, PHW began offering grants to BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) centered faith communities to address mental health needs made worse by the pandemic. For more information, contact [phwinfo@ncchurches.org](mailto:phwinfo@ncchurches.org).
- **The Opioid Crisis, the Faith Community Responds** educates faith leaders about compassionate responses to the growing overdose crisis and offers ways for congregations to become involved by connecting them to resources in their communities, such as a harm reductionist. If interested in hosting an event or to learn more about this project, contact [elizabeth@ncchurches.org](mailto:elizabeth@ncchurches.org).
- **Capital Punishment Abolishment:** Working with the NC Coalition for Alternatives to the Death Penalty, resources for congregations and individuals across the state are provided to amplify the voices of people of faith who are speaking out against capital punishment. While there have been no executions in NC since 2006, several district attorneys continue to pursue the death penalty and 133 people remain on NC's death row. The council is committed to joining the 23 states that have abolished this racist and sinful practice.

Over the course of this year, the governing board approved the following policy statements. It crafted these statements in keeping with its interpretation of the prophetic witness of the Old Testament and the gospel message of the New Testament. The full text for each statement is available on the website ([www.ncchurches.com](http://www.ncchurches.com)), in addition to statements from previous years.

- Statement on Removing Confederate Symbols Where Justice Is Sought (January 26, 2021)
- Statement on George Floyd Murder Trial Verdict (April 21, 2021)
- Statement Condemning Violence Against our Jewish Neighbors (January 24, 2022)

Currently, other areas of emphasis include living wage promotion, criminal justice reform, Confederate monument removal from courthouse lawns, gun violence prevention, Medicaid expansion, and redistricting reform. Resources are available online, and staff is available to help congregations address any of the myriad concerns that arise in contemporary settings. For answers to questions or more information, please contact [info@ncchurches.org](mailto:info@ncchurches.org), or call the office at 919-828-6501.

Denominational members of the council include Alliance of Baptists · African Methodist Episcopal Church · African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church · Christian Methodist Episcopal · Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) · Episcopal Church · Evangelical Lutheran Church in America · General Baptist State Convention · Metropolitan Community Churches · Mennonite Church USA · Moravian Church in America · Presbyterian Church (USA) · Reformed Church in America · Reformed Churches of God in Christ, International · Religious Society of Friends · United Church of Christ · Unity Fellowship Church Movement · United Methodist Church.

Jennifer E. Copeland, Executive Director  
[www.ncchurches.org](http://www.ncchurches.org)



## 9. RFD CDC

RFD CDC serves communities, congregations, and individuals. The focus is rural, but the service extends to all. RFD Consulting is available for consultation for senior, transitional, and veterans housing, community facilities and congregational facility expansion. Contact information is available at the website: [www.rfdcdc.org](http://www.rfdcdc.org).

NETworX® serves individuals in multiple counties in NC and California. Outcomes of significant progress in terms of wellbeing, financial stability, and a significant decrease in reliance upon public assistance are reported by 420 persons in NC alone. With gratitude, NETworX individuals in NC and each of the sites, celebrate the support received from the Western NC Conference. More information about NETworX is available on the website [www.networxusa.org](http://www.networxusa.org).

### Members of the RFD CDC board are as follows:

Rev. Lucy Robbins, President, Pastor Biltmore UMC	Rev. Ken Locklear, Gateway District Superintendent, NCC
Rev. Carol Goehring, Vice President, Retired District Superintendent, NCC	Rev. Joe Mann, Duke Divinity School
Rev. Gil Wise, Secretary/ Treasurer, Pastor Salem UMC, NCC	Rev. Connie Marie Stutts, Pastor Beech Grove-Rhems Charge
Rev. Amy Coles, Assistant to the WNCB Bishop	Steve Taylor, Outreach Team Coordinator, NCC
Rev. Laura Early, Senior Minister All God's Children UMC	Rev. Dr. R. A. (Alan) Rice Jr., Executive Director, and COO
Tom Lambeth, Retired Executive Director, Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation	

R. A. (Alan) Rice Jr., Executive Director  
Lucy Robbins, President

## 10. UNITED METHODIST FOUNDATION OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA, INC.

The Foundation reached an all-time high of \$332 million in total assets in 2021, an achievement that reflects the trust and faithfulness of ministry partners as the organization enters its 55th year in the Western North Carolina Conference. Managed investment funds delivered strong returns across the board, highlighted by the Diversified Fund's year-end return of 14.6 percent. Returns like this generate more resources for mission, scholarships, care programs and other vital forms of ministry.

In a year filled with uncertainty, the Foundation sought to provide forward-thinking leadership to help partners adapt to changing circumstances. For all its challenges, the pandemic presented an opportunity to move beyond traditional methods and try new things in an environment that lends itself to innovation.

A webinar series for clergy and laity called Transformational Generosity explored ways to adapt to virtual worship and incorporate technology into a culture of year-round giving in the local church. The series was offered in partnership with Dr. Bill White, Director of Equity and Justice Ministries for the Western North Carolina Conference.

Reynolds Academy for Ministry Management held two sessions for alumni on "Managing Ministry During Covid-19," providing opportunities for clergy to share open, honest discussion about challenges stemming from the pandemic, the climate of social unrest and also divisions in The United Methodist Church.

The Foundation introduced an online giving portal that makes it easier for people to give directly to permanently restricted endowments (typically established in honor of individuals and families) as well as church-owned funds invested with the Foundation. Donors can now make gifts without having to write a check or mail a letter.

The organization's staffing model evolved to keep pace with shifting needs and opportunities. In April, Matt Garfield joined the team in a new communications role to use the power of storytelling to engage and inform audiences. Two weeks later, Andrea Gutierrez joined the financial services team as staff accountant, a role dedicated to serving the needs of clients. In December, Amanda Goedert came on board as executive support specialist. Two staff members departed in 2021: Suzanne Atkins, executive assistant, and Layne Smith, associate director of Reynolds Ministries and Programs, left to pursue other ways to use their gifts. With these changes and additions, the team is well positioned to serve partners in and beyond the Western NC Conference.

### Here is a look at other ministries of special note:

- Reynolds Ministry Fund distributed approximately \$500,000 in grants to fuel endeavors that invite people into a relationship with Jesus Christ. From meal deliveries to after-school tutoring and child enrichment programs, Reynolds-supported initiatives are at work in communities across the conference.
- UMF Development Fund and Loan Program ended the year with \$19 million in deposits and \$13 million in loans outstanding.
- UMHEF Quadruple Your Dollars for Scholars provided \$31,000 in scholarships for 31 United Methodist students who aspire to make a positive difference in the world.
- A \$75,000 contribution supported the Conference's Comprehensive Plan of Equity, the fourth year of giving for this purpose.

The foundation mourned the loss of honorary board member, Rev. Dr. Harley Dickson, who passed away August 19 at age 92. After a distinguished career as a local church pastor and district superintendent, Harley's last full-time appointment ended in 1997 as the Executive Director of the Foundation. Always committed to the ministry of the foundation, he returned in an interim capacity in September 2001 until the arrival of David Snipes in February 2002. Harley was instrumental in the late 1990s in bringing "The Reynolds Foundation" under the foundation umbrella and in creating the highly regarded Reynolds Leadership Academy for Evangelism & Discipleship. The board and staff owe Harley a great deal of gratitude for his many years of faithful service.

The ministries described above are but a snapshot of the foundation's landscape of offerings. To learn more, please visit online at [UMFWNC.org](http://UMFWNC.org) or stop by the foundation ministry tent.

The foundation remains committed to the work of building the church for generations to come.

George Thomas (Tom) Jordan, Chairperson  
David Allen Snipes, President/CEO

## 11. WESLEY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The past year has been one of growth for Wesley Community Development. Wesley CD continues to manage property, including the conference center, for the Western North Carolina Conference, and now also manages on a limited basis for the North Carolina Conference. Brokerage in both conferences has increased with Wesley approaching \$10 million in annual transactions across the state. Development has increased with many projects in various stages of design and development. To meet this need Wesley has recently grown to eight staff members, bringing deeper experience and talent to the team. Wesley is proud to welcome these new team members as it celebrates its 20th anniversary in 2022.

Wesley is pleased to be a partner with churches as they work to reposition their campuses. The redevelopment at Smith Grove UMC has been completed and the church is back in their new sanctuary, following years away after a fire. First Newton UMC is in the final stages in the redevelopment of its sanctuary and the creation of a large new welcome space created within the existing building. At Lake Junaluska, Wesley worked with the Foundation for Evangelism to redevelop and lease their existing building, creating an income-generating, multi-tenant building. Wesley assisted St Francis in the creation of a ground lease relationship with a new charter school that will be beneficial to both for years to come. In both Wilmington (Trinity UMC) and Asheville (Biltmore UMC) the journey has led to the sale of property to reposition these churches for new and revitalized ministry.

2022 brings a number of new developments coming online. Mineral Springs Commons, a 73-unit senior affordable housing project, will break ground in mid-March. This project is possible only with the support of the Conference Board of Trustees, who continues to be a leader in how church property can be utilized to serve the community. The demolition of the former Selywn UMC is completed in advance of the redevelopment on the site. The proceeds from that work will go towards a redevelopment of the former Grace UMC, now home to the combined church, Woodlawn Community Fellowship. Final designs are underway for phase one of Lydia's Place, a new women and children shelter being developed in the former Calvary UMC buildings in Asheboro. Active conversations with churches preparing to reposition their campuses for more impactful and sustainable ministry are creating an exciting horizon for the coming year.

Wesley was recently informed that Prosperity Ridge Apartments, developed and opened in 2021, has been awarded the CAHEC Award for Development of the Year. This represents the fourth such award in Wesley's history. Wesley has also been working with 14 other conferences across the country as they explore how to create a similar entity within their organizations.

The team at Wesley Community Development is excited for all that the coming year will bring and the innovation that will arise from a transitional time within the church.

Joel A. Gilland, President/CEO  
Randolph H. Harry, Chairperson

### **Proposal: Wesley Community Development Board of Directors**

**(Petition 13)** Approved June 17, 2022

Rev. Randolph Harry  
Rev. George Coates  
Richard (Dick) Woods

Rev. David Hiatt  
Phillip Jones  
Rev. Dr. Mark King  
Rev. Lynda Ferguson

Rev. Willetts Ar-Rahmaan  
Joseph (Ricky) Lefft, Esq  
Don Pettigrew, PE



**E. EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS****1. HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA****a.1. Bennett College for Women President's Report****I. Students (as of fall semester 2021-2022)**

A. Full-time students.....	181
B. Part-time students.....	26
C. Full-time equivalent enrollment.....	194
D. Full-time North Carolina students .....	72
E. Full-time Methodist students.....	na
F. Resident students .....	32
G. Non-resident students (commuters and adult learners) .....	175
H. Male students.....	0
I. Female students.....	207
J. American black students .....	141
K. International students.....	0
L. Number of students receiving financial aid.....	204

**II. Faculty (as of fall semester 2021-2022)**

A. Number of Full Time Faculty .....	14
B. Number of Part Time Faculty .....	21
C. Full time equivalent faculty.....	21
D. Degrees of full time faculty	
Doctorate .....	na
Masters .....	na
E. Number of ethnic minorities employed on faculty and administrative staff .....	65
F. Average salary of full time faculty .....	\$43,189
G. Average compensation of full time faculty .....	\$53,986

**III. Operating Finances (for 2020-2021 fiscal year)**

A. Operating income (total) .....	\$14,770,868
1. Student Fees .....	452,780
2. Endowment Income .....	3,568,059
3. Church sources.....	78,529
4. Auxillary enterprises.....	20,545
5. Gifts and grants.....	7,899,434
6. Investment income.....	378,616
7. Other .....	155,439
B. Operating expenses (total).....	\$13,297,535
1. Instructional.....	3,166,151
2. Administrative and general.....	4,322,544
3. Library .....	65,694
4. Physical plant.....	1,752,724
5. Auxillary enterprises.....	151,124
6. Student aid .....	771,617
7. Academic support .....	1,139,763
8. Depreciation & debt services .....	1,938,828
9. Other (Depreciation, interest, academic support) .....	0
C. Operating indebtedness at beginning of current year .....	\$0
D. Operating budget.....	\$15,279,685
E. Expenditures per student.....	\$68,544
F. Amount per UM student provided by Western NC Conference.....	na

**IV. Capital Funds**

A. Market value of physical plant at beginning of current year .....	\$20,718,759
B. Capital indebtedness at beginning of current year .....	0
C. Net increases in physical plant during preceding year .....	1,318,294
D. Market value of endowment at beginning of current year.....	13,999,399
E. Net increase in endowment principal from preceding year.....	1,991,333

Suzanne Walsh, President

### a.2. Bennett College for Women Chaplain's Report

The Chaplain's Office encourages spiritual inquiry and development through in-person and virtual opportunities that foster reflection and self-discovery while promoting a sense of belonging that seeks to strengthen bonds of sisterhood and community. Since reopening our campus to in-person residential living and hybrid instruction, most of our activities have taken place in the virtual format.

1. **A Peaceful Pause: 20 Minutes for Meditation ~ Affirmation ~ Prayer.** This weekly series offers our community an opportunity to break from the day's routine to experience quietness, a breath of different air, and moments to recharge before resuming their responsibilities. Topics included "The Appreciation of Beauty," "Seasons of Your Spiritual Journey," "I Am Enough and Other Affirmations," "Taming Your Emotions," and "The Discipline of Stillness."
2. **A Word In Season:** A series of timely and relevant reflections that connect our campus with the concerns and issues facing our community and the world. A reflection, "The Value of a Woman's Voice," was part of a collaboration with College Archivist Jocelyn Caldera and Andrena Coleman. This event celebrated notable guests of Bennett College.  
[https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1V835oY7YaeFmhwql4jSdNQbiYb2xAzQ6FCORFLAc\\_-A/edit?](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1V835oY7YaeFmhwql4jSdNQbiYb2xAzQ6FCORFLAc_-A/edit?)
3. **Wednesday in the Word Bible Study:** Our studies engaged the topics related to critically thinking about life in the world beyond Bennett College. As we continued to operate within the constraints of COVID-19 and its impact on the holistic development of our students, we also shared lessons entitled "Purpose and Fear," "Being Fearless and Free," and "What It Means to be Chosen by and Grounded in God."
4. **U.M.W. Book Study:** Members of the Bennett College community joined the Northern Piedmont U.M.W. in a book study, *We Are All Fast-Food Workers Now: The Global Uprising Against Poverty Wages* by Annelise Orleck, a two-session conversation. The study examined the topics at hand primarily through stories of real workers. This analysis sought to balance realism and ambition to address serious, urgent issues and celebrate progress, and provided hope for real change. The topics discussed were poverty wages in the U.S. and globally, fast fashion, and agricultural work. The study leader was Lily Pierce, who serves as Communications Coordinator for the Northern District of United Methodist Women.
5. **Mindful Moments:** Consideration, Inspiration, and Application through a Quote, a Question, and a Comment. Example: **Quote:** "WE WEAR MASKS: We hide in the margins, disappearing in plain sight; we hide amid our networks, seeking to find our voice; we hide surrounded by possessions, desiring to be valued; we hide behind our accomplishments, hoping to be seen; and we hide within acts of service, longing to be touched." **Question:** What treasures remain hidden behind our masks? **Comment:** You may journal privately, post a comment on the Bennett App, or share confidentially: [nmclean@bennett.edu](mailto:nmclean@bennett.edu).
6. **Academic Cultural Enrichment Series (A.C.E.S.):** "The goal of ACES is to enrich students' lives and the lives of the campus community. Students have the opportunity to enhance their cultural, social, intellectual, and spiritual development through A.C.E.S.

When Bennett College was co-ed, it was felt that graduates needed more than book learning and intellectual discourse to be successful. Our graduates needed to be well-rounded; the whole person required preparation to deal with the ever-changing world."

**Highlighted programs:** The **Entrepreneurial Belle** panel with alumnae and current students entrepreneurs and Fair; **Black Women and Climate Change** with featured speaker La'Meshia Kaminski Deputy Director for Advance Carolina and the NC Black Alliance Campaign Director; **Cryptocurrency and Investing Apps** moderated by Society for Financial Education and Professional Development Ambassador Zauria Murphy,'22; **YOUiversity Drive Career Preparedness**; **Kay Yow Empowerment Tour**; and **Super Heroes of the Civil Right Movement** that welcomed the voices of Bennett women who were involved in the planning and execution of the sit-ins in Greensboro, NC that led to desegregated facilities in the community and sparked change in our nation.

7. **Church and Entrepreneurship:** This course is structured to enhance student leadership skills and critical thinking; assess values and develop a personal mission statement as a guiding principle. These tools are designed to support student self-discovery, encourage discernment of the call to service, and generate a plan with the potential to influence campus, the church, and the community. Church and Entrepreneurship can encourage spiritual exploration and growth. Additionally, the course content will serve as a bridge between the theoretical and practical aspects of ministry. The goal was for students to identify an unmet need on campus or within the local or universal church. The course content also considered how toxic charity impacts the service they sought to provide.
8. **The Well Belle Initiative** seeks to address the Eight Pillars of Wellness. As a member of the Wellness Committee, we diligently work on keeping our students and employees safe and healthy while being surrounded by a COVID environment. The commitment of the students, faculty, staff, and administration to the adherence to our Campus Protocol Policy is that our campus does not experience many of the challenges that other institutions have. The Pillars include a comprehensive approach to wellness: physical, social, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, professional, financial, and environmental.

The Office of the Chaplain constantly strives to emphasize the acquisition of moral and spiritual principles and promote faith development. We are committed to helping today's young woman answer the questions of life: "Who am I, and what does it mean to be in the world?" Partnering with faculty, staff, community churches, other college communities, and other agencies beyond the local church, Bennett seeks to encourage a new generation of gifted young women to cultivate academic, social, and leadership skills and spiritual gifts. Our goal is to promote interaction with the local faith community to ensure a safe and supportive environment where students can express and nurture their faith.

**b.1. Brevard College President's Report****I. Students (as of fall semester, 2020-2021)**

A. Full-time students.....	764
B. Part-time students.....	45
C. Full-time equivalent enrollment.....	746
D. Full-time North Carolina students .....	402
E. Resident students .....	593
F. Non-resident students (commuters and adult learners) .....	161
G. Male students.....	449
H. Female students.....	360
I. American black students .....	107
J. Hispanic .....	55
K. Native American .....	13
L. Asian American.....	6
M. Foreign .....	31
N. Number of students receiving financial aid .....	756

**II. Faculty (as of fall semester, 2020-2021)**

A. Number of Full Time Faculty .....	52
B. Number of Part Time Faculty .....	58
C. Full time equivalent faculty.....	69
E. Degrees of full time faculty	
Doctorate .....	42
Masters .....	10
E. Number of ethnic minorities employed on faculty and administrative staff .....	9
F. Average salary of full time faculty .....	\$47,204
G. Average compensation of full time faculty .....	\$48,246

**III. Operating Finances (for 2019-2020 fiscal year)**

A. Operating income (total) .....	\$21,927,836
1. Student Fees .....	21,667,504
2. Endowment Income .....	1,257,919
3. Church sources.....	0
4. Auxillary enterprises.....	5,696,216
5. Gifts and grants.....	3,462,485
6. Other .....	145,867
B. Operating expenses (total).....	\$19,862,939
1. Instructional.....	4,713,392
2. Administrative and general.....	5,969,920
3. Library .....	346,826
4. Physical plant.....	1,669,712
5. Auxillary enterprises.....	3,382,568
6. Student aid .....	1,247,242
7. Other .....	
C. Operating indebtedness at beginning of current year .....	\$0
D. Operating budget.....	\$18,000,242
E. Expenditures per student.....	\$24,096
F. Amount per UM student provided by Western NC Conference.....	\$0.00

**IV. Capital Funds**

A. Market value of physical plant at beginning of current year .....	\$34,361,987
B. Capital indebtedness at beginning of current year .....	18,094,468
C. Net increases in physical plant during preceding year .....	0
D. Market value of endowment at beginning of current year.....	36,205,979
E. Net increase in endowment principal from preceding year.....	1,920,517

Bradley J. Andrews, President

### b.2. Brevard College Chaplain's Report

Brevard College is a four-year, experiential liberal arts college founded in 1853, and is the oldest college in Western North Carolina. The college is home to students from 30 states and eight foreign countries. Brevard College's mission states, "Brevard College is committed to an experiential liberal arts education that encourages personal growth and inspires artistic, intellectual, and social action."

At Brevard College, education is much more than memorizing answers on a test. Faculty connect knowledge to direct experience, purposefully and intentionally. This experiential teaching and learning philosophy, led by expert faculty in small classrooms, develop students' ability to think, work in groups, reflect upon what they have learned, and then apply their knowledge to real world problems. Faculty cultivate marketable skills such as collaboration, problem solving, teamwork, and conflict resolution, to name a few. Students graduate Brevard College with more than a transcript and diploma. They graduate with an experiential resume' full of undergraduate research they have conducted, real-world problems they have addressed, and in-class projects they have completed.

Brevard College is affordable. Students from North Carolina receive a Half-Tuition Scholarship when they receive offers of admission. Brevard has 17 NCAA DIII sports teams and three non-NCAA teams including competitive cheerleading, rock climbing, and cycling.

Several people committed themselves to expand spiritual and religious life at Brevard College this year. Despite a continued global health pandemic, the Office of Spiritual and Religious Life offered in-person and virtual engagement opportunities. In-person opportunities were a huge success. Brevard's community has not gathered in person due to COVID-19 for nearly two years. Five themes continued to be pertinent to ministry at Brevard College.

**Ministry at Brevard College is needed.** As stated in years past, ministry at Brevard College was imperative. The College Minister reported an increased number of individuals requesting counseling, prayer, and opportunities to gather in person and virtually. Responding to personal challenges from the campus grew significantly. Ministry at Brevard College continued to provide mentorship for seminary interns and undergraduate students interested in ministry as a profession.

**In-person and virtual ministry at Brevard College grew.** The campus was happy to pursue opportunities to gather together physically. There were multiple in-person meetings, events, study sessions, and counseling sessions. Responsibly sharing space in person was a gift. Using virtual meetings platforms continued to be viable for ministry at the College. Providing people with the option to meet virtually or in-person helped the passion for being present with people expand.

**Ministry was multifaceted.** People prayed during athletic events, studied as groups, created student ministries, visited places of worship, mentored people interested in clergy leadership, and offered service-learning projects. There were multiple participants expanding ministry at Brevard College. It was amazing to watch students pursue opportunities to learn, discover, and witness while living into different denominational identities.

**Ministry was educational.** Central to religious and spiritual life at Brevard College, student leaders and the college minister taught classes and invited people to attend many activities. The college minister spoke at more than 35 venues over the year.

**Ministry was powerful.** Brevard College remained a special place for ministry. The negative effect of COVID-19 on college ministry was not the prevailing narrative of the year. It was God's presence and grace with this ministry and the people who call Brevard College home.

Religious and spiritual life at Brevard College remained excited about what it experienced throughout the year. Without a doubt, the best stands in front of us.

Sharad Creasman, College Minister



**c.1. Greensboro College President's Report****I. Students**

A. Full-time students.....	700
B. Part-time students.....	250
C. Full-time equivalent enrollment.....	826
D. Full-time North Carolina students .....	534
E. Full-time Methodist students.....	47
F. Resident students .....	238
G. Non-resident (day) students .....	712
H. Female students.....	502
I. American black students .....	240
J. Foreign students.....	176
K. Number of students receiving financial aid.....	687

**II. Faculty**

A. Number of Full Time Faculty .....	52
B. Number of Part Time Faculty .....	61
C. Full time equivalent faculty.....	75
D. Degrees of full time faculty.....	
Doctorate .....	45
Masters .....	7
E. Ethnic minorities employed on faculty and administrative staff – Total.....	43
F. Average salary of full time faculty .....	\$54,404
G. Average compensation of full time faculty .....	\$64,134

**III. Operating Finances**

A. Operating income .....	\$23,657,904
1. Student Fees .....	14,161,910
2. Endowment Income .....	338,220
3. Church sources.....	14,930
4. Auxillary enterprises.....	3,437,091
5. Student aid (restricted).....	3,634,137
6. Development Funds .....	1,690,220
7. Other .....	381,395
B. Operating expenditures .....	\$24,289,679
1. Instructional.....	6,087,069
2. Administrative and general.....	6,813,019
3. Library .....	271,673
4. Physical plant.....	2,705,057
5. Auxiliary expenses .....	2,050,652
6. Student aid .....	6,362,208
7. Other .....	
C. Operating surplus/(deficit) at beginning of current year .....	
D. Expenditures per student.....	\$26,663
E. Operating budget.....	\$17,351,936
F. Amount per UM student provided by Western NC Conference (2019-2020).....	\$16

**IV. Other Financial Information**

A. Market value of physical plant at beginning of current year .....	\$43,582,273
B. Capital indebtedness at beginning of current year .....	14,777,364
C. Net increases in physical plant from preceding year .....	1,615,698
D. Market value of endowment at beginning of current year.....	25,071,796
E. Net decrease in endowment principal from preceding year .....	190,255

Lawrence D. Czarda, President

### c.2. Greensboro College Chaplain's Report

This past academic year has been marked by continued pandemic and deep discussions of equity and anti-racism. Greensboro College has held classes online and in person with strict safety protocols this academic year. They have managed to maintain a relatively safe campus while seeking to provide students with the fullest experience of college life. Just after Spring break they moved to "masks optional" in all areas of campus including classrooms. Along with community safety, they have also continued discussions about the influence and effects of racism on the institution. They have committed to this work through a new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Office and Religious Life.

The Religious Life office continues to support the spiritual life and faith development of students, faculty, and staff. Central to the life of the college is a weekly chapel service on Thursdays led by students, with music provided by the chapel band and gospel choir. This year the weekly chapel service has been in-person and streamed online on YouTube. A Sunday night worship service for college students is also provided in conjunction with the Wesley-Luther Ministry at UNCG.

A variety of student small groups and Bible studies have also been offered in person this year. A weekly Zoom book study is also offered for faculty and staff. This year's selections were works by Amy Jill-Levine and a book on the life of trees.

Religious Life also offers an internship program to help students discern their call to ministry in a practical setting. They were also fortunate this year to have an intern working in the Chaplain's office from Wake Forest Divinity School. The intern is an alumnus of the college and has worked to support students in person. He has helped lead small groups, talk with students about discernment, and preach at worship services.

The Religious Life office also provides service opportunities. One such service opportunity occurred over Spring break when students explored Greensboro's history and served daily in local nonprofits. This experience was supported through a grant from the Northern Piedmont District. They also worked closely with the Spartan Open Pantry at UNCG that is housed at College Place UMC. They collect food and items that college students might need. Students in need can receive food and meals at the pantry.

Greensboro College realigned tuition in 2019 in order to make it affordable and accessible to more students. They are also adding new programs and concentrations this coming year such as Business Analytics, Gaming and Interactive media, and a new Bachelor of Fine Arts in theatre. Although the pandemic had a negative impact upon enrollment, they are thankful students have returned to campus and anticipate the new programs will attract more students to be part of the long legacy of Greensboro College alumni. Greensboro College continues to be a place where people join together in "knowledge and vital piety," through classes, chapel services, lectures, and community service events so that students might be faithful and informed citizens of the world.

Robert Brewer, Chaplain





**d.1. High Point University President's Report****I. Students (as of fall semester, 2021-2022)**

A. Full-time students .....	5,741
B. Part-time students .....	119
C. Full-time equivalent enrollment .....	5,787
D. Full-time North Carolina students .....	1,909
E. Full-time Methodist students .....	309
F. Resident students .....	4,791
G. Day (commuter students and adult learners) .....	1,069
H. Male students .....	2,493
I. Female students .....	3,367
J. American black students .....	524
K. International students .....	94
L. Number of students receiving financial aid .....	5,114

**II. Faculty (as of fall semester, 2021-2022)**

A. Number of full-time faculty .....	320
B. Number of part-time faculty .....	166
C. Full-time equivalent faculty .....	375
D. Degrees of full-time faculty:	
Doctorates and other terminal .....	267
Masters .....	51
E. Number of ethnic minorities employed on faculty and administrative staff .....	235
F. Average salary of full-time faculty .....	\$80,032
G. Average compensation of full-time faculty .....	\$102,041

**III. Operating Finances (for 2010-2021 fiscal year)**

A. Operating income (total) .....	\$246,370,697
1. Student fees .....	\$151,937,782
2. Endowment income .....	\$676,793
3. Church sources .....	\$14,000
4. Auxiliary enterprises .....	\$86,293,268
5. Gifts and grant.....	\$6,112,638
6. Investment income.....	\$0
7. Other .....	\$1,336,216
B. Operating expenditures (total) .....	\$185,460,318
1. Instructional .....	\$46,943,872
2. Administrative and general .....	\$55,271,840
3. Library .....	\$1,281,474
4. Physical plant .....	\$30,282,101
5. Auxiliary enterprises .....	\$51,681,031
6. Student aid .....	\$62,521,633
C. Operating indebtedness at beginning of current year .....	\$0
D. Operating budget for current year .....	\$256,995,273
E. Expenditures per student for current year .....	\$52,341
F. Amount per student by WNC Conference .....	\$2.85

**IV. Capital Funds**

A. Value of physical plant (with depreciation) at beginning of current year .....	\$734,080,996
B. Capital indebtedness at beginning of current year .....	\$120,678,659
C. Net increases to physical plant during preceding year .....	\$22,423,297
D. Market value of endowment fund at beginning of current year .....	\$127,505,121
E. Net increase to endowment fund principal during preceding year .....	\$8,696,989

Nido R. Qubein, President

## d.2. High Point University Chaplain's Report

### Mission of Hayworth Chapel and Religious Life Office

Hayworth Chapel and the Religious Life Office (aka "The Chapel") of High Point University seeks to grow the heart and soul of High Point University. Its ambition is that all members of the HPU community experience they are beloved. As much as possible, every person will:

- Experience they **Belong**.
- **Become** who they are called to be.
- **Behold** the presence of God's grace.

Fostered by its Christian tradition, The Chapel exists to deepen High Point University's Christian character and practice, which also means being a place of radical hospitality to people of all traditions. In this way, HPU is Christian by tradition (and committed to that tradition) and interfaith in outlook, modeling inter-religious understanding and cooperation.

### Recent Highlights

- **Organizational Structure Changes.** As of June 2021, Hayworth Chapel and Religious Life Office has moved out from under the Office of Student Life to be a stand-alone office. The Minister of the University (Preston Davis) now reports to the Vice President for Operations and Community Relations.
- **ABC Christmas Eve Special.** High Point University produced a Christmas Eve worship service that was aired on ABC. This worship service featured the preaching of Rev. Dr. Michael Brown, the music of High Point University Chamber Singers (led by Dr. Marc Foster, Music Director of Jamestown UMC), and local clergy, students, and staff reading scripture and poetry.
- **Fall Family Weekend.** Dr. John Maxwell was the featured preacher for the fall family weekend worship service with 1,500 people in attendance. The HPU Chapel Choir led the music, with a variety of special musical guests.
- **Weekly Chapel.** Weekly Chapel came back to in-person worship, averaging 150 attendees a week in the 2021-2022 academic year. The series from this year included:
  - Prodigal God: Knowing the God of Jesus
  - Real Relationships: Practices for the Out of Practice
  - Dinners with Jesus: Meals in the Gospel of Luke
  - Bible Project 2022: Reading the Bible with Grown-up Eyes - *HPU Chapel gave away over 300 Wesley Study Bibles as part of this series*
  - Listening to the Cross: the uniqueness of the Christianity
- **Weekly Chapel Series highlights included:**
  - Exodus: I Am
  - Acts of the Apostles: A Move of God's Spirit
  - Advent Series
  - What do I Want When I Want \_\_\_\_\_?
  - Faith and Science Dialogue
  - Letters to My 20 Year-Old Self
  - 8th Annual Black Heritage Worship Service.

Weekly Chapel continues to incorporate Breakout Groups, which average 50 students participating each week.

- **Online Engagement.** Weekly Chapel continues to reach over 1,500 people weekly by streaming through Facebook. A weekly highlight is also released on Instagram and Facebook. Follow:
  - [Fb.com/hpuchapel](https://fb.com/hpuchapel)
  - [Instagram.com/hpuchapel](https://Instagram.com/hpuchapel)
- **Interfaith Partners Program.** Interfaith Partners Program was founded to provide students an employment opportunity to increase their interfaith knowledge and lead interfaith projects like this year's edition of *Infinite Space: Out of Darkness*
- **Sunday Worship.** "Chasing God; Choosing Grace" HPU Chapel's Sunday evening worshipping community, named HPUSunday, gives students a worship night every Sunday night where students lead *lectio divina* study of scripture and contemporary worship.
- **Social Entrepreneurship.** The Board of Stewards with a matching gift from an anonymous donor raised over \$15,000 (a new record) to provide gifts for children during the holidays through the Salvation Army's Angel Tree program. Also for the second year in a row, students are leading a silent auction to benefit West End Ministries, a local community center that provides a women's shelter, afternoon programming for children, and food pantry. Students get experience in fundraising, philanthropy, theologically healthy practices of charity, and build relationships between community and school.
- **Pilgrimage: Asheville and Piedmont Triad.** Over spring break, Rev. Preston Davis and Dr. Chris Franks (Chairperson of Religion Department) led eight students on a pilgrimage experience to Asheville, immersing students in the theology of art, deeper understanding of the wicked problems of homelessness, and serving with the Haywood Street congregation. Another group of eight students also participated in the Piedmont Triad pilgrimage, where they were introduced to faith-based organizations working on the frontlines of human and civil rights issues.
- **Jewish Life Flourishing.** Jewish Life continues to grow steadily each year. The Jewish Life Office has moved out of the Chapel and Religious Life Office to the Office of Student Life.

### e. Pfeiffer University President's and Chaplain's Report

As with most institutions of private education, the 2021-2022 year has been a challenging and fulfilling one for Pfeiffer University, as the institution cautiously returned to delivering most classes in an in-person format in Fall 2021. The fall-to-spring retention rate was a strong 92.1%, indicating high levels of student satisfaction.

#### **Academic Division: data show that Nursing, Physician Assistant Studies, and Exercise Science are on the rise:**

Pfeiffer's graduating class from the Donald Walser School of Nursing leapt into North Carolina's top 10 programs according to at least one metric released by the State Board of Nursing this winter – the three-year rolling average of graduates who passed the National Licensure Examination (NCLEX) stands at 93%. That score equals the large public institution just south of Pfeiffer in Mecklenburg County and places Pfeiffer ahead of private institutions in all adjacent counties. One hundred percent of Nursing graduates from the class of 2021 had full-time positions on graduation day.

Growth has also continued in other healthcare-related fields – in the state-of-the-art Pfeiffer Center for Health Sciences in downtown Albemarle, Pfeiffer accepted another cohort of 45 students, bringing the total number of students in the center to approximately 160 overall (approximately 100 students in Physician Assistant Studies, and approximately 60 students in Occupational Therapy). The first cohort of PA students – many of whom will secure the certificate in Rural Medicine – are scheduled to graduate in May. Interestingly, 30% of all students in the graduate programs located in the Center for Health Sciences majored in Exercise Science as undergraduates. At Pfeiffer, this major has grown from 40 students to 73 students in just two years. In addition, assisted by a grant from a faithful United Methodist family in Anson County, Pfeiffer has renovated its laboratory spaces in this area within the historic Harris Science Building.

The health sciences are not the only disciplines excelling at Pfeiffer. In this year's first-year class, the five most popular disciplines are Business, Nursing, Health and Exercise Science, Biology, and Sport Management. The university also received a wonderful grant in honor of the late Dr. Eugene Earnhardt, a longtime History professor. This gift has made possible the Earnhardt lecture series, and this March, the university was pleased to welcome Carlotta Walls Lanier – civil rights leader and famed member of the "Little Rock Nine," a group of nine courageous high school students who led the way in terms of integrating public schools in Arkansas in the late 1950s.

Seniors are receiving good news related to job placement and graduate schools. Pfeiffer's establishment of a concentration in Cybersecurity with its Computer Science division led to full-time jobs in that field for all four of last year's graduates. In addition, Pfeiffer 2021 graduates are also doctoral students at the Medical University of South Carolina; they are Physician Assistant Studies students in Albemarle; they are MBA students at Pfeiffer's Charlotte campus; they are graduate students in creative writing at Oklahoma State University; they are studying public policy at American University in Washington, D.C. Already, the class of 2022 has seen a student accepted to Duke Divinity School.

Finally, Pfeiffer is pleased to announce the arrival of a new Vice-President of Academic Affairs. Dr. Daniel Mynatt, an Old Testament scholar, experienced dean, experienced accreditation liaison, and graduate of Wake Forest University, has come aboard and lives on Pfeiffer's traditional campus in Misenheimer. Dr. Mynatt comes to us with a vast array of experiences. He has served institutions in South Carolina as a professor of Old Testament and as dean. He has served an institution in Texas as dean, accreditation liaison, and interim provost. Importantly, in his volunteer work, Dr. Mynatt has served the accrediting body, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), on over 20 committees designed to examine the practices of Pfeiffer's peer institutions in the south. He has chaired eight of those committees. All are invited to stop by campus this year to help welcome Dr. Mynatt. He has swiftly improved operations in the Office of Academic Affairs through a divisional restructuring and has improved faculty morale by hosting several events in his home there. Pfeiffer is grateful that this North Carolina native has come home to serve here.

#### **From the University Chaplain's Office:**

It is clear from the sentences above that Pfeiffer's faculty members do excellent work preparing students for lifetimes of service in ministry, medicine, business, education, and other fields. Staff continues to be integral in preparing the region's future "servant leaders." The University Chaplain has one of the most important roles on campus in terms of relating to students, and she has become a member of the President's Cabinet at Pfeiffer.

As Pfeiffer continues her commitment to church-relatedness in new and innovative ways, of the following examples, the most exciting development within the chaplain's office this year is establishing the academic component of XOK, Pfeiffer's Christian Ecumenical Community. Based on a Wesleyan Model of ministry, students can now take a one-hour academic course alongside their major each semester. If a student takes the XOK course six times before graduation along with three Religion and Practical Theology courses, they can graduate with a certificate in Christian Leadership.

This year's theme in XOK was Christian Formation. In the fall, they centered on Spiritual Disciplines, and in the spring, they concentrated on connections between being created in the Image of God, the Kingdom of God, and Social Justice. In addition, students attended weekend retreats at Mount Shepherd, where they participated in team-building leadership activities like the Leap of Faith, meaningful worship experiences, and cooking a meal together. It is exciting that this program continues to grow and develop Wesleyan Christian leaders equipped to serve in the 21st Century.

**Intersections.** Pfeiffer's weekly chapel service, continues to explore the crossroads between faith and academy every Wednesday at 10 am. Back in person this year, students had the opportunity to hear faculty and community speakers discuss current events like the war in Ukraine and race in America. Moreover, students participated in traditional worship, special services such as the Blessing of the Animals, and kinesthetic learning experiences like meditative hiking. A space for experimentation, innovation, and deep questions, Intersections continues to enhance Pfeiffer's church-related experience.

**Connections,** Pfeiffer's student-led worship service, continues to meet the campus community's spiritual needs. Each week students create a sacred space outside the chapel walls to explore their beliefs and values through music, word, centering prayer, and reflection. In addition, students led in-person interactive worship experiences that included reflective activities, art, conversation, and music. They also experimented with Fresh Expression concepts like Dinner Church.

Pfeiffer's **Beliefs and Values Initiative** welcomes students of all religious and philosophical backgrounds to build a community based on the principles of mutual respect, understanding, and dialogue. This year students hosted and participated in a two-day hybrid interfaith conference with Elon University. Students also offered programming that included events like Make Your Own Mandala, What's That Symbol, and Spill Your Ink: A Tattoo Story Telling Event.

**The Francis Center for Servant Leadership:** Francis Scholars continue to embody John Wesley's charge to love God and one another. Students participated in several service initiatives on- and off-campus throughout the academic year, including weekly builds at Habitat for Humanity Stanly, Stanly County Christian Ministries, Backpack Buddies with Uwharrie District, Stanly County Angel Tree, and Project Linus, among others. Within the center, students learn about servant leadership, and how leading from below truly helps change the world.

**Faith-filled Racial Equity Trips:** This year, the chaplain's office partnered with the English department to take students on two co-curricular trips to better understand the role of racial equity and religion in America. This past fall, with the help of the WNCC and Uwharrie District, students visited the Equal Justice Initiative in Montgomery, Alabama. Here, students explored the history of racism in the United States utilizing James Cone's *The Cross and the Lynching Tree*. In the spring, students will visit Charleston, South Carolina. Here, they will learn about the role religion plays in both racial violence and empowerment by visiting the Gullah Gullah Geechee people and Mother Emanuel Baptist Church in Charleston, SC, and by having conversations with indigenous peoples of the area. These trips aim to empower students to think critically about their faith and how that impacts different avenues of their life.

**Pfeiffer Pfriends:** The chaplain's office continues to partner with an ecumenical group of local churches from five different denominations in Albemarle as part of the Pfeiffer Pfriends initiative. This growing program matches individual church members with Occupational Therapy and Physician Assistant students – matches based in part on the denominational preferences of the student – and the "Pfriends" sent notes of encouragement, gift cards, snacks, etc., to their students throughout the academic year. The goal is to provide support and community to the new OT and PA students in the area and deepen relationships between the students and the churches in their new "hometown" of Albemarle. The student response continues to be overwhelmingly positive, and Pfeiffer is grateful for its continued United Methodist and ecumenical support.

**Pfeiffer YeTI:** As of April 1st, Rev. Maegan Habich leads Pfeiffer YeTI. Focusing on the intersection of Christian leadership, social justice, and vocation, high school-aged participants will meet with Pfeiffer faculty and staff from all different majors to discern what Christ is calling them to do in the world. Students will explore all Pfeiffer has to offer in this pre-college experience. They will gain insight from on-site faculty about several different majors and careers, visit innovative field sites in the surrounding area, and take a deep dive theologically about why their work matters to God and the Kingdom. All should consider sending their youth to this worthwhile, faith-filled experience.

**From the Office of the Chief Financial Officer:**

Recall that in the summer of 2019, a new president and a new CFO took office. The budget had not been balanced in several years, and the accrediting body had sanctioned Pfeiffer, informing the board and incoming leadership that Pfeiffer would need to balance the budget for three consecutive years. Pfeiffer is pleased to announce that it has balanced the budget for two consecutive years and will continue to work to achieve a third consecutive balanced budget for this fiscal year by June 30. Though undergraduate enrollment has trended down for two consecutive years – going from about 800 students to about 700 students in Misenheimer – graduate student enrollment is trending up, and the university has received two significant gifts of real estate in the past 24 months. The percentage of alumni who give to the university on an annual basis has also risen for three consecutive years, a sign that the more "scientific" approach to advancement and development at Pfeiffer is paying dividends.

The Center for Health Sciences in Albemarle has been an essential catalyst for these improvements as well. Noting that applications to this area of Pfeiffer's graduate school have increased in number, the trustees have assembled a committee – composed of trustees, faculty members, and administrators – on each of the three campuses to study more deeply the viability of each academic program on campus. As Pfeiffer adds programs, it may be that the trustees identify other programs that merit a deeper investment, too. It may also be the case that there are programs that are no longer viable.

Scott Walker Bullard, President  
Maegan Habich, Chaplain

## f. Proposed WNCB Higher Education Board Trustees

**(Petition 14)** Approved June 17, 2022

### Trustees of Brevard College

*Term Trustees:* Betsy O. Barefoot, B. Barbara Boerner, John S. Boggs, Isaac Bradley, Ronald L. Burgess Jr., Joe DePippo, Art Fisher, Calvin Harrelson III, Reginald D. Heinitch Jr., Barbara A. Hulse, J. Phillip Jerome, A. Edwin Jones, W. Bradley Lakeson Jr., Mark Lemel, Barbara M. Nesbitt, Jack Parker, Leigh Ann Pickup, Alfred F. Platt Jr., Connell Stafford, Jerry Stone, Elizabeth O. Taylor, Dona D. Vaughn, W. Heathley Weldon, W. Gil West, Michael Whitehead

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*Ex-Officio:* Bradley J. Andrews, Maxie G. (Jenny) Munro

**(Petition 15)** Approved June 17, 2022

### Trustees of High Point University

*Elected:* Michael Brown, Teresa B. Caine, Richard D. Callicutt II, Roy Carroll, Lorraine Charman, Christine B. Cottrell, David F. Couch, J. Carven Foster, Shirley T. Frye (Secretary), James C. Howell, Kenneth Kahn, Miriam O. Kimsey, Paul Leeland, Peter A. Mahler, Katherine K. Maynard, Kristine Boll Mestdagh, Kevin P. Norton, Jeff Patterson, Mark Phillips, Steve Pond, Anne K. Walker, J. Alexander Ward, Mark A. Webb, Douglas S. Witcher, Molly Millis Young

*Ex-Officio:* Nido Qubein (President), Amy MacArthur (Faculty Representative), William Tarrant (President, Alumni Assoc.), Iv Culp (Chair, Board of Visitors), Kenneth Carter (Bishop, WNCBUMC), Leonard Fairley (Bishop, NCCUMC)

*Honorary:* David Hayworth, Jacob Martinson, Thomas Stockton

*Lifetime:* Elizabeth H. Aldridge, Robert J. Brown (Chair), Richard P. Budd, Thayer Coggin, Earl E Congdon, Floyd T. Craven, John L. Finch, David L. Francis, Donald W. Haynes, Christopher L. Henson (Vice Chair), Thomas E. Ingram (Chair, Academic Affairs), Ron L. Jones, Gene C. Kester, William V. Kester Jr., Meredith P. Michener, J. Robert Stout, Richard F. Vert, Fred E. Wilson

## 2. UNITED METHODIST SCHOOLS OF THEOLOGY AND UNIVERSITIES

### a. Africa University

This year, The United Methodist Church marks 30 years of vibrant, transformative ministry through Africa University (AU). Thank you, Western North Carolina Conference, for your faithfulness and generosity in bringing the dream of Africa University to life.

From the first conversations in 1984 to formal approval at the General Conference in 1988, the planting of Africa University required vision, faith, and bold action in the face of predictions that it could never succeed. Africa University found advocates and friends in the Western North Carolina Conference and across the denomination. The “Dream is Alive” was the rallying cry in March 1992 as 40 students from six African countries attended the first lectures in repurposed farm buildings. In celebrating its 30th anniversary, Africa University is honoring the past and looking to the future, while remaining true to its mission as the cornerstone ministry for United Methodist-related leadership development in Africa.

Africa University’s journey from day one to the present is a shared story of being salt and light. Africa University is also part of the Western North Carolina Conference’s story—a uniting United Methodist dream come true—of restoring hope, equipping, and sending forth young leaders to shape an abundant life for themselves and for the communities they serve.

Much like the year that preceded it, 2021 affirmed that God’s grace is sufficient in all circumstances. In January 2021, the students, faculty, and staff grappled with the sudden death of Africa University Vice Chancellor, Dr. Munashe Furusa. As the year unfolded, the COVID-19 pandemic claimed more lives, continued to restrict travel, and damaged livelihoods. Unable to be together on campus, the students, faculty, and staff grieved, pivoted, supported, and encouraged each other, and persevered.

Against the backdrop of a global pandemic, Africa University found new opportunities for missional engagement in 2021. The year’s highlights include:

- Effective online-only teaching, learning and student assessment: About 99 percent of students participated in online learning. Enrollment held steady at 3,060 students and more than 500 graduates from 24 African countries were awarded degrees in July 2021.
- The installation of AU’s fifth Chancellor: Bishop Gaspar João Domingos of the Western Angola Episcopal Area was elected Chancellor following the death of Bishop John K. Yambasu of Sierra Leone.
- Research and community service: AU researchers received US\$2 million in funding for regional initiatives to eradicate malaria, tuberculosis, and other communicable diseases. The Africa University Malaria Institute was established to serve as a center of excellence supporting the fight to eradicate malaria.

AU’s students and graduates led, and showed their love of neighbor, with initiatives to feed hungry families, care for the environment, and improve the quality of life of legally blind parents and their children.

AU received the 2021 Jairos Jiri Humanitarian Award from the Government of Zimbabwe in recognition of its pandemic impact mitigation efforts.

Africa University is grateful to the Western North Carolina Conference for investing 110.64 percent of the asking to the Africa University Fund (AUF) in 2021. Thank you to the more than 1,100 churches in the Western North Carolina Conference for their extraordinary generosity in a difficult year. Thank you for graciously ensuring access to a life-changing educational experience for the students at Africa University, most of whom are unable to fund a college education on their own!

Thank you, Western North Carolina Conference, for letting your light shine for young women and men who would otherwise be left on the sidelines. “A city on top of a hill can’t be hidden.” Similarly, AU’s current students and its more than 10,000 graduates to

date are that metaphor made real. The Western North Carolina Conference walks alongside these young people as they hone their abilities, live fully into their purpose, and join in the work of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

James H. Salley, Associate Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement and President/CEO, Africa University (Tennessee) Inc.

### b. Boston University School of Theology

The Boston University School of Theology (BUSTH) is profoundly grateful for the partnership, prayers, and support in these challenging times. A year like 2021 makes even more relevant BUSTH's historic and ongoing commitments to peace and justice in cultivating transformational leaders. BUSTH remains hopeful and vigilant in continued partnership with UMC conferences.

#### BREAKING NEWS:

- **Return to Campus:** Faculty, administrators, and library returned to in-person instruction and work in Fall 2021, with many events reaching hybrid audiences. Strict COVID-19 precautions continue to ensure the safety of students, faculty, and administrators.
- **Students:** The Fall 2021 entering class was among the most diverse, with 108 new students enrolling in September.
- **Faculty:** In September the appointment of *Cristian De La Rosa* as Associate Dean for Students and Community Life was celebrated. Prof. *Shelly Rambo* leads the Lilly-funded project on "Trauma-Responsive Congregations," and two faculty members—Prof. *Dana Robert* and *Wesley Wildman*—were each honored with festschrifts. Prof. *Jonathan Calvillo*'s book *The Saints of Santa Ana* received the HTI Book Award, and Prof. *Choi Hee An* published *A Postcolonial Leadership*. BUSTH is conducting two faculty searches with anticipation of welcoming new faculty in the fall.
- **Launch of a New Online Degree:** BUSTH's first fully online master's degree—the Master of Religion and Public Leadership (MARPL)—is currently enrolling students for its first cohort in fall 2022. MARPL seeks students who wish to be prepared for leadership roles that creatively engage the challenges of public life.
- **Peale Foundation Grant:** Prof. *Steven Sandage* and his research team were awarded a \$2.19 million, five-year grant by the Norman Vincent Peale Foundation for a project that fosters a network of communities for relational care and support to spiritual leaders and therapists to offer resources to reduce trauma risk and vocational burnout and foster flourishing.
- **Scholarships:** Free tuition is offered to UMC-registered candidates for ordained ministry and leadership fellowships that support students in ethnic, gender, and sexuality studies. New funds include the Sacred Worth Scholarship Fund and the Dean Thurman & Bishop Easterling Fellowship Fund.
- **Online Lifelong Learning:** BUSTH offers online workshops for professional and spiritual enrichment of religious leaders. Recent workshops include "Practices of Grief in a Time of Pandemic" and "Reflecting with Howard Thurman." To learn more, visit [bu.edu/sth/oil](http://bu.edu/sth/oil).
- **Development:** Recent accomplishments include endowing the Center for Global Christianity and Mission upon its 20th anniversary and new funding for student scholarships and academic programs

#### COMMITMENT TO JUSTICE and COMPASSION:

- BUSTH's Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion offers webinars on timely inclusion efforts, such as "*Increasing Participation of Students of Underrepresented Backgrounds*."
- The 2021-22 *Lowell Lectures* are dedicated to cross-advocacy and intersectionality in racial justice efforts. This fall, Dr. Kwok Pui Lan advocated for broader understandings of political theology and greater awareness of anti-Asian sentiment and violence. A diverse panel response fostered rich conversation.
- Work continues to improve accessibility, sustainability, and responsible investing. BUSTH is the first certified Green School at BU and active in the Green Seminary Initiative.

G. Sujin Pak, Dean

### c. Candler School of Theology

Since 1914, **Candler School of Theology at Emory University** has lived into its mission, educating faithful and creative leaders for the church's ministries throughout the world. This year, as it leaned into this critical work and continued to adapt to a world changed by the coronavirus pandemic, it imagined new possibilities for students who are called by God to pursue serious theological study and preparation for ministry. For some, opening avenues to graduate theological education requires moving financial obstacles, and for others, geography or family responsibilities may be the barriers. Candler is committed to assisting students in removing these barriers and opening new pathways to ministry.

An official seminary of The United Methodist Church, Candler holds true to the Methodist value of ecumenical openness, enthusiastically welcoming students from 43 denominations, with 45% of MDiv students coming from the Wesleyan tradition. Candler's student body reflects the diversity and breadth of the Christian faithful, with an enrollment of 466 from 16 countries and 38 states, 45% persons of color (U.S.), and a median age of 28 among MDivs. This diversity is a blessing, enriching both students and the larger community and providing a "learning laboratory" for ministry in the 21st century—ministry that reaches across difference, works to resolve injustice, and embodies Christ's love in and among all.

Candler offers six single degrees (MDiv, MTS, MRL MRPL, ThM, DMin) and ten dual degrees. DMin is 90% online, so students can remain in their places of ministry while earning their degrees. Its high 87% completion rate illustrates both the students' quality and Candler's commitment to their success. This year, it increased online offerings in other degrees as well. Now students can complete the Master of Religion and Public Life completely online; the Master of Religious Leadership with concentrations in Youth Ministry, Justice, Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation, or Wesleyan Leadership and Heritage in a hybrid format; and MDiv students can complete core classes online. Plus, the new Remote Teaching Parish (RTP) program allows MDiv students who have jobs in ecclesial settings far from the Atlanta campus to take core classes online and complete their contextual education requirements at their place of ministry, participating in mentor-led online groups with other RTP students.

Alleviating student debt through generous financial aid is a top priority. In 2020-2021, Candler awarded more than \$6.8 million in financial aid, with 100% of MDiv and 98.5% of all students receiving support. All MDiv students who are certified candidates for ordained ministry in the UMC receive full-tuition scholarships, and all MDiv, MTS, MRL, and ThM students who are enrolled part-time or more receive a scholarship covering at least 50% of tuition for the length of their program.

Hundreds of laity and theology students alike have joined in classes and events offered through The Candler Foundry, an innovative program to make theological education accessible to all. Through short and semester-length courses taught by Candler faculty, videos and discussion guides to spark conversation in groups or one-on-one, and online panel discussions, those who want to delve more deeply into theology and the Bible have the chance to do just that. View the latest offerings at [candlerfoundry.emory.edu](https://candlerfoundry.emory.edu).

Associate Dean of Methodist Studies the Rev. Dr. Anne Burkholder will retire from Candler at the end of the 2021-22 academic year. Candler is grateful to God for her energetic and skillful leadership in this vital area as she strengthened the connection between students and conferences throughout the UMC, mentoring them as they discerned their call and navigated the ordination process.

Candler's ability to fulfill its mission to provide the church with the faithful and creative leaders it needs depends upon prayers, partnership, and support. Thanks to all benefactors for the countless ways they advance this essential ministry in the life of The United Methodist Church. Visit online at [candler.emory.edu](https://candler.emory.edu).

Jan Love, Dean

#### **d. Drew University Theological School**

In spring and fall of 2021, Drew Theological School began returning to its Madison, New Jersey campus for some classes, meetings, and worship. As with many churches, in-person events were held in spaces equipped for live-streaming or Zoom participation. The shift to remote learning during COVID-19 pandemic thus significantly expanded online course offerings and accessible community events. Now, a number of students in Drew's masters programs will progress through their programs in US and global locations far from New Jersey. This year, the school welcomed 150 new students, again the largest class in a decade, and have a current enrollment of 376 students.

Drew cultivates pastors, preachers, deacons, activists, teachers, and thought leaders who are taking their places as the next generation of faith leaders and change agents. Diversity is a hallmark of the student body, including theological, vocational, age, racial, and national diversity, with internationally representative (Asian, African, and South American) and United States (Black, white, Latinx, and Asian-American) students. The student body is truly global, with 35% of students from 21 different countries. For the first time in its history, Drew has an African student association, initiated by Drew Theological School students from 14 African countries, that is already contributing richly to the Drew community both on-campus and online. It has welcomed new faculty in Latinx ministries and world Christianity. It has also seen an increase in United Methodist students particularly interested in the school's Gospel-inspired traditions of social justice advocacy and widely inclusive ministry. Drew is proud that many United Methodist Global Fellows have recently chosen to continue their journey in ministry at Drew. Its UMC graduates are serving in Greater New Jersey, Eastern Pennsylvania, and New York conferences as well as conferences across the country.

The faculty is committed to continuing to develop the curriculum in ways that take seriously the wide range of lived experience and calls to ministry of the students that gather in their global classrooms. All degree programs at the Theological School include interdisciplinary courses that demand out-of-the-box thinking, apprenticeship training that addresses real-world issues, and modes of learning that promote adaptability and innovation. The MDiv and MATM degrees include a required gateway year, vocational pathways, and experiential learning that develops and deepens adaptive leadership skills. The curriculum features a team-designed and taught interdisciplinary sequence of core courses reflecting the integration of the theological disciplines and practices characteristics of the life of faith. The faculty has also articulated shared values that are infused across the teaching and learning at Drew: a commitment to anti-racism; gender and sexual-identity equality; eco-sustainability and environmental justice; and interfaith understanding and cooperation.

Melanie Johnson-DeBaufre, Interim Dean

#### **e.1. Duke Divinity School**

Edgardo Colón-Emeric, the Irene and William McCutchen Associate Professor of Theology and Reconciliation and director of the Center for Reconciliation, began his two-year term as the dean of Duke Divinity School on July 1. Colón-Emeric earned both his M.Div. and Ph.D. from Duke and has been a member of the faculty since 2008. He has served as the director for the Hispanic House of Studies and as the director for the Center for Reconciliation (CFR). An ordained elder in the North Carolina Annual Conference, he directs the Central American Methodist Course of Study and the Peru Theological Initiative and serves on the United Methodist Committee on Faith and Order and on both national and international Methodist-Catholic dialogues. Recognizing that he is entering the dean's office at a pivotal time for the school, Colón-Emeric stated his commitment to keep the Divinity School heading in a life-giving direction: "The world needs the church, and the church needs the theologically grounded, intellectually vibrant, and socially innovative pastors and leaders that we train. From the heart of Duke University, we cultivate wisdom that is joyfully orthodox, Christ-centered, Spirit-led, and irrevocably anti-racist for the sake of the church in its mission for the life of the world." He is the first Latino dean of the school.

A new partnership with North Carolina Wesleyan College will enable qualified undergraduates to take master's level courses at Duke Divinity School beginning in 2022. The Duke Accelerated Pastoral Formation Program offers select juniors and seniors the option to begin coursework toward Duke's Hybrid M.Div. or Master of Arts in Christian Practice (M.A.) degree programs while completing their baccalaureate degree. Funded by the support of the Kern Family Foundation, the Accelerated Program will help students lower educational debt incurred in the preparation for ministry process and accelerate their timeline to engaging the field of ministry. In the spring the school launched the Asian House of Studies, a formational community that will support Asian and Asian-American students; build a network of Asian and Asian-American students, alumni, and church leaders; and provide resources for Asian

theological studies. Asian House of Studies is under the leadership of Sangwoo Kim, a consulting professor and senior director of the Methodist House of Studies, and Jung Choi, a consulting professor and senior director of Wesleyan Formation Initiatives.

Three new certificates were approved this year, and all can be earned as part of the residential M.Div., Hybrid M.Div., M.T.S., and M.A. degree programs. The Certificate in Methodist/Wesleyan Studies is aimed at pan-Methodist/Wesleyan students who want to engage in robust and intentional training in Wesleyan theology and spiritual practice in preparation for leadership positions in Methodist and Wesleyan organizations and churches, such as The United Methodist Church, AME Church, AME Zion Church, and Korean Methodist Church. In the Certificate in Latinx Studies, students will practice and hone skills for ministry while becoming part of a learning community that is committed to Hispanic/Latinx communities and seeks to learn from Hispanic/Latinx traditions and cultures. The Certificate in Worship is designed to prepare Duke Divinity students to engage in practical formation and theoretical reflection on the worship of God in Christian congregations.

In January, the school announced 12 full-tuition fellowships to support incoming residential Master of Divinity degree program students who pursue a certificate in Black Church Studies or Latinx Studies. In addition to providing full-tuition scholarships, the Black Church Studies and Latinx Studies Fellowships provide vocationally specific formation and mentoring opportunities for the fellows and up to \$24,000 in stipend support and internship opportunities through the Office of Field Education. The fellowships begin in the fall of 2022.

The Office of Wesleyan Engagement announced the “Rediscovering the Heart of Methodism” project. This project is a missional initiative of the Divinity School with the support of the Kern Family Foundation. It seeks to nurture innovative leadership within the Wesleyan tradition as a constructive and hope-filled response to a turbulent ecclesial landscape. Supported by a gift from the Duke Endowment, the school launched To Heal the Wounded Soul, a project to strengthen Wesleyan pastors in the Carolinas who are Black, Indigenous, or people of color, including from the AME, AME Zion, CME, and UMC churches. Led by the Office of Black Church Studies and the Clergy Health Initiative To Heal the Wounded Soul will develop peer networks, support groups, and retreats to address the specific mental, emotional, and spiritual needs of this community.

This academic year Duke Divinity School welcomed the largest incoming class in the school’s history, with 259 new students from 31 different states and five other countries. Enrollment in the flagship M.Div. degree program jumped to 133 students, up from approximately 110 students during each of the previous four years. The growth was heavily driven by the first cohort of 52 Hybrid M.Div. students. There were 27 denominations represented in the M.Div. entering class, with 38 percent affiliated with The United Methodist Church (up from 30 percent in 2020). Anglican-Episcopal students made up 13 percent of the new M.Div. students (up from nine percent the prior year); non-denominational students, 11 percent; and Baptists, 10 percent. The Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) welcomed 36 students, the Master of Theological Studies (M.T.S.) gained 33, and the M.A. saw 17 new students. The Master of Theology (Th.M.) enrolled 12 students, and the Doctor of Theology (Th.D.) enrolled seven new students. The Certificate in Theology and Health Care welcomed five residential students to campus and a large first cohort of 14 students in the hybrid version of the program. Across all degree programs at the Divinity School, 32 percent of the incoming class identified as a race or ethnicity other than white. Black students made up 18 percent of all students; Latinx students, six percent; Asian students, two percent; and American Indian students, two percent. Women made up 47 percent of incoming students across all programs.

Three new faculty members joined the faculty in 2021. Polly Ha is an Associate Professor of the History of Christianity whose work focuses on the history of Christianity and the construction of diverse confessional and ecclesiastical traditions in the Reformation and post-Reformation world. Ronald K. Rittgers is the Duke Divinity School Chair in Lutheran Studies and Professor of the History of Christianity, and his research interests include the religious, intellectual, social, and cultural history of medieval and early modern/Reformation Europe, focusing especially on the history of theology and devotion. Daniel Castelo, William Kellon Quick Professor of Theology and Methodist Studies, taught intensive Wesleyan theology courses in Mexico, Honduras, and Brazil, and then took a teaching post at a Mexican seminary for three years. He has been an active participant in the Central American Methodist Course of Study program and recently has served as a doctoral mentor for the Hispanic Theological Initiative.

Edgardo Colón-Emeric, Dean

## **e.2. Convocation & Pastors’ School at Duke Divinity School**

Due to the pandemic, the 2021 Convocation and Pastors’ School (CPS) was again a virtual event with the theme, *Uncommon Ground: Living with Humility, Patience, and Tolerance in a Divided Age*, designed for Christian leaders of all traditions. The event was spread over five separate days. The primary two gatherings, October 4-5, centered around panel discussions, with each session spotlighting one of the featured speakers. Bishop Claude Alexander, Senior Pastor of The Park Church in Charlotte, N.C., Dr. John Inazu, distinguished professor of law and religion at Washington University, Sara Groves, popular singer-songwriter, and Dr. Warren Kinghorn, Associate Research Professor of Pastoral and Moral Theology at Duke Divinity School. Optional lunchtime sessions during these two days offered updates on Duke Divinity School Houses of Study as well as chances to register for small group opportunities with our featured speakers. On the following three Mondays, CPS hosted lunchtime webinars featuring Tru Pettigrew, motivational speaker and empowerment consultant, Dr. Jan Holton, Associate Professor of the Practice of Pastoral Theology and Care at Duke Divinity School, and Psalms in Dialogue featuring Dr. Ellen Davis, Distinguished Professor of Bible and Practical Theology at Duke Divinity School, Dr. Zeb Highben, Associate Professor of the Practice of Church Music at Duke Divinity School and Amanda Hughes, Director of Development and Strategy, Duke University Chapel.

The Convocation & Pastors’ School Board of Managers is comprised of representatives from the North Carolina and Western North Carolina Conferences, and it advises and works with Duke Divinity School to offer a quality continuing education event annually. The Western North Carolina Conference representatives on the Board of Managers are: 2018-2022 Heidi Campbell-Robinson and Avery White; 2019-2023 Darryl Dayson and Sue Anne Morris; 2020-2024 Samuel Moore and Bill Roberts; and, 2021-2025 Meg Gaston and Ellis Carson.



We are planning for the 2022 CPS to be in-person October 9-11, 2022 at Duke Divinity School. The theme will be “Creativity and Courage From Trauma to Tough Hope.” In response to the pandemic and thanks to the generosity of The Duke Endowment and Duke Divinity School, the 2021 event was offered at no charge. Pastors serving churches eligible for grants from The Duke Endowment, current divinity school students, and recent graduates of Duke Divinity School were able to attend in-person Convocations at a discounted rate.

Ken Spencer, Director  
[ken.spencer@div.duke.edu](mailto:ken.spencer@div.duke.edu)

### f. Gammon Theological Seminary

Gammon Theological Seminary, located in Atlanta, GA, is the Interdenominational Theological Center’s United Methodist constituent member. The Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC) is a Christian Africentric ecumenical consortium of seminaries and fellowships that educate students to commit to practicing justice and peace through a liberating and transforming spirituality to become leaders in the church and local/global communities.

Gammon was founded in 1883 by The Methodist Episcopal Church, with assistance from the Freedman’s Aid Society. Today, Gammon Theological Seminary is the only predominately Black Seminary of the 13 approved United Methodist-related theological institutions. The faculty and administration of Gammon at the ITC create an environment in which critical thinking, investigative reflection, decision-making, and responsible action happen. The ITC’s accreditation is with the Association of Theological Schools and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. Gammon/ITC offers the following degree programs: the Master of Divinity, the Master of Arts in Religion and Education, and the Doctor of Ministry. Admission is open to qualified men and women. The support given to The United Methodist Ministerial Education Fund by United Methodist Conferences continues to enable Gammon students to be grounded in the Wesleyan tradition of theological education. The Gammon Board of Trustees elected its 17th president/dean, Rev. Dr. Candace M Lewis, the first woman to lead the seminary in its 138-year history. Dr. Lewis began her tenure on April 1, 2021.

#### New initiatives and celebrations this year at Gammon include:

- **The Rev. Geraldine Williams-McClellan \$100,000.00 Endowment Fund launched** with Bishop Kenneth Carter and Florida Annual Conference.
- **Commissioned the First Gammon Seminary National Research Project** focused on COVID-19’s impact on Black United Methodist Clergy, Laity and Congregations – partnership with SBC21, BMCRC, BCW, Discipleship Ministries & Convocation Pastors Black UMC. Please visit the website [www.gammon-itc.org](http://www.gammon-itc.org) for the findings.
- **Hosted a Virtual Church Leadership Training Event, “Navigating Next,”** in January 2022 to equip leaders for effective ministry 2022 with over 700 registered attendees.
- **Gammon student participates in the 2021-2022 Ecumenical Institute at Bossey.** Tavis Tinsley, a Gammon senior, was invited by the United Methodist Council of Bishops (COB) the World Council of Churches. He completed the “Complementary Certificate in Ecumenical Studies” through the University of Geneva in Switzerland.
- **Celebrated its 138th Anniversary** and Founder’s Day.

The greatest challenge facing Gammon Seminary is the rising cost of theological education and the significant amount of debt students are incurring as they answer their call to full-time ministry. Therefore, Gammon is committed to raising a million dollars in the next two years to offer full-tuition scholarships to students who are called and committed to full-time ministry in The United Methodist Church.

Gammon Seminary is grateful to the Western North Carolina Conference for its support of theological education and the commitment to ensuring that pastoral leadership is theologically trained to lead forward in the Wesleyan tradition.

Candace M. Lewis, President-Dean

### g. Methodist Theological School in Ohio

#### With \$1 million grant, Methodist Theological School in Ohio (MTSO) supports existing religious leaders and helps form new ones

MTSO has received a five-year grant of \$999,665 to establish “Connecting Pathways: A Multi-Faceted Approach to Strengthen and Sustain Current and Future Faith Leaders.” The project is being funded through Lilly Endowment Inc.’s Pathways for Tomorrow Initiative.

The project utilizes MTSO’s strengths in two distinct parts. Part One, “Connecting Pathways: Congregations and Other Ministry Partners,” supports existing religious leaders, focusing on anti-racism training and resourcing. Working with partner organizations, MTSO helps faith leaders to assess land use and church food programs to assist in building community engagement. Part Two, “Connecting Pathways: Vocational Exploration Intensive for Young Adults,” invites young adults to imagine the possibilities for lifelong faith, offering experiential learning, theological reflection, worship, and relationships with healthy community leaders and vibrant faith communities. It introduces the whys and hows of ministry, connecting participants with faith leaders, including some of those involved in Part One of the project.

#### New initiative enhances scientific literacy for seminarians

MTSO has a longstanding commitment to preparing religious leaders who are conversant in and respectful of science. An important part of that effort is “Questioning Science with Good Faith: Shifting the Engagement of Science in Seminaries,” a project that integrates science into church history and theological studies curricula while also contributing to the public discourse on intersection of science and religion. The project is made possible by a \$75,000 grant from the American Association for the Advancement of Science Dialogue on Science, Ethics, and Religion program. The grant is funded by the John Templeton Foundation. In September 2021, MTSO offered an online, multi-professional conversation, “Pastors, Pandemics and Public Health: Building Collaborative Responses to COVID-19.”

**Full-tuition scholarships extended to those pursuing United Methodist candidacy**

MTSO and the school's donors pledged to extend a full-tuition pledge to all prospective students who are pursuing United Methodist elder or deacon candidacy. The MTSO admissions staff is happy to answer questions about this initiative at 800-333-6876 or [admissions@mtso.edu](mailto:admissions@mtso.edu). Learn more about MTSO at [www.mtso.edu](http://www.mtso.edu).

Danny Russell, Director of Communications

**h. Saint Paul School of Theology**

Educating tomorrow's leaders by offering on-campus, online, and hybrid learning courses at a FLEXible schedule, Saint Paul School of Theology is a seminary of The United Methodist Church committed to the formation of people for innovative, creative ministry. Grounded in the academic study of faith and ministry, theology is practiced in a traditional classroom and a contextual curriculum.

As the global pandemic continues to bring challenges to our daily lives, Saint Paul School of Theology began the 2021-2022 academic year, again offering students an option to attend courses via Zoom or on-campus while maintaining safety protocols. Weekly chapel service continues to be available online, allowing staff and students to come together as one institution where all are invited to create a sacred atmosphere from wherever they are. In addition to faculty and staff serving as chapel speakers, Saint Paul was blessed to have alumni and special guest speakers Rev. Winter Hamilton of Manchester UMC, Rev. Delesslyn Kennebrew, Rev. Dr. Carol Cook Moore, and more. Chapel recordings are available on the [Saint Paul YouTube channel](#) for those who cannot join live.

Saint Paul staff and faculty continue to contribute to the academy, church, and society. This year, it has had many faculty and staff changes. After many years of tremendous service to students and the Seminary, Dr. James Brandt and Dr. Hal Knight announced retirement plans effective at the end of the 2021-2022 academic year. In addition, Dr. Jeanne Hoeft will step down from her role as Vice President of Academic Affairs and Dean at the end of the academic year, but will continue as faculty. New additions to the Seminary family include Dr. Joshua Bartholomew, Assistant Professor of Ethics, Church and Society; Dr. Tiffany Nagel Monroe, Executive Director of the Oklahoma Campus; and, Rabbi Michael Zedek, Rabbi-in-Residence.

The faculty of Saint Paul School of Theology maintains high standards of scholarship, research, publication, and engagement. Over the past year, their many activities and publications have been so numerous that space permits only the sharing of selected highlights.

1. Dr. Nancy Howell, Professor of Theology and Philosophy of Religion and Oubri A. Poppele Professor of Health and Welfare Ministries, was re-elected to a second term on the Executive Committee of the International Society for Science and Religion. She also had an article published in a South African journal. With more than a decade of service, she serves on the Broader Social Impacts Committee of the National Museum of Natural History at the Smithsonian.
2. Dr. Casey Sigmon, Assistant Professor of Preaching and Worship and Director of Contextual Education, was invited to be a writer for "Lent Another Way," an e-course, with The Plural Guild and The Many, and she offered the convocation address for Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School in Fall 2021. She also applied for and received a grant from the Wabash Center for Teaching to support my project entitled: "Resisting the Plagiarized Pulpit: Helping Students and the Professor to Find trust their voice through Artistic Instructional Design."
3. This January, Dr. Joshua Bartholomew, Assistant Professor of Ethics, Church and Society, was the guest speaker at a Kansas City event, "Black Theology and the Black Panthers: A Conversation with Dr. Joshua Bartholomew." In addition, he was recently interviewed by Climate Central for the article " 'A moral imperative': Monastic sisters in rural Midwest make faith-based case for climate action."

Saint Paul welcomed 45 new students for the 2021-2022 academic year. New student enrollment for the Fall semester increased by 44 percent (34 new students), with an overall increase for the year of 75 percent. With the COVID-19 pandemic still in the midst, prospective students previewed the Saint Paul community and curriculum via online visits. Students joined in community worship, attended classes, and participated in online discussions with current students to discern if Saint Paul was indeed the choice for theological education. Enrollment remained strong for the Master of Divinity (MDiv) degree program with promising growth in the newly designed Master of Arts in Theological Studies (MATS) and Master of Arts in Christian Ministry (MACM) programs.

In September, Saint Paul held the 2021 Harrington Lecture online featuring Dr. Eboo Patel. His lecture, "We Need to Build: Field Notes for Diverse Democracy," expanded knowledge and built skills, helping people become the kind of leaders diverse democracy needs. In the Spring Semester, Saint Paul Evangelical Society, led by Dr. Hal Knight, hosted a forum given by Dr. Amos Yong, Professor of Theology and Mission, and Dean of the School of Mission and Theology at Fuller Theological Seminary, on "The Holy Spirit and People of other Faiths: Relational Christian Witness in the 2020s." Later in the semester, the Evangelical Society hosted a lecture featuring Dr. Joy Moore, Professor of Biblical Preaching and Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Academic Dean at Luther Seminary. And for the first time, on May 13, Saint Paul held a hybrid commencement celebration via Zoom, allowing graduates to come together from both the Kansas and Oklahoma campuses with attendees viewing from around the country. The school honored the 2022 Distinguished Graduate Award Winner and Commencement Speaker Dr. Stan Copeland during the ceremony.

For the 2021-2022 fiscal year, Saint Paul Course of Study (COS) School educated 228 individual students, 49 of which were new students, with approximately 550 registrations and offering a total of 50 courses. Serving 32 conferences, including 94 districts, 121 full time and 106 part-time licensed local pastors comprised these registrations. Saint Paul Course of Study School welcomed new Regional Director Dr. Lucas Endicott. Dr. Endicott has been serving as Associate Director for the Office of Mission, Service, and Justice at the Missouri Annual Conference and lecturing at Central Methodist University. Due to the continuing pandemic, the school has continued its course offerings in both asynchronous and synchronous online formats. Utilizing this online format, students in 24 states were reached. Plans include an increase in the number of hybrid course offerings. This fiscal year has also ushered in the new ability of online registration completed by the student and access to their student account through Populi as used by seminary students. All of the students share the same benefits by integrating Course of Study School into Populi, making them a more integrated part of the Saint Paul experience.

Saint Paul Board of Trustees added two new members to their ranks: Ms. Debra “Debbie” Buzard, Director of Outreach Ministry at First United Methodist Church of Kearney; and Rev. Martin “Tino” Herrera, Congregational Care Pastor at UM Church of the Resurrection. Through a board initiative related to diversity and inclusion, the Saint Paul Board of Trustees has devoted a significant portion of the last year’s meetings to church leaders with experience and expertise in creating more diverse and inclusive communities and organizations. Aiding Saint Paul’s trustees in better understanding these issues, the board hosted the Rev. Dr. Benjamin Boswell in April 2021. Dr. Boswell, Senior Pastor of Myers Park Baptist Church in Charlotte, North Carolina, described the anti-racism work being led in that community. The City of Charlotte awarded Dr. Boswell its Martin Luther King, Jr. Medallion for the work. In July 2021, Congressman Emanuel Cleaver II of Kansas City shared the perspective on the racial and social justice issues confronting the nation and the efforts being led by the House of Representatives which is hoped to undertake in response. With the board’s assistance, led by Board Chairperson Rev. Dr. Tex Sample, the seminary focuses on its mission. The trustees continuously enhance and evaluate the strategic plans to guide Saint Paul into the future.

As reported in years past, Saint Paul is financially sound and operates with a balanced budget. These last years’ changes have established a solid financial foundation for years of sustainability. The school continues to be grateful for donations from the community that provide technology, scholarships, and evolving academic programs to students. Significant investments in technology have allowed Saint Paul to maintain a hybrid educational delivery model providing a safe learning environment during the continuing pandemic.

Saint Paul’s aim has always been to utilize technology as a conduit to bring faculty and students together regardless of whether they are on-campus or joining remotely through Zoom. The school took a hard look at the distance learning landscape during the pandemic to see how it could substantially enhance the classroom experience. After significant testing, it opted to replace the distance-learning classroom technology with Neat’s offerings, including technology still in development. All the classrooms began upgrades in Fall 2021 with offerings from Neat. Each smaller classroom added a 65” neat.board, a self-contained screen that functions as a full Zoom room, as well as an electronic whiteboard. Anything written or drawn on these boards is transmitted through Zoom to the screens in the classroom and remote Zoom participants. This content can also be saved and emailed to all participants. The school implemented neat.bars in other classrooms that connect to the classrooms’ existing screens. It is currently implementing neat.bar pros, just released at the end of 2021, in each of the large classrooms. Saint Paul School of Theology has always tried to be pioneers with distance-learning technologies. It is very early in the lifecycle of this stimulating and groundbreaking technology. The school is thrilled to partner with Neat and Zoom in revolutionizing the classroom experience.

Saint Paul School of Theology is blessed to be a partner in ministry and help those seeking to discover more and answer the call. The school is grateful for the support of the students and seminary. May we continue to live into the call of Jesus Christ to be faithful witnesses for healing in these unsettled times and for generations to come. President Neil Blair, Saint Paul trustees, faculty, staff, alumni, and students thank the conference for the prayers and support.

Tiana Gatewood, Director of Events and Public Relations

### **i. United Theological Seminary**

For the past 150 years, United Theological Seminary has educated men and women for Christian ministry within the historic traditions of the United Brethren, Evangelical United Brethren, and United Methodist churches. On October 11, 1871, United Theological Seminary, then Union Biblical Seminary, held its first classes in Dayton, Ohio. From a starting class of 11 students, the seminary has grown to 488 students in its most recent academic year,\* representing 39 denominations, 11 countries, and 39 states. Today’s seminary serves a diverse student body that is 53 percent African American.\*\*

On October 10, 2021, the seminary celebrated its 150th anniversary and burned the mortgage on its current campus facilities, freeing up \$400,000 annually to support student scholarships.

In 2021, United received a grant of \$1 million from Lilly Endowment Inc.’s Pathways for Tomorrow Initiative to expand the seminary’s Houses of Study, which offer specialized master’s tracks to equip students for the unique ministry needs of the communities, movements, and denominations they serve. The seminary has introduced six Houses of Study, currently enrolling for 2022-23:

- Fresh Expressions, directed by Dr. Michael Beck;
- Mosaix, in partnership with Mosaix Global Network and directed by Rev. Chip Freed;
- Hispanic, 100% in Spanish for Spanish-speaking leaders, directed by Dr. Jorge Ochoa;
- Black United Methodist, directed by Dr. Vance Ross;
- Global Pentecostal, directed by Dr. Mark Chironna;
- and, Global Wesleyan, directed by Rev. Gregory Stover.

Because United believes so passionately in this initiative, the seminary has dedicated additional resources to offer half-tuition scholarships for inaugural students in its Houses of Study programs.

United also introduced the Academic Dean’s Scholarship, which provides 50 percent tuition for the duration of a master’s degree program, and the Presidential Scholarship, awarding up to \$5,000 per year to new students.

In honor of United’s 150th anniversary year, a generous donor gifted \$2 million to help graduating students reduce their educational debt. Each graduate in the 2021-22 academic year will receive up to \$20,000 toward student debt from theological and previous academic studies.

As United looks forward to the next 150 years with gratitude and anticipation, the seminary remains committed to the preparation of faithful and fruitful Christian leaders to make disciples of Jesus Christ.

Kent Millard, President

\* Student data represent 2020-2021 headcount enrollment. \*\* Figure represents those who responded.

### j. Wesley Theological Seminary

Some days, it seems beloved religious, civic, and educational institutions stand peering into the fog of an unknown future as questions resound: What does the collective future look like, and who will lead it? In the midst of these questions, Wesley remains committed to supporting pastors and churches and to preparing graduates to lead innovative ministries grounded in God's mercy and justice. It stands ready to accompany pastors and churches on the path to which God is calling them.

#### Creating new models of education that respond to student needs

Building on Wesley's strengths and responding to student needs, Wesley is pleased to announce two pathways for master's level students beginning in Fall 2022. For students who reside on or near campus, classes will continue to be offered each week on campus during daytime and evening periods. For students needing to remain in their own contexts, Wesley will offer a hybrid pathway that invites students to campus for a one-week intensive immersion each semester, with the remaining coursework being held online. Learn more about how to be part of the Wesley community and the Washington, DC experience through these pathways at <https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/mdiv/>.

These course pathways also support FlexMA, a degree program built to provide robust learning and theological formation for busy individuals that integrate faith, life, and professional experience with the flexibility needed to customize content and accommodate hectic schedules. Whether preparing for bi-vocational ministry in congregational and institutional settings, going deeper into one's own spiritual journey, or integrating faith and theology into an existing career or "third career" post-retirement, wherever God is calling, the FlexMA will help one prepare to respond fully. Learn more at <https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/flexma/>.

#### Research projects support congregational community engagement and envision future ministry

Four grants from the Lilly Endowment Inc, totaling \$5.25 million, undergird Wesley's research into and support of congregational thriving and innovation.

- A new five-year project through the Wesley Innovation Hub will have two main foci: a one-year Design Fellowship to equip young adult leaders and the Wesley Design Lab, featuring both in-person and online curricula, training, and other resources for congregational innovation. Young adults age 23-29 are invited to apply for the Design Fellowship, which will provide an \$8,000 stipend, community formation, spiritual direction, graduate-level courses in design thinking for ministry, and hands-on experience leading innovation in congregations. Wesley will also be seeking creative persons of faith to be "Innovators in Residence" at Wesley and partner churches who have interesting challenges or opportunities for young adult ministry. To learn more: <https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/wesley-innovation-hub/>
- A second new grant will undergird Wesley's move toward comprehensive theological education for the whole church. Wesley will strengthen its existing excellent master's and doctoral programs while also expanding a suite of pre-degree, post-degree (continuing education), and non-degree courses to meet the current and emerging needs of spiritual leaders in their context.
- Now in its second year of The Source Collaborative, Wesley continues to work with congregations in adjacent UMC annual conferences to identify markers of thriving and pursue them. Congregations and coaches interested in joining the 2023 cohort should apply by September 1, 2022 via [innovation@wesleyseminary.edu](mailto:innovation@wesleyseminary.edu).
- The **Religious Workforce Project**, run by the Lewis Center for Church Leadership, studies religious work in congregations across several denominations to understand current and future needs. Learn about emerging data at <https://religiousworkforce.com/>.

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

Wesley is ready to work to make theological education more accessible and relevant to the realities of ministry today. Wesley offers an 81-hour Master of Divinity, a 36-hour Master of Arts, and a 60-hour Master of Theological Studies, any of which can be focused on specializations in public theology, urban ministry, arts and theology, missional church, children and youth ministry and advocacy, or African-American church leadership. Courses are available in person, online, and in intensive hybrid formats. Info at [www.wesleyseminary.edu/admissions/try-a-class-3](http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/admissions/try-a-class-3).

Wesley provides \$2 million annually in scholarships via regular merit awards, ranging from 25 percent to 100 percent tuition with stipends, including full-tuition scholarships for qualified applicants recommended by WTS alumni, campus ministers, or Christian service ministries; Next Call in Ministry scholarships for students working in a non-ministry setting for at least 10 years; and Generación Latinx Scholarships for emerging Latinx leaders for ministries within and beyond the church.

#### Take your ministry to the next level

The Certificate for Children and Youth Ministry and Advocacy (CYMA) is a non-residential certificate completed in 12-15 months via online classes and up to two residential sessions ([www.wesleyseminary.edu/admissions/cyma-3](http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/admissions/cyma-3)). The Certificate in Faith and Public Life explores the foundations of public theology, religious freedom, and civil discourse ([www.wesleyseminary.edu/ice/programs/public-theology/public-life/](http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/ice/programs/public-theology/public-life/)).

Wesley's premiere Doctor of Ministry program includes three new 2022 tracks: Ministry in a Digital Age; Justice, Compassion, and Witness in a Turbulent World (Cambridge, UK); and a program focused on Latinx ministry. In 2023, it will again see popular DMin tracks: the Cambridge UK track, Military and CPE Chaplains, Global Church Leadership program, Church Leadership Excellence, and a groundbreaking track on Trauma. Visit [www.wesleyseminary.edu/doctorofministry/](http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/doctorofministry/).

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

The **Lewis Center for Church Leadership** conducts leading edge research for the local church. The Lewis Center's *Leading Ideas* e-newsletter and *Leading Ideas Talk* podcast is the go-to source for over 20,000 people in ministry each week. Subscribe at [www.churchleadership.com](http://www.churchleadership.com).

The **Community Engagement Institute** embraces a vibrant vision to be the premier center for churches and faith-based organization engaging their communities. The innovative online Health Minister Certificate Program prepares congregations for public health work in their parishes. Contact: Dr. Tom Pruski, [tpruski@wesleyseminary.edu](mailto:tpruski@wesleyseminary.edu).

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

The **Henry Luce III Center for the Arts and Religion** works with students, religious communities, artists, and scholars exploring the intersection of the arts and theology. Visit [www.luceartsandreligion.org](http://www.luceartsandreligion.org).

#### **Stay connected**

Contact Wesley Theological Seminary at 202-885-8659 or [admissions@wesleyseminary.edu](mailto:admissions@wesleyseminary.edu) and join the Wesley Community online via [www.facebook.com/wesleyseminary](https://www.facebook.com/wesleyseminary), on Instagram [@wesleyseminary](https://www.instagram.com/wesleyseminary), on Twitter [@WesTheoSem](https://twitter.com/WesTheoSem), or sign up for the electronic newsletter.

David McAllister-Wilson, President

### **3. THE GENERAL BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND MINISTRY**

GBHEM seeks to promote innovative and experiential opportunities for transformative learning, higher education, and ministry formation worldwide. The agency works with key partners, churches, and institutions in Africa, Asia Pacific, Europe, and Eurasia, Latin American and the Caribbean, and North America to offer connectational, contextual, and collaborative programs to support the church, the academy, and the world. Among its various activities, GBHEM is responsible for two initiatives approved by General Conference: The Methodist Global Education Fund for Leadership Development (MGEFLD) – which includes the Grants and Scholarships Program (GRASP) – and the Central Conference Theological Education Fund (CCTEF). The agency also maintains Regional Hubs for Leadership, Education and Development (LEAD Hubs) in various locations around the world, has helped create and support the International Association of Methodist Schools, Colleges, and Universities (IAMSCU), and works with regional education associations on five continents. GBHEM is currently partnering with general agencies and other organizations to support important projects on COVID-19 vaccine equity, mindfulness and wellbeing, net-zero emissions, human rights, and the promotion of a culture of generosity throughout the United Methodist worldwide connection.

In 1972, The United Methodist Church reaffirmed its support of the 11 historically black colleges and universities related to the denomination by creating the Black College Fund and this year celebrates its 50th Anniversary. Support for the Black College Fund supports the education of world-changing leaders by investing in the hopes and dreams of students from around the world. Continued support for the Black College Fund renews the vision for the next generation of transformational leaders.

GBHEM celebrates awarding more than 2,250 students a total of \$4,084,979 in scholarships in 2021. These future leaders range from first year freshmen to doctorate level students across the denomination. The board is grateful for the support received in recognizing United Methodist Student Day, World Communion Sunday, and Native American Sunday which helps fund a portion of the scholarships. The remaining funds for these awards come from gifts, annuities, and endowments GBHEM has invested and administered for decades.

Worldwide Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access (WIDEA) is a strategic focus area for GBHEM to align its work with the mission and ministry of congregations and constituents around the world. This renewed commitment includes advanced staff development in intercultural competency, active listening, and a deeper understanding of and appreciation for difference so relevant programs and services may be developed, offered, and implemented more equitably and effectively.

GBHEM remains committed to building and sustaining collaborative cross-conference networks that foster collegiality and guide credentialing for ordained and licensed ministry. The board has partnered with conference leaders to clarify the role of those in ministry while assisting in the interpretation and application of relevant paragraphs within *The Book of Discipline*. GBHEM has supported the work of recruiting, guiding, and credentialing candidates and clergy through the development of Passage - a comprehensive registry resource, as well as a virtual onboarding module for new district and conference board members.

Hundreds of years before amazon.com, John Wesley stuffed the saddlebags of circuit riders with books of theology and biblical interpretation—selling them to fund the movement while spreading it literally. GBHEM continues this innovative spirit by leveraging social enterprise opportunities and creative partnerships as a way of reducing its reliance on apportionments while continuing to focus on delivering the very best services, products, and programs to United Methodist constituents around the world.

The same spirit of service and leadership that first inspired John Wesley lives on in each of us. Today, GBHEM looks confidently to the future taking bold and creative action, remaining good stewards, and continuing to support The United Methodist Church in innovative and meaningful ways.

Greg Bergquist, General Secretary