

VIII. REPORTS

A. 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*). CFA takes this directive seriously.

CFA seeks to wisely discern available and potential resources that match with the vision and implementation of 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.

CF&A believes that apportionments are solid pathways to tangible connectionalism. By joining together resources, our collective bonding achieves far more than we could ever accomplish alone. Yet, CF&A acknowledges that local congregations are engaged in vibrant ministries in their communities. CF&A, therefore, takes seriously the challenge to balance the needs of the local congregations and the needs of the annual conference.

Rather than regurgitate what your apportionment funds are realizing, CF&A simply invites you to further explore and keenly discern what all the teams, committees, boards, agencies, institutions and organizations are doing in 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% of its funds apportioned. We commend those churches in the conference who fully supported the connectional ministry of the church in 2019, sometimes at great sacrifice. In 2019, 81% of all congregations of our conference paid 100% of the total amount apportioned. Imagine if all our congregations paid 100% of the apportioned funds, what a great fulfillment of the Lord’s Commission to which Christ calls us.

If local congregations follow the dictates of *The Book of Discipline*, the expectation is that each congregation pay 100% of the total monies apportioned through the district, conference, jurisdiction, and general church. Pastors and lay members of the Annual Conference are to interpret and promote 100% payment of apportionments. The Conference Treasurer’s office produces promotional material each year to assist in this effort. Anyone may visit the WNCC web site (www.wnccumc.org/administration) and review their local congregation’s apportionment allocations, remittances and descriptions of each of the funds. In the average congregation in our conference, based on 2019 statistical data, the total apportionment payment (District, Conference and General Church) is about 5.75% of the total income from church members and friends. Congregations retain 94.25% of monies contributed. In using the biblical language of the tithe, apportionments are slightly more than half of a tithe and they do not represent the full 10% of the expenses of our congregations.

To these ends, CFA commends to the Annual Conference the 2021 budget which is focused on accomplishing the vision of the Conference, with the ultimate focus of developing vital churches. At a total of \$13,747,745, the 2021 conference apportioned budget represents a decrease of 15.5%. The degree to which we accomplish this goal depends upon local churches’ support of the conference budget. Receipts on all funds for 2019 were \$13,723,503 or 84.89% of the total apportioned, a decrease of 2.08% over 2018 receipts. The 2021 Budget does include a shift in the following areas:

- District Operations “Administry” costs are shifted from the conference budget to the respective districts. This allows for more localized approach with a fairness that districts receive what they require.
- The Conference Board of Pensions will now cover the costs of the Medical Leave Expense Fund.
- Significant reductions across the spectrum of General, Conference and other District apportionments compared to 2020.
- Episcopal Office Fund and Episcopal Residence Fund increased due to loss of grants from GCFA that covered majority of expenses in 2020 and prior.

Even with the decrease in the 2021 conference budget, the CFA is confident that we 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 our world.

Proposal: 2021 Conference Funds and Financial Policies**(Petition 1a)** *Approved August 8, 2020*

The Council on Finance and Administration proposes:

1. That each of the funds described in the section of this report headed "Conference Funds for 2021" be approved and that the traditional decimal formula be used in determining the apportionments for 2021 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 Superintendent Fund
 - Equitable Compensation Fund
 - Conference Support Fund
 - Mission and Ministry Fund
 - District Administration Fund
 - District Mission Engagement Fund
 - District Benevolence Fund
 - District Church Vitality Fund
 - Africa University Fund
 - Black College Fund
 - Episcopal Fund
 - General Administration Fund
 - Interdenominational Cooperation Fund
 - Jurisdictional Administration Fund
 - Ministerial Education Fund
 - World Service Fund

The decimal formula shall be based on the average of the amounts paid by each mission or chartered church/charge during 2017, 2018, and 2019 on the following items:

Items from Table Two of the Year-end Statistical Reports

- Total Conference Apportioned Funds Paid (29a and 29b)
- 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 & 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 thus be authorized to be paid at 100% of the approved budget. The District Operations Fund will be funded at 100% of the approved budget. On the basis of prior year receipts to these funds, CFA shall then determine a percentage of the approved budget to be authorized for expenditure in the remaining items of each budget, so that expenditures shall not exceed income.

 - a. Each church is expected to support all funds at 100% 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% 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 Operations), 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 on a monthly basis, 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 2021, as recommended by CSRC, is to be set at \$113,618 the same as 2020.

8. 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.
9. 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 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.
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.
 - NETworX
 - Methodist Home for Children
 - New Faith Communities Fund, Board of Congregational Development
 - Campus Ministries to include: Appalachian State University, UNC-Asheville, NC A&T, UNC-Charlotte, UNC-Greensboro, Western Carolina University, Winston-Salem Wesley Foundation

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 2021; and that the following, and only the following, conference-wide offerings be approved for 2021:

Human Relations Day.....	General Conference
UMAR Sunday	Annual Conference
UMCOR Sunday.....	General Conference
Native American Awareness	General Conference
Medical Mission Teams.....	Annual 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 2020 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 as a result 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 the president, vice-president, and secretary of the conference Council on Finance and Administration, the chairperson of the Audit Review Committee, the conference treasurer-director of administrative services, a Cabinet representative, and one lay member of the CFA constitute the executive committee of the conference 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.
 13. That the Council on Finance and Administration be authorized to appoint a conference auditor.
 14. 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.
 15. That conference funds not be 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 3:00 p.m., Wednesday, January 6, 2021, be the cutoff time by which all payments from local churches must be in the office of the conference treasurer in order to be applied to the 2020 year.
 17. 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.
 18. That the conference fiscal year begins on January 1, 2021 and ends on December 31, 2021.
 19. That the conference Council on Finance and Administration be responsible for designating depositories for conference funds.

P. Glenn Kinken III, President
R. Mark King, Treasurer

The 2021 WNCC Proposed Budget on the following pages is Petition 1b, approved August 8, 2020.

APPROVED BUDGET FOR 2021

Western North Carolina Conference						
Petition 1B: Budget 2021						
	2019	2019	2019	2020	2021	
Fund Name	Approved	Actual Receipts	Actual Expenses	Approved	Proposed	
Conference Funds						
District Operations	\$ 2,559,478	\$ 2,188,975	\$ 2,457,860	\$ 2,592,405	\$ 1,890,945	-27.06%
<i>District Superintendents Salaries</i>	890,344		890,344	908,945	908,945	
<i>Benefits and District Staff Costs</i>	1,029,134		927,516	1,043,460	982,000	
<i>District Office Operations</i>	640,000		640,000	640,000	-	
Conference Support (Schedule 1)	4,109,460	3,491,652	3,370,157	4,089,414	4,135,400	1.12%
<i>Conference Services Support</i>	688,350		376,698	634,405	603,350	
<i>Conference Staff Support</i>	2,661,410		2,407,533	2,573,024	2,625,000	
<i>Conference Administrative Support</i>	759,700		585,926	811,985	907,050	
Equitable Compensation	150,000	128,361	107,977	150,000	125,000	-16.67%
Clergy Medical Leave Benefit Supplement	450,000	424,639	258,987	425,000	-	-100.00%
Mission and Ministry (Schedule 2)	2,996,640	2,534,106	2,566,538	3,005,847	2,500,000	-16.83%
Total Conference Funds	10,265,578	8,767,733	8,761,520	10,262,666	8,651,345	-15.70%
General Church Funds						
Africa University	90,797	88,222	88,222	92,468	81,362	
Black College	405,715	343,295	343,295	413,180	361,899	
Episcopal Fund	891,794	753,023	753,023	908,204	1,003,978	
General Administration	357,578	298,711	298,711	364,157	307,910	
Interdenominational Cooperation	79,545	66,286	66,286	81,009	10,825	
Jurisdictional Conference Administration	46,980	41,367	46,980	46,980	46,980	
Ministerial Education	1,017,107	860,147	860,147	1,035,822	783,110	
World Service Fund	3,011,387	2,504,719	2,504,719	3,066,798	2,500,336	
Total General Church Funds	5,900,903	4,955,770	4,961,383	6,008,618	5,096,400	-15.18%
Grand Total of all Conference- Apportioned Funds	\$ 16,166,481	\$ 13,723,503	\$ 13,722,903	\$ 16,271,284	\$ 13,747,745	-15.51%
Increase (decrease) in budget from 2019 to 2020; 2020 to 2021				104,803	(2,523,539)	
				0.65%	-15.51%	
District Apportioned Funds						
District Administry	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 685,000	100.00%
District Mission Engagement	532,000	490,434	490,434	532,000	409,000	-23.12%
District Benevolence Grants	641,800	591,461	591,461	641,800	584,000	-9.01%
District Church Vitality	678,700	629,402	629,402	678,700	564,000	-16.90%
Total District Funds	\$ 1,852,500	\$ 1,711,297	\$ 1,711,297	\$ 1,852,500	\$ 2,242,000	21.03%
Grand Total of all Conference & District Apportioned Funds	18,018,981	15,434,800	15,434,200	18,123,784	15,989,745	-11.77%

APPROVED BUDGET FOR 2021, CONTINUED

Western North Carolina Conference						
Petition 1B: Budget 2021						
	2019	2019	2019	2020	2021	
Fund Name	Approved	Actual Receipts	Actual Expenses	Approved	Proposed	
Schedule One						
Conference Support						
Conference Services Support:						
Cabinet Support	55,500		51,526	56,055	55,000	
Archives and History	14,350		9,830	14,350	14,350	
Resource Center	54,000		45,658	52,000	52,000	
Committees Support	16,500		7,972	15,000	10,000	
Annual Conference						
Conference Sessions	102,000		95,550	102,000	102,000	
General & Jurisdictional delegate expenses	6,000		4,654	15,000	-	
Ministers Moving Fund	140,000		98,210	130,000	120,000	
Contingency	300,000		63,298	250,000	250,000	
Total Conference Services Support	688,350		376,698	634,405	603,350	-4.90%
Conference Staff Support:						
Salaries	1,827,728		1,988,236	1,759,755	1,760,000	
Related Benefits costs	833,682		419,297	813,269	865,000	
Total Conference Staff Support	2,661,410		2,407,533	2,573,024	2,625,000	2.02%
Conference Administrative Support:						
Office Operations						
Episcopal Office	6,000		9,042	8,500	85,000	
Assistant to Bishop	4,000		1,870	3,800	3,800	
Treasury Services	20,000		14,926	10,000	10,000	
Communications	96,000		55,524	96,000	96,000	
Ministerial Services/Conference Secretary	19,000		11,849	17,250	17,250	
Information Technology	165,000		119,754	312,760	315,000	
General Support						
Liability & Property Insurance	38,200		27,954	30,000	30,000	
Legal	62,500		55,176	63,125	60,000	
Audit	80,000		79,700	75,000	45,000	
Staff Travel/Education	154,000		102,697	155,500	125,000	
Episcopal Residence	10,000		2,434	4,000	20,000	
Conference Office	105,000		105,000	106,050	100,000	
Total Conference Administrative Support	759,700		585,926	881,985	907,050	2.84%
Total Fund 505 - Conference Support	\$ 4,109,460	\$ 3,491,652	\$ 3,370,157	\$ 4,089,414	\$ 4,135,400	1.12%

APPROVED BUDGET FOR 2021, CONTINUED

Western North Carolina Conference						
Petition 1B: Budget 2021						
		2019	2019	2019	2020	2021
Fund Name	Approved	Actual Receipts	Actual Expenses	Approved	Proposed	
Schedule Two						
Conference Mission and Ministry						
Connectional Table						
Connectional Table	7,000		1,512	7,000	5,000	
Connectional Ministry	\$ 116,760		\$ 92,391	96,000	80,000	
Contingency	\$ -		\$ -	-	17,030	
Conference Camping Ministries	100,000		91,019	100,000	83,300	
WNCC Council on Campus Ministries	615,000		522,750	621,150	518,039	
Ordained Ministry	286,000		\$ 217,672	288,750	233,417	
Board of Laity	12,450		2,954	7,550	6,665	
Total Connectional Table	1,137,210		\$ 928,298	1,120,450	943,451	
Church Vitality						
New Faith Communities Ministry and Grants	724,000		674,009	731,240	608,000	
Total Church Vitality	724,000		674,009	731,240	608,000	
Mission Engagement						
Ministry and Grants	170,250		100,649	170,250	136,500	
Mission Church Grants	250,000		250,000	250,000	250,000	
Mission Response Center	58,930		60,893	59,500	21,000	
Total Mission Engagement	479,180		411,542	479,750	407,500	
Leadership Development						
Ministry and Grants	352,000		300,956	345,000	281,000	
Total Leadership Development	352,000		300,956	345,000	281,000	
Justice and Reconciliation						
Ministry and Grants	164,250		139,733	189,407	160,049	
Total Justice and Reconciliation	164,250		139,733	189,407	160,049	
Mission/Ministry Grants						
Partnership Fund with WNCC-UMC Colleges, Retirement Communities, Crossnore and UMAR	140,000		112,000	140,000	100,000	
Total Mission & Ministry Grants	140,000		112,000	140,000	100,000	
Total Mission and Ministry Fund	\$ 2,996,640	\$ 2,534,106	\$ 2,566,538	\$ 3,005,847	\$ 2,500,000	-16.83%

Proposal: Per Diem Reimbursement Policy

(Petition 1c) *Approved August 8, 2020*

With the intent to standardize expenses and reduce costs associated with conference-related travel expenses for all members of conference boards, agencies, committees, and commissions, and conference and district staff, the Conference Council on Finance and Administration proposes the Annual Conference adopt the following:

Per Diem Reimbursement Policy**A. Travel**

1. Utilize virtual meetings as much as possible to eliminate the need for travel for both staff and volunteers. Budgets may incorporate one face to face meeting annually, but all other meetings should be held virtually.
2. Volunteers (non-staff laity and clergy members of conference entities): Travel reimbursed at the IRS Charitable Mileage Reimbursement Rate. If a particular hardship exists, the chairperson or leader of the group may discuss with the Conference Treasurer for additional assistance which will come from the group's budget. For 2020, that amount is \$0.14 a mile.
3. Conference staff without use of conference-provided vehicles: Continue the practice of the standard IRS Business Mileage Reimbursement Rate. For 2020, that amount is \$0.575 per mile.
4. Require for overnight or long day trips the option of renting a car under the conference's Enterprise / National Rental Car agreement. Staff should calculate what the round-trip mileage reimbursement would be versus the cost of the rental car including fuel. Whichever is less is the required option to utilize.
5. Encourage ride share whenever possible and feasible.

B. Lodging

Committees and groups that require overnight accommodations are allowed at conference expense, including both volunteers and staff. Set the per diem rate for overnight lodging expense at the maximum IRS rate for Charlotte NC. With travel to other cities, check IRS rates for mediated allowance. If lodging cannot be found at this rate, then exception may occur. Safety and location must be considered. If participant prefers higher rate, the difference will be at their cost. For 2020, this amount is \$129 per night.

C. Meals

Occasionally committees, groups, and staff who meet close to a mealtime have the option of providing a meal for those attending.

1. Implement the standard IRS per diem rates for the following meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner and incidentals. For 2020, the allowances per the IRS are as follows:
 - a. Breakfast: \$13
 - b. Lunch: \$15
 - c. Dinner \$23
 - d. Incidentals: \$5
 - e. DAILY TOTAL: \$56
2. If a staff person desires to order items over the rates, the difference is at their cost.
3. Schedule committees and organizational meetings and agendas to not occur close to mealtimes. Limit committee and organizational meals to once annually at most. If exceptions to such scheduling must occur, allow meal breaks for participants to procure from area restaurants on their own. Utilizing virtual meetings will eliminate the need for providing meals.

****NOTE:** all rates are set at 2020 IRS rates. Annually, these will be adjusted per the IRS notices.

B. CONFERENCE MINISTRIES

1. CONNECTIONAL TABLE

PURPOSE: The Connectional Table (CT) is to connect the ministry and resources of the Western North Carolina 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 (from the Plan of Organization and Rule of Order and Procedure of WNCC). The CT is the governing body for the conference between the annual conference gatherings.

If the CT fulfills its mission, ministry in the WNCC—relevant, vibrant, and diverse, reflecting the faces of all God’s people across WNC—will develop faithful disciples and fruitful leaders across the conference so that lives and communities are transformed by the power of God.

The CT established a 2016–2020 Quadrennial Goal to implement a consistent budgeting process that engages all ministries of the WNCC. An implementation team has been named to lead a process that will result in a conference ministry budget rather than a ministry-delineated, siloed budget.

New norms set by the extended cabinet and embraced by the CT describe conference wide values as the framework for mission and ministry. They are as follows:

- Laity are essential;
- Resist injustice in whatever forms it presents itself;
- Collaboration and cooperation across all districts and ministries;
- Navigate conflict head-on following Matthew 18 for ministry transformation;
- Fresh leaders lead to innovative solutions.

The Justice and Reconciliation Team will coordinate white-privilege training for members of the CT in 2020.

Caroline Wood and Jane Boatwright Wood, Co-Chairpersons

2. CHURCH VITALITY TEAM

The Church Vitality Team continued with its three major areas of focus this conference year: new church starts, Fresh Expressions of church, and the Transformation Journey.

New Church Starts:

The Western North Carolina Conference continues to be a leader in the denomination for church planting. The conference has launched 10 new church start projects since 2017 and it is prepared to launch 5 more new church starts on July 1. The church starts and pastors that have started this conference year are:

- Wellspring, Ashley Crowder Stanley
- WithALL Congregation, Rob Parsons
- Church Without Walls, Kevin Bates and Kevin Miller
- The Place for New Life, Diane Harper

Fresh Expressions:

This time last year, the Church Vitality Team added 86 Fresh Expressions to bring its total to 126 Fresh Expressions. This year, it has added 127 more for a total of 253 Fresh Expressions! That is the equivalent of launching a new Fresh Expression every three days. Over the course of this Fresh Expressions movement in the conference, the team has learned that dinner churches are a very successful way to launch new faith communities. So, at annual conference last year the team offered \$2,500 grants to help launch dinner churches. Those grants helped the conference launch 60 dinner churches this year. This ministry is thriving under the leadership of the Rev. Luke Edwards, who serves as the associate director of church development.

Transformation Journey:

In addition to planting new faith communities, the Church Vitality Team is also helping to strengthen existing congregations with an 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. The team has successfully launched 13 churches on their Transformation Journey and will be inviting 8 more churches to participate this fall thanks to a grant from its 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 have been trained in this process to partner with churches to help them fulfill their recommendations. The Rev. Dr. Nancy Rankin is the Transformation Journey coordinator, and she is providing excellent leadership to this ministry initiative.

COVID-19 Response:

At the beginning of the COVID-19 quarantine, the Church Vitality Team took quick action, repurposing grant funds to offer Zoom Pro accounts to conference churches so that they could continue to meet and worship electronically. As of this writing, 167 churches are using this grant to connect electronically with their congregations.

As we enter into a new and challenging annual conference year, the Church Vitality Team encourages members and friends of the Western North Carolina Conference to continue to pray for its new church start pastors, Fresh Expressions, and the Transformation Journey.

Mike Fongemy, Chairperson
Dan Pezet, Director of Church Development

3. JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION TEAM

The WNCC UMC Justice and Reconciliation Team (J&R) Team functions in various ways with the 11 entities within this framework to include the ministries of:

- 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

Throughout this quadrennium, the Conference Leadership Team has shared a unique bond like no other, while recognizing that it is a picture of heaven on earth as it has endeavored to make the WNCC whole. The team has also sought collaborative partnerships with the United Methodist Women Social Action, United Methodist Youth, Board of Ordained Ministry, and the Board of Laity.

THE VISION – Empowered by Christ, The Justice and Reconciliation Team exists to repair that which has been broken. **THE 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. **THE CORE AND ASPIRATIONAL VALUES** are to practice genuine listening, mindfulness, encouraging others to lean into discomfort, serving as a catalyst for equity in change by compassionate acts, practicing 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 the voice, influence, access, resources, and spirit among caucuses and conveners so that the WNCC will reflect the diverse body of Christ.

Committee On Native American Ministries – Convener Joel Locklear, along with Daphne Strickland, an elder among Lumbee Native Americans, planned and held a conference workshop at Triad Native American UMC, Greensboro, N.C. August 30-31, 2019. With the theme “Honoring Our Children in the Circle of Life” the workshop focused on combating bullying, domestic violence, and suicide, all prevalent in the Native American community. The goal was to reverse the cycle of pain through conversation and action. Calvetta Watlington, a tribal citizen of the Occaneechi Band of Saponi Nation, was the workshop leader. Freeman Owle, who recently served as Elder-in-Residence at Western Carolina University, who is also a traditional storyteller of Cherokee culture and history, led the group in arts and crafts. New tables were recently installed in the Native American room at the Lake Junaluska Bethea Welcome Center. Connie Locklear, Director of the Southeastern Jurisdiction Association of Native American Ministries (SEJANAM), shared that a Waynesville artist used wood from a maple tree from the golf course at Lake Junaluska. Sixteen matching chairs from this tree are the next project for this room.

African American Ministries – Convener the Rev. Ronnie Roseboro continues to move forward with the **Vision** of strengthening the black churches in the conference through leadership development, revitalization and Christian/spiritual formation. The **Mission** is to use resources to train clergy and laity in the African American context of what it means to be a vital church in the community and world, to make disciples for the transformation of the world. A WNCC UMC Black Church Clergy and Laity Symposium was held Saturday, August 24, 2019 at Hood Theological Seminary with the theme “A Call to Action: Shaping the Future” sponsored by WNCC Black Methodists for Church Renewal (BMCR). Topics for the event were designed to ignite, inspire, lead, and deepen the impact for the future church. Over 200 participants celebrated the giftedness of the black church while being reminded of its relevance. Panelists/presenters included: Dr. Reginald Lee, congregational specialist and member of the South Carolina Annual Conference; the Rev. Regina Henderson Moore, a member of the North Carolina Annual Conference now living in Columbia, S.C. and leading churches and faith-based organizations in social impact strategies; the Rev. Dr. Fred A. Allen, national director of Strengthening the Black Church for the 21st Century (SBC21); the Rev. Angela A. Pleasants, Catawba Valley District Superintendent (WNCC); the Rev. Dr. Otto Harris III, pastor of St. Mark’s UMC Charlotte, N.C. and launch coordinator of the WNCC Comprehensive Plan of Inclusiveness; and the Rev. Brandon Wrencher, pastor of new church start The Good Neighbor Movement in Greensboro, N.C. (WNCC).

A group of ten clergy and laity travelled to Tampa, FL October 17-19, 2019 for the SEJ-BMCR 51st Annual Meeting with the theme *Purpose Driven: Laser Focused on the Mission and Ministry of the Black Church*, undergirded by Philippians 3:15-16. The event included learning labs, a town hall meeting, Bible study, communion and plenary. Western North Carolina was also represented by eight members in Kansas City, MO for the 53rd National BMCR General Meeting held March 4-7, 2020 with the theme: *It’s Time*. This event included a panel of Ebony Bishops discussion, worship, bible studies, workshops, fellowship, a gospel music extravaganza, seminary breakfasts and luncheons, Black College Fund luncheon as well as presentations by general agencies and BMCR partners. The J&R Team was presented with a 50th Anniversary Development Fund Award for its support this quadrennium.

The J&R Team supported BMCR youth to SEJ-Harambee held June 26-29, 2019 at Claflin University, Orangeburg, SC with the theme “**A=anointed R=reigning M=mighty Y=youth**” undergirded by Ephesians 6:13. The daily keynote speaker was the Rev. Payton Parker, Assoc. Pastor for children, youth, and young adults at St. Luke “Community” UMC Dallas, TX. This conference helps youth develop their spiritual, leadership, and interpersonal skills as they build meaningful relationships with God and each other, and explore the

meaning of pulling together and working together in Christian love, hence the name of the conference Harambee. They also learn how to bridge the gap from generation to generation. WNC-BMCR Youth again claimed the award for the highest number of attendees.

Hispanic Latino Committee –Conveners the Rev. Susan Suarez-Webster and the Rev. Frank Ramos have continued to lead this caucus as co-conveners, along with Pilar Perez the chairperson. Regular meetings are held throughout the year to include worship and fellowship with the **Vision** – We are a united and diverse community that experiences God’s transformation through embracing neighbors. **Values** are – mutuality, commitment, love, hope, and empowerment with the **Mission** being – to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

- Chairperson Pilar attended the Southeastern Jurisdiction Methodists Associated representing the Causes of Hispanic Americans (SEJ-MARCHA) Assembly May 16-18, 2019 at Epworth by the Sea, GA.
- Three youth attended the Hispanic Youth Leadership Academy (HYLA) at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, August 6 -10, 2019 in Chicago, IL.
- During Fall 2019, two Latina youth travelled to Exploration 2019 to discern their call to ministry.
- Chairperson Pilar Perez participated in the Spanish version Walk to Emmaus- Heart of Georgia at Camp Dooley Tifton/Vienna, GA September 25-29, 2019.
- A Fresh Expressions Vision Day was held on October 26, 2019 with Luke Edwards at the UM Conference Center in Huntersville, to build networks and relationships among Hispanic communities in each area.
- Two clergy persons attended the Mosaix 4th National Multi-Ethnic Church Conference November 5-7, 2019 in Dallas, Texas.
- November 15-17, 2019, 41 persons gathered at the UM Conference Center for the first Ecuentro to study for Lay Missioner in the Spanish language.
- This committee gathered 489 letters to send to legislators regarding Temporary Protected Status. A year extension was given to TPS holders from El Salvador.
- On Saturday, January 25 at St. Luke UMC in Hickory, WNC Hispanic Latino congregations gathered for a time of prayer, worship, preaching, holy communion, and a fellowship meal. Approximately 90 people attended the event, which was conducted mostly in Spanish but with English added in for the English speakers who were also in attendance. Romans 5:1-11 was the scriptural emphasis of the evening.
- Funds are earmarked for an evangelistic youth concert and campaign service for 2020, reaching out to Hispanic Latinos in the area and all others who are interested.

Asian American Ministries – May Vang continues as convener. The regularly scheduled meetings include clergy and laity, Koreans, Hmong, Cambodians, African Americans and Caucasians with the **Vision**: to become a community that sees all the people and a **near-term objective**: to have a more vital presence in the WNC by “Bridging, Building and Becoming,” with specific strategies for each component of the goals. First Hmong UMC youth attended Ca Sab National Youth Summer Camp in Missouri with the theme: “Worthy.” They were able to attend various workshops to help them grow spiritually, learning about creation, the fall, redemption, and restoration. They participated in encouragement groups with deeper focus on the theme and prayer, praise, and worship, with energy and enthusiasm along with fellow youth from across the nation. Funds are also earmarked for a youth camping retreat in WNC in 2020.

- Supported participants to attend the National Hmong Women’s Revival in Carlinville, IL with the theme – “Anchored In Christ.”
- Korean clergy was supported to attend Pastoral Care Supervision Training in Denver, CO September 9-11, 2019, to gain more knowledge in clinical pastoral care ministries.
- Another was supported to the Duke Pastor’s Convocation October 7-8, 2019 to learn more about cultivating thriving communities. Hmong clergy was supported to attend the Yexus Communitas Summit Event at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, IL October 31 - November 2, 2019. This national interdenominational Hmong event encourages conversations to develop ideas around church planting, theological writing, and leadership development. The intent was to gain more knowledge of how to reach out to the second-generation Hmong church.
- Hmong laity was also supported to attend a Missions Conference in Milwaukee, WI December 13-14, 2019 with the theme – “The Heart for God’s Mission.”
- Support was also given for a WNC Clergy Pilgrimage to South Korea to Bupyeong Methodist Church March 4-12, 2020, for greater cross-cultural experience, competence, and spiritual renewal.

Commission on the Status and Role of Women – led by convener Polly Pearson with the **Mission**: to work alongside the General COSROW advocating for full participation in the total life of The United Methodist Church by helping the church to recognize every person – clergy and lay, women and men, adults and children – as full and equal parts of God’s human family. This year the convener has attended and participated in various conferences with displays and information regarding COSROW initiatives. The late Bishop Leontine T. C. Kelly will be featured in the African American Historical Museum of the Smithsonian in Washington, DC for the 2020 Year of the Woman exhibit. The group has been working with GCOSROW to develop an online training for laity in the WNC which will be the first of its kind across the denomination. Funds are earmarked for this effort to come to completion in 2020. 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.”

Commission on Religion and Race – New convener the Rev. Tamara Ingram organized the planning team for the 2020 WNC Martin Luther King Jr. Commemoration. This event is co-sponsored with BMCR, and the new coordinator of that caucus is the Rev. Charlie Rivens. The theme selected was “Embracing Our Beloved Community: Persevering Despite Adversity” with the focus scripture Matthew 25:34-40 shared in various languages, and read by clergy and laity of the different ethnicities represented. The

commemoration was held at St. Paul UMC Winston-Salem, N.C., and was co-hosted with Centenary UMC Winston-Salem, N.C. There were over 300 in attendance. A combined choir with members of the co-host churches was especially uplifting, and the special music offered by Caleb Serrano was a special blessing for everyone. The Hispanic/Latino Praise Band of Hickory Grove UMC Charlotte added a unique flavor to the day and had many on their feet. Drum Major for Justice Awards recognized the tireless work of the Poor People's Campaign and Greensboro's Beloved Community Center, both of whom engage diverse parts of the community in current, relevant injustices to bring about social change. Children and youth from across the conference wrote timely essays creating a picture that focused and elaborated on meaningful MLK Jr. quotes. Their participation in the table talk discussion during lunch enhanced that portion of the day with their youthful insights. A major highlight of the commemoration was the keynote speaker, Clara Esther, retired UMW deaconess, member of the Charter for Racial Justice, National UMW Vice-President and civil rights activist. She underscored how all must "wake up" and work for a world of justice and equality so that the nation will be a place where everyone's children and grandchildren have the opportunity to live fruitful and productive lives. The offering for this event benefited the Poor People's Campaign. Conference Communications Director, Melissa McGill captured numerous photos of this and other events, along with additional photos from Kathy FitzJefferies and the promotional and recap videos by Jennifer Moxley and her team from Sunshine Media, Inc. The next commemoration is scheduled to be held in Hickory, N.C. on Saturday, January 16, 2021.

Diversity Monitoring – the Rev. George Coates, J&R Team member has continued to lead the team, functioning within its role in gauging diversity as it relates to the annual conference meeting. In 2016, the team monitored onstage participation at the annual conference. The team observed at racial/ethnic background, lay/clergy, male/female, participation by age group, and whether the physically challenged were included in the conference presentations. The J&R Team then shared this information with the Annual Conference Planning Committee chair, the conference secretary and the office of the bishop.

Only modest changes have been noted over the years. With respect to racial/ethnic background, participants have consistently been 78%-80% white. Black participation actually declined from 21% to 16% with the difference being an inclusion of Asian and Hispanic/Latino participants. The lay/clergy ratio has shifted toward clergy with an average of 43% laity and 57% clergy. Youth and young adult participation has improved, going from 0% for both in 2016 to 2% and 33% in 2018, with corresponding declines in mature and older adult participants. Unfortunately, there was only one physically challenged participant in all the years for which data exists.

As the team studies this data, it wants to encourage the Annual Conference Planning Committee to work with intentionality to ensure that the participants reflect all communities. While strides toward being more inclusive have been implemented, it is important that the participants' pool is both deepened and widened with people from all districts. God has been gracious in gifting many with multiple talents. There are individuals with the ability to serve in many areas in both the business and worship sessions. The goal is that the Annual Conference Planning Committee will seek to involve as many, and as varied, a population as possible to truly represent the variety and richness of UMC congregations.

Environmental Concerns and Efforts – convener and WNCC-Earthkeeper, the Rev. Jonathan Brake reminds everyone that creation care is an essential part of Christian discipleship. Earthkeepers are keenly aware of the ecological challenges in today's world and feel called to be part of a movement to transform the world. The 2019 Creation Care Summit was held in Nashville, TN from Thursday, July 11 – Sunday, July 14 at Scarritt Bennett Center with the theme *Building a Movement*, that focused on the climate crisis and environmental justice from a grassroots perspective. The event was sponsored by the General Board of Church and Society, General Global Ministries, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, Tennessee Annual Conference of the UMC, Tennessee Interfaith Power and Light, United Methodist Women, Scarritt Bennett Center, and Wespeth Benefits and Investments. On July 10, a training entitled "*Just Energy for All*" was also held at Scarritt Bennett in partnership with the NAACP and Vote Solar. Elizabeth (Liz) Chun Hye Lee, Executive for Economic and Environmental Justice, Climate Justice Lead, Christian Social Action, United Methodist Women, UMW Headquarters – New York, NY, was the facilitator for the "*Just Energy for All*" training. Resources recommended from this training by Karlah Burton are: <https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/climate-justice/guides>; and <https://www.umccreationcare.org>.

September 20, 2019 select Earthkeepers attended and participated in a Climate Strike held in Greensboro, N.C. On Wednesday October 23, 2019, the NC/VA Earthkeepers Cohort Fall Gathering was held in Winston-Salem, N.C. The UMC Earthkeepers continue to expand in the WNCC. On February 8 - 9, 2020 in Southport, N.C., the first African American and Hispanic/Latino American became certified as UMC Earthkeepers: Karlah Y. Burton, member of St. Matthews UMC Greensboro, N.C., and Sabrina Maria Visigali Martins do Rosario, originally from Brazil and a member of University City UMC Charlotte, N.C. The 50th anniversary of Earth Day was April 22, 2020. For further information contact Jonathan at creationcarewncc@gmail.com.

The J&R Team gave financial support to the following in addition to what has already been mentioned above; Beloved Community Center and Collaborative Partner the Northern Piedmont District Initiative to provide Truth and Reconciliation Discipleship Retreats; Metro District Racial Healing and Social Justice Initiative to examine the Christian response to racial and social justice issues; Boone UMC for the Bradford Youth Mexico Pilgrimage /Bradford Ministries; Hinton Rural Life Center for providing assistance to increase poverty awareness and perspective through programming during the summer missions outreach event; All Nations UMC to provide assistance for the parents of students to receive personalized job training, counseling and affordable care in terms of immigration mediation strengthening family bonds; Lee's Chapel UMC community ministry partners providing stability for children of minority groups, tutoring, free meals, and justice opportunities; Myers Park UMC collaborative ministry partners for the Deep South Pilgrimage; Good Neighbor Movement for the Journey to Joy program assisting with supplies, equipment, and curriculum; MARCHA supporting the work to promote respect of human rights and a commitment to peace, justice, liberty, and equality while advocating on behalf of Hispanic/Latino members of The United Methodist Church and The Methodist Church in Puerto Rico;

BMCR supporting the continued work of raising up prophetic and spiritual leaders who will be advocates for the unique needs of Black members of The United Methodist Church, while continuing to strengthen the value for diversity within The United Methodist Church through advocacy, inclusiveness, justice, and leadership development.

The J&R Team gives yearly financial support to the North Carolina Council of Churches (NC COC) 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 individually and collectively impact the state on issues such as economic justice and development, human well-being, equality, compassion and peace, following the example and mission of Jesus Christ. NC COC 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. J&R member and NC COC Laity Board of Governors member Renee Hayes serves on the Public Education committee, and on Saturday, February 29, 2020, the committee sponsored a community forum at Milford Hills UMC, one of several such events held across the state and co-sponsored by the NCC and WNCC United Methodists Advocating for Public Schools (UMAPS). The community forums aimed at changing the narrative about public schools versus privatization and the prevalence of racial bias in disciplinary policy enforcement. The PHW program is working with NCIPL and the Creation Care Alliance to address food insecurity. The Northern Piedmont Missional Networks are benefitting from these efforts. PHW also provided trauma care training for the Northern Piedmont district; and 19 clergy breakfasts focusing on the opioid crisis were held across the state.

Census 2020 – The council is strategizing the best ways to mobilize faith communities to reach out to their neighborhoods to ensure a proper census count. Since local congregations may be less intimidating to their immediate neighbors than strangers wearing a government ID, churches are urged to find ways to facilitate filling out census forms, either online or by mail, for those in their communities. The council is willing to provide resources to help congregations mobilize.

On February 26, 2020, Rosa Ortez-Cruz, who has been living in protective sanctuary in Chapel Hill for almost two years, has had her order for deportation lifted by the US Court of Appeals. She will remain in sanctuary until there are assurances from ICE that this judicial decision will be honored pending her follow-up court appearance.

Comprehensive Plan of Inclusiveness (CPI) Educational Work – The J&R Team serves within this framework to create educational experiences that address racism, diversity and integration, by creating various exchanges of churches and clergy with congregations that are different from where they have served; through choir and pulpit exchanges; joint worship services; and ministries and temporary membership exchanges to name several. The Conference Resource Center has a number of helpful items. This work raises awareness, where the J&R Team already has a platform for advocacy and training.

Dismantling Racism Task Force – As part of a conference-wide initiative, the upcoming quadrennium's ethics training will address the topic of antiracism in the church and broader society. The training will be led by talented facilitators from RISE! (Race: an In-depth Spiritual Examination), with follow-up opportunities presented by the conference Comprehensive Plan of Inclusiveness team. As always, the quadrennial ethics training is required for all clergy, but additionally this time, the trainings will take place over two days, and each pastor is asked to encourage at least one laity from his/her charge/organization to attend. This inclusion of laity will foster more effective change in congregational culture. This valuable investment of time and resources will plant seeds for a lifelong process of learning and unlearning. The size of each session will be more limited than for past ethics trainings, so be sure to sign up as soon as offerings are made available. Look out for upcoming announcements regarding dates and locations of trainings in each district, possible scholarship options, and how to register.

The 1996 General Conference mandated that each annual conference and local church develop concrete programs of antiracism training. This mandate remains largely unfulfilled. Racism is still pervasive and harmful. It is time that the Western North Carolina Annual Conference re-commit to dismantling racism. The Dismantling Racism Task Force, under the leadership of the Rev. Dr. In Yong Lee as part of the Justice and Reconciliation Team, has worked to advance this goal for the past three years, and now welcomes the new conference-wide initiative to eliminate racism. In particular, the new quadrennium's focus on antiracism for the clergy ethics training and the inclusion of laity promises to be an important step. Planting seeds is a lifelong process, and as a task force it is exciting to see what God will cultivate and grow. Partners in this initiative are the Board of Ordained Ministry Ethics Committee and the Comprehensive Plan of Inclusiveness Team.

Other members of the J&R Team not mentioned above are: Daphine Strickland, the Rev. Brandon Wrencher, Pastor Ray McKinnon, the Rev. Norma Villagrana, Carolyn Payne, the Rev. Dr. Otto Harris III, and the Rev. Angela Pleasants. It has been a great pleasure to have served as vice-chairperson for the second half of the previous quadrennium and as chairperson for this quadrennium, with this awesome team of people (clergy and laity together) who have continued to educate, inspire and advocate during these challenging times for the church and society at large.

Pamela Shoffner, Chairperson

STATEMENT ON ANTIRACISM ETHICS TRAINING

As part of a conference-wide initiative, the upcoming quadrennium's ethics training will address the topic of antiracism in the church and broader society. The training will be led by talented facilitators from RISE! (Race: an In-depth Spiritual Examination) with follow-up opportunities presented by the conference Comprehensive Plan of Inclusiveness Team. As always, the quadrennial ethics training is required for all clergy, but, additionally, this time the trainings will take place over two days (Friday and Saturday) and each pastor is asked to encourage at least one laity from his/her charge/organization to attend. This inclusion of laity will foster more effective change in congregational culture. It is the Dismantling Racism Task Force's hope and expectation that this valuable investment of

time and resources will plant seeds for a lifelong process of learning and unlearning. The size of each session will be more limited than for past ethics trainings, so be sure to sign up as soon as offerings are made available. Look out for upcoming announcements regarding dates and locations of trainings for your district and possible scholarship options, as well as how to register.

The 1996 General Conference mandated that each annual conference and local church develop concrete programs of antiracism training. This mandate remains largely unfulfilled. Racism is still pervasive and harmful. It is time that the Western North Carolina Conference (re)commits itself to dismantle racism. The Dismantling Racism Task Force, as part of the Justice and Reconciliation Team, has worked to advance this goal for the past three years, and now welcomes the new conference-wide initiative to eliminate racism. In particular, the new quadrennium's focus on antiracism for the clergy ethics training and the inclusion of laity promises to be an important step. The task force is planting seeds for a lifelong process, and is excited to see what God will cultivate and grow.

Board of Ordained Ministry Ethics Committee
Comprehensive Plan of Inclusiveness Team
Justice and Reconciliation Team
Dismantling Racism Task Force

4. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TEAM

Wesleyans believe in going on to Christian perfection. They believe that the Holy Spirit is at work within doing the soul healing and rebuilding work required so that they might love God with all of their heart, soul, mind, and strength. The leadership development team believes that sanctification also applies to leadership. The Lord is constantly inviting leaders to grow into all that they have been created to be. The leadership development team seeks to participate in this part of God's work by increasing the leadership capacity of clergy and lay ministry professionals.

Of course, the short-hand term for the theological account of this work is change. Multiple societal trends continue to impact ministry in WNCC. The changes in the denomination impact the ministry. A global pandemic now impacts the ministry in the annual conference. These factors require leaders to learn and to adapt in order to remain effective.

The leadership development team itself has learned and changed. The team has adopted a podcast as a new means by which to disseminate experiences and know-how about leadership. The team has shifted its efforts to focus on peacemaking in a time of potential denominational separation. The team has asked questions at every meeting concerning how the work of leadership development intersects with traditionally underrepresented persons. The team has learned about this current moment of leadership through reading books together, collaboration with other teams, and listening.

Amid all this change, the team continues to offer spiritual renewal opportunities as the Holy Spirit is truly the only inexhaustible resource. The team has continued to offer preaching cohorts to hone this central and communal practice of worship. The team has continued to draw from the leadership well of WNCC by tapping them to lead training events, and by training leaders with the expectation that they will train others in this annual conference.

The particular opportunities for leadership development change frequently and can best be followed on the WNCC website under the leadership development tab. All training opportunities are made affordable to members of the WNCC through the generosity of its member churches. The team looks forward to more learning, and more equipping of all lay and clergy ministry professionals during these days of extraordinary change. As United Methodist writer James Harnish noted in a small group curriculum entitled, *A Disciple's Heart*, "If you aren't going on toward perfection, then where are you going?"

Dan Hester, Chairperson

5. MISSION ENGAGEMENT TEAM

The Western North Carolina Conference Mission Engagement Team exists to equip the local church to be in the mission of God focusing on communication, resourcing, and collaboration. MET advanced hope through humanitarian relief and sustainable development, and by supporting empowerment ministries with communities locally and worldwide.

The Committee on Relief is the humanitarian relief and development arm of the Western North Carolina Conference, relating directly to the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) and the United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM). Its mission is to alleviate human suffering and advance hope through humanitarian relief, sustainable development, and global missions. Since last annual conference, it has hired a part-time Conference Disaster Response Coordinator. Ben Rogers is a graduate of UNC Charlotte and previously assisted with Hurricane Harvey efforts in Texas, and also directed Hurricane Michael relief efforts in the Florida panhandle. Since arriving, Ben has cleaned and reorganized the Mission Response Center in Terrell. The committee funded 30 Early Response Team volunteers to assist Hurricane Dorian relief in the Bahamas, and four teams to aid in Hurricane Maria relief in Puerto Rico. Early Response Training has been moved to an on-line platform and added a chainsaw safety approval to its curriculum.

The committee coordinated the donation of 10,000 N95 face masks to CaroMont Health in Gastonia, 4,500 masks and 4,500 gloves to the Charlotte Fire Department, 360 masks to the Atwell Township VFD in China Grove, and 100 masks to physicians in Lincoln County. The supplies were part of thousands of UMCOR flood bucket kits that are stored at the Mission Response Center in Terrell. The committee coordinated the donation and delivery of 3,000 boxes to UNC Charlotte students and 1,000 boxes to UNC Greensboro, and another 1,000 boxes to NC A&T State University as students were forced out of dorms due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Mission Connection Teams place emphasis on multiple local churches working together alongside native/in-country partners to accomplish goals and tasks of the host culture. The global reach of the Western North Carolina Conference is vast. Nine Mission Connection Teams represented the conference commitment to love neighbors around the world. These included, three teams to

Guatemala, two to Costa Rica, and one team each to Belize, Romania, and Project Agape in Armenia. Additionally, one Volunteer in Mission (VIM) team was sent to Alaska.

The Northern Haiti Mission Connection team helped to financially support the completion of a dormitory in New Hope Hospital. The dormitory will be utilized to house Haitian doctors and visiting medical teams. The work was completed by Haitian workers providing employment and using local construction methods.

The Western NC Conference is partnered with Zoe Empowers to assist children across the world. Orphans and vulnerable children living in extreme poverty are abused, sick, and isolated from their communities. Handouts and begging help them to survive temporarily. Zoe Empowers' solution addresses all their challenges, across eight areas of life, equipping them to overcome poverty with their own efforts permanently. Currently, 13 WNCC churches are supporting 26 groups representing 2,340 children.

One of the sustainable development efforts is Congregations for Children (C4C). C4C is a resource of the WNCC UMC created to provide support to churches and communities in developing new and strengthening existing church and school partnerships. Three initiatives were particularly impactful this past year. First, legislation passed at annual conference creating the WNCC UMC C4C Child Advocacy Coalition. The coalition centralizes a means to speak cohesively about programs impacting children from birth to 18, and allows an opportunity to develop a conference advocacy plan of action. Second, the Smoky Mountain District, through a grant from The Duke Endowment, piloted a Generational Poverty Literacy Initiative engaging church and community partners to collectively use resources in reducing the negative impacts of poverty, by enhancing both school readiness for kindergarteners, and reading proficiency by the end of third grade. Third, through a school readiness initiative in the Yadkin Valley District, urban churches partnered with the local school district to serve as sites for families, teachers, and children to gather in neighborhoods close to low performing elementary schools, to work on improving third grade reading scores.

MET's dedication to resourcing leaders is lived out through The Missional Collective Journey, a series of retreats designed to help WNCC mission leaders provide spiritual care and grow leader connections; strengthen ministerial knowledge and skills; help discern impact in a community; increase exposure to relevant resources; lend practical tools for implementing a vision; and to boost confidence for engaging the community. The first Missional Collective Journey launched in April, with the intention to shift the work of missions from relief to empowerment.

Brian Mateer, Associate Director of Missional Engagement

Advance Specials for 2020-2021

(Petition 3) *Approved August 8, 2020*

Churches are at liberty to support Advance Specials according to the wishes of the individual churches. The following ministries have been vetted and are approved as Annual Conference Mission Specials:

Carolina Cross Connection
Congregations 4 Children
Mission Journey Teams
Mission Response Center

Missional Church Fund
Missional Collective
Northern Haiti Mission Connection
Open Arms

Project AGAPE
WNCC Comm. on Relief (Disaster Response)
Youth Service Fund
Zoe Empowers

6. COUNCIL ON CAMP AND RETREAT MINISTRY

The goal of the conference Council on Camp and Retreat Ministry (CCRM) is to support, encourage, and resource the three camping ministries with four camp sites of the Western North Carolina Conference. The camp sites are Mount Shepherd in Asheboro, Camp GuilRock in Reidsville, Camp Tekoa in Hendersonville, and Tekoa Foothills in Casar, N.C. This year has brought a major shift in how the council fulfills this mission.

In October, Carroll Harris left her position as the staff liaison between the council, camps, and conference. The members of the council were asked to take a much more active role in the camping ministries of WNCC.

Also in October, the council held a training initiative with the council, camp directors, and their boards. They met with Charlie Lyons of Drive Educational Systems about telling their common story. It was then decided that the purpose of the council and camps was to be "Advocates of the unique encounter." Later, as the mission and purpose was further fleshed out, it changed to "advocates of the sacred encounter."

As advocates, the council realized the first job was to educate both themselves and others about the wonderful resources the camps offer to western North Carolina. Each camp was assigned a liaison from the council to be its connection. The liaison would check in periodically with the camp directors and, if possible, attend board meetings.

The council familiarized themselves with the camps needs. Realizing that each camp has significant deferred maintenance, they created a proposal to present to the WNCC trustees to give a small portion of the endowment to help offset some of these costs, so the camps can focus on growing the amazing programming that they already offer.

The members of the council began seeking ways of helping spread the word about the wonderful things the camps are doing. The conference has three vital camping ministries with four wonderful sites that are under-utilized by the ministries of the conference. The council is striving to connect more within the conference to figure out ways to partner with the ministries and initiatives already taking place. Members of the council have met with the bishop, the cabinet, the UMC foundation, the director of church development, the director of missional engagement and connectional ministries, and more. The council looks forward to more partnering with the conference and finding new and innovative ways of strengthening the connection between the conference and camps.

The current year offers new challenges as the camps and conference navigate the unknown during and after COVID-19. The camps are all in a good place to weather the storm, and all trust that vital ministry will emerge from these sites. All of the ministries are offering ways to virtually connect with them and nature during the shutdown. The leadership of the camps is as strong as it has ever been, and the right people are in place to take the lead through uncertainty.

Camps are thriving, wonderful places of ministry that offer a unique and sacred encounter to those who participate. If interested in visiting, plan an outing soon. All are welcome. Think about how one or more of the four camps can best partner with ministry in the upcoming year.

Tresca McSwain, Chairperson

Boards of Directors for Western NC Conference Camps

(Petition 4) Approved August 8, 2020

Camp GuilRock

Class of 2020
Lori Buck
Mary Etta Richardson
Bobby Jones
Doug Berlin

Class of 2021
Rhonda Lee
Stan Hollis
Lenora Graves

Class of 2022
Mike Shelton
Todd Freeland
Cole Perkinson
Hil Peel
Kevin Raper

Ex officio: Eric Hearn, Director, and WNCUMC Council Liaison

Camp Tekoa/Tekoa Foothills

Class of 2020
John Fletcher
Dan Lyons
Kevin Osborne
Keys Pendleton

Class of 2021
Brad Cunningham
Bill Porter
Kimberly Jackson
Jimmy New

Class of 2022
David Mitchell
Candis Walker
William Van Wieren
(vacant)

Mount Shepherd Camp Retreat Center

Class of 2020
David Blankenburg
Jerry Bohnsack
Dennis Carroll
Gifford Del Grande
Cheryl Freeman
Charlie Lyons
Katie Robinson

Class of 2021
Carla Freemyer
Paul Strahan
Ryan Nunn
Ben Morgan

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

Camp Directors' Reports

Camp GuilRock

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

Camp GuilRock has continued to grow and reach more people throughout its surrounding community. In the past year, the Day Camp Program expanded from two weeks in 2017 to a full nine weeks in 2020. This allowed the camp to serve over 160 campers over the summer. It has also continued to improve the rental experience for all guests, which has led to continued growth in usage of the property throughout the year. The camp closed 2019 with one of its most successful fundraising appeals, raising over \$10,000 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

Camp Tekoa

This past season at Camp Tekoa was vibrant and full of ministry to campers. Tekoa experienced an amazing summer of growth for campers and staff, a growing season for the afterschool program, and hired a new director at Tekoa Foothills. Here are some highlights from the ministry over the past year.

- Tekoa hired the Rev. Jennifer Hampton to serve as the first Director of Tekoa Foothills. Jennifer began May 1, 2019 and guided Tekoa Foothills through an amazing summer of ministry.
- Lakeside Lodge at Tekoa Foothills was completed. It is an extraordinary lodge that will benefit the continued ministry of this property for years to come.
- There were a total of 2,178 summer camp registrations at Camp Tekoa and 39 summer camp registrations at Tekoa Foothills. Tekoa Missions continued to grow and offered two weeks of mission trips at Tekoa Foothills.
- Tekoa's afterschool program continues to thrive and reach children throughout Henderson County. The average attendance was 34 children each day.

- The new Ninja Cave construction completed at Camp Tekoa was extremely well received by campers.
- For the summer offering this year, Tekoa chose to support Sharing House of Brevard, which supplies basic needs to the residents of Transylvania County. Campers and staff gave \$5,023. Over the past five seasons, Camp Tekoa campers and staff have given a total of \$29,737 to ministries beyond camp.
- In September 2019, Tekoa celebrated 70 years of ministry at Tekoa! There was a wonderful 70th celebration event to reconnect with former staff and camper parents. The Rev. James Johnson and Rev. Jack Porter shared devotions with attendees.
- The Rev. James Johnson ended his ministry as the Executive Director of Camp Tekoa October 15, 2019. In October, the Tekoa family enjoyed the opportunity to share in celebrating James' life and ministry. James served as the executive director the past 22 years. It was a beautiful end to a truly amazing season of ministry at Tekoa.

This year Tekoa lost a giant in the Christian camp community. The Rev. Jack Porter died near his home in Maryville, Tn. on April 3, 2020. Jack was the Executive Director of Camp Tekoa in the 1980s-90s. He was a beloved father figure to campers and staff for many years. Under his leadership, Tekoa reached thousands of children in the name of Christ and formed the faith of hundreds of young adults, many of whom are in ministry today. Jack served local churches in the area, alongside his ministry at Tekoa, out of his deep love of pastoral ministry. The Camp Tekoa experience of today was formed under his leadership and vision. Outside of Camp Tekoa, Jack was well-known in the Christian camping community. He revitalized several sites, assisted smaller locations in developing programs, and constantly sought ways to support the greater camping community.

John Isley, Assistant Director
www.camptekoa.org

Mount Shepherd Retreat Center

Mount Shepherd is a nonprofit organization that accomplishes its mission through Christian camping. By all accounts, 2019 was a landmark year for the ministry of Mount Shepherd Retreat Center. The organization met or exceeded every goal it had for the year, including the areas of strategic planning, utilization and board development.

The Mount Shepherd Board of Directors completed a yearlong strategic planning process with the aid of Run River Enterprises. This work helped the organization identify priorities and set key goals for the coming years. Camps occupy a vital evangelical space as an extension of the local church. Rather than lamenting the decline of visits from United Methodist churches, the retreat center is embracing a new opportunity to reach children who have never been to church. Furthermore, the strategic planning resulted in the hire of Christina Gibbs, its first full-time program director.

In the past five years, Mount Shepherd has more than tripled its usage, increasing it by 233 percent. Its summer camp program continues to grow each year, and the retreat ministry is at an all-time high. New programs this summer include off-site adventure programs in the Uwharrie National Forest area. Strategic partnerships with several churches have helped elevate its ministry.

Finally, Mount Shepherd is thankful for the faithfulness of its board of directors. The board has leaned into its identity as a self-sustaining nonprofit organization. This year's board of directors is the most diverse group of talented leaders in Mount Shepherd's history. It continues to build on the excellent foundation of leadership.

As always, Mount Shepherd appreciates the generosity and faithfulness of the conference in supporting its ministry. Conference staff, committees, local churches, and so many individuals have offered their financial, physical and spiritual support. To God be the glory.

Josh Britton, Executive Director
www.mtshepherd.org

C. 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.

The resource center continues to purchase new, quality resources recommended by staff, pastors and laity for use by churches and individuals for the education, leadership training and spiritual formation of children, youth and adults. The resource center's two 24-foot canvas labyrinths continue to be used often, especially during Lent.

Circulation rose 3.2 percent from 2018 to 2019. As of January 2020, the resource center boasts 6,667 resources on its shelves, including books, DVDs, worship aids, vacation Bible school starter kits, stewardship campaign programs, Stephen Ministry support and curriculum for all ages and stages of life. The resource center continues to partner with The Youth Cartel for free digital resources. Contact the resource center for the promo code.

Pastors and lay people alike can turn for help and guidance in selecting resources. Resource center staff are happy to recommend resources to meet specific needs. Stop by the resource center display during annual conference to set up a free patron account, update contact information, browse the catalog, and reserve resources. Following annual conference, contact the resource center at resourcecenter@wnccumc.org or 704-535-2260.

Resource center materials are managed and supported by Surpass, a system used in public schools and libraries. The online catalog, <http://wncc.mysurpass.net>, is open to all for browsing, but one must have a patron account to make reservations. Be sure to "like" the resource center's Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/wnccresourcecenter>, for seasonal recommendations and to stay up-to-date on the newest resources as they are catalogued.

Havaleh Havelka, Training and Resource Specialist

D. HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA**1.a. BENNETT COLLEGE FOR WOMEN PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

I. Students (as of fall semester 2019)	
A. Full-time students	298
B. Part-time students	9
C. Full-time equivalent enrollment	298
D. Full-time North Carolina students	135
E. Full-time United Methodist students	
This number may be higher considering that approximately 67% of full-time students chose not to disclose their religious preference. Furthermore, five students identified as Methodist and one identified as United Methodist.	
F. Resident students	228
G. Non-resident (day) students	70
H. Male students	0
There are no male degree-seeking students. There were four male part-time non-degree seeking students.	
I. Female students	298
J. Foreign students	2
This count does not include teaching assistants from our global studies program who are taking classes.	
K. Number of students receiving financial aid	226
II. Faculty (as of fall semester 2019)	
A. Number of full-time faculty	35
B. Number of part-time faculty	22
C. Full-time equivalent faculty	42
D. Degrees of full-time faculty:	
Doctorates	25
Masters	10
E. Average salary of full-time faculty	42,836
F. Average compensation of full-time faculty	44,203
III. Operating Finances (7-1-19 to 6-30-20)	
A. Operating income	\$ 26,806,803
1. Student fees	8,513,369
2. Endowment income (unrestricted)	10,119,314
3. Church sources	599,319
4. Auxiliary enterprises	2,948,934
5. Student aid (restricted)	606,828
6. Other	4,618,361
B. Operating expenses	21,747,839
1. Instructional	4,749,163
2. Administrative and general	6,173,601
3. Library	38,982
4. Physical plant (included throughout other areas).....	205,192
5. Student aid.....	4,136,509
6. Auxiliary enterprises	2,053,156
7. Other	4,635,410
C. Operating deficit at beginning of 2018-2019.....	(217,990)
D. Expenditures per student 2018-2019	60,748
E. Operating budget for 2018-2019	12,518,168
F. Amount per UM student provided by Western NC Conference (2018-2019)	54
IV. Other Financial Information	
A. Market value of physical plant (7-1-19)	\$ 29,069,223
B. Capital indebtedness at 7-1-10.....	33,532,963
C. Net increase in physical plant from preceding year.....	(655,457)
D. Market value of endowment at 7-1-19.....	11,536,894
E. Net decrease in endowment principal from preceding year	159,162 up

Suzanne Elise Walsh, President

1.b. BENNETT COLLEGE FOR WOMEN CHAPLAIN'S REPORT

The Chaplain's Office continues to encourage spiritual growth and development. Much of this year was spent in prayer and reflection.

UMC Social Justice Scholarship and Intern Program: Through the resources of The United Methodist Church, Bennett College has continued its efforts to honor the memory of Sandi Neely Smith, class of 1976. She was a community activist who along with four others was killed during a conflict with Ku Klux Klan and American Nazi Party members in 1979 in Greensboro, N.C. This summer, the five interns have plans to serve:

- Loaves and Fishes in Mecklenburg County, a ministry offering groceries for neighbors in need
- Guilford County Department of Social Services
- The Exodus Foundation whose "mission is to stop the flow of African Americans to prison"
- The Hispanic Alliance, which helps victims of domestic violence in the upstate of South Carolina, offering a continuum of services as well as teen dating violence education and community outreach, and
- The Beloved Community Center, Greensboro, N.C., where the social justice intern will assist as a youth community organizer volunteer responsible for voter registration and education; edit the Beloved Community Center Newsletter; and facilitate program and dialogue to help build cross-cultural coalitions within the Greensboro community.

Marcinia Johnson was selected as our Black College Fund Intern and Ambassador. She spoke during services for United Methodist Student Day at Centenary UMC. Marcinia Johnson's story was featured in the United Methodist Communications blog post Rethink Church site.

UMW shared scholarship information with students and their families during Welcome Week. They also worked in partnership with Career Services, Financial Aid Office, Library Services, Bennett College alumnae and the Chaplain's Office to help students with internship and scholarship applications. Their work continues as they make themselves available for sessions in the library.

Student Christian Fellowship hosted sessions entitled "Who She Is," Biblically based conversations with practical applications. They also convened weekly prayer and monthly worship and fellowship.

The Chaplain's role is to nurture students as members of the various ministries and to offer for all students to discuss their understanding of faith. To that end, Bennett received funds from the Interfaith Youth Core to build understanding, cooperation, and awareness of its diversity through dialogue, community service, and activities. It has opened an Interfaith Prayer Room which provides a space for prayer, meditation, and reflection.

The Chaplain taught weekly Bible study and preached during worship at various churches in the community. Additionally, she revised and taught a class on church and entrepreneurship.

Natalie V. McLean, Chaplain

2.a. BREVARD COLLEGE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I. Students		
A. Full-time students.....	687	
B. Part-time students	15	
C. Full-time equivalent enrollment.....	693	
D. Full-time North Carolina students	406	
E. Full-time Methodist students.....	32	
F. Resident students	531	
G. Non-resident (day) students	142	
H. Male students	397	
I. Female students	305	
J. American Black	88	
K. Hispanic	3	
L. Native American	11	
M. Asian American.....	6	
N. Foreign	13	
O. Number of students receiving financial aid	687	
II. Faculty		
A. Number of full-time faculty.....	52	
B. Number of part-time faculty.....	41	
C. Full-time equivalent faculty	69	
D. Number of faculty and administrative staff representing ethnic minorities.....	9	
E. Degrees of full-time faculty:		
Doctorates (or other terminal degree)	42	
Masters	10	
F. Average salary of full-time faculty	\$ 45,349	
G. Average compensation of full-time faculty	\$ 46,303	
III. Operating Finances		
A. Operating income (total).....	\$ 19,246,500	
1. Student fees.....	19,579,477	
2. Endowment income (unrestricted)	1,246,622	
3. Church sources	20,000	
4. Auxiliary enterprises	6,032,404	
5. Student aid.....	(\$8,901,228)	
6. Development funds.....	2,502,495	
7. Other.....	608,343	
B. Operating expenditures (total)	18,875,433	
1. Instructional	4,764,761	
2. All institutional support services.....	4,043,404	
3. Library.....	392,514	
4. Physical plant	1,603,945	
5. Auxiliary services.....	3,907,582	
6. Student aid.....	1,954,018	
7. Other.....	0	
C. Operating indebtedness at beginning of current year.....	0	
D. Operating budget for current year	18,581,468	
E. Expenditures per student for current year	26,545	
F. Amount per student provided by Western North Carolina Conference.....	0.35	
IV. Capital Funds		
A. Value of physical plant at beginning of current year	\$ 29,198,281	
B. Capital indebtedness at beginning of current year.....	12,762,313	
C. Net increases to physical plant during preceding year	0	
D. Market value of endowment fund at beginning of current year	28,985,350	
E. Net increases to endowment principal during preceding year	1,657,537	

Brevard College President's Report, Continued

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.

David C. Joyce, President

2.b. BREVARD COLLEGE CHAPLAIN'S REPORT

Brevard College remains a phenomenal space for nurturing, expanding, and engaging the religious and spiritual life of students, staff, and faculty. At the beginning of the academic year, their team hosted and worked alongside 11 churches, three local faith-based organizations, and more than 70 volunteers as they welcomed and moved new students and their families into the residence halls. One parent moving their first year student into a residence hall said, "You all are the answer to my prayers. I didn't know how we were going to carry my child's things up three flights of stairs. Then I met Brevard College's College Minister and all the volunteers who welcomed me with a smile on their faces. Ultimately, all I had to do was park my car and volunteers took care of everything. That's true ministry! In that moment I knew God was present and at work at Brevard College."

This year they have been witnesses to God's love as they have shared more than 150 prayers, visited more than 250 people, counseled more than 150 people, invited the college community on weekly prayer walks, led six religious and spiritual life programs including an interfaith tour, created three vibrant student led ministries, taught two courses and four studies, and welcomed a host of inspirational speakers and leaders to engage the campus community. Additionally, four students admitted their call to ministry, 12 joined a leadership group for individuals with a vocational interest in ministry, two students applied and was accepted into seminaries, and one student became a ministerial candidate within the Western North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church.

Brevard College celebrates what God has done and looks forward to the great things God will do in, through, and with Brevard College. Brevard College continually aims at providing dynamic opportunities for learning, understanding, engagement, and discovery. They strive to offer creative and religiously diverse programming, service learning projects, cultural and religious immersion experiences, community engagement, mentoring and training, inspirational speaker series, and space for worship and reflection. The Brevard College team seeks to provide profound experiences where inclusion, compassion, creativity, and possibility become tangible expressions of lived experiences. They intentionally do this while remembering their rich Methodist heritage.

Sharad Creasman, College Minister

3.a. GREENSBORO COLLEGE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I. Students		
A. Full-time students		797
B. Part-time students		233
C. Full-time equivalent enrollment		913
D. Full-time North Carolina students.....		613
E. Full-time Methodist students		67
F. Resident students		367
G. Non-resident students.....		663
H. Female students		456
J. American Black		268
K. Foreign Students.....		82
L. Number of students receiving financial aid		799
II. Faculty		
A. Number of full-time faculty.....		49
B. Number of part-time faculty.....		98
C. Full-time equivalent faculty		84
D. Degrees of full-time faculty:		
Doctorates		34
Masters		15
E. Ethnic minorities employed on faculty and administrative staff.....		52
F. Average salary of full-time faculty.....	\$ 55,652.00	
G. Average compensation of full-time faculty	\$ 66,861.00	
III. Operating Finances		
A. Operating income.....	\$ 30,066,634	
1. Student fees	21,025,266	
2. Endowment income (unrestricted)	995,710	
3. Church sources	7,500	
4. Auxiliary enterprises	4,098,147	
5. Student aid (unrestricted)	2,172,812	
6. Development funds.....	1,343,779	
7. Other.....	423,420	
B. Operating expenditures (total)	30,490,508	
1. Instructional	6,095,283	
2. Administrative and General.....	7,044,952	
3. Library.....	269,074	
4. Physical Plant	2,678,270	
5. Auxiliary Enterprises	2,304,300	
6. Student aid.....	12,098,628	
7. Other.....		
C. Operating deficit at beginning of current year		
D. Operating budget.....	18,579,737	
E. Expenditures per student	33,396	
F. Amount per student provided by Western North Carolina Conference.....	8	
IV. Capital Funds		
A. Value of physical plant at beginning of current year.....	\$ 41,966,575	
B. Net increases to physical plant during preceding year	14,960,330	
C. Market value of endowment fund at beginning of current year	1,396,088	
D. Net increases to endowment fund principal during the preceding year	25,471,053	
E. Net increase to endowment fund principal during preceding year.....	1,305,109	

Lawrence D. Czarda, President

3.b. GREENSBORO COLLEGE CHAPLAIN'S REPORT

The Greensboro College Religious Life office actively supports 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 weekly service includes a variety of preachers from the campus and community.

Each week there are a variety of small groups, Bible studies, and structured times for prayer. A weekly Bible study is also offered for faculty and staff, and a Sunday night worship service for college students is provided in the area with the Wesley-Luther Ministry at UNC Greensboro. The Religious Life office also collaborates with the Wesley-Luther Campus Ministry, Catholic Campus Ministry, Episcopal Campus Ministry, Ukirk (Presbyterian) Campus Ministry, and Hillel Campus Ministry in Greensboro. Students have the ability to attend the weekly gatherings with these ministries.

As a recipient of the Young Clergy Initiative from the General Board of Higher Education and ministry, Greensboro College Religious Life has implemented an internship program to help students discern their call to ministry. Students have the experience of being an intern at local United Methodist and Lutheran Congregations to learn about ministry and ways in which they can serve the church as lay leaders and ordained clergy.

In December, Greensboro College held the 55th annual Festival of Lessons and Carols in Finch Chapel. This spring the 57th annual Ward Lecture on Christian education was held with speaker Dr. Jonathan Wilson-Hartsgrove.

As of mid-March Greensboro College became one of the first colleges in the area to move classes and chapel services online due to the COVID-19 virus. It has postponed graduation and other in-person events until it is safe to hold them again. Enrollment still continues to grow in the new master of arts program in theology, culture and ethics.

The Religious Life office also provides service opportunities on campus and in the community. It works closely with the Boys and Girls Club of Greensboro, providing events on campus for their members each semester. Students also sustain and support a community garden on campus to feed the hungry in the community. And it works closely with the new Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to support a diverse student body on and off campus.

Greensboro College realigned tuition last year so that it is now \$18,960 before financial aid and scholarships. This makes Greensboro College affordable and accessible to more students to receive an education rooted in the United Methodist tradition where "knowledge and vital piety" join together. The Greensboro College Religious Life office does this through its classes, chapel services, lectures, and community service events so that our students might be faithful and informed citizens of the world.

Robert Brewer, Chaplain

4.a. HIGH POINT UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I. Students (as of fall semester, 2017-2018)

A. Full-time students	5,253
B. Part-time students	77
C. Full-time equivalent enrollment	5,282
D. Full-time North Carolina students	1,620
E. Full-time Methodist students	321
F. Resident students	4,386
G. Day (commuter students and adult learners)	944
H. Male students	2,229
I. Female students	3,101
J. American black students	368
K. International students	113
L. Number of students receiving financial aid	4,459

II. Faculty (as of fall semester, 2017-2018)

A. Number of full-time faculty	329
B. Number of part-time faculty	131
C. Full-time equivalent faculty	373
D. Degrees of full-time faculty:	
Doctorates and other terminal	271
Masters	56
E. Number of ethnic minorities employed on faculty and administrative staff	
F. Average salary of full-time faculty	\$ 72,378
G. Average compensation of full-time faculty	\$ 89,025

III. Operating Finances (for 2016-2017 fiscal year)

A. Operating income (total)	\$ 221,261,196
1. Student fees	136,700,523
2. Endowment income	1,172,081
3. Church sources	15,156
4. Auxiliary enterprises	75,876,594
5. Gifts and grants	6,825,356
6. Investment income	0
7. Other	671,486
B. Operating expenditures (total)	185,742,834
1. Instructional	48,865,605
2. Administrative and general	65,467,763
3. Library	1,310,078
4. Physical plant	21,787,549
5. Auxiliary enterprises	48,311,843
6. Student aid	43,703,889
C. Operating indebtedness at beginning of current year	0
D. Operating budget for current year	209,243,085
E. Expenditures per student for current year	45,577
F. Amount per student by Western NC Conference	3.30

IV. Capital Funds

A. Value of physical plant (with depreciation) at beginning of current year	\$ 618,144,088
B. Capital indebtedness at beginning of current year	136,044,980
C. Net increases to physical plant during preceding year	66,513,394
D. Market value of endowment fund at beginning of current year	65,747,536
E. Net increase to endowment fund principal during preceding year	3,248,962

Nido R. Qubein, President

4.B. HIGH POINT UNIVERSITY CHAPLAIN'S REPORT

Hayworth Chapel and the Religious Life Office (aka "The Chapel") of High Point University seek to grow the heart and soul of High Point University. The mission is for all members of the HPU community to experience that they are beloved individuals. Every person, as much as is possible, will experience belonging; become who they are called to be; and behold the presence of God's grace.

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

Recent Highlights:

- **Fall Sunday Worship.** "Chasing God; Choosing Grace" HPU Chapel started a Sunday morning worshipping community: HPU Sunday.
- **Social Entrepreneurship.** The Board of Stewards with a matching gift from an anonymous donor raised over \$17,500 (a new record) to provide gifts for children during the holidays through the Salvation Army's Angel Tree program.
- **Pilgrimage: Camino Spain. God in the City.** Over fall break, Rev. Preston Davis and Dr. Tara Shollenberger led eight students on the Camino de Santiago. This 1,000-year-old pilgrimage is dedicated to walking as a form of prayer. The trip ends in Santiago, the resting place of St. James, disciple of Christ. Pilgrims walked nearly 90 miles over the course of a week introducing students to the concept of pilgrimage, walking spiritual practices, and self-awareness.
- **Jewish Life Flourishing.** Jewish Life continues to grow steadily each year. Major events through either Jewish Life or Hillel (student-led Jewish group) included: the Daffodil Project (planting daffodils in remembrance of holocaust victims); weekly themed Shabbat dinners; family weekend bagel brunch; weekly lunches; weekly Wednesday evening programs; shuttles to Temple Emmanuel for High Holidays (Rosh Hashanah, Kol Nidre, Yom Kippur); Annual Hanukkah dinner at 1924 Prime; and MLK Day service project.
- **Weekly Chapel Highlights from fall 2019.** Series highlights included "Inside Out" – scripture's take on emotional intelligence; joy, sadness, anger, and fear
- **Embrace the Questions.** A series on unanswered prayer, uncertainty, and the question of how do we make sense of suffering?
- **Interfaith Engagement.** Interfaith United, a group of students who come from various religious and cultural backgrounds gather for monthly dinner. This dinner club has grown to average more than 30 students.
- **Uncommon Grounds.** Led by the Multicultural Affairs Office. Dr. Mark Toole, Rev. Preston Davis, and Amy Epstein lead a panel on interreligious understanding, commonality, and difference.
- **Annual MLK Worship Service.** Rev. Michael Walrond Jr., Senior Pastor of First Corinthian Baptist Church, Harlem, NY, was the guest preacher.
- **Weekly Chapel.**
- **Fail Better: A three-week series on the story of Elijah** and how failure sows the seeds for spiritual and vocational growth, maturity, and success. This was a Growth Mindset-awarded project led in conjunction with the Career and Professional Development Office.
- **7th Annual Black Heritage Worship Service.** Theme: "Rise Up and Imagine a World" of freedom, love, security, belonging, and acceptance. Led by Genesis Gospel Choir and the Black Student Union, with contributions from Black Cultural Awareness, HPU National Pan-Hellenic Council, and the Board of Stewards. Rev. Frank Thomas, Pastor of Mt. Zion Baptist Church, High Point, will deliver the message.
- **No Turning Back.** A four-week worship series on making the four biggest commitments of life count: romance, friendship, work, and faith.
- **Pilgrimage: Charleston.** Rev. Preston Davis and Rev. Andria Williamson took eight students to Mepkin Abbey and Charleston. This pilgrimage focused on the intersections of spiritual formation and social justice work in Charleston, SC. Students spent three nights at a Trappist Monastery, entering into the contemplative life with resident monks. Students then stayed three nights in downtown Charleston learning about the intersections of Charleston's religious, racial, and culinary history.
- **Rescheduling Fr. Greg Boyle's visit.** Due to unforeseen conflicts, Fr. Greg Boyle, founder of Homeboy Industries, could not visit HPU on Nov. 20. The plan is to reschedule for the fall of 2020.

Preston Davis, Minister to the University

5. PFEIFFER UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT'S REPORT AND CHAPLAIN'S REPORT

There are exciting things happening at Pfeiffer, where in the 2019-2020 year enrollment rose above 800 undergraduate students for the first time since the beginning of the 2007 -2010 "great recession." With 823 total undergraduate students in Misenheimer at the beginning of the year and the promise of new graduate programs in the health sciences coming online in 2020, enthusiasm in the fall semester was quite high. January 2020 brought even more optimism as the university reported a fall-to-spring retention rate of 94.8% for the undergraduate campus. These numbers will be impacted by the COVID-19 virus and virus-related turbulence and uncertainty, but Pfeiffer is encouraged by this data, interpreting it as evidence that the highly-engaged faculty and staff offer a more personal form of higher education than Pfeiffer's peer institutions.

From the Academic Division:

Perhaps the biggest news out of Pfeiffer this year is the ongoing construction of the **Center for Health Sciences** and the arrival of Pfeiffer's first class of graduate students in the area of Physician Assistant Studies. A 43,000 square foot, four-story structure which has now become one of the centerpieces of downtown Albemarle, N.C., the center will house Pfeiffer's programs in **Physician Assistant Studies and Occupational Therapy**. Pfeiffer continues to be on schedule to open the center in July of 2020. Instruction begins there in August, while first-year P.A. students spent the 2019-2020 campaign in Misenheimer in the Harris Science Building. From an advancement perspective, while most of the naming opportunities for classrooms, laboratories, simulation centers, and conference rooms have been settled, some naming opportunities remain available for the center and both of the academic programs therein. Contact the president's office at Pfeiffer for more information.

Pfeiffer will also begin its **Global Sport Management** graduate program in the fall of 2020. Based on the Charlotte campus, the program boasts partnerships with several professional sports organizations, and an experienced department chair with ties to the National Basketball Association (Charlotte Hornets and Detroit Pistons), several NASCAR teams, and other industry leaders.

Dr. Heidi A. Miller joined the **Religion** faculty after a nationwide search following the retirement of the Rev. Kathleen Kilbourne, who had a long and outstanding tenure marked by service to The United Methodist Church. Working in collaboration with seminaries – including Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, DC – the Master of Arts in Practical Theology(MAPT) remains one of the preeminent arenas in which deacon candidates are prepared for ministry in the shifting church and cultural landscape. Current students engage with their academic work at convenient times in Charlotte and online, and are able to immediately integrate their learning into ministerial vocations. Current students include those preparing for chaplaincy, work with incarcerated persons, spiritual direction with underserved communities, and congregational ministries. Faculty in the program are also providing resourcing to local congregations in the Western North Carolina Annual Conference, as well as working with annual conferences across the United States. Among the innovations underway are training partnerships with a variety of regional non-profit and civic institutions including health systems and county correctional facilities. Pfeiffer is also working to bring these educational resources to continuing education micro-classes that can be offered to clergy and church members alike.

Student Development and Service Division:

Pfeiffer continues its **vocational exploration and Pfeiffer Journey programs** with the assistance of a NetVUE Program Development Grant. Promoting the idea of vocation as one's call helps Pfeiffer to fulfill its mission to prepare servant leaders for lifelong learning. Director of Vocational Discernment Caroline Sowards and University Chaplain the Rev. Maegan Habich (a UMC deacon), lead efforts in this area, with a great deal of assistance from faculty members in the Religion Department, the Communications Department, and administrators.

Pfeiffer's Masters in Marriage and Family Therapy program continues to flourish on the south Charlotte campus, and Pfeiffer continues to offer **free and steeply discounted counseling sessions** for individuals and families experiencing financial hardship. This ministry – offered by Marriage and Family Therapy faculty members and advanced students with degrees and training in Marriage and Family Therapy and other mental health-related fields – was utilized by over 5,000 individuals in 2019.

Pfeiffer is now in the fourth and final year of its move from NCAA Division II athletics to **NCAA Division III** athletics, with continued success in the USA South Athletic Conference. The conference includes competition against seven other United Methodist-related colleges, including Methodist University, N.C. Wesleyan, and Brevard College. Pfeiffer will be eligible to begin playing in the postseason in NCAA tournaments this year, as all scholarship athletes from the Division II era will have cycled out of the program (NCAA Division III institutions do not offer athletic scholarships). A special word of congratulations goes to Pfeiffer's women's soccer team, who won the USA South regular season title.

From the University Chaplain's Office:

In the fall, the chaplain's office implemented **Intersections**, a new form of chapel that explores the crossroads between faith and academy, and encourages students to think about their faith as it relates to contemporary issues in the world and local communities critically. Intersections meets every Tuesday morning in the chapel.

This year, **Connections**, a new student-led worship service, began at Pfeiffer to meet the spiritual needs of the campus community. Students designed a sacred space outside the walls of the chapel to explore their beliefs and values through music, word, centering prayer, and reflection.

XOK, Pfeiffer's Christian Ecumenical Community, continues to support students in their spiritual formation. Students meet weekly in large group gatherings, small group discussions led by local clergy, and connect with God and one another at an annual retreat. This year students focused on the semester topics of Servant Leadership and Vocational Discernment.

Beliefs and Values programming continues to grow at Pfeiffer. This 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

attended interfaith worship services throughout western North Carolina, hosted interfaith speakers on campus, and attended a regional interfaith conference at Elon University.

Dr. Kevin Taylor and Dr. Leah Robinson, both members of the Department of Religious Studies, manage www.theologycast.org, a podcast that focuses on theological discussions in theology, academics, and pop culture. Tune in for fun, engaging, and thoughtful dialogue.

Youth Theological Institute ... or "PFEIFFER YeTI" Partnering with 29 congregations and 31 faith-based organizations, this Lilly-funded program began in summer 2017 for two weeks of life-changing experiences. Over the past three summers, YeTI has welcomed 33 high school students, with 16 college-aged mentors, into its youth theology institutes and associated activities. Participants, mentors, and leaders engaged in activities and discussion that served to expand the participants' understanding of ministry and invited them to consider their future in ministry. Of these participants, six are now serving their communities in non-profits, full-time Christian ministry, or are in seminary.

Scott Walker Bullard, President

Proposal: College and University Trustees

(Petition 5) *Approved August 8, 2020*

Trustees of Brevard College

Term Trustees: Timothy J. Bailey, Betsy O. Barefoot, John S. Boggs, B. Barbara Boerner, Isaac Bradley, Douglas Brinkley, Ronald L. Burgess Jr., Art Fisher, Calvin Harrelson III, Reginald D. Heinitsh Jr., Charles Henley, Barbara A. Hulsey, Richard Jacobs, J. Phillip Jerome, A. Edwin Jones, W. Bradley Lakeson Jr., Mark Lemel, Kathi L. Levine, Barbara M. Nesbitt, Alfred F. Platt Jr., Connell Stafford, Jerry Stone, Elizabeth O. Taylor, Dona D. Vaughn, W. Heathley Weldon, Michael Whitehead, W. Gil West

Lifetime Trustee: C. Harley Dickson Jr.

Emeriti Trustees: Ralph L. Abernethy Jr., Douglas W. Booth, Leonard S. Bullock, Tommie L. Cassady, F. Crowder Falls, Dyeann B. Jordan, Robert S. Lawrence, Lizette Lewis Pryor

Ex-Officio: David C. Joyce, Maxie G. Munro

(Petition 6) *Approved August 8, 2020*

Trustees of High Point University

Kristine Mestdagh, Roy Carroll, and Ken Kahn

E. BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND CAMPUS MINISTRY

New beginnings are being celebrated by the Western North Carolina Conference Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry. Campus ministries are growing and adding new ministries.

In July 2019, the board welcomed the Rev. Jeff McCumber, who was appointed as the campus minister for the Wesley Foundation at UNC Asheville. The Rev. McCumber received his M.Div. from Wesley in 2010 and has served as an associate at Mineral Springs and Mills River. The board is thankful for the leadership of the Rev. Jessica L. Dayson who relaunched this campus ministry in 2015. She served for four years and was appointed to Myers Park in July 2019.

In January 2020, the board welcomed the Rev. Juston Smith who was appointed as the campus minister for the Wesley Foundation at Appalachian State University. The ASU Wesley board of directors did an extensive search before announcing the Rev. Smith as the new campus minister. He received his M.Div. from Hood Theological Seminary and previously served as an associate at First UMC in Gastonia. The board is grateful for the Rev. Brad Farrington who served in this role for 15 years. The Rev. Farrington is now serving as a coach and consultant.

The board also celebrates the establishment of a new Wesley Foundation on the campus of Lees McRae College called Common Ground. This ministry has a partnership with Banner Elk UMC. The Rev. Ted Henry began reaching out to the students on the campus many years ago and the fruits of that ministry have grown since. Common Ground is currently the only campus ministry on the campus and has around 30 students meeting weekly for worship, study, and a meal.

This year the Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry is launching a Community College/Fresh Expressions Pilot Cohort. With tuition increases at institutions of higher learning, some graduating high school students decide to enroll in community colleges as they transition into higher education. Community college has several advantages when compared to a traditional four-year college, including open admission policies, lower tuition fees, savings on room and board, and more flexible curriculum and class schedules. To extend ministry into community colleges, the WNCC Board of Higher Education and Collegiate Ministry is partnering with Fresh Expressions to encourage and resource local congregations to begin Fresh Expressions within community colleges. District superintendents will identify one congregation in their district close to a community college that they believe has the potential (passion and courage) to be in relationship with college students. A Fresh Expressions training led by Luke Edwards will be held in late 2020. After the training is completed, each congregation will be awarded \$1,000 to begin a Community College Fresh Expression.

The purpose of the WNCC 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." Even in times of change and uncertainty in the denomination, campus ministry is still growing strong and is a vital ministry of the conference. Thanks to the generous support of the conference, campus ministry is alive and well on campuses across western North Carolina. The council is committed to its mission and looks forward to what God has in store for the future of campus ministry in the WNCC.

John F. Howard Jr., Chairperson

Proposal: Campus Ministry Boards*(Petition 7) Approved August 8, 2020***Appalachian Wesley Foundation Board of Directors***Class of 2021:* Andrew Davis (Alumnus), Matt Mize (Boone UMC, Alumnus), Gwen Stevens (Boone UMC, parent)*Class of 2022:* Susan Boyer (West Jefferson UMC), Marshall Boyer (West Jefferson UMC), Katherine Christie (FaithBridge, Alumna)*Class of 2023:* Wes Austin (Deerfield UMC, pastor), Dodie Glowa (Boone UMC), Jack Simpson (Deerfield UMC)*Student Members:* Emma Aldridge, Regan Duke, Luke Williams*Pastor of Local United Methodist Church:* Anita Sain (Jefferson UMC)*Ex officio:* Carl Arrington (Appalachian District Superintendent), Kyle Sigmon (FaithBridge associate pastor; Conference Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry representative)*Campus Minister:* Juston Smith**Asheville Wesley Foundation***Class of 2020:* Kayln Wiley (Chairperson), Andrea Lingle*Class of 2021:* John McCullough (Treasurer), Bill Haggard, Dianna Johnston*Class of 2023:* John Smith, Lindsay Rosson*Ex officio:* Mark Ralls (Blue Ridge District Superintendent)*Campus Minister:* Jeff McCumber**Common Ground at Lees-McRae College***Susan Staton (Chairperson), Rebecca Bolick (Secretary), Jana Greer, Vicki Lott, Jim Hart (Chaplain), Neil Hartley, Michelle Scott, Gina Phenneger (Finance Treasurer)**Campus Minister:* Ted Henry**Niner United at UNC Charlotte***Ian Binns, Anne Brown, Jesse Caldwell, Olanda Carr, Sandra Cline, Beth Hardin, Mike Hoffman, Lyn Holt, Sam Moore, Trey O'Quinn (Chairperson), John Richards, Taylor Simmons, Ethan Smith, Beth Whitaker**Ex officio:* Cailee Franklin, Ben Rogers, Stephen Cheyney (Campus Pastor)**Wesley Foundation at East Market (North Carolina A&T State University)***Class of 2020:* Ron Cooper, Henry Waddell*Class of 2021:* William Waddell, Dottie Troxler*Class of 2022:* George Coates, Brandon Wrencher*Student Members:* Jaala Harrison, Jovan Lawless*Ex Officio:* Beverly Copley (Northern Piedmont District Superintendent), Marie King, Ellis Carson, Diron Chloe (Campus Minister)**Wesley Luther at UNC Greensboro***Veranita Alvord, Jessica Gregory, James Esterline, Jill Alventosa-Brown, Tom Herin, Jay Hilbinger, Don McCrickard, Carol Carlson, Carolyn Miller, Catherine Sevier, William Parrish, Paul Freeman, Mark Smith**Ex Officio:* Beverly Copley (Northern Piedmont District Superintendent), Rebecca Kurt, Olivia Biro, Andrew Mails (Director of the Wesley-Luther Campus Ministries), Emily Saine (Associate Director of Wesley-Luther Campus Ministries)**Wesley Foundation at Western Carolina University***Ryan Pless, Mike Poston (Financial Secretary), Liz Davis, Bill Ogletree (Vice Chairperson), Sarah Speed (Secretary), Drew Carnes (Chairperson), Eric Sink, Sam McCarsen, Jay Ruebel, Callie Moore, Savannah White, Adam Mottershead, Zack Georgopoulos, Rachel Gibby**Ex-Officio:* Linda Kelly (Smoky Mountain District Superintendent), David Reeves (Senior Pastor at Cullowhee UMC), Jay Hinton (Director of the Wesley Foundation at WCU), Hannah Van Hooser (Associate Director), Scarlett Pless (Associate Director)**Winston-Salem Wesley Foundation***Roger Echols (Chairperson), Christy Buchanan, Elinor Starling, Steve Felts, Jonathan Philpot, Nicklaus Ashburn, Ryan Angi, Zechariah Kearns, Lamar Parker, Sara Miller, Grace Gach, Treasurer, Meredith Menius, Melanie Crossen**Ex Officio:* Sam Moore (Yadkin Valley District Superintendent)**Campus Ministry Reports****Appalachian Wesley Foundation**

The Appalachian Wesley Foundation has been in a state of transition during the 2019-2020 academic year. Following the Rev. Brad Farrington's announcement to transition away as the Campus Pastor in April, 2019, the Board of Directors appointed a search committee. The search committee was chaired by the Rev. Lory Beth Huffman, senior pastor of Boone United Methodist Church. After an extensive search was launched in July, 2019, three candidates were invited to campus in September and October to share in worship and meet with the Student Leadership Team. The Rev. Juston Smith was announced as the campus pastor on October 20, 2019, to begin his tenure on January 1, 2020.

Even in the midst of transition and change, the mission of App Wesley continued. Weekly prayer services, worship, and small groups were led by student leaders. Highlights include the Fall Break Asheville Mission Trip, 27 Hours of Prayer during the Fall and Spring semesters, Humane Society Pet Day during midterm exams, and the end of school year beach retreat to celebrate a year of ministry and the graduates. However, March 2020 brought with it a new way in which App Wesley would need to do ministry due to

the COVID-19 outbreak. Because of an extended spring break, and the change from on-campus classes to online classes, creativity and new resources were vital. App Wesley is continually committed to students and their needs, especially in the time of COVID-19 and the immediate changes this brought to on-campus living and learning, and to how this ministry would stay in community with one another. Monday night prayer services, small groups, and the Spring 27 Hours of Prayer were held through video conferencing. Wednesday night worship became a podcast, published each week, consisting of music, scripture, prayer, and a time of Bible study. Board meetings and Student Leadership meetings transitioned to video conferences.

The Appalachian Wesley Foundation student center is in the first stages of many needed updates to make the center more accessible to all students. Some updates, based on emergency, included a new water line to the building in February to help with leaks occurring outside of the building. This new line will help future upgrades to make all bathrooms handicap accessible. The board has approved working with Bill Dixon of Appalachian Architecture to draw and begin the bidding process for ADA upgrades to include handicap accessible bathrooms, and a lift from the first floor to the second floor worship space. The project includes a complete kitchen renovation during a later phase. Currently, the board is working to apply for ADA grant funding, and beginning to solicit donations to the project.

The foundation is blessed with an active board who have been a source of encouragement to both Brad and Juston, and most importantly, the students. The 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 the annual conference for their support of this vital extension ministry.

Through this constant state of change that the Appalachian Wesley Foundation has been in throughout this past school year, one thing is for certain—the mission, the message, and the place for openness in such a vulnerable time never wavered.

Juston Smith, Director

Wesley Foundation at UNC Asheville

It has been an amazing year of growth and transformation serving the UNC Asheville campus. The foundation underwent a change in leadership in July, and the transition has been smooth and exciting. Student leadership has excelled in maintaining the identity, stability, and vision for the campus ministry while embracing new ideas with grace. 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. The campus ministry continues to grow and continues to place a high value on empowering students to grow in their faith, service, and leadership abilities. This year, the Wesley Foundation has been active in service through ABCCM, local welcome tables, and the NCC UMC Disaster response team. Asheville Wesley's Leadership Team and Student Ministry Internships continue to be a success, giving students a way to make the ministry their own. The campus ministry has also worked diligently over the course of this year to reach out to local congregations and build relationships. With that being stated, the foundation would like to thank both its old and new friends for their support of the campus ministry. Thank you for helping to make the Asheville Wesley Foundation a place where any student can be known, seen, and loved as individuals of sacred worth.

Jeff McCumber, Director

Common Ground at Lees-McRae College

In the latter part of 2012, The Rev. Ted Henry began reaching out to students on the campus of Lees-McRae College. Several years later a community of trust and respect began to flourish, and a fresh expression known as Common Ground was established.

The concept behind the program was to find the "common ground" all students shared, regardless of faith, lack of faith, or anything else.

Negotiation with the Town of Banner Elk in July of 2015 yielded a free meeting space across the street from campus. The tattered and well-worn room in the Historic Banner Elk School was in serious need of some TLC. A few weeks of scrubbing mildewed walls, then throwing a few gallons of paint on the walls, adding a chalkboard and massive whiteboard, gluing together a mosaic floor covering made from painters drop cloth and carpet sample squares, and bringing in some donated furniture, Common Ground finally had a home and began to take on a personality as unique as the fifteen students attending each week.

The free meeting room was only allowed to be occupied one night per week, however, that didn't stop the enthusiasm. Huddled around several space heaters that constantly tripped circuit breakers, the challenges of the first winter in their new space only seemed to bring everyone closer together. Conversations about life, faith (or lack of it), struggles facing students, and game nights, all centered around home cooked meals, kept students coming back week after week. Service projects for the students included packing several hundred backpacks of food once a month for the Missional Network in Avery County and serving meals at a regional transitional living facility. Graduation of 2016 arrived, and the face of Common Ground changed dramatically.

Surprisingly, the students were not the only thing to change! The Historic Banner Elk School was also going through a time of transition as the town sought to bring in paying tenants. Common Ground was forced to leave the "free meeting space." The choices were to accept a room that might hold eight or nine students or move to a room that required them to start paying rent. The decision was made to forge forward and raise funds. Thanks to funding from the Appalachian District, several local churches, and a number of individuals, the rent for one year was raised in about five weeks and Common Ground's roots began to grow even deeper.

The appointments in June of 2018 moved the Rev. Henry to serve at Banner Elk UMC, located on the campus of Lees-McRae College. Banner Elk has locked arms with Common Ground and shares in the excitement of all God is doing on and around this small private college. The Rev. Henry also serves in extension ministry as part-time chaplain of the college, affording him greater access to and opportunities for building authentic relationships with the students. Common Ground is currently the only campus ministry at Lees-McRae and has around 30 students meeting Thursday nights for a meal and fellowship and Sunday evenings for worship and study.

The Board of Common Ground is excited about all God has yet to reveal for CG and is incredibly appreciative of the Western North Carolina Conference Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry for approval of Common Ground to become the newest Wesley Foundation.

Ted Henry, Director

Niner United at UNC Charlotte

Niner United is the United Methodist campus ministry, working ecumenically with the Episcopal, Lutheran (ELCA), and Presbyterian (USA) denominations at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, the Carolina's fastest-growing university. With nearly 30,000 students in the largest metropolitan between Washington and Atlanta, UNC Charlotte is a critical population to reach and serve. Niner United offers an incredibly comprehensive and dynamic ministry program and presence. The campus ministry offers two weekly worship services that reaches hundreds of students, faculty, and staff. A staff of three, together with a team of 22 student leaders, organize and coordinate the ministry programs that include Christian formation, outreach and service, music ministry, and an extensive program in vocational discernment, entitled the Faith and Leadership Experience, backed with support from the Lilly Endowment, the Young Clergy Initiative, and other various agencies and foundations. Major events included four trips (the Holy Land, Denver, Orlando, Asheville, and Hurricane Dorian relief in the Bahamas) with 102 student participants.

UNC Charlotte is still adjusting from the tragic events of April 2019, yet has emerged as a strong community resilient to the love of learning and the pursuit of making the world a better place. Niner United plays an important role in the university's student life, by helping students, faculty, and staff experience the abundance of life in Christ by equipping this university community to live consequentially faithful lives. The campus pastor, Stephen Cheyney, has worked with key administrators in establishing and re-establishing a much pastoral presence to the university community.

Despite these events, Niner United has continued to grow and offer life-changing experiences, especially to students. This past year Niner United reached 5,668 students including 1,046 students in the Class of 2023.

Steve Cheyney, Campus Pastor

Wesley Foundation at East Market at North Carolina A&T State University

WFEM is the Wesley Foundation to North Carolina A&T State University. Over the past year WFEM has partnered with multiple A&T groups to assist local Guilford County Elementary Schools for their beautification day and other volunteer opportunities. Student-led discipleship groups continued and WFEM has partnered with the Good Neighbor Movement in assisting them in starting an A&T City Village. Developing the next generation of worship ministry leaders is continued. WFEM also continues its relationship with Metropolitan Greensboro, and developing more relationships with the faculty and staff of NC A&T State University.

Diron Chloe, Director

Wesley-Luther at UNC Greensboro

Wesley-Luther would not exist without the transformational support of the Western North Carolina Conference. As the oldest of the Wesley Foundations in WNCC, the foundation continues to make disciples of Jesus who are committed to the transformation of the UNC Greensboro campus, the Greensboro community, and the world.

As an expression of the commitment to sharing the Gospel not only in words but in faithful action, Wesley-Luther serves the campus' food insecure students through the Spartan Open Pantry, which was organized for the university in 2012. Since 34% of the students at UNC Greensboro are food insecure, caring for students' basic needs is not only necessary for their health, but an essential expression of God's grace in the community. Wesley-Luther's service through food also engaged more than 219 students in on-campus service work. Those students helped distribute 11,001 pounds of food through the main distribution last year. At the time of this submission, UNC Greensboro is adapting to the realities of student needs amid the COVID-19 crisis, through the increase of weekly distribution, food deliveries to self-isolating students, and the expansion of to-go meals.

Through the support of the Lilly Endowment, Inc., Wesley-Luther has expanded its "Nourishing Mind Body and Soul" to allow more students to consider Christian vocation through care-orientated professions, lay service inside the church, and ordained ministry. In 2019, as part of this program, one student made a profession of faith and is entering the candidacy process while another young adult began seminary at Wake Forest School of Divinity.

Andrew Mails, Director

Jill Alventosa-Brown, Chairperson

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 the friends and alumni. This academic year the ministry helped college students connect with each other and the world around them in many ways. Students spend time with each other daily at the ministry and at Cullowhee United Methodist Church. They participate 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 also planned and implemented the 11th Annual Wesley Haunted House which raised over \$5,200 for the trip to the Holy Land and reached out to over 600 college students and local residents. Each week during the school year the student worship team and Wesley staff plan and hold worship for college students. Wesley staff help college students learn how to plan and give a sermon almost every week of the school year. They also provide opportunities for small group participation, worship with Cullowhee UMC, and fellowship and study with Cullowhee UMC members. During the last academic year, Wesley staff started planning the next trip for the Holy Land in December 2020. This academic year, 15 students and three staff have signed up, as well as several Cullowhee UMC church members and alumni. Next

year, the staff plans to increase their focus on in-depth student leader development, board development and student involvement, increased intentional student outreach, and student worship 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 fund-raising efforts.

Jay Hinton, Director

Winston-Salem Wesley Foundation

Until mid-to-late February, 2020, Winston-Salem Wesley Foundation was having a really strong and solid year of ministry. New students were attending; two great spiritual retreats took place during the fall semester; more bottles of Wesley logo water bottles were given to any passersby at the home football games from our “dry” tailgate area; one of the Wake Forest seniors answered the call to pursue ministry; WFU student-led Bible study was thriving; and, the ministry at Salem was making great strides, especially at the first of the fall semester.

But then, the scourge of the pandemic began to make its sad effects felt, and life definitely changed for students as well as the rest of the world. The spring break WFU mission trip to serve with the Costa Rica Mission Project in San Isidro, CR was cancelled; and, with the cancellation of on-campus classes at both Salem College and Wake Forest University, a steep learning curve has ensued for both the students and myself!

But there are strong evidences of God’s presence within this hard and unsettling time. The Bible study folks have begun Zoom-enabled Bible study—and they report that their numbers are growing. Sermons are on video, which then get distributed by email and also on Facebook. So far, no current students nor alumni report having contracted the virus; and, the dramatic shift in the ordering of the daily schedule is actually allowing more students to be contacted. The Lord is present; the Wesley Foundation will continue; and, plans are already being made for next semester!

As always, WFU thanks the churches of the conference for their continuing support of campus ministry in the WNCC. For the Winston-Salem Wesley Foundation, the financial support we receive through the conference provides over 60 percent of the income needed to continue this ministry. Continued prayers and financial support are greatly appreciated!

Larry Jones, Campus Minister and Director

F. HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

1. ALDRSGATE LIFE PLAN COMMUNITY

Aldersgate, now in its 72nd year of serving elders, is located in the most diverse geographical area of Charlotte and continues to spearhead diversity, inclusion, and equity in residents, team members, board members, and community partners. “We honor elders,” the first three words of the Aldersgate mission statement, establishes the 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.

Aldersgate continues to fulfill its mission of serving elders, embracing diversity in all dimensions, and engaging surrounding neighbors in 2019. The progress is marked with some significant thresholds, not the least of which are outlined here.

One of the most significant achievements of 2019 is the completion of the Gateway Expansion with the opening of three final independent living buildings. The new apartments and villas are the final piece of the expansion and improvements within Cuthbertson Village Memory Care, the new Asbury Health and Rehabilitation Center, and The Commons with five unique dining venues and other engaging spaces.

The Urban Farm at Aldersgate, spanning 6.7 acres, has begun to be planted in an effort to help address food insecurity for neighboring communities. Through a collaboration with Carolina Farm Trust, the urban farm will serve as a fully operational farm with learning labs, aquaponics, and local fresh goods. The Urban Farm will accept government subsidized food programs as payment and provide wholesome food for the surrounding areas as well as the Aldersgate community. Opportunities abound for Aldersgate residents to not only enjoy the bounty but also volunteer alongside neighboring school students.

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 leadership team.

Opening Minds Through Art (OMA) is an evidence-based art program specifically designed for artists to express themselves, within their diagnosis of dementia. OMA was launched in Cuthbertson Village Memory Care with the first group of resident and volunteers. Volunteers work with the same residents over six art sessions and the projects were intentionally structured to promote the social engagement, autonomy, and dignity of the artists while providing an avenue for individuality and creativity. The work culminated with a resident art show where funds were raised to continue the support of this meaningful experience.

Renovations have begun in the former WNCC building to welcome the Camino Community Center to open its second location on the Aldersgate campus later this year. This collaboration will bring Camino’s second free medical clinic and mental health services to a largely immigrant clientele. This fills a deep need for the neighborhood residents. Along with the OurBridge afterschool immigrant program for kids, Aldersgate continues to enjoy strong community relations in this great area of East Charlotte.

Playworks Productions and Aldersgate proudly presented “Acting Our Age: A Century of America in Seven Voices” in 2019. Close to 1,500 people enjoyed hearing the stories of seven lively Aldersgate elders who were the focus of the unique theatre and video

experience that traced their lives from childhood to the present. Ranging in age from 73 to 95 years old, their experiences intersect with nearly every major cultural and historical development in the United States over the past 100 years.

Aldersgate at Home continues to serve clients who live both on and off the Aldersgate campus in Mecklenburg County expanding to approximately 100 additional lives touched.

Aldersgate celebrated the diversity of East Charlotte at the fourth annual International Sandwich Festival. Thousands of guests of all ages came out to Shamrock Drive to enjoy live entertainment, sandwiches, and specialty cuisine from around the world.

Aldersgate previously entered into a letter of intent to develop and operate an independent living community with dedicated memory care at Shalom Park Jewish campus and further expand its mission. Set to open 2024, this Jewish community, serving all faiths, will be unique in the integration of the various Jewish agencies at the park and further combat ageism by providing innovative intergenerational opportunities. With no other Jewish senior communities between Richmond, VA and Atlanta, GA, this community, named Generations, is positioned to carry on the standard of excellence that the Aldersgate campus on Shamrock Drive continues to strive to maintain the best possible days for the elders they are blessed to serve.

Finally, during this year Aldersgate had the privilege of dedicating the Sigmon Memorial Garden, named for the Rev. Dr. Thomas Sigmon, a good and faithful servant of the church for many, many years. Tom and his family were the driving force in bringing the Columbarium to fruition. Sadly, Tom passed away April 5, 2019. Fittingly, Tom was the first to be inurned in the Sigmon Memorial Garden and Columbarium.

Aldersgate's journey continues.

Brooks Shelley, Director of Marketing, Branding and Community Engagement

**Proposal: Boards of Directors of
Aldersgate United Methodist Retirement Community, Inc.,
and Aldersgate at Home, Inc.**

(Petition 8) *Approved August 8, 2020*

The boards of directors of Aldersgate United Methodist Retirement Community, Inc. and Aldersgate at Home, Inc. proposes that the following persons be confirmed as members of the boards:

(8a) Board of Directors of Aldersgate United Methodist Retirement Community, Inc.

Chris Davis, Pat Garrett, Jerry Gaudet, Dave Guilford, Brad Crossley, Tommy Lawing, Fred Longietti, Billy Maddalon, Kevin McKane, George Moffat, William Springs, Bob Vaughn, Irene Vogelsong, Mary Wilson, Stanley Watkins

(8b) Board of Directors of Aldersgate at Home, Inc.

Chris Davis, Pat Garrett, Jerry Gaudet, Dave Guilford, Brad Crossley, Tommy Lawing, Fred Longietti, Billy Maddalon, Kevin McKane, George Moffat, William Springs, Bob Vaughn, Irene Vogelsong, Mary Wilson, Stanley Watkins

2. ARBOR ACRES UNITED METHODIST RETIREMENT COMMUNITY, INC.

On behalf of the board of directors, the residents, and the staff of Arbor Acres, the annual report of this ministry's activities to the Western North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church is submitted. It is a pleasure to be joined through the common mission and ministry in extending Jesus Christ's gospel to others.

Over the last year Arbor Acres has been preparing to celebrate its 40th year of service to the Triad. In planning various commemorative celebrations, a significant amount of time and effort has been focused on addressing the infrastructure. With 40 years of service come 40 years of wear and tear. As a result, the board of directors and the leadership of the community have approved a Core Redevelopment Plan that will serve as a guide for the addition of new apartments, as well as the eventual replacement and/or repurposing of existing buildings in order to ensure that Arbor Acres continues to adapt to the changing needs and expectations of older adults.

In addition to the work on the Core Redevelopment Plan, the community has implemented two new programs: Arbor Acres Home Care and the Arbor Acres Advantage. Arbor Acres Home Care is a private-duty home care agency providing in-home services ranging from companion services and personal care to skilled nursing services. Arbor Acres Advantage is a program that enables individuals who live outside Arbor Acres to become residents without relocating to the campus. This program allows the participants to engage in the life of the community and enjoy many of its benefits while remaining in their preferred location.

The Resident Assistance Fund received \$412,529, surpassing the goal of \$400,000. Unrestricted bequests totaled \$542,355, surpassing the 2018 total of \$212,333. Four new members joined the Heritage Society, keeping the total membership over 130. The total amount Arbor Acres provided as Community Benefit was \$1,898,494.43.

A new effort is being made to support the Financial Assistance Endowment which is currently over \$15 million. Membership is being sought for individuals committing a designation of \$500,000 through their estate for the Resident Assistance Fund Endowment. To date, six new members have committed to this effort. The new group will be called the Anniversary Society.

Arbor Acres is grateful for the continued relationship in the active ministry in the name of the Western North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church.

Andrew W. Applegate, President/CEO
Susan S. Schwartz, Chairperson, Board of Directors

Proposal: Board of Directors of Arbor Acres**(Petition 9)** *Approved August 8, 2020*

Welborn E. Alexander Jr.
 Pamela H. Ball
 Arthur L. Bloom
 Dudley C. Chandler
 Florence P. Corpening
 Danny R. Newcomb
 Courtney H. Douglas
 Susan C. Elster

Scott J. Gerding
 Cynthia S. Graham
 David C. Hinton
 Kaye P. Lambert
 Kathryn A. Nelson
 William J. McGuinn
 Drewry H. Nostitz

Steven L. Reeder
 James M. Ruffin
 William F. Sayers
 Susan S. Schwartz
 J. Hill Stockton
 Wendy Walker-Fox
 John W. Willingham

Ex Officio

Paul L. Leeland
 Resident Bishop

Samuel H. Moore Jr.
 Yadkin Valley District Superintendent

Dale E. Driscoll
 Immediate Past Chairperson

Margaret B. Hayden
 President, Resident Council

3. CHRYSALIS COUNSELING AND CONSULTATION CENTER

Chrysalis is the Methodist counseling and consultation resource serving all the districts of the eastern part of the conference. It is a non-profit, 501(c)(3), fee-based center providing mental health services for individuals, couples, families, and children who are experiencing emotional and spiritual issues.

Chrysalis believes that healing and wholeness is a fundamental part of serving God in all relationships. It provides quality confidential counseling for ministers and their families at an affordable cost. It also serves clergy as a referral source for congregants experiencing a range of emotional problems including anxiety disorders, addiction, depression, marital conflict, and relationship issues.

In 2019 Chrysalis relocated to the (former/vacant) parsonage of Rehobeth United Methodist Church. The transition was successful and clients have expressed increased comfort at the new location. The satellite at Covenant UMC in High Point remains in place with steady growth under Chrysalis counselor Cathy Cole, LPC.

Chrysalis continues to serve as an invaluable resource for those seeking affordable, professional counseling and consultation services. In 2019 Chrysalis reduced total fees by \$33,000 for its clients. It also maintains the Chrysalis Samaritan Fund for those have limited income and are without mental health insurance coverage. It is proud of this figure and the spirit of the mission that it represents.

Since 1980, Chrysalis Counseling & Consultation Center has provided services to individuals and families in its faith communities. It thanks you for your trust in its efforts over the years to make a difference in the lives of people. Chrysalis appreciates all financial support as it moves forward to meet the growing demands of the future.

Please visit the website to learn more about the Chrysalis ministry.

Gary L. Kling, Executive Director

Proposal: Board of Directors of Chrysalis Counseling and Consultation Center**(Petition 13)** *Approved August 8, 2020*

Appreciation goes out to Chrysalis' board members.

Amanda Kirby, M.S. Ed.S., LPC, NCC (Vice President)
 Jackie Selman, B.S., M.Ed.
 Donna Miller

Mary Lu Harmon, B.S., MBA (Secretary)
 Clarinda Crawford, D.Min.
 Lynda Hodges, R.N.

TBA (President & Treasurer)

Ex Officio

Gary L. Kling (Executive Director)

Cathy G. Cole, LPC (Staff Counselor)

Leigh Loftin (Office Manager)

4. CROSSNORE SCHOOL & CHILDREN'S HOME

Crossnore School & Children's Home has a 212-acre campus opened in 1909 in the heart of Winston-Salem, N.C., an 86-acre campus opened in 1913 in Crossnore, N.C., and a satellite office opened in 2018 in Hendersonville, N.C. The mission of Crossnore School & Children's Home is to grow healthy futures for children and families by providing a Christian sanctuary of hope and healing. Crossnore's programs include residential foster care, community-based foster care and adoptions, outpatient and school-based clinical services, educational services, and transitional living services for children aging out of foster care.

Brett A. Loftis, J.D., Chief Executive Officer of Crossnore School & Children's Home, directs an executive team of seven: based on the Winston-Salem campus, Jenny Taylor, Chief People Officer; Meribeth Robinson, Executive Director-Triad Region; Sarah Norris, Child Welfare Division Director; and, Johannes Steffin, Clinical Director. Based on the Crossnore campus, Caroline Hart, Deputy Director; Teresa Huffman, Chief Financial Officer; and, Kenny Cook, Chief Facilities Officer. Each officer leads a team of talented directors and staff who are committed to the mission of Crossnore School & Children's Home. The board of trustees is led by Katheryn Northington, Board Chair; Bick Cardwell Jr., Vice-Chair; Marilyn Williams, Secretary; and Ted Laporte, Treasurer.

Crossnore utilizes The Sanctuary Model®, a trauma-informed model of care, in all locations and was re-certified in the model for in 2018. Crossnore is one of only six organizations nationwide that have been certified three times by The Sanctuary Institute. Our fourth certification process will begin this year and conclude with a site visit by The Sanctuary Institute in 2021. By utilizing the most current science about brain development and decades of research about the impact of trauma on the brain, Sanctuary transforms organizations into healing communities. Sanctuary is implemented worldwide in more than 300 organizations, and it is the only organizational model that is recognized by the National Child Traumatic Stress Network. Put simply, Sanctuary changes an organization's essential question from, "What's wrong with you?" to, "What happened to you?" When implemented with fidelity in an organization, research shows that children and adult clients make better and faster progress, and the staff members serving clients are protected from the dangerous impacts of vicarious trauma and toxic stress. Crossnore currently has 42 employees who are trained as Sanctuary trainers providing ongoing training for staff and community-based foster families.

Crossnore opened the Center for Trauma Resilient Communities in 2018 to provide training in trauma and building resiliency to communities across the United States. Faculty of the Center offer customized training to meet the needs of groups, teams, churches, businesses, or organizations. These sessions range from half-day workshops in the basics of trauma-informed care to multi-day intensives that delve deeper into effectively responding to those who have experienced trauma, as well as multi-year contracts helping organizations embed and embody the science of trauma resilience.

Crossnore School & Children's Home's residential program is growing on the Winston-Salem campus. Seven cottages have been refurbished or renovated and are now home for up to 63 children. Hanes Cottage, most recently renovated, houses a new cafeteria for group meals and a commissary where cottage parents pick up their weekly groceries. Combined with the 14 cottages on the Crossnore campus, 132 children are living safely on the campuses and are cared for by Crossnore's professional cottage parents. Many of the children live with their siblings and all receive the therapeutic, medical, and educational support services they need. Spiritual life has grown on both the Winston-Salem and Crossnore campuses to include 21 cottages attending churches in their local communities, a community garden on the Crossnore campus, weekly chapel services, monthly Young Life for teens, fall and spring spiritual life retreats for teens, as well as small group studies for staff.

Crossnore's Clinical Services is providing outpatient and school-based therapy to approximately 423 children in Winston-Salem, Crossnore, and Hendersonville. In Winston-Salem, Crossnore's day treatment program continues to serve Kindergarten through 12th grade at Kingswood School. The day treatment program at Kingswood is currently serving 27 children. Crossnore's school-based therapy services are offered to students in the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools and Henderson County Public Schools and we are currently serving in 21 elementary, middle, and high schools in these districts.

Foster care and adoption services have expanded to Crossnore's three locations. Currently 79 foster children are living safely in one of Crossnore's 84 licensed community family foster and/or therapeutic foster homes. Another 31 families are currently in the foster care licensing process. Additional staff has been hired in Crossnore and Hendersonville to facilitate recruitment and support of these families.

To support the expansion of community-based foster care and adoptions, Crossnore's Fostering Communities continues to recruit churches as they answer God's call to serve foster children and families in their own communities. Crossnore partners with local churches to create a Fostering Community and provides a dedicated point of contact, education on the impact of trauma and how to build resiliency, development of a sustainable support structure to meet the needs of foster children and parents, training and licensure for families who are interested in becoming trauma resilient foster families, support with ongoing coaching and consultations, and overseeing a smooth process for any foster placement that may become a forever home for a child through adoption. For more information about the Fostering Communities initiative, please email fosteringcommunities@crossnore.org.

For nearly 112 years, Crossnore School & Children's Home have 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 School & Children's Home is the premier provider of children's services in Western North Carolina.

Holly Solomon, Director of Communications

336-721-7600 • hsolomon@crossnore.org • www.crossnore.org

Proposal: Crossnore School & Children's Home Trustees

(Petition 10) *Approved August 8, 2020*

The United Methodist Trustees for the class of 2020: Saribeth Dozier, Redge Hanes, Iris Sunshine

5. GIVENS COMMUNITIES

COVID-19 has received much attention due to the age of the constituency served. It has been imperative the organization be prepared to keep residents and staff as safe as possible in a caring and supportive environment. They have implemented emergency preparedness, infection control and pandemic plans to address the coronavirus and manage this difficult situation. The residents and staff in the four communities are working together in a positive and supportive manner to overcome this crisis. There is solace in going through trying times together. Also, there is inspiration from the response of the most vulnerable group who are concerned for others before themselves. This is a lesson for all.

Beginning in 2019, Givens placed an emphasis on respecting differences, diversity, and inclusion. This will continue through 2020 and 2021 with a specific focus on inclusion. There is much work to be done though they are pleased with current progress and enthusiastic about the future and the opportunity to become stronger and healthier.

Givens Estates is renovating Oxford Commons, the main building on campus. The renovations will expand the dining options and wellness opportunities. Also, Givens Estates is building Friendship Park which is designed to replace some of the older more moderately priced housing and includes 80 one and two-bedroom apartments. Both projects will be completed in 2021. While these projects are under construction, attention will soon be shifting to phase 2 of the campus master plan which includes a significant renovation of the health care center. Givens Estates is installing the first solar panels which will provide energy to the grounds and maintenance buildings. The health center will be working with Action Pact to continue its effort of becoming more resident and staff focused.

Highland Farms is building The Cottages which is sixteen one and two-bedroom homes on a beautiful seven-acre site on the southeast side of the campus. The Cottages will be complete in September of 2020. Also, under construction is a much-needed maintenance and grounds building. While these projects are underway, attention is shifting to phase 2 of the campus master plan which will include new kitchen, dining and commons areas, and 57 one and two-bedroom apartments. This phase of the master plan will augment Meadowmont Homes and The Cottages which will further transform that wonderful community.

Great Laurels continues to emphasize the importance of social connections and being in community. The onsite Manna Food Pantry and the access to campus nursing continue to benefit residents. This wonderful community is fully occupied with healthy waiting lists which is a testimony of the need and demand for quality affordable housing in Western North Carolina.

Gerber Park is a wonderful community that is fully occupied with healthy waiting lists which is evidence of the need and demand for quality affordable housing in Western North Carolina. The attention and focus are on making this a vibrant and lively campus, providing a quality of life as well as 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, accessing community-based services, and mental, physical and spiritual wellness. 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 a partnership with Blue Ridge Health and provides residents onsite access to primary care at the lowest cost to the residents. Gerber Park is an example of partnerships and important collaborations with those who believe in providing quality residential living with support services to everyone regardless of finances, especially The Duke Endowment.

LifeMinistries is the faith and community-based outreach program. It is thriving and continues to impact the local churches and communities. It enables congregations to share their gifts and talents in addressing health and wholeness needs with those in need including the frail and the unchurched. LifeMinistries areas of focus include Welcome Tables (meal sites), BEAR Closets (baby equipment and resources), medical equipment loan closets, MY Meds (medication assistance), wellness education, and a community nurse program addressing the needs of lower-income seniors.

Givens Communities continues to be an exciting organization with an abundance of opportunities serving seniors in Western North Carolina. They remain enthusiastic about their Life Plan Communities, their affordable housing, their emphasis on keeping residents independent for as long as possible, and their goal of being a responsible employer in which team members are welcomed, respected, and appreciated.

Kenneth M. Partin, Chief Executive Officer

Proposal: Board of Directors of Givens Communities

(Petition 11) *Approved August 8, 2020*

It is proposed that the following be elected as members of the Board of Directors of Givens United Methodist Senior Ministries:

Class of 2021	Class of 2022	Class of 2023
Ann H. Aldridge	Grace Allen	Kathryn M. Atkinson
Suzanne E. Landis	Annette P. Coleman	Donna A. Broadwell
Connie B. Martin	Adam K. Ennis	Alisa J. Brown
Clifton B. Metcalf	Charles L. Fredrick	Kathryn R. Durity
Charles Pine	Ronald C. Leatherwood	Patrick McGuire
Kenneth W. Swayze Jr.	Rob McKown	Murphy Horne Fletcher
G. Edward Towson II	Chris B. Taylor	Rebekah Lowe
Marjorie J. Tucker	David C. Whilden	Miles K. Hoffman

Ex Officio

William B. Cagle (Honorary Life)	Robert E Shepherd (Honorary Life)
Hal F. Starnes (Honorary Life)	Alfred J. Whitesides Jr. (Honorary Life)

Clergy

Robert M. Blackburn Jr.	W. Michael Holder
R. Keith Turman	Christopher M. Westmoreland
Paul L. Leeland, Resident Bishop	
W. Mark Ralls, Blue Ridge Superintendent	

6. SANCTUARY COUNSELING GROUP (SCG)

Sanctuary Counseling Group (SCG) is an agency that provides mental health counseling to 16 unique communities in the greater Charlotte area from Hickory to Monroe to Shelby. For over 50 years, SCG therapists have been offering counseling, psychotherapy, and consultation to individuals, clergy, congregations, and UMC districts in the western and central Piedmont areas. It works with a variety of issues, including depression, anxiety, stress, career counseling, abuse recovery, grief/loss, and addiction, to name a few. In addition, SCG offers educational programs for church congregations and groups. Its mission statement is “to be dedicated to the healing of the heart, mind, and soul by providing excellent emotional, spiritual, and relational health care to all peoples and communities.”

2019 Statistics:

- 9,285 hours of counseling services were provided for over 763 clients
- 1,999 hours of service were provided on a sliding scale
- Donations provided 1,268 hours to the Samaritan Fund last year for low income clients, a \$195,000 value
- SCG served 16 communities: Charlotte, Shelby, Gastonia, Belmont, Monroe, Pineville, South Charlotte, Center City, University City, Concord, Huntersville, Davidson, Hickory, Salisbury, Winston-Salem, and High Point
- 100 percent of donations go to the Samaritan Client Assistance Fund
- \$50 pays for one hour of services; \$750 can last a client for a year
- 33 percent of hours provided are at reduced rates

All SCG’s therapists are licensed to conduct counseling in the State of North Carolina, based on their professional organizations. In addition to having pastoral counselors on staff, it also has Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists, Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselors, and Licensed Clinical Social Workers. Its goal is to meet people where they are in their walk without judgment or bias. SCG realizes that throughout life there are times that everyone needs some assistance, and it values the opportunity whenever someone calls for help in their despair and darkness. As a faith-based organization, it offers God’s healing grace to all regardless of their beliefs and position in life. SCG has found many of its churches are full of those broken because of life circumstances, and this keeps them bound to the pews instead of fully engaging in God’s work. SCG serves as an important referral source for pastors, who often do not have the time or the specialized training to work with persons who are hurting in local congregations.

SCG’s therapists work with a plethora of mental health and relationship issues that cover a broad spectrum. While some have specialties, the therapists are for the most part generalists. Some specialties include play therapy, abuse and trauma recovery, perinatal and child loss trauma, marriage, adolescents and young adults, sex, men’s issues, coaching, and addiction. SCG uses various methods and techniques so clients can reach the goals they set for themselves. It specializes in working with pastors who face the same challenges in life as the rest of the community but often do not have a resource to help them.

SCG realizes that communities are ever changing, as is the need, so it has been growing by adding new staff members who offer diverse skills to the communities we serve. Since last October, SCG has added five new therapists with experience in a variety of clinical areas. Realizing that various cultural influences affect the way people of color see therapy, SCG is working to hire more therapists of color. It believes this is instrumental in carrying out the work of God in all communities.

The SCG area of service now encompasses the Catawba Valley, Metro, Northern Piedmont, and Uwharrie districts that cover a 13-county area. Shady Grove UMC was added this year to the location list. SCG donated approximately \$195,000 in dollars of service provided at either a reduced or no cost basis to the various communities where there are satellites. This was made possible by generous donations from church partners and donors who believe in its mission. In addition to offering the Samaritan’s Client Assistance Fund, SCG also takes insurance from five different insurance carriers, including the conference plan.

SCG has a website that is updated regularly with new information that pertains to the industry, which can be accessed at www.sanctuarycounselinggroup.org. SCG works to stay current with all mental health issues and endeavors to make its social media platforms a resource to communities through Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. It encourages you to follow SCG and to post links on your own church’s websites and social media. To learn more about the clinical services and sites, as well as to make contributions to the Samaritan Client Assistance Fund to aid persons without the financial means who seek professional pastoral counseling, visit 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 Samaritan Institute.

Jay Cobb, Executive Director
704.375.5354

7. 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, its mission easily translates into “Live, Work, and Thrive” as it transforms lives. UMAR is grateful for the partnership from members across 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 provides inclusive opportunities for spiritual development, volunteerism, essential items, and social interaction. One hundred percent of UMAR residents participated in a worship service or church-sponsored activity in the past year.

Thank you. If it were not for this support, UMAR would be unable to provide the following opportunities and quality services upon which families and communities rely:

- **Live (Residential Services):** UMAR operates 22 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 (Day Programs/Arts):** 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 arts, and horticulture. Artists earn a 40 percent commission for every piece sold.
- **Community Services:** Across 11 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 one's 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.

Celebrations from 2019:

- The Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) awarded three-year accreditation for excellence in community housing, supported living, community integration, job development, job supports, and job-site training.
- The ALL IN Campaign was launched to raise awareness of adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities and of the financial challenges facing UMAR, as well as the opportunities for growth.
- Community and periodic support services grew as a direct result of electronic health record implementation.
- A total of 305 people were supported in their own community, with 917,835 miles driven in service to participants.
- A total of 503 hours of professional training was provided to direct support caregivers.
- UMAR arts in Charlotte, Lincolnton, and Reidsville continued to increase community partnerships and class offerings, enabling artists to increase their skills, involvement, income, and artistic expression.

Focus Areas for 2020:

- Continued performance improvements in care delivery that embody UMAR's mission while meeting the needs and dreams of UMAR participants.
- Extension of the \$3.5 million ALL IN fundraising and community engagement campaign as a result of COVID-19 disruption.
- Investment in technologies that enhance workforce resourcing and productivity as well as improve outcomes of the people UMAR supports.
- Implementation of organizational strategy to reduce annual operational deficit and improve financial strength and sustainability.
- Increased organizational awareness and image throughout western North Carolina.

Marilyn Garner, President and CEO

Proposal: Trustees of UMAR Services, Inc.

(Petition 12) *Approved August 8, 2020*

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

Class of 2019/20

Parks Hunter
Donna Frye
Ed Imbrogno
Billy Morton
Morry Johnston
Patricia Mirabelli
Mike Bailey
Leslie Marsicano
Gil Middlebrooks

Class of 2020/21

Billy Morton
Morry Johnston
Pat Mirabelli
Mike Bailey
Leslie Marsicano
Stephanie Hand
Archie Pertiller
Parks Hunter

G. BOARD OF LAITY

The 2016-2020 Board of Laity term is completed. The generative leaders who served the Western North Carolina Conference on the board is congratulated. These members caught the vision that growing numbers of committed United Methodist laity who are maturing in their faith, disciplining others, and transforming their churches and communities are the hands and feet of Christ in WNCC and around the globe. Through their actions, they have modeled, assessed, and advocated for the WNCC laity, so that through their leadership and engagement, everyone glimpsed what God can do through the quarter-million lay members.

Accomplishments for this quadrennium include:

- Implementing a plan to enrich the personal faith of lay members through the training for and resourcing of accountability and covenant groups in churches across the conference;

- Establishing, in partnership with Bishop Leeland and the cabinet, a Certified Lay Ministry program. Thereby completing a full spectrum of Lay Servant Ministry training across the conference while standardizing training and coordinating opportunities to serve;
- Providing leadership to relaunch the Connectional Table of the WNCC, where lay members served as co-chairs. The committee began its work and continues in the 2020-2024 quadrennium to coordinate ministry efforts across the conference to invest funding and human resources consistent with the mission and in the areas where they have the highest potential for impact;
- Partnering with Bishop Leeland to more fully engage lay leadership from the local church to the extended cabinet to participation at Annual Conference.

It has been an honor to serve as conference lay leader. Please welcome John Crane, the next conference lay leader. The 2020-2024 Board of Laity is poised to continue innovative and fruitful ministry so that the communities and world benefit from engaging with the laity of The United Methodist Church of the Western North Carolina Conference.

Jane Boatwright Wood, Conference Lay Leader

H. 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 UMC.

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 overview of ministry of men in the local church is defined as a core group of men, partnering with their pastor, to invite and initiate spiritual growth opportunities for all men of the church. Everyone has different gifts, graces, and areas of interest. Therefore, opportunities for participation include diverse ministries of the church, such as prayer groups, missions, Bible studies, retreats, workshops/seminars, small groups in the Wesleyan tradition, leading and participating on committees, teaching Sunday school classes, youth ministries, scouting, mentoring, and assisting in leading worship service. 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 WNCC UMM continue to present information about their emphasis on scouting in which The United Methodist Church is the largest denominational supporter of scouting in the United States, each year the WNCC UMM Scouting Coordinator Team sponsors an excellent scouting weekend at Lake Junaluska.

The WNCC UMM proudly sponsors Ministerial Scholarships for Second Career Pastors for which the UMM give an average \$5,000 every year. They support WNCC Disaster and Building Teams.

The WNCC United Methodist Men are very strong advocates against domestic violence and the week of August 2–8 everyone will be asked to observe a Week of Prayer against Domestic Violence and also pray for strong loving family relationships. This year the devotional for each day will be written by a UMM Spiritual Advisor in coordination with members of the executive board. The UMM work along with the North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence and the GCUMM partner amend together to help stop domestic violence.

Looking at the future, the UMM need younger men to participate in the ministry, therefore, they have established a “YOUNGER Men’s Ministry” which is an innovative way to draw men to the United Methodist Men. For more information go to: <https://sejumm.org/youngERMen.html>.

The Western North Carolina Conference United Methodist Men continue to be leaders among the General Commission of United Methodist Men by continuing to have the highest number of life members of UMM, a very high percent of churches with a charter, and a high number of charters. The Western North Carolina Conference United Methodist Men “Helping Men Grow In Christ, So Others May Know Christ.”

William Waddell, President
wiloliwad@yahoo.com • www.wnccumm.org

I. UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

The highlight of 2019 was the celebration of 150 years in mission on March 23. The conference, all eight districts, and many local units had creative celebrations. Much fun was had throughout the year learning about the foremothers’ roles in what is today United Methodist Women (UMW).

Mission work is being done in some 120 countries, through eight regional missionaries and 92 mission institutions. Five of those are in this conference: Bethlehem Center in Charlotte and Winston-Salem, Brooks-Howell Home for retired missionaries and deaconesses in Asheville, Bennett College in Greensboro, and Pfeiffer University in Misenheimer. What began in 1869 with two cents a week and a prayer in one country has become a \$27 million annual mission effort around the world. Membership has grown from those six ladies in Boston to 800,000, the largest faith-based organization for women in the world.

Conference membership of 18,000+ in more than 600 units took part in the conference and district events. A new two-night June spiritual growth retreat at Lake Junaluska featured speaker Clara Ester, Deaconess and national UMW Vice-President, with the theme “Thorns and Roses.” The extra day allowed for various breakout sessions. Mission at Pfeiffer University’s Misenheimer campus in July featured studies on “The Gospel of Mark and Radical Discipleship” and “Women United for Change—150 Years in Mission.” At the annual celebration at Lake Junaluska in September, a “Grace, Grit & Gratitude” theme featured speaker Christi Campos, national UMW Executive for Development and Donor Relations. Ubuntu Day of Service was conducted at the Mission Resource Center, Bethlehem Center Charlotte, Bethlehem Center Winston-Salem, Brooks-Howell Home, Bennett College, and Pfeiffer University. Members prepared stars for holiday gift donations, cleaned closets, planted shrubbery, etc. Districts had prayer breakfasts, mission studies, days apart, and annual meetings. The conference leadership team provided training for district officers on Leadership Development Day. The eight districts used this information to provide training for new and continuing local unit officers.

Conference total mission giving was \$763,129. Local units across the conference supported many projects within their own communities directly. Scholarships in the amount of \$19,900 were awarded to undergraduate students at the Methodist colleges in the Western North Carolina Conference: Bennett College, Brevard College, Greensboro College, High Point University, and Pfeiffer University. Social and justice issues have been at the heart of this organization since those six ladies and two missionary wives became concerned about the plight of women and girls in India. Focus continues on the quadrennial priorities of economic inequality, climate justice, maternal and child health, and criminalization of communities of color. UMCOR kits and Project AGAPE Christmas shoe boxes were collected as hands-on projects at conference and district events. Members enjoyed providing relief items and bringing Christmas cheer to children in Armenia. Hands-on projects had a value of \$105,487. Even as conferences across the nation combine to form larger memberships, Western North Carolina was a very close second in the nation for undesignated mission giving.

The Legacy Fund endowment campaign goal of \$60M will undergird this organization and insure the mission work of United Methodist Women well into the future. At the end of 2019, \$31M of this goal had been realized. At the national level there were various actions to conserve mission dollars and to allow the 25 directors to allocate money wisely.

This new year and new decade will certainly bring changes within The United Methodist Church, but the PURPOSE and mission of United Methodist Women will remain the same. Regardless of local church affiliation, United Methodist Women plan to be the “uniting” force to keep women “united” for personal spiritual growth, leadership development, and mission support for so many women, children, and youth around the world who rely on this involvement to better their lives. This organization will strive to continue its mission to work for and with women as it creates, supports, and partners with other organizations to make mission happen.

Julia A Willis, President
jawillis1@aol.com • www.wnccumw.org

J. CONFERENCE COUNCIL ON YOUTH MINISTRIES (CCYM)

The 2019–2020 Conference Council on Youth Ministries (CCYM) is composed of approximately 30 youth and five adults from various districts in the conference. The CCYM is a leadership team of dedicated youth and adults who plan and implement ministries for youth across the Western North Carolina Conference. In addition, the CCYM receives grant applications and awards Youth Service Funds each year. The CCYM mission is to find ways to encourage young people to follow Jesus, make disciples, and transform the world.

The CCYM faced many exciting changes this year which served as catalysts to expand CCYM’s influence in the conference. It gives thanks to God for the leadership of Amanda Thomas over the past several years and is blessed with the new leadership of Shannon LeMaster-Smith as CCYM Coordinator. Both women have worked together to provide a smooth transition for this year’s CCYM to thrive.

CCYM is responsible for planning the conference-wide retreat for middle school youth, known as IgniteUs (formerly Kaleidoscope). It meets every other month to work on IgniteUs. This year it also took time at each meeting to dream about the future of CCYM, which involved some restructuring and editing its guidelines. New committees were formed and old ones were changed so more youth could be involved in the planning and execution of IgniteUs and spreading God’s word beyond this event. An example is CCYM’s new Praise Team that was formed to lead the group in worship at each meeting and at IgniteUs in the spring. Considering the wonderful talents that God blessed each of the CCYM members with helped CCYM realize that it needs to embrace them and use them to inspire others!

With COVID-19 becoming a prevalent issue about a month before IgniteUs, the executive team of the CCYM had to make the tough decision to cancel IgniteUs, which was scheduled for April 24–26, 2020. While disappointed CCYM would not be able to share the love of God to middle school youth in person at IgniteUs 2020, the organization is grateful for the leadership growth of the youth who serve on CCYM and will build on this in the future. The IgniteUs theme for this year was “2020: Focus on the Path,” and CCYM knows that God still has a path for it during these hard times. Psalm 119:105 says that God is “a lamp to our feet and a light to our path,” and CCYM knows that God is guiding it to do great things, even if it is not what was originally planned.

CCYM is excited to partner with Missional Engagement and Connectional Ministries to hold regional youth events throughout the upcoming year. It is in the beginning stages of nurturing this partnership and is hopeful to reach youth all over the WNCC. In addition, it has scheduled IgniteUs 2021 for April 23–25, 2021, to be held at YMCA Camp Hanes in King.

On behalf of CCYM, thank you for your continued support for the conference youth ministry. The CCYM is growing leaders of today and the next generation to transform the church and the world into a community that accepts and loves all of God’s children. It gives thanks to God for allowing it to be the hands and feet of Christ and guiding members even when the path may not be clear. Join CCYM in embracing “being the church” and trusting that God is “a light to our path” and will guide us to love, comfort, and inspire others in all circumstances.

Rylie Warren, President

K. 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 denomination. 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 two district superintendents who serve as cabinet representatives.

The members of the board are volunteers and each member volunteers many hours. They serve on working teams to care for specific aspects of the board's work and they serve on Discernment Teams to interview candidates. In January they began reading documents submitted by persons who had applied for ordination as full connection deacons or elders. Board members were evaluating the candidate's effectiveness in ministry demonstrated in their provisional years. They were discerning how the applicants had integrated the fundamentals of the faith and United Methodist doctrine and polity with the daily practice of ministry. Board members spent two days together in February interviewing these candidates in person. Thirteen persons are being recommended to be ordained at the 2020 session of the annual conference,

This same process was repeated for interviews in March for persons who had applied for commissioning as provisional deacons and elders. In these interviews, the focus was evaluating readiness for ministry. The COVID-19 pandemic required that these interviews be conducted by Zoom. The interviews went very well over two days with a third day for board voting and other business. The board recommends 14 persons for commissioning in 2020.

The board has undertaken an important next step toward recruiting, identifying, training and interviewing for future clergy leadership in the Western North Carolina Conference. A board task force has assembled a list of 11 critical characteristics of a fruitful leader. That list has been outlined in a document that has been named "Whom Shall I Send: A Portrait of Fruitful Clergy Leadership." This document along with a discernment process that starts at the local church level will offer a framework by which a person can more fully clarify a call to ministry. That document will help make clear what the conference needs in future clergy leadership. Local church pastors, Staff Parish Relations committees, district superintendents, district boards of ordained ministry and others will have a process around which they may guide a person in discerning if God is calling them into licensed or ordained ministry. Provisional Member questions and Full Connection questions will be rewritten where permitted by The Book of Discipline to reflect this focus on the portrait of a fruitful leader.

A good relationship with the bishop and cabinet is important to the work of the board. The responsibilities of the board and the bishop and cabinet remain distinct, but cooperation and respect are evident. The executive committee of the board meets with the bishop and cabinet to maintain and enhance this relationship.

2020 ends four years of this board's working together on behalf of Christ and the church. This board has taken its work very seriously. The members of this board have been honored to serve in this important way.

Donald Jenkins, Chairperson
DJenkins@wnccumc.net

1. LOCAL PASTORS COMPLETING COURSE OF STUDY DURING THE 2019-2020 CONFERENCE YEAR

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

- Robert K. Boozer, Reid's Chapel (Murphy), Smoky Mountain, COS—The Divinity School, Duke University
- L. Rodney Burton, Oak Grove (Mocksville), Yadkin Valley, COS—The Divinity School, Duke University
- Gregory K. Collins, Delta (Sandy Ridge), Yadkin Valley, COS—The Divinity School, Duke University
- Jennifer L. Forrester, First Associate (Hickory), Catawba Valley, COS—Candler School of Theology, Emory University
- Ronald E. Hartman, North (Kannapolis), Metro, ACOS—The Divinity School, Duke University
- Glenda D. Hayner, Nesbitt's Chapel (Fairview), Blue Ridge, COS—Candler School of Theology, Emory University
- Luke A. Mitchell, Hillsdale (Advance) Assistant, Yadkin Valley, COS—The Divinity School, Duke University
- Sybil J. Perrell, Lilesville Charge (Forestville, Lilesville, Olivet), COS—The Divinity School, Duke University
- Lynette J. Sills, Central (Asheville), Blue Ridge, COS—The Divinity School, Duke University

2. SEXUAL AND PROFESSIONAL MISCONDUCT POLICY FOR MINISTERIAL LEADERSHIP

The current policy is published online at www.wnccumc.org/clergyethics.

L. BOARD OF PENSION AND HEALTH BENEFITS

Pension Program and Policies

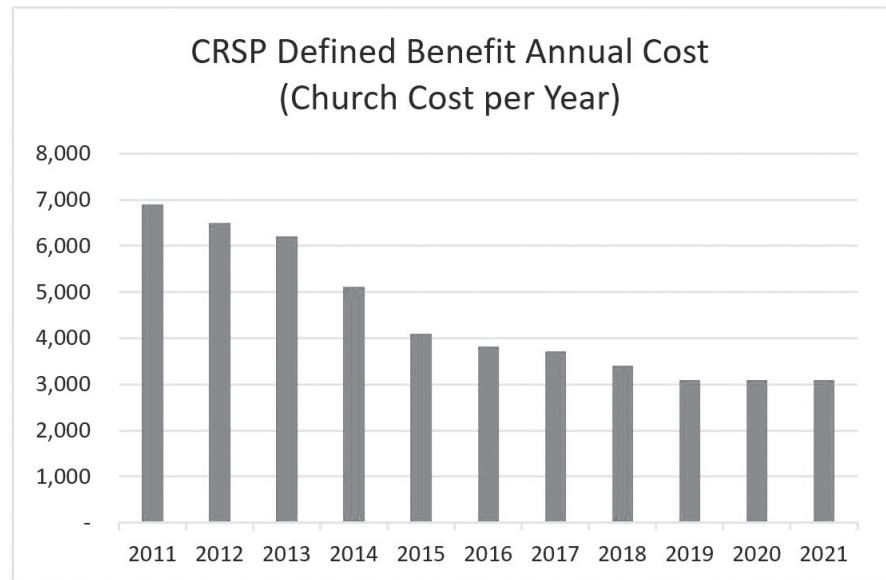
The Board of Pension and Health Benefits, Inc., Western North Carolina Conference, The United Methodist Church, acting as an auxiliary to Wespeth Benefits/Investments, is charged with caring for the work of providing for and contributing to the support, relief, assistance, and pensioning of clergy and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

In 2021, 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. Through December 31, 2016,

CRSP covers all US United Methodist Church clergy, including elders, local pastors and deacons, appointed within the annual conference, subject to the time designations described below with the effective date of January 1, 2014.

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 \$2,378 per full-time pastor in 2021, invoicing \$3,093 to the local church. The actual cost invoiced to the conference for the CRSP DB full-time benefit will be \$5,471. This is the tenth year of reductions in our 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



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 2021; 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 2021, 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 2021, the cost is \$3,093 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 \$3,093. Wespath has provided that the conference actuarially determined normal cost contribution due December 31, 2021 will be \$3,958,245.

Effective January 1, 2014, as approved by General Conference 2012, clergy appointed to ¼ 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 ¼ 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 ¾ time and full-time positions in the CPP. GC 2016 also changed the minimum compensation to 25% of DAC. For the year 2021, the CPP premium will be invoiced to the churches with full-time and ¾ 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 2021PSR be set at \$823.00 per service year, which represents the aforementioned 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 of its benefit obligations. Such funding plan must be submitted to Wespath Benefits/Investments for review in order 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.

Proposal: Pension Programs and Policies

(Petition 2a) Approved August 8, 2020

The conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits proposes:

1. That the basic cost of pastor's pension be invoiced to churches in 2021 as pension responsibility to support the Clergy Retirement Security Program.
2. That supplemental funds for the cost of the Clergy Retirement Security Program – Core Defined Benefit Part (CRSP-DB) for clergy appointed on medical leave be included in the 2021 conference budget at Fund 507, named "Clergy Medical Leave Benefits." The 2021 budget request for the CRSP–DB pension component for clergy on medical leave is \$0 (zero).
3. That the Past Service Annuity Rate for service years prior to 1982 be set at \$823.00 per service year, effective January 1, 2021, and that the eligibility for the Clergy Retirement Security Program be determined to include clergy appointed for full, ¾ and ½ time positions. That the eligibility for the Comprehensive Protection Plan be determined to include clergy appointed for full and ¾ 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 2021:

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 Western North Carolina Conference Superannuate Endowment Fund, and The Duke Endowment during the period January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021 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 Clergyperson 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 program is already impacting its participants, and holds possibilities for improving clergies' general welfare and well-being. As of December 31, 2019, loans outstanding for clergy debt reduction and refinancing totaled \$2,076,362.

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 2019 list of churches with balances greater than \$50.00 as of June 30, 2020, resulting from non-payment of direct clergy benefit costs:

District	Church	2019 Balance	District	Church	2019 Balance
Appalachian	Boone (Boone).....	\$9,429.37	CV, cont'd	Linville (Morganton).....	3,103.00
	Crossfire (N. Wilkesboro).....	1,223.52		Mundy's Chapel (Mooresboro).....	1,188.77
	Fairmount (Statesville).....	76.42		St. Peter's (Lawndale).....	3,141.60
	Green Hill (Lenoir).....	684.25		Tucker's Grove (Iron Station).....	14,862.75
	Nathan's Creek (Crumpler).....	95.09		Hunter's Chapel (Cornelius).....	9,546.00
	Pisgah (Linville Falls).....	88.12		Mill Grove (Indian Trail).....	51.65
Blue Ridge	Snow Creek (Statesville).....	1,020.00	Metro	Park Avenue (Mooresville).....	192.94
	Addie's Chapel (Marion).....	14,097.82		Sanctuary (NS) (Charlotte).....	5,203.64
	Oak Hill (Candler).....	812.84		Love's Chapel (Sylva).....	551.64
Catawba Valley	Selica (Brevard).....	434.80	Smoky Mtn Uwharrie	Central (Monroe).....	1,775.58
	Brown's Chapel (Catawba).....	348.44		Rehobeth (Ramseur).....	95.73
	El Bethel (Kings Mountain).....	919.29		Union Chapel (Albemarle).....	426.24
	Kadesh (Lawndale).....	3,141.60		Centenary (Clemmons).....	387.62
Catawba Valley	Knob Creek (Lawndale).....	3,141.60	Yadkin Valley	New Mount Vernon (Winston-Salem)	1,208.52
				Total	\$ 70,677.49

Health Benefits Committee

The Health Benefits Committee serves as a subcommittee 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, 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 quarterly 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.

2019 Financial Summary of Health Benefits Plans through December 31, 2019

	Fund 575 Active	Fund 125 Retirees
Sources of Funds		
Premiums -		
Active-Church Contributions	9,388,250.00	0
Active-Clergy/Dependent/Conf. Personnel	2,469,165.00	0
Retiree Contributions	0	1,082,300
Cole Foundation	0	185,792
Other -		
Stop Loss Claims	411,663	0
Drug rebates/Misc	56,329	17,340
Clodfelter Trust	0	0
Retiree Stabilization Fund	0	0
Total Sources	12,325,407	1,285,432
Uses of Funds		
Benefit Payments	12,806,975	1,140,304
Wellness program	40,148	0
Administrative Charges	824,569.00	273,835
HSA Seed Expense	7,200	0
Life Insurance Premium	36,751	0
Operating Expenses	4,710	8,039
ACA Fees	3,883	0
Change in Claims Incurred but not received	0	0
Claims - Medical Leave	13,999	0
Miscellaneous	0	19,663
Bad Debt Expense	61,554	0
Total Uses	13,799,789	1,441,841
Sources less Uses	-1,474,382	-156,409
Fund Balance, January 1	-1,983,850	1,172,585
Excess/Deficit	<u>-1,474,382</u>	<u>-156,409</u>
Fund Balance, December 31	\$ -3,458,232	\$ 1,016,176
<i>Retiree Stabilization Fund</i>		
Beginning Balance, January 1	\$	7,647,971
Investment Income		1,578,211
Grant Payment		<u>0</u>
Current Balance, December 31		<u>9,226,182</u>
Combined Total Fund Balance	\$	10,242,358

Conclusion

The committee appreciates the fine spirit in which subscribers and local churches are supporting the work of the Health Benefits Committee. It seeks their continuing support as it makes every effort to provide a health benefits program that meets all needs.

Members of the committee are: Frank A. Stith III (chairperson), Sandra McNeil, Lori Wilson, Al Jones, Marvin Melton, Rey Rodriguez, J. Zachery Christy, Phillip B. Cole, Winifred Helton, Andrea Conder, Ken Poe, and Beverly Copley, Cabinet Representative, R. Mark King, Conference Treasurer, Dale C. Bryant, Benefits Administrator, and M. Lynne Gilbert, CBOPHB Treasurer.

Proposal: Health Benefits Program and Policies

(Petition 2b) *Approved August 8, 2020*

The Health Benefits Committee proposes:

1. That the Board of Pension and Health Benefits be authorized to secure a hospital/medical insurance contract for 2021 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 2021 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 2021 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 2021 apportioned funds to pay premiums for district superintendents and administrative, program, and support staff members of the conference headquarters.
13. That supplemental funds for insurance for clergy on medical leave be included in the 2021 conference budget at Fund 507, "Clergy Medical Leave Benefits". The 2021 budget request for the health benefit component for clergy on medical leave is \$0 (zero).

Words of Appreciation

The board extends 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 Bryant at 704-535-2260 or 704-714-2332; e-mail dbryant@wnccumc.org.

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

M. CONFERENCE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, INC.

The Board of Trustees, Western North Carolina Conference, The United Methodist Church, Inc. is a chartered nonprofit corporation under North Carolina law, in accordance with *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church*, and is subject to the instructions of the annual conference and its officers.

Investments

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

Earnings during 2019 were distributed to the following designated beneficiaries:

Western North Carolina Conference Board of Pensions	\$3,882.86
Western North Carolina Conference United Methodist Women	\$2,190.89
Brevard College	\$4,772.23
Total Distribution.....	\$10,845.98

New Conference Center*Sustainability*

In January 2019, the trustees were informed that the building had received LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) gold certification. In addition, solar panels on the roof of the building were installed to generate power that will feed the WNCN offices resulting in a direct impact to operating costs. Three additional conference rooms have been constructed on the first floor for use by the conference, local churches, and outside groups.

Property Management

On May 1, 2019, the board of trustees transferred all conference property management and broker services from A. Anthony and Foundry Commercial to Wesley Community Development, a nonprofit that helps North Carolina churches develop or repurpose real estate to best meet church and community needs.

Leasing

Wesley Community Development negotiated a seven-year lease with annual incremental increases with NRV, Inc. (parent company of Ryan Homes and NVR Mortgage), and they are now occupying 80% of the first floor of the Conference Center building. The conference received the first lease payment from NRV, Inc. on January 22, 2020. 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 Mrs. Paul Leeland 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 look after discontinued and abandoned churches. The Church Legacy initiative, with a staff of four persons, is continuing to assist local churches with discerning possible paths forward. This project has completed its fourth of a five-year grant from the Duke Endowment. The trustees affirm the benefits of this transition team, 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, N.C. 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.

Disaffiliated Churches

At the Special Session of General Conference in February 2019, an additional pathway for a local church to disaffiliate with The United Methodist Church was adopted. Paragraph 2553 is now effective and will be in effect through December 31, 2023. It 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 new provision, the main body of decision-making and negotiating on behalf of the conference is the annual conference board of trustees. This is a distinct departure from the other two possible exit routes

from the denomination discussed in the past (Paragraph 548 permitting mergers of a local church with another denomination and Paragraph 2549 which has been used by other conferences to close a church desiring exit and sell assets back to a newly-formed congregation outside of the UMC, respectively). The 2020 Annual Conference will be asked to approve the disaffiliation of seven local churches: (AP) Mount Zion (Lenoir); (BR) Brown's View (Candler), Cedar Grove (Bostic), Golden Valley (Bostic); (ME) Bethel (Midland); (YV) Hardison (Mocksville), Mount Pleasant (Thomasville).

Vehicle Leasing

Because of the cost effectiveness of this practice, the trustees worked again with Vann York Auto Mall in High Point, N.C. to secure new 36-month leases of 11 vehicles (eight Honda CRVs, two Honda HRVs, and one Accord) in March 2019. These vehicles are used by the district superintendents, bishop, bishop's assistant, and director of church development.

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 (www.wnccumg.org) under Administration/Forms, Documents, and Publications, and are recommended for comparison with existing 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.

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.

Robert Wilhoit, President

Proposal: Mount Shepherd Retreat Center to Grant and Create 87.935-Acre Conservation Easement

(Petition 18) Approved August 8, 2020

Submitted by: Board of Directors of Mount Shepherd Retreat Center, Inc., Asheboro, NC, Uwharrie District and the WNCC Board of Trustees

Text:

Whereas, ¶ 2516 of the Book of Discipline states that "Title to annual conference...camps, conference grounds, and retreat centers held in trust by an incorporated board...can be mortgaged, or sold and conveyed by such corporation...only after authorization by the annual or district conference to which such body is related; and

Whereas, Mount Shepherd Retreat Center, Inc., located in Asheboro, North Carolina, is a separately incorporated annual conference camp and retreat center which holds its 543.3 acres of real property in trust for the benefit of the Annual Conference; and

Whereas, one of the primary purposes of Mount Shepherd is to promote environmental stewardship and to teach creation care; and

Whereas, Mount Shepherd has reached an agreement with The Piedmont Land Conservancy (PLC) that will preserve the natural beauty and ecological harmony of 87.935 acres in perpetuity by insuring the land will not be developed; and

Whereas, PLC is offering \$2000 per acre for this Conservation Easement, providing critical capital in the midst of a global pandemic that has severely impacted Mount Shepherd's ability to generate revenue; and

Whereas, the proceeds of \$175,870 will allow Mount Shepherd to reach financial security by paying off all indebtedness to the Western NC Conference and providing an essential cash resource for ongoing operational needs; and

Whereas, the beneficial trust interest of the Annual Conference in the real property would be subordinate and subject to the perpetual conservation easement;

Whereas, the board of directors of Mount Shepherd have approved this project. Therefore, be it

Resolved, that the Western North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church approves the grant of easement rights by Mount Shepherd Retreat Center to Piedmont Land Conservancy in the 87.935 acres for \$175,870, as agreed upon by the parties, and further authorize The Board of Trustees, Western North Carolina Conference, United Methodist Church, Inc. to execute all documents and agreements necessary to carry out the same.

N. CHURCH LEGACY INITIATIVE

The Church Legacy Initiative (CLI) is a ministry of the Western North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church, supported by a grant from The Duke Endowment. The purpose of CLI is to assist churches in assessing their current and future potential for ministry and leading them through next steps so that they may provide a legacy which will help to make disciples in this and future generations. CLI team members and the districts they serve are:

- Rev. Charlotte Brendel – Appalachian, Blue Ridge, and Smoky Mountain districts
- Rev. Renee Easter – Northern Piedmont, Yadkin Valley, and upper Uwharrie districts
- Rev. Angela Hollar – Catawba Valley, Metro, and lower Uwharrie districts

The Western North Carolina Conference has a large number of churches that have declined significantly in vitality and worship attendance during the previous decade. Congregations faced with declining membership and diminishing resources have significant challenges in fulfilling their call to develop faithful followers of Jesus within the church, as well as making new disciples and providing meaningful ministry to those outside the walls of the church. These churches struggle to sustain even the most essential work of the church, and often are focused more on survival than making disciples.

The ministry of the Church Legacy Initiative is to work with the pastor and congregants of struggling churches and provide support as they follow a faithful path. This journey includes important conversations and commitments by churches, but they can know they will be supported by CLI personnel each step of the way.

CLI works collaboratively with district superintendents to determine the churches with whom CLI will work and to discern next steps. CLI plays an important role in the vitality efforts of the Western North Carolina Conference as churches purposefully discern the faithful path God is calling them to follow, either for intentional revitalization of their own church or to provide a legacy which will assist with the renewal of other churches and the creation of new faith communities. Through loving faithfulness in this ministry, the Church Legacy Initiative will provide the WNC with greater opportunities to fulfill its mission of following Jesus and making disciples who will transform their communities and the world.

Lyn Sorrells, Team Leader

O. 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. We agree with the Rev. Alfred T. Day, General Secretary of the General Commission on Archives and History, that this is a “Ministry of Memory so we may continue to learn from our past and anticipate our future.”

The Commission continues to oversee the work of the Conference Archives, now located at the G. A. Pfeiffer Library at Pfeiffer University in Misenheimer, N.C. Highlights this year include:

- The Rev. James Pyatt continues as the part-time conference archivist. He supervises the work of an archival assistant, Sonja Clough, who was hired this year to work on a part-time basis.
- A signed lease agreement, approved by conference legal counsel Greg Huffman and then-President Colleen Perry Keith, now serves as a memorandum of understanding between the Archives and Pfeiffer University. The open-ended agreement provides that the conference will not be charged rent for the space. In return, Pfeiffer gets increased visibility and good public relations for the school. The archives houses documents and information available to those wishing to conduct research. Research requests increased roughly 50% in 2019, indicating that people are aware of the archives and are making use of the resources.
- Working with librarians at Duke Divinity School, the Rev. Pyatt worked on the details for the digitization of some of the archival resources to make them available and searchable in electronic format. The project is on hold because Duke is currently closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The archives are open on Tuesdays and Wednesdays only, and by appointment.

Another function of the commission is to provide a clergy grave marker upon the passing of any clergy member of the conference. During this conference year, markers were presented to 24 affected families. The commission anticipates continuing this service on behalf of the conference.

In 2016 the annual conference approved a recommendation that each district offer training opportunities for local church historians during this quadrennial.

- In 2019 and 2020, commission members led training sessions for local church historians (and other interested persons) for the Uwharrie, Catawba Valley and Northern Piedmont Districts. Members of the commission are ready and willing to facilitate training events in any district which wishes to host one.
- The commission also continues to ask for assistance in identifying significant sites in the conference which can then be nominated for designation as historic sites of The United Methodist Church.

The Commission on Archives and History continues its tradition of recognizing those churches within the conference who are celebrating significant anniversaries this year.

- Churches celebrating their bicentennial anniversaries are Bethel, Winston-Salem (Forsyth County), Concord (Randolph County), Rehobeth (Cleveland County), Sandy Ridge (Guilford County), and Stony Point (Alexander County)
- Those identified as celebrating sesquicentennial anniversaries this year include Avery’s Creek (Buncombe County), Cedar Valley (Caldwell County), Fanning Chapel (Henderson County), First, Gastonia (Gaston County), New Salem (Iredell County), Rock Hill (Lincoln County), St. James (Lincoln County), and Vanderburg (Iredell County).
- Churches celebrating their centennial anniversaries are Broad Street, Mooresville (Iredell County), Elmwood (Iredell County), and Park Avenue, Mooresville (Iredell County).
- A more complete list of churches celebrating significant anniversaries will appear in the 2020 Conference Journal.

The Southeastern Jurisdiction (SEJ) Commission on Archives and History met at Lake Junaluska in November of 2019.

- The Rev. Pyatt serves as chairperson, and Sandra Williamson, chairperson of the conference commission, serves as an at-large member.
- The SEJ Commission hosted a heritage preservation workshop at Lake Junaluska November 8 and 9, 2019, and the Rev. Pyatt assisted SEJ archivist Nancy Watkins in presenting a session on what to keep and what to toss.

- The SEJ Historical Society met at Emory University, July 9-12, 2019. WNCC CAH vice-chairperson, the Rev. Charles Curtis, represented the conference.
- The General Commission on Archives and History met in Delaware, Ohio, in September 2019, with the 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

P. CHRISTIANS ENGAGED IN FAITH FORMATION

Christians Engaged in Faith Formation (CEF) is an association of leaders connected to one another and to God, energized for the work of faith formation and, guided by Acts 2:42, exists to promote and strengthen faith formation and Christian education in local churches, districts, and the Western North Carolina Conference.

The Western NC Conference CEF continues to go through some transformation and is re-envisioning its purpose to serve both tenured and new leaders within the church. Leadership is shifting as CEF continues investigating and encouraging new continuing education opportunities. Webinars, podcasts, seminars, day apart, and retreat opportunities will be communicated throughout the year and into next year.

In January 2020, the Western NC Conference CEF membership had a presence at the National KidMin Conference. The conference focused on connections, learning, worship, and discovering new ways to engage children.

In addition, CEF continues to partner with the Conference Discipleship Ministries Office to update and strengthen Safe Sanctuary policies and offer educational and training opportunities for local churches within the conference.

The Western NC Conference CEF 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. CEF members enjoy the additional benefits of connections within CEF and the church, receiving discounted registration to CEF events, Facebook connections, frequent e-news updates, and scholarship opportunities for seminars and conferences. CEF also provides a support system of and for those who have unique experiences in Christian Education ministries. Learn more about the CEF community and what it can offer for Christian Education and disciple formation at www.wnccumc.org/CEF.

Dana Hanlon, President, 2019

Q. 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 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 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 funds and programs of the conference. The commission assists with managing the image of the conference, as well as working to provide resources for the districts and 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. Members of the commission will also assist with the communications efforts at the annual conference gathering as they have in past years with photography and story writing.

In the past year, the conference communications team has published a magazine, Stories of Faith; launched a podcast, Means of Grace; collaborated with the resource center on a Lenten Curriculum, The Passions of Jesus, and created a conference-wide virtual Easter Worship. Aimee Yeager has joined its staff team as communications ministry assistant. During this time of social distancing due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the commission continues its work to share stories and equip local congregations.

Melissa McGill, Conference Director of Communications

R. CONFERENCE STAFF RELATIONS COMMITTEE

The Conference Staff Relations Committee is part of the support system for the conference office staff and the staff of the district offices. The committee assists them by providing needed resources which enable them to fulfill their mission of developing and supporting vital congregations.

On October 3, 2019, Caroline Wood, Director of Missional Engagement and Connectional Ministries, contacted Robert Upchurch regarding the addition of a staff position, Associate Director of Missional Engagement. Robert contacted the Conference Staff Relations Committee members by email. Some committee members had questions about the continuing cost and the decision to employ a person without posting the position and seeking applications. Robert shared with the members additional information provided by Caroline. The proposed staff position was approved.

The committee met in Huntersville on December 5. Treasurer Mark King gave a performance management report, sharing that final reviews had been completed by all supervisors. Mark King also shared about a Duke Endowment grant application for the comprehensive plan of improvement.

Luke Edwards, Associate Director of Church Development, shared about his new role on the staff. His primary areas of focus are Fresh Expressions, Dinner Church, Messy Church, and communications.

Brian Mateer, Associate Director of Missional Engagement, shared about his new role on the staff. He will be helping to facilitate a mission engagement cohort which will focus on best practices in mission engagement.

Amy Coles, the Assistant to Bishop Leeland, reported on several recent retirements from the conference staff and the district offices.

The formula for determining the salaries of the district superintendents was reviewed. Due to some of the uncertainty within the denomination, discussion was held regarding the possibility of adjusting that formula for 2021.

The committee was informed that Mark King and Amy Coles have assumed the Human Relations responsibilities following the retirement of Kathy Odell.

Robert D. Upchurch, Chairperson

S. COMMITTEE ON THE EPISCOPACY

The Conference Committee on Episcopacy continues to fulfill its role of serving, supporting, and upholding the work of Bishop Leeland for the Western North Carolina Conference. It has been the committee's honor and pleasure to serve with Bishop Leeland during these last four years.

In this report, the committee thinks it is important to summarize for you the work that has been accomplished under Bishop Leeland's leadership for this quadrennium.

In addition to the construction and completion of a new conference center, the WNCC has launched 10 churches in the last 36 months and five new churches are identified to open by July 2020, making a total of 15 new churches. As of annual conference, June 2019, the WNCC has launched 124 new Fresh Expressions, 60 of which are dinner churches, making a grand total of 250 Fresh Expressions for the conference.

Transformation of existing congregations has included every district, identifying good churches that could be great churches, and in the last 24 months, the WNCC has had 13 churches complete the transformation journey for renewal. The WNCC has scheduled 8 more churches that will begin this process in the fall.

The bishop's Emerging Leadership Initiative has received a \$1.5 million grant from the Duke Endowment centered around the 15 characteristics that identify the primary leadership competencies related to effective fruitful churches. The WNCC has had over 150 clergy complete this year-long leadership initiative and there are 80 more clergy participating in the 2019–2020 cohort. This initiative will continue through the next quadrennium regardless of a change in episcopal leadership. The committee has also been working closely with the Board of Laity to ignite its certified lay ministries.

Every district has invested in district missional networks, specifically working with the poor, including food programs, clothing, vocational training, and helping underprivileged areas of our local communities. All through the WNCC, churches are reaching out in their communities to help and improve the lives of those with the most need. There is also work being done with Congregations for Children focusing on children and families impacted by poverty.

The WNCC and local churches continue to partner with GBGM in regard to global health. There are clean water projects in Guatemala and Armenia, and wells being drilled and health clinics opening in Haiti, Guatemala, Armenia, Dominican Republic, Uganda, and the Congo.

A grant has been submitted to the Duke Endowment for the development of a comprehensive plan of inclusiveness. This plan strategically addresses racism and 10 tactical teams to invite the conference into a greater and more equitable body in regard to ethnic ministries. The conference quadrennial ethics will focus on racism for the next four years.

Bishop Leeland has worked to build relationships with pan-Methodist, ecumenical, and interreligious communities. He has continued to share and teach the contributions of connected giving throughout the annual conference and has been consistent in his perspective that the conference serves all congregations, regardless of their location and theological perspective. The bishop embodies and promotes the unity of the Church and everything he and the conference do is supported by the Wesleyan model of making disciples of all nations for the transformation of the world.

When Bishop Mike Coyner visited with the committee in September 2019, he said, "I am amazed and stunned at all Bishop Leeland has accomplished in his time with the WNCC; this is most often not the case for a four-year bishop."

The Western North Carolina Conference has been blessed by Bishop Leeland's humble and balanced leadership and he has placed this conference in a strong position for its next Episcopal leader in September 2020.

Bishop Leeland, as it says in Acts 13:3, "they placed their hands on them and sent them off." The committee now sends you off to the next chapter of your ministry, with all the honor and respect you so deserve. Thank you for a job well done, good and faithful servant.

Wanda Musgrave, Chairperson
Sandy Giles, Vice Chairperson
Sarah McKinney, Secretary

Note: In the span of time since the report was submitted by the COE, due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic delaying the General and Jurisdictional Conferences, Bishop's Leeland's appointment to serve as WNCC bishop has been extended.

T. EPISCOPAL RESIDENCE COMMITTEE

The Episcopal Residence Committee is pleased to report that Bishop and Mrs. Paul Leeland have been comfortably using and enjoying the residence at 3416 Maryhurst Lane in Charlotte. The residence endowment reserve now stands at \$56,762.41 (as of December 31, 2019). For 2021, the amount of \$4,000 will be included in the apportioned conference budget. The committee, in consultation with Bishop and Mrs. Leeland, will continue to monitor expenses and request funding as is appropriate and necessary.

Phillip B. Cole, Chairperson

U. COMMISSION ON EQUITABLE COMPENSATION

Policies and Guidelines for Administering the Equitable Compensation Fund (Calendar Year 2021)

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 in order 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 or charge 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 three or fewer years. In the first year, a church or charge may receive up to 100 percent of the maximum available grant; in the second year, up to 70 percent; in the third year, up to 40 percent. During this period, the church or charge must adopt and follow a plan, approved by the district superintendent, that eliminates the need for this assistance. After the third year, a church or charge will not automatically be eligible for a regular grant. Representatives of the CEC shall consult with the district superintendents about any clergy person or church that has received equitable-compensation grants for five consecutive years.

3. Definitions and Classifications of Pastors

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

b. 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 in one-quarter-time increments of either $\frac{3}{4}$, $\frac{1}{2}$, or $\frac{1}{4}$ 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.

c. 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 in an amount based upon the one-quarter-time increments as negotiated by the district superintendent at the time of the appointment, which shall not exceed $\frac{3}{4}$ time. In determining the compensation for a pastor attending school, grants received for educational 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.

- d. Part-Time Local Pastors and Retired Supply Pastors: Since the ECF is designed to support those in full-time services as pastors of our local churches, those charges utilizing part-time local pastors or retired supply pastors shall not have a claim upon the ECF.
- e. 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.
- f. Deacons in Full Connection: As provided in ¶ 331.10b, deacons in full connection serving within the local church “shall receive a 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 and 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 a written grant application, using the CEC form available through the conference web page, and signed by the district superintendent, the pastor, and the secretary of the charge conference. 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: written plan for decreasing reliance on equitable compensation, letters of support from 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. Requests must be made at least 30 days prior to the month when the assistance is to commence. In these cases, the local church or charge must pay at least 70 percent of the minimum applicable to its pastor.

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 to not 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:

- Elders and Deacons in Full Connection;
- Provisional/Associate Members;
- Local Pastors who have completed the Course of Study/M.Div.;
- Local Pastors who have not completed the Course of Study.

Neal C. Jones, Chairperson

Proposal: Equitable Compensation Policies and Guidelines

(Petition 14) *Approved August 8, 2020*

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 2021.

A. Allocation of Requested Equitable Compensation Fund Budget for 2021:

Regular Grants.....	\$97,000
Emergency Sustentation Grants.....	\$25,000
Expenses of the Commission	\$3,000
Total	\$125,000

B. Schedule of 2021 Minimum Compensation for Clergy Serving Full-Time Appointments:

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

V. COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS: 2020-2024 QUADRENNIUM NOMINATIONS

The following members are the recommendation of the Committee on Nominations. Additional members of these conference entities are in *ex officio*, as outlined in the Plan of Organization.

CONNECTIONAL TABLE

Elected Young Clergy: Meg Gaston

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE

Elizabeth Coppedge-Henley

Myer Dahn

Carol Williams-Gilbert

Alternates

Mike Carr

Gloria Hughes

BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION & CAMPUS MINISTRY

Jill Alventosa-Brown

Robbie Combs

Jessica Dayson

Torey Haynes

Josh Headen

John Howard Jr.

Eric Lanier

Rebecca McKnight

Cheryl Perkins

Amy Rio

Kyle Sigmon

Ethan Smith

BOARD OF LAITY

John Crane

Kylee Rose Frye

Patricia Graham

Casey Habich

Dorian Palmer

William Parrish

Christine Pharr

Mary Umbarger

Angela Webster

BOARD OF ORDAINED MINISTRY

Deacons

Amy Burton

Julia Trantham Heckert

Meredith Hinton

Troy Howard

Meredith Martin

Kevin Turner

Rene Wilt

Carrie Wright

Elders

Aldana Allen

Steve Autrey

Eileen Ayuso

Sherri Barnes

Randy Blanton

Emmanuel Boakye-Yiadom

Fredrick Bowman

Mary Brown

Matthew Burton

BOM Elders, Cont.

Heidi Campbell-Robinson

Paul Christy

Al Everett

Lynda Ferguson

Randy Harry

Dan Hester

J. F. Howard

Lory Beth Huffman

Jeff Johnsen

Mark Key

Uiyeon Kim

Josh Kurtz

Justin Lowe

Dan Lyons

Jonathan Marlowe

Dan Martin

John McGill

Jeff Patterson

Sally Queen

George Ragsdale

Charlie Rivens

Lucy Robbins

Jim Sanders

Randy Sherrill

Mike Shuford

Wes Smith

Tom Steagald

Brad Thie

Ashley Thomas

Paul Thompson

Will Van Wieren

Norma Villagrana

Cliff Wall

Avery White

Laity

Joe Beaman

Michael Blackburn

Ellen Copley

John Crane

Martha Efird

Joyce Forth

Eunice Hannah

Andrea Johnson

Bob Penny

Mary Perkins

Jenny Reilly

Ceola Ross-Baber

Jatana Royster

Jaidey Smith

Jane Boatwright Wood

Local Pastors

Alexis Anthony

Tom Jones

Sue Anne Morris

BOARD OF PENSION & HEALTH BENEFITS

Sandy Arey

Amy Berrier

Winifred Helton

Lauren Hill

Vicki Hunt

Sarah Kalish

Jearld Leonhardt

Albert Mills

Dave Ogden

Joseph Purington

Rennie Salata

Anthony Vincent

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Michelle Chappell

Fred DeVore

Steve Felts

Karen Foster

Roslyn Harris

Eric Lane

Tonya Lanier

Ricky Lefft

Carl Manuel

Chad Shoaf

Phil Smith

Earonita Strong

CHURCH VITALITY TEAM

Cindy Wechter, Chairperson

Frank Ramos, Vice-Chairperson

Amy Foote

Tiffany Little

Meredith Menius

Brenda Ray

Walter Vaughan

District Representatives

Howard Fleming, Appalachian

Sam Burleson, Blue Ridge

Rob Hutchinson, Catawba Valley

Hugo Villagrana, Metro

Morris Brown, Northern Piedmont

Wayne Dickert, Smoky Mountain

Jim Parsons, Uwharrie

Darren Crotts, Yadkin Valley

COMMISSION ON ARCHIVES & HISTORY

Brenda Alston

Kelly Crissman

Charlie Curtis

Phyllis Dudley

Irma Ellwanger

Russ Ford

Jason Harvey

Alan Keely

Ray Don Letts

Bill Taylor

Nancy Watkins

Sandra Williamson

COMMISSION ON COMMUNICATIONS

Marty Barrett
Barbara Bowser
Earl Bradshaw
Kathy Bryant
Jonathan Coppedge-Henley
Sarah Davis
Fran Farrer
Bill Jones
Doug Peninger
Juston Smith
Lindsay Snipes
Shonnie Streder

COMMITTEE ON CONFERENCE STAFF RELATIONS

Paul Brown
Bonnie Burkett
Nancy Miller Campbell
Nancy Dozier
Faye Herbin
Robert Shepherd

COMMISSION ON EQUITABLE**COMPENSATION**

Ann Aldridge
Paul Bethel
Phyllis Coates
Charlene Curtis
Timothy Fitzgerald
Tracy Fuller
Neal Jones
Patrick Ledford
Eric Lineberry
Fernando Little
Kevin Queen
Steve Reeder
Brad Treece
Frances Williamson

COMMITTEE ON EPISCOPACY*Clergy*

Sandy Giles
Otto Harris
Paul Milton
Andrea Smith

Laity

Dennis Carroll
John Crane
Hank Dozier
Joyce Forth
Tom Jordan
Linda Linfors
Linda Masters
Suzanne Schilling
Ed Welch

Appointed by Bishop

Peg Aldridge, Laity
Shirley Canty, Clergy
John Fitzgerald, Clergy

COMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATION*Clergy*

Pam Blackstock
Charlotte Brendel
Joseph Kim
Joe Tarpley

*Investigation, Cont.**Clergy Alternates*

David Hamlyn
Donald Jenkins
Patricia Pegram

Diaconal Ministers

Rebecca Lile
Sandi McGarrah
Catherine Ritch

Laity

Jesse Caldwell III
Torry Pinter
Lori Wilson

Laity Alternates

Margaret Cox
Chris Douglas
Sally Kirby Turner

COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS

Mary Allen Conforti
Hank Dozier
Reola Jamerson
Ken Partin

COMMITTEE ON ORGANIZATION & RULES

Ella Hand
Denise Kilgo-Martin
Jonathan LeMaster-Smith
Dustin Mailman
Kelly Shrader

COUNCIL ON CAMP & RETREAT MINISTRY

Jason Boggs
Andrew Brown
Katie Henderson
Pam Humphrey
Andrew Johnson
Chris Lakey
Jonathan LeMaster-Smith
Kate May
Tresca McSwain
Chandler Ragland
Jill Rhinehart
Neill Shaw

COUNCIL ON FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

Tom Adams
Diron Chloe
George Coates
Spencer Disher
Kaye Fry
Louretta Howze
William Hutaff
Joel Long
Angela Marlowe
Randy Perdue
Gregg Plott
Rose Rich
Julie Ann Roberts
Irish Spencer
Louis Timberlake
Mary Ann Wexler
Sara Williams

JUSTICE & RECONCILIATION TEAM

Donnell FitzJefferies, Chairperson
Renee Hayes, Vice-Chairperson
John Barbee

J.B. Byrch
Josette Ferguson

Jae Lee
James "Slice" Penny

Nikki Raye Rice

Convener: African American Ministries

Ronnie Roseboro

Convener: Asian American Ministries

May Lo Vang

Convener: Creation Care Ministries

Kim Richmond

Convener: Hispanic/Latino Ministries

Susan Suarez Webster

Convener: Native American Ministries

Joel Locklear

Convener: Religion & Race

Tammy Ingram

Convener: Status & Role of Women

Nancy Walton

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TEAM

Kari Howard, Chairperson
Bill White, Vice-Chairperson

David Beam

Shirley Canty

Mark Conforti

Laura Danford

Deborah Daniels

Karen Easter Bayne

Jesse Ennis

Jon Gaylord

Parker Haynes

Carl Martin

Jeremy Pegram

Wil Posey

Lauren Sims-Salata

MISSION ENGAGEMENT TEAM

Stephen Cheyney, Chairperson

Amy Spivey, Vice-Chairperson

Richard Buff

Alexis Coleman

Carolyn Coram

Laina Davis

Laura Alexander Elliott

Catherine Gantt

Rod Ingram

Monique Luckey

Kris Mares

Camille Roddy

Patricia Settle

Dick Weaver

Marilyn Weiler

PETITIONS COMMITTEE

Lynne Gilbert

Sandy Giles

Sue Jones

Jonathan Marlowe

Christine Pharr

W. DISCIPLE BIBLE OUTREACH MINISTRIES OF NORTH CAROLINA, INC.

In America, there are 2,200,000 people in prison. In North Carolina alone, more than 37,000 inmates live in state prison facilities. If one includes those on probation and post-release parole, this number climbs to more than 133,000. This does not even include federal inmates and juvenile offenders. It is said that the criminal justice system in North Carolina affects one out of every four persons in the state and that number continues to grow.

Disciple Bible Outreach Ministries of N.C., Inc. (DBOM) was founded in 1999 to minister to those in prison and provide a Christian response to need. DBOM recruits, trains, and sends local church volunteers to prisons, jails, and youth development centers to teach God's word. Thousands of North Carolina inmates participate annually. DBOM's model of ministry has gone national with affiliates operational in Virginia, Tennessee, Louisiana, Illinois, and Texas.

None of this would be possible without you. A primary source of DBOM's funding comes from the annual special offering taken in August. In 2020, the offering will be received on August 23. Downloadable PDF flyers, videos, and other promotional material will be provided to the pastors prior to the offering.

Thank you for your support, and please pray for DBOM's ministry in both prison and pew!

Members from the WNCC are: Alvin Battle, Ed Campbell, David Christy, Randy Harry, Diane Ezzell, William Waddell, Jeoff Williams

Disciple Bible Outreach Ministries • PO Box 358, Oak Island, NC 28465 • 336.689.1443 • mhicksdbom@gmail.com • www.disciplebibleoutreach.org

Mark Hicks, Executive Director
Randy Harry, Board Chairperson

X. 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 2019, 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 three (3) trustees elected by the annual conference: James C. Windham Jr., chairperson; Anthony Orsbon, vice-chair; and Rebecca Douglas, secretary.

James C. Windham Jr., Chairperson

Proposal: Trustee of Cole Foundation

(Petition 15) *Approved August 8, 2020*

The trustees of the Eugene M. Cole Foundation propose that Rebecca Douglas, whose term as trustee expires in 2020, be re-elected for another three (3) year term, expiring in 2023.

Y. UNITED METHODIST FOUNDATION OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA, INC.

Since the last time we gathered as the Western North Carolina Annual Conference, the United Methodist Foundation has been busy at work fulfilling the mission of building the church for generations to come in an effort to bring people into a relationship with Christ. The foundation's board of directors and staff remain committed to serving the sisters and brothers in Christ as one will see in this report.

The foundation's total assets reached an all-time high surpassing \$238MM by year end. Although this accomplishment represents a simple number, the foundation believes it represents an opportunity to carry-out vital ministry throughout the conference and beyond. The foundation continues to be the fourth largest conference-area foundation with one of the most sophisticated investment policies throughout the United Methodist connection. In addition to offering investment management ministry which includes five fund options totaling over \$200MM, programming continues to be offered that surpasses what many believe to be part of a foundation's portfolio. Some examples of this include:

Reynolds Program in Church Leadership where pastors from six conferences in the Southeastern Jurisdiction come together for a year-long, intensive program to learn how to be more effective leaders in their ministry setting;

Reynolds Leadership Academy for Evangelism and Discipleship where pastors from the Western North Carolina Conference learn from others how to be more effective at bringing people to Jesus Christ;

Reynolds Academy for Ministry Management where pastors from this conference learn business practices that apply to their ministry setting;

Reynolds Grants surpassing \$400K that financially support ministries that bring people to and nurture a relationship with Jesus Christ;

Clergy Debt Reduction Loan Program that provides low interest loans surpassing \$2MM to qualifying clergy with overwhelming debt and is a partnership program with the Duke Endowment and the Board of Pension and Health Benefits of the Western North Carolina Conference;

UMF Development Fund and Loan Program providing competitive returns for investors while offering low-cost loans totaling \$18MM to United Methodist institutions throughout North and South Carolina;

Certificate Program in Church Treasury offered in partnership with the Western North Carolina Conference Office of Treasury Services where participants learn specifics related to the responsibilities of church treasurers and financial secretaries.

There are many more ministry programs offered through the foundation such as permanently restricted endowments that provide in excess of \$1MM for such things as scholarships, supplemental income and ministry funding. In addition, the foundation helps consult and train in areas such as church finances and stewardship.

To learn more about the foundation's ministries, visit the website at www.umfwnc.org or visit the ministry tent at the 2020 session of the Western North Carolina Annual Conference where foundation leaders will be available to answer questions.

G. Thomas (Tom) Jordan, Chairperson
David A. Snipes, President

Z. 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.

NETworX® serves individuals in eight counties in North Carolina and five other states. Outcomes of significant progress in terms of wellbeing, financial stability, and a significant decrease in reliance upon public assistance are reported by 496 persons. With gratitude, NETworX individuals in N.C. 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.

Members of the RFD CDC board are as follows:

Lucy Robbins, President, Pastor Biltmore UMC
Carol Goehring, Vice-President, Retired District Superintendent, NCC
Gil Wise, Secretary/Treasurer, Beacon District Superintendent, NCC
Amy Coles, Assistant to the WNCC Bishop
Laura Early, Senior Minister All God's Children UMC
Tom Lambeth, Retired Executive Director, Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation
Ken Locklear, Gateway District Superintendent, NCC

Joe Mann, Duke Divinity School
Mattie Patterson, Retired Executive Director Blue Ridge Community Action, Inc.
Connie Marie Stutts, Pastor Beech Grove-Rhems Charge
Steve Taylor, Outreach Team Coordinator, NCC
Jeremy Troxler, Pastor Guildford College UMC
Randy L. Wall, Retired, and Pastor Ann Street UMC
R. A. (Alan) Rice Jr., Executive Director and COO

R. A. (Alan) Rice Jr., Executive Director
Anna Baucom, President

AA. WESLEY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

It has been another year of growth and new milestones reached for Wesley Community Development. This year Wesley led the leasing, build out, and occupancy of the first floor of the WNCC Conference Center, fulfilling the commitment of a building that houses the Conference and Metro District offices, but also generates revenue to offset expenses. Wesley completed two new affordable housing projects and received an award of tax credits for its next project, the ninth, to be located in Fayetteville, N.C. One of Wesley's new projects, Prosperity Ridge, has been awarded North Carolina Project of the Year. Over the next 12 months, Wesley is projected to develop \$13M in church redevelopments representing over \$100M in development since its inception in 2002. Many of the upcoming developments are designed to assist churches in creating a more secure financial footprint by bringing in additional revenue, freeing up more of the offerings for ministry and outreach.

In the first full year of being a licensed real estate company, Wesley has brokered over \$7.6M in real estate transactions. The revenue generated from brokerage has allowed funds to be directed to church growth and exciting new ministries. The team at Wesley is excited to be a part of this transformational work. Wesley currently manages over 60 properties and helps in the rethinking of how those properties can be positioned to strengthen the growth of the Conference. This work has led to collaboration with groups including the governor's office, the Duke Endowment, Duke Divinity School, the N.C. Office of Rural Health, Princeton University, and ImagineHub to name a few. In all this work, the continued and valued partnership with the Conference Board of Trustees has been instrumental and productive. These collaborations will lead to more groundbreaking initiatives in the coming year.

Seeds of Change, the Wesley program to rethink church campus usage, continues to challenge churches to look at their real estate differently. Over the next year, Wesley will be testing how to expand Seeds of Change utilizing newer platforms.

The team at Wesley is excited to enter another year of innovation and helping churches achieve their ministry goals by rethinking their real estate holdings.

Joel A. Gilland, President
Randolph H. Harry, Chairperson, Board of Directors

Proposal: Wesley Community Development Board of Directors

(Petition 16) Approved August 8, 2020

Randolph Harry
George Coates
Richard (Dick) Woods
Lynda Ferguson

David Hiatt
Philip Jones
Mark King

Willetta Ar-Rahmaan
Joseph (Ricky) Lefft
Don Pettigrew

BB. BROTHERHOOD/SISTERHOOD OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA

The Brotherhood/Sisterhood is an affiliate ministry of the WNCC in which clergy and laity members mutually share compassion for the families of clergy members when they die. Once a clergy member's death is reported to us, the family receives a pastoral visit and a financial gift that is available for immediate use. Funds for this gift come from our members, who receive a call notice providing pertinent information about the death.

Beneficiary membership in the BH/SH is open to all clergy members of the Annual Conference, including full and provisional members and local pastors. Older clergy who join compensate the BH/SH for all assessments issued from the time of their 35th birthday. A non-interest-bearing promissory note may be signed for this purpose.

The election of the members of our Board of Directors and its officers, the approval of our annual budget, our proposals to the Annual Conference, and other official business of the BH/SH is conducted at our Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting is normally held on the site of the Annual Conference and is open to all members. This year's meeting was held via Zoom at 10:00am on 07/09/2020.

For the 2020-2021 Conference year, the basic amount of the financial gift is \$10,000.00. The assessment rate for clergy members is \$15.00 per death. Laity members, responding as individuals and church groups, are asked to consider donations of \$6.00 or more per death.

Each local church is encouraged to observe Brotherhood/Sisterhood Sunday on the third Sunday in February or at another preferred time.

With more than 600 clergy members plus many laity enrolled in the Brotherhood/Sisterhood ministry, we express our great appreciation for everybody's consideration and support.

H. Donnell FitzJefferies, President
 Donald A. Newman, Vice President
 Jeremiah P Pegram, Recording Secretary
 Roland T. Barnhardt, Executive Director

Brotherhood/Sisterhood Statement of Cash Receipts and Disbursements: 2019-2020

Income

Program Income	
Clergy Assessments and Fees.....	127,965
Laity Contributions	45,229
Payments on Notes.....	4,214
Miscellaneous Income.....	10,267
Interest and Investment Income	2,617
Total Income	\$ 190,292

Expenses

Death Benefits Paid (16 Deaths)	142,640
Salaries, Wages, and Payroll Taxes.....	38,789
Travel Reimbursements and Meeting Expenses.....	1,692
Bonding and Insurance.....	756
Accounting Fees, Contract Services, Bank Charges/Fees	3,914
Office Expenses.....	3,430
Postage/Mailing Services.....	6,096
Total Expenses	\$ 197,317

Capital Assets	\$ 382,125
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Other Pertinent Information

Clergy Assessment Balance, as of 10/26/2020: Prepaid.....	19,719
Past Due	66,769
Clergy Promissory Notes Balance	\$ 439,389

Brotherhood/Sisterhood Membership Roll as of July 1, 2020

Adams, H.C.	Barbee, W.L.	Bost, D.W.	Carlton, H.M.	Clodfelter, J.P., Jr.	Crowder-Stanley, A	Dowdy, A.M.	Felts, R.D.
Adams, S.L.	Barden, B.J.	Bowen, J.E.	Carr, M.A.	Clough, R.C., Jr.	Davenport, J.P.	Dowling, R.E.	Ferguson-Allen, L.L.
Adams, T.D.	Barden, L.E.	Bradley, E.F.	Carter, E.K.	Cole, P.B.	Davis, E.V.	Dukes III, L.S.	Ferree, J.K.
Aldridge, J.M., Jr.	Barden, M.L.	Brake, J.L.	Carter, R.L., Jr.	Coles, A.L.	Davis, G.M.	Duncan, A.L.	Few, J.F.
Allen, A.	Barnes, S.E.	Branton, T.R.	Cartner, J.D.	Collins, G.D.	Davis, J.	Duncan, D.J.	Fitzgerald, J.C.
Allen, C.W.	Barnhardt, R.T.	Briggs, L.T.	Cash, D.R., Sr.	Collins, G.K.	Davis, J.B.	Duncan, G.M.	Fitzgerald, L.E.
Allen, D.R.	Barringer, G.R.	Brittain, T.B.	Cash, L.W.	Collins, K.	Davis, J.E., Jr.	Dunker, C.F.	FitzJefferies, H.D.
Allen, F.A.	Bartley, E.J.	Brown, A.W., Jr.	Cassady, T.L.	Collins, M.W.	Davis, S.W.	Durham, D.B.	Flack, C.A.
Allen, G.C., Jr.	Bartz, J.	Brown, H.A.	Cauble, R.L.	Collins, S.C.	Davis, T.A.	Duvall, J.A.	Fleming, H.D.
Allen, T.L.	Baxter, D.L.	Brown, M.W.	Champion, B.J.	Colson, J.D.	Davis, W.G.	Dye, M.J.	Ford, A.G.
Alventosa-Brown, J.	Beall, T.M.	Brown, W.A., Jr.	Chaney, B.J.	Combs, J.F.	Dawkins, H.C.	Easter-Bayne, K.L.	Foust, W.N.
Amason, J.D.	Beam, D.W.	Burnette, K.H.	Chaney, E.	Combs, S.R.	Day, A.P.	Eggers, L.A.	Fox, D.B., Jr.
Andrews, H.F.	Beck, B.R.	Burton, G.A.	Chaput, P.G.	Compton, H.R.	Dean, E.E., Jr.	Eller, K.R.	Franklin, J.K.
Andrews, W.M.	Berry, W.F.	Burton, J.M., Jr.	Childers, D.W.	Conder, A.R.	DeBerry, P., Jr.	Ellis, L.D.	Freeman, G.D.
Armstrong, J.M. Jr	Beverly, A.E.	Burton, J.M., Sr.	Childers, W.H., Jr.	Conder, T.E., Jr.	Demorest, D.R.	Ellison, W.B.	Freeman, P.
Arnold, C.L.	Biggers, E.L.	Burton, M.K.	Choplin, P.P.	Conover, A.C.	Dickens, J.G.	Emory, M.J.	Friddle, G.H., Jr.
Ashe, D.W.	Billings, J.W.	Byers, R.T.	Christy, D.H.	Conover, C.H., Jr.	Dickson, C.H.	Epps, J.F.	Fritts, R.E., Jr.
Auman, T.L.	Bishop, S.B.	Caldwell, L.B.	Christy, J.C.	Cook, D.A., Jr.	Dingus, W.H.	Ervin, B.N.	Fry, K.H.
Auten, L.H.	Blair, C.S.	Cameron, D.	Christy, J.P.	Cook, E.A., Jr.	Donahue, C.E.	Evans, J.H.	Fulk, J.M., Jr.
Autrey, S.L.	Blalock, J.F., Jr.	Camp, G	Cirksena, R.J., Jr.	Cornell, K.V.	Donnell, S.S.	Evensen, H.D.	Furr, J.C.
Bailey, D.A.	Blanton, W.N., Jr.	Campbell, D.J.	Clanton, R.A., Jr.	Crary, B.M.	Doub, R.D.	Everett, A.	Gaddy, D.W.
Bailey, M.F.	Boggan, R.E., Jr.	Campbell, R.H.	Clifton, L.B.	Craig, P.A., Jr.	Doucette, K.C.	Ewing, S.H.	Galloway, J.W.
Banyai, P.D.	Boggs, J.S.	Campbell-Robinson, H.	Clodfelter, B.C.	Crotts, D.L.	Dowdle, J.O., Jr.	Farabow, M.S.	Gibbons, C.F.

Gibbs, D.W.	Haynes, J.O.	Ireson, S.W.	Lewis, P.A.	Montgomery, G.G.	Porter, T.R.	Shuford, M.A.	Tuttle, R.B.
Gibbs, L.C.	Haywood-Baxter, A.	Ishenhour, O.B.	Lindquist, C.A., Jr.	Moore, J.A.	Portis, M.S.	Sides, S.H.	Van Meter, A.R.
Gibbs, R.L.	Heafner, J.P.	Ison, F.H.	Lindsey, C.R.	Moore, S.H., Jr.	Powell, D.N.	Sills, M.R.	Van Wieren, W.
Gibert, A.S.	Heafner-Heun, S.A.	Ivey, H.D.	Lloyd, I.D.	Moore, T.S.	Powell, T.A.	Sisk, C.W.	Vaughan, A.R.
Gibson, T.L.	Hedgpath, E.H.	James, S.D.	Locke, D.A.	Morgan, C.J.	Pyatt, J.L.	Smith, D.E.	Vickers, M.N.
Gilbert, D.W.	Heermans, E.D.	Jeffries, W.T.	Lookadoo, D.G.	Morgan, L.S.	Queen, H.	Smith, D.S.	Vredenburg, Y.L.
Giles, S.L., Jr.	Heermans, J.P.	Jessup, B.J.	Lovelace, W.E.	Morris, S.A.	Rainey, J.A.	Smith, H.D.	Wachs, W.R.
Giles, S.S.	Hege, J.A.	Johnsen, J.W.	Lowder, P.D.	Morrison, A.C.	Rainey, S.K.	Smith, J.R.	Walker, P.B.
Gilland, J.C.	Helsabeck, O.W.	Johnson, J.S.	Lowe, J.H.	Morrison, D.G.	Ramsey, G.L.	Smith, K.H.	Wall, C.W.
Glahn, P.L.	Herbin, F.L.	Johnson, K.M.	Lowe, M.D.	Morrison, H.L.	Randolph, R.D.	Smith, M.S.	Wall, R.L.
Glass, B.D.	Herin, T.J.	Johnson, L.N.	Lowe, V.W.	Morrow, W.L.	Rankin, N.B.	Smith-Pitts, S.L.	Wallace, E.L.
Godfrey, C.B.	Herold, J.W.	Johnson, R.B.	Lucas, J.C.	Mosteller, A.W.	Reavis, E.A.	Snider-N.T.	Ward, J.A., Jr.
Golden, J.B., Jr.	Herron, R.E.	Johnson, S.T.	Lunsford, C.K.	Mosteller, J.B.	Reece, E.A.	Snipes, D.A.	Ward, J.R.
Goode, M.H.	Herron, V.C.	Jolly, T.G.	Lunsford, W.J.	Murray, J.D.	Reeves, J.R.	Snow, P.T.	Ward-Brown, M.J.
Gordon, A.F., Jr.	Hiatt, J. D.	Jones, B.M.	Luther, J.D.	Murrow, M.C.	Rhinehart, J.B.	Spencer, A.Y.	Warner, S.B.
Gordon, G. B.	Hileman, J.L.	Jones, K.R.	Lynn, E.R.	Myers, G.L., Jr.	Rice, R.A., Jr.	Spencer, R.L.	Webb, J.S.
Gordon, M.B.	Hillyer, D.E., Jr.	Jones, R.R.	Lyons, D.J.	Myers, J.L.	Riggs, E.R.	Spivey, A.C.	Webb, J.T., Jr.
Gosnell, A.P.	Hilton, R.D., Sr.	Jordan, D.M.	Lytle, R.J.	Newell, J.K.	Rintz, J.W.	Starnes, T.P.	Webb, N.S.
Gottula, K.W.	Hinson, H.L.	Jordan, N.F., Jr.	Macon, F.K.	Newman, B.M.	Roach, R.E.	Steadgald, T.R.	Webb, S.F.
Gould, R.J.	Hinton, B.T.	Joyce, S.D.	Mandelstamm, W.	Newman, D.A.	Roberson, G.W.	Steed, R.G., Jr.	Weekley, J.M.
Graves, J.H.	Hinton, M.A.	Joyner, M.E.	Manning, C.C.	Nolan, D.C.	Roberts, J.A.	Stein, J.C.	Weeks, T.W.
Gray, M.D.	Hitch, G.C.	Judy, K.W.	Margarita, D.S.	Northcraft, S.B.	Roberts, K.H.	Stephenson, W.E.	Weiler, M.L.
Greene, D.S.	Hobson, B.G.	Kalish, S.B.	Marlowe, A.R.	Northrup, P.B.	Roberts, T.K.	Stevens, C.B.	Weisner, R.D.
Greene, L.W.	Hochmuth, D.E.	Kaser Odor, K.E.	Marlowe, J.D.	Noyes, D.C.	Rochester, N.L., Jr.	Stinson-Wesley, J.T.	Welch, P.P.
Grice, F.W.	Hockett, D.C.	Kayler, C.J.	Martin, D.G.	Ollis, J.P.	Romanat, M.M.	Stith III, F.A.	Wensil, T.D.
Griffis, T.L.	Hodgens, R.H.	Keaton, J.C.	Martin, S.L.	Orrell, E.H.	Romanello, R.E.	Stockton, T.B.	Westfall, J.M.
Griffiths, G.S.	Hodnett, M.E., Jr.	Kelley, D.R.	Mason, D.M.	Overcash, R.A.	Rorie, D.M.	Stokes, E.B.	Westmoreland, C.M.
Griswold, N.K.	Holland III, A.R.	Kelly, L.M.	Mason, D.O.	Owens, P.S., Jr.	Rose, G.W.	Strange, L.H.	Westmoreland, J.R.
Groome, J.	Holland, J.W.	Key, J.T.	Mayo, B.B.	Owens, N.B.	Roseboro, R.E.	Suggs, D.L.	White, C.D., Jr.
Guy, C.R.	Hollar, A.B.	Key, M.J.	McClellan, M.D.	Owens, W.N.	Rosenquist, V.B.	Suggs, P.K.	White, J.K.
Guy, D.A.	Holliday, B.M.	Kilbourne, K.H.	McCleskey, J.L.	Park, P.W.	Routh, D.W.	Summey, R.C.	White, J.L.
Gwyn, B.L.	Hood, R.L.	Kim, Tae	McClintick, H.E.	Parker, B.J.	Swaim, B.G.	Swain, B.G.	Whitley, A.L.
Hacklander, P.K.	Horn, K.A.	King, R.M.	McCombs, J.A.	Parker, M.J.	Salata, R.R.	Sweeney, J.A.	Whitlock, D.E., Jr.
Hahn, R.J.	Houser, E.H.	Knoespel, J.W.	McConnell, J.T.	Parker-Reece, B.L.	Sanders, J.K.	Sweezy, N.N.	Wilhelm, S.D.
Haines, S.D.	Howard, J.C.	Krall, N.M.	McCoy, D.E.	Patterson, J.S.	Scandale, N.A., Jr.	Swofford, M.K.	Williams, E.W.
Haire, E.R.	Howard, J.F. Jr.	Kurtz, M.D.	McIntosh, M.D.	Patzfahl, R.L.	Scarborough, S.C.	Talbert, D.D.	Williams, G.E.
Hall, J.T.	Howard, J.F., Sr.	Lair, R.E., Jr.	McKelvey, W.H.	Peeler, A.O.	Schnitzlien, T.H.	Talbert, T.R.	Williams, J.B., Jr.
Hall, L.B.	Howard, K.L.	Lambert, A.E.	McKim, D.A.	Pegram, J.P.	Schwantes, H.E.	Tate, J.P.	Williams-Gilbert, C.
Hall, R.O.	Howard, T.K.	Lancaster, W.H.	McKinney, E.D.	Pegues, W.	Scott, J.A.	Taylor, J.L., Jr.	Wilson II, C.W.
Hamlyn, D.M.	Howell, J.C.	Langford, S.O.	McNiel, S.L.	Pendleton, K.S.	Scott, L.	Taylor, P.J.	Winstead, M.E.
Hammill, T.L.	Howle, R.A.	Langford III, T.A.	Medlin III, W.T.	Penley, C.C., Jr.	Scott, S.	Thie, R.B.	Witherington III, B.
Hamrick, J.M.	Huffman, L.B.	Lanier, R.S.	Melton, L.M.	Penry, C.K.	Settle, C.E.	Thomas III, J.H.	Wood, F.J.
Hand, D.M.	Huffman, R.E.	Latimer III, C.T.	Mendenhall, J.R.	Perdue, J.R.	Setzer, P.H.	Thomas III, W.P.	Wooten, M.B.
Hand, S.M.	Humphries, J.	Lear, W.J.	Michael, R.B.	Perkins, P.F., Sr.	Setzer, R.D.	Thompson, P.B.	Worley, E.
Harrelson, C.G.	Humphries-Bivens, P.	Leatherwood, J.M.	Michael, S.G.	Perrell, S.J.	Shepherd, B.K.	Thompson, C.S.	Worthy, C.M., Jr.
Harrill, M.B., Jr.	Hunter, C.R.	Lee, D.J.	Miller, B.R.	Peterson, M.L.	Sherfey, J.H.	Thore, W.C.	Wright, C.S.
Harris, B.V.	Hunter, B.V.	Lee, E.D.	Miller, D.V.	Petree, J.R.	Sherrill, C.G.	Thurman, J.M.	Wyant, D.A.
Harris, M.L.	Hunter, T.R.	Lee, In-Yong	Miller, D.W.	Petree, R.E.	Sherrill, H.D., Jr.	Tisdale, J.K.	Wyman, W.C., Jr.
Harris, O.D.	Hutchings, C.R.	Lee, S.T.	Miller, J.C.	Peurifoy, R.C.	Sherrill, H.M.	Towery, J.B. Jr.	Wynn, N.W.
Hartsell, C.J.	Ingram, B.A.	Lemaster-Smith, S	Miller, L.	Peurifoy, V.B.	Sherrill, K.C.	Troutman, G.D.	Yates, W.G.
Hatherly, K.L.	Ingram, F.E.	Lemons, E.M.	Miller, M.R.	Pharr, P.A.	Sherrill, R.N.	Turman, D.W.	Young III, C.S.
Hawkins, G.L.	Ingram, R.M., Sr.	Lemons, J.B.	Milleson, B.W.	Plott, T.G.	Shives, H.D.	Turman, T.C.	Young, H.C., Jr.
Hawkins, W.T.	Ingram, T.	Leonard, D.B.	Mills, A.	Plowman, E.L.	Shoaf, C.H.	Turner, C.M., Jr.	Yount, P.W., Jr.
Haynes, D.W.	Ireson, C.H.	Lewis, M.W.	Mills, R.W.	Plummer, C.M.	Short, D.N.	Turner, C.S.	Yow, J.L.

*The membership and benefits of 170 of our members are suspended as of 08/31/2020 until past due assessments are paid. We believe that most suspensions will be lifted.

CC. CONVOCATION & PASTORS' SCHOOL AT DUKE DIVINITY SCHOOL

The 2019 Convocation and Pastors' School, "Life That Really is Life: Cultivating Thriving Communities," explored how Christian congregations, led by gifted clergy, are crucial to the vitality of thriving communities. When congregations and pastors are faithful and focused on God's dreams, they can be exceptional catalysts, conveners, and curators, drawing people together across diverse sectors, generations, and neighborhoods. They are integral to the formation of thriving communities that are marked by an acknowledgment of the fragility of human life, rooted in issues of suffering and sin, finitude, and brokenness that simultaneously nurture hope and wisdom to pursue what 1 Timothy 6:19 calls "the life that really is life." Through this way of living, people of character nurture trust and a vision for the common good, bearing witness to a holistic understanding of human beings and the fullness of the reign of God.

The two-day conference helped pastors and church leaders gain insight and energy to build, strengthen, and cultivate thriving communities. Held October 7–8, 2019, at Duke Divinity School, the event featured the following presenters:

- L. Gregory Jones, Dean of Duke Divinity School;
- David Brooks, author, op-ed columnist for The New York Times and commentator;
- Anne Snyder Brooks, editor, Comment Magazine, and author of The Fabric of Character;
- Kate Bowler, associate professor of the history of Christianity in North America at Duke Divinity School and New York Times bestselling author;
- Krista Tippett, Peabody Award-winning broadcaster and New York Times bestselling author;
- Patrick Smith, associate research professor of theological ethics and bioethics, Duke Divinity School; and
- Ralph West, pastor, The Church Without Walls.

Attendees also participated in worship and their choice of 13 seminars led by faculty, church leaders, and practitioners on topics ranging from "For Thriving Priestly Community: Life in the Psalms" to "Unpacking Pastoral Leadership and Preaching" to "Cultivating Thriving Communities Through Mutual Teaching and Learning." The next Convocation and Pastors' School, "Uncommon Ground: Living with Humility, Patience, and Tolerance in a Divided Age," will take place October 5–6, 2020. Participants will explore the powerful ways that God can work when we are willing to gather together on uncommon ground.

Confirmed featured presenters include:

- John Inazu, author, distinguished professor of law and religion at Washington University;
- Claude Alexander, bishop and senior pastor of The Park Church in Charlotte, N.C.;
- Sara Groves, singer, songwriter, and recording artist, nominated for several Dove Awards; and
- Tru Pettigrew, author and motivational speaker

Pastors serving churches eligible for grants from The Duke Endowment, current divinity school students, and 2020 graduates of Duke Divinity School may attend at a discounted rate.

The Convocation and Pastors' School board of managers is composed 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:

2016-2020	2017-2021	2018-2022	2019-2023	2020-2024
Terry L. Matthews Joshua Sherfey	Lauren Anderson Kelley Groce	Heidi Campbell-Robinson Avery White	Darryl Dayson Sue Anne Morris	Samuel Moore Bill Roberts

Additional information about Convocation & Pastors' School is available online at www.divinity.duke.edu/cps.

Laura Johnson (NC Conference), Chairperson

DD. THE DUKE ENDOWMENT

The Duke Endowment was formed in December 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, Duke named four areas of focus: higher education, health care, child welfare, and rural United Methodist churches in North Carolina. For almost 96 years, the endowment has engaged with rural churches to strengthen their ministries all 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 2019, the Rural Church program area of the endowment made 51 new grants totaling over \$35.2 million, including a \$12 million, five-year award to Duke Divinity School to strengthen the M.Div. degree and reimagine the heart of Methodism, to continue to bolster the clergy leadership pool in the Western North Carolina Conference. Other highlights are below:

1. In collaboration with the two annual conferences and Duke Divinity School, the endowment is working to cultivate and support clergy leadership for the rural United Methodist church in North Carolina through several initiatives, including:
 - The **Clergy Health Initiative (CHI)**, based at Duke Divinity School, advises and informs the conferences, denomination, and others on issues of clergy well-being. The CHI team recently rolled out a new effort aimed at bolstering pastors' ability to thrive in the midst of stressful circumstances. Called "Spirited Life: Selah," the effort will serve several hundred pastors across the state over the next two years.
 - The **Thriving Rural Communities Initiative (TRCI)** is a collaborative effort among the endowment, the two conferences in North Carolina, and Duke Divinity School. The program forms and networks strong pastors, dubbed "Rural Fellows," for service to rural congregations. This year, Amy Lambert, Samuel A. Moore, and Nathan Webb are graduating from Duke Divinity School as Rural Fellows and beginning this ministry under appointment in the Western North Carolina Conference.
 - 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 at the divinity school, has been re-launched and seeks to contribute scholarship, training, and leadership for building thriving communities. Read more about the center here: <https://www.dukeendowment.org/story/strengthening-congregations-and-communities>.
2. The endowment is working with both annual conferences on efforts to support congregations in long-term planning, including helping churches to discern their most faithful and fruitful future. Resourcing the work of the Church Legacy team in the Western North Carolina Conference, as well as the partner agency Wesley Community Development Corporation, the endowment celebrates the unique redevelopment programs that have progressed so far. Examples of such work can be found here: <https://www.dukeendowment.org/story/sowing-change-in-rural-churches>.
3. The endowment is also working to build the capacity of United Methodist churches to help address community-wide issues at their roots. This happens primarily through system-level grants to nonprofit agencies that are experts in issue areas, and that coach congregations in enhancing 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. For churches interested in deepening their work in food system engagement (including all food ministries), community or economic development, or strategic planning for community engagement, the endowment will be glad to connect them with congregational coaches who have a statewide presence and expertise.
4. Finally, the endowment is developing and testing models for high-impact community-focused ministry for the age birth-to-eight population. Currently, the focus of this work is the Summer Literacy Initiative, which resources up to 20 congregations (currently eleven in the Western North Carolina Conference) per year to offer summer reading camps that follow a set of essential guiding principles, to early elementary students. Churches that are interested in joining this pilot program may contact Kristen Richardson-Frick, Associate Director of the Rural Church program area.

More information about The Duke Endowment may be found at the Rural Church page of The Duke Endowment's website: <https://www.dukeendowment.org/program-areas/rural-church>.

Robb Webb, Director, Rural Church

EE. 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 WNCC for its support and for the leadership on its governing board provided by Renee Hayes, Trinity N.C., and Amelia Stinson-Wesley, Charlotte, N.C.

Current staff funded program areas:

- Ecumenical Immigration Alliance (EIA) includes the N.C. Sanctuary Coalition, a collection of faith communities across North Carolina that offer public sanctuary sites or collaborating support for immigrants at risk of deportation. Additionally, EIA provides education and advocacy for immigrants in the state through webinars, teach-ins, and online resources. The council continues its longstanding work with farmworkers and farmworker advocacy. If your congregation is interested in becoming a sanctuary site or learning more about work with immigrants or farmworkers, please contact rachel@ncchurches.org.
- N.C. Interfaith Power and Light (NCIPL) is the only statewide organization that works on addressing the ecological and justice issues of climate change as a faith-based initiative. Efforts include energy efficiency and conservation, increased renewable energy use, and collective low-carbon lifestyle changes. NCIPL programs encourage congregations, clergy, and denominations to know about and speak to the moral dimensions of climate change and environmental justice from a faith perspective. For more information, contact programs@ncipl.org.
- Partners in Health and Wholeness (PHW) provides tools to help faith communities form healthy habits, including exercise, healthy eating, mental health awareness, and smoking cessation. Staff members in Asheville and Charlotte are available to help your congregation. PHW also has a staff member dedicated to education and advocacy around the opioid crisis. For more information, contact phwinfo@ncchurches.org.
- Gun violence prevention advocacy focuses on telling the truth about gun violence in the country. The majority of gun deaths are suicides; the next highest number is homicides, usually among people who know each other or who are related to one another. The council's work is to help people understand how guns end up in places that create great harm and what each person can do to make people safer. For more information, contact jennifer@ncchurches.org.
- Public education funding advocacy concentrates on making sure all schools have the resources to provide a sound, basic education for all students. The council knows that per-pupil spending, teacher pay, and capital improvements are now lagging in a state that used to lead across the southeast. For more information, contact jennifer@ncchurches.org.

Over the course of this year, the governing board approved the following policy statement which can be found on the council's website along with other statements from previous years:

- Reaffirmation of Support for the LGBTQ+ Community (June 4, 2019)

The council crafts these statements in keeping with its interpretation of the prophetic witness of the Old Testament and the gospel message of the New Testament.

Currently, other areas of emphasis include living wage promotion, criminal justice reform, Medicaid expansion, and redistricting reform. Resources are available online and dedicated staff is available to help your congregation address any of the myriad concerns that arise in this contemporary setting. If you have any questions or are interested in more information, please contact the council at info@ncchurches.org or call the office at 919.828.6501.

Jennifer E. Copeland, Executive Director
www.ncchurches.org

FF. THE GENERAL BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND MINISTRY

In the history of The United Methodist Church, there has never been more of a need for leadership, collaboration and connection. Now is the time for those who have been called into the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ to step out and step forward.

The General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM) has been charged by the church for just this moment. GBHEM is equipped and ready to engage in the journey with those called to be principled, Christian leaders.

This is the call of GBHEM – to embrace the ministry of learning and leadership formation in The United Methodist Church and the Wesleyan tradition. The board serves Christian leaders around the world who are defined, formed, and shaped by a process of intellectual engagement, spiritual and character formation, and leadership development.

GBHEM will continue the mission and ministry through 2020 and beyond, but are going to be more innovative and adaptive in the approach. GBHEM has begun a deliberative process to reimagine and reshape its ministry in the following ways:

- Continuing to cultivate a dynamic culture of call and vocational discernment that encourages lay and clergy leaders to discover, claim, and flourish in God's ministry and mission for the church, the academy, and the world;
- Enhancing and expanding GBHEM's innovative platform of experiential learning and formation that provides connectional, contextual, and collaborative solutions to the challenges facing the church, the academy, and the world;

Establishing a stewardship and economic model for GBHEM that maintains a commitment to the mission of the church and the agency while increasing the agency's financial self-sufficiency and sustainability.

"And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:20)

The same spirit of service and leadership that first inspired John Wesley lives on within everyone. All have been called, so lead on, knowing GBHEM is here every step of the way.

Greg Bergquist, General Secretary

GG. HINTON RURAL LIFE CENTER

Hinton is a retreat and mission outreach agency of the Southeastern jurisdiction, with the following mission statement: "Inspired by Jesus Christ, Hinton Rural Life Center's purpose is to engage individuals, congregations, and communities in transformation through retreat ministry and missional outreach."

Hinton Center is located in Hayesville, N.C., on 33 acres of wooded property in the Appalachian Mountains. Situated on Lake Chatuge, Hinton continues its 50+ year tradition of hosting clergy and other individuals and retreat groups. With trails, an outdoor labyrinth, scenic views, Hermitage cabins and retreat houses, chapel and meeting rooms, and delicious meals, Hinton provided space and place this past year for many throughout the Southeast to get away, breathe, draw closer to God and others, and be renewed in spirit and call.

As a mission outreach agency focused on improving long-term quality of life in the three-county area of Clay and Cherokee counties, N.C., and Towns County, Ga., Hinton provided individuals and groups with year-round opportunities to serve in its Safe & Healthy Home Repair ministry, firewood ministry, garden ministry, and Christmas Care. With funding from The Duke Endowment, and guided by its 2016 quality-of-life study, Hinton continued to lead collaborative efforts with community partners to address challenges in its rural area. In addition to introducing mission teams to dynamics and perspectives of rural poverty, as well as to the assets in our unique Appalachian culture, Hinton's Safe & Healthy Home Repair ministry developed an assessment tool for pre-home repair visits. The assessment identifies areas of safety/health concerns of which the homeowner may not be aware, such as falling hazards, lack of smoke detectors, standing water, etc., that a mission team can address. As part of its educational efforts, Hinton produced a Safe & Healthy Home checklist refrigerator magnet and started distributing it in the community and to the homeowners it serves to equip them in maintaining a safe and healthy home.

2019 ministry highlights included:

- 269 families/households served
- 1140 volunteers; \$621,891 value of volunteer time
- 46 percent increase in grant dollars awarded
- 372 loads of firewood distributed
- 345 area children received Christmas care gifts
- 1000+ pounds of vegetables for Hinton dining & area food pantries
- 58 churches in mission outreach; 949 mission outreach participants

Below are additional initiatives throughout the past year that supported Hinton Rural Life Center's mission for engagement and transformation:

- Developed local leadership training courses for adults and youth.
- Provided rural life Sunday worship resource to conference offices to share with churches.
- Hosted and led Kentucky's residents in ministry in a mission experience, as part of their residency requirements, which included: home repair ministry, worship, presentations on rural poverty and Appalachian culture, and a seminar on pastoring in rural contexts.
- Produced a Sunday school/small group curriculum, with video *Cultivating Hope: Grow Where You're Planted*, with funding from the Duke Endowment. The curriculum is available for free on Hinton's website or by contacting Hinton Rural Life Center.

Jacqueline Gottlieb, President and CEO
828.389.8336 • info@hintoncenter.org • www.hintoncenter.org

HH. LAKE JUNALUSKA ASSEMBLY, INC.

Lake Junaluska is a place of Christian hospitality where lives are transformed through renewal of soul, mind and body. This year, over 50,000 overnight guests from all 50 states and over 35 countries will visit the idyllic valley located in the Great Smoky Mountains of Western North Carolina.

Commitment to transformation at Lake Junaluska is stronger than ever. Thanks to generous charitable giving that provides opportunities for Lake Junaluska to reinvest in its facilities and grounds, great strides have been made toward improving the infrastructure, that will enable the conference center to continue to meet guests' needs.

Some of the recent transformational improvements made at Lake Junaluska include:

- **Transforming Youth Ministry:** As part of a \$1.5 million youth ministry revitalization initiative, provided by generous donor support, Shackford Hall auditorium received new audio-video equipment that enhances youth worship experiences. The building was also repainted and the front and side porches were reconstructed. The youth dining hall also received many facility upgrades, with more planned for 2020.
- **Nurturing God's Creation:** Thanks to a generous charitable gift, the greenhouse, a place of cultivation and nourishment, was renovated, making it easier to grow the more than 8,000 plants that beautify the grounds each year.
- **Investing in Preservation:** Over \$900,000 was invested in preserving Shackford Hall, Harrell Center, and the Administration Building, enabling Lake Junaluska to continue to model great stewardship in its effort to preserve this special place.
- **Honoring Sacred Spaces:** A new lychgate added to the Biblical Garden and a seating area added to the Prayer Labyrinth help define and enhance these sacred spaces. Renovation of the Stuart Circle spring area has also created a peaceful place for prayer and meditation.

- **The Renewal of Recreation:** Lake Junaluska tennis courts were resurfaced (complete with pickleball lines), a new cornhole area, a gaga ball pit, 9 square in the air, renovation of sections of the walking trail and refurbishment of the activity field at the Nanci Weldon Gym.

The leadership and staff invite everyone to visit Lake Junaluska for a conference, a retreat, or a vacation. The lake and surrounding mountains will provide the perfect setting to experience transformation and renewal. To plan a visit, please go to the website at www.lakejunaluska.com.

Ken Howle, Executive Director

II. UNITED METHODIST SCHOOLS OF THEOLOGY AND UNIVERSITIES

1. AFRICA UNIVERSITY

In 2019, Africa University's story was one of resourcefulness, investment, and ministry growth.

Thank you, Bishop Paul Leeland, the cabinet, and the committed lay and clergy leaders who nurture vitality in the local congregations of the Western North Carolina Conference. Africa University is grateful for all that you do to affirm the United Methodist connection and global mission. The gracious support of the Western North Carolina Conference resulted in a 97.18 percent investment of the asking to the Africa University Fund (AUF) apportionment in 2019. Thank you for commitment and responsiveness it took to grow your gifts to the AUF by more than eight percent in 2019.

Your generosity is helping Africa University to be impactful in its mission—nurturing, educating, and equipping leaders who think for themselves, are contextually relevant, and have a passion to serve. Since opening in 1992, Africa University has trained more than 9,000 graduates who lead and serve across sub-Saharan Africa. These young people are equipped to be ethical, responsible, and responsive leaders who discern their calling and determine how to best serve the needs of their communities.

Institutional Update:

- Africa University has an annual student population of around 2,800. There are 25–30 African nations represented in the student body each year.
- The university's three colleges operate as centers for teaching, research, innovation, community engagement, and enterprise development. Africa University is still the only university in Zimbabwe accredited to offer online degree programs.
- Students, faculty, and alumni contribute ground-breaking solutions to Africa's current challenges with interventions that include graduate programs in migrant and refugee protection, articulated by refugee students, as well as doctoral-level training for military chaplains in Africa.
- As regards its campus infrastructure, Africa University is transitioning to solar energy with the support of the General Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church. A residence hall for women and a new wing of the student union building—gifted to the university by the Dallas, Tex.-based Highland Park United Methodist Church—will be the first solar-powered facilities on the campus.

Africa University affirms its commitment to The United Methodist Church, its Cross and Flame, and the denomination's global mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Through its faithfulness, the Western North Carolina Conference invites and encourages new partners to join in the mission and change the world. By giving freely, Western North Carolina United Methodists walk alongside their neighbors and participate in bringing dreams to life. Western North Carolina Conference, you have heard story after story about how Africa University is nurturing difference makers. Thank you for responding with love and generosity.

Africa University continues to celebrate God's amazing grace. Thanks to your stewardship of God's blessings, Africa University has gone beyond what some thought was possible. "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God." Luke 18:27 NKJV

James H. Salley, Associate Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement
www.support-africauniversity.org

2. BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

The dean is grateful to have one last opportunity to thank you for your moral, prayerful, and material support of the Boston University School of Theology (BUSTH), and also to highlight the promising future of the school as a new dean joins the stellar faculty, staff, and students in summer 2020 to carry on the mission of the school.

Breaking News:

- **Students:** The school continues to increase and celebrate diversity in the student body, creating opportunities for in-depth exchanges and a rich community life.
- **Faculty:** Two new faculty were welcomed this year: Filipe Maia as assistant professor of theology, and Luis Menéndez-Antuña as assistant professor of New Testament. Both are extraordinary teachers who delight in working with students.
- **Scholarships:** Free tuition is offered to UMC-registered candidates for ordained ministry, and student scholarships and housing are key priorities. BUSTH also offers leadership fellowships to support students in ethnic, gender, and sexuality studies: Raíces Latinas, Sacred Worth, Howard Thurman, Indigenous Studies, Korean Studies, Women in Leadership, and African Studies.
- **Two new programs:** Faith and Ecological Justice (FEJ) and Raíces Latinas Program in Theology, Leadership, and Research (RL). FEJ leads programs to build ecological awareness, theological research, church collaborations, and community activism in ecological justice. RL sponsors programs to expand Latin American and Latinx theological study and research and to enhance the leadership of students, young people, and leaders in Latino/Latina communities.

- **Online lifelong learning:** An exciting new program has been launched, offering online mini-courses, workshops, and reading groups for professional and spiritual enrichment.
- **Theology and the arts initiatives:** Exhibits highlight sacred spaces in Boston; wilderness photography; a 1619 visual lament of 400+ years of slavery; voices and faces of Colombia; and paintings of a gay man struggling with the church.
- **Campaign:** The BUSTH development campaign concluded with the raising of \$29.4 million to support students, faculty, and vital programs.
- **Website and Viewbook:** Check out the new BUSTH website (www.bu.edu/sth) and Viewbook.

Partnering for Ministry and Transformation:

- **Creative callings:** In partnership with local churches, the project seeks to create “a culture of call.”
- **Engagement with the UMC:** Many BUSTH students are delegates, volunteers, and singers in General Conference 2020.
- **Continuing scholar program:** BUSTH courses are open to alums and local clergy for small lifelong learning fees.
- **Doctor of Ministry:** The D.Min. in transformational leadership flourishes with lively student cohorts that are broadly ecumenical, culturally diverse, and global. The model includes intensives, online courses, and faculty mentoring.
- **Religion and conflict transformation clinic:** The clinic provides internships in local churches and organizations that foster just peacebuilding.
- **Travel seminars:** Immersion journeys open worlds to students in the borderlands of Arizona and Mexico, Cuba, Peru, Israel, Palestine, civil rights landmarks, and centers for ecological-spiritual renewal.
- **Ecumenical partnerships:** BUSTH now has four denominational communities of learning: Wesleyan/Methodist, Episcopal Anglican, United Church of Christ, and Unitarian Universalist.
- **Partnership with Hebrew College:** This partnership enriches interreligious learning through joint courses and public events, and also co-sponsors *The Journal of Interreligious Studies and the State of Formation* for emerging leaders.

Taking Action Globally and Locally:

- **Campus action:** Work to improve accessibility and sustainability. BUSTH is the first certified “Green School” in BU and is active in the Green Seminary Initiative. It was also named as one of the “Seminaries that Change the World.”
- **Internships in global service and peacemaking:** Students participate in apprenticeship ministries across the world.

Commitment to Justice:

- Faculty and students have been active in UMCOR efforts to support victims of hurricanes and fires, and in collaborative services to support people suffering the consequences of immigration practices, disability inequities, or racial violence.
- In town hall meetings, the community has deep conversations on issues that divide, seeking to develop capacities for relating across difference and to create a community based on the dignity of all.

BUSTH looks to the future. It celebrates transformational leaders of The United Methodist Church, who love with their whole hearts and follow Jesus Christ with their whole lives.

Mary Elizabeth Moore, Dean

3. CANDLER SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Since its founding in 1914, Candler School of Theology at Emory University has educated more than 10,000 students, shaping thoughtful, principled, and courageous leaders who are dedicated to transforming the world in the name of Jesus Christ.

This is especially important to note amid the current shifts in the denomination. It is an honor and a privilege for Candler to be one of 13 official seminaries of The United Methodist Church. Yet, true to the Methodist tradition of ecumenical openness, Candler has enthusiastically welcomed the entire Wesleyan family to its community for generations. Faculty, staff, and students from the AME Church, the AMEZ Church, the CME Church, Free Methodists, Nazarenes, and others have worked, worshiped, learned, and prayed alongside United Methodists, and have been a vital part of shaping Candler and its mission. This diversity has been a wonderful gift and a rich blessing. As Candler moves forward, it will continue to invite and welcome those from all expressions of the Wesleyan tradition. Indeed, it will continue to welcome all those who follow Jesus Christ.

This year, Candler has continued to strengthen its deep commitment to alleviating student debt and promoting financial literacy. In 2018–2019, it awarded \$6.3 million in financial aid, with 100 percent of Master of Divinity (M.Div.) students receiving support and financial coaching. In fall 2019, it announced a major expansion of its financial aid program to include full-tuition scholarships for all M.Div. students who are certified candidates for ordained ministry in The United Methodist Church, and new merit scholarships covering 75 percent of tuition for qualifying M.Div. students who identify as pan-Wesleyan and those pursuing chaplaincy through Candler’s new chaplaincy concentration. In addition, all incoming students in the Master of Divinity, Master of Theological Studies, and Master of Religious Leadership programs will receive awards covering at least 50 percent of tuition.

This year also saw the launch of two pilot “formation communities,” off-campus student housing that focuses on intentional living and spiritual formation. Students from multiple degree programs applied to take part in these pilot groups. At the start of the year, the housemates created a “rule of life” to guide their days together, emphasizing prayer, fellowship, and celebration. A house chaplain—a Candler faculty member or church leader—supports them and shares in the journey. The ten students who took part this year describe feeling a richer sense of community and deeper connections to God and one another in the midst of their busy lives. It is clear that this fulfills a need for Candler’s seminarians, and the school eagerly anticipates the program’s growth in the coming years.

Candler’s student body continues to reflect the diversity and breadth of the Christian faithful, with an enrollment of 470 from 12 countries and 38 states, with 40 percent people of color (U.S.) and a median age of 27 among Master of Divinity students. Students represent 42 denominations, with 45 percent of all students and 50 percent of Master of Divinities coming from the Methodist family.

Candler offers six single degrees and 10 dual degrees pairing theology with bioethics, business, international development, law, public health, and social work. Its Doctor of Ministry degree is 90 percent online, so students can remain in their places of ministry while completing their degrees.

Candler draws strength and inspiration from its relationship with The United Methodist Church. Its ability to fulfill its mission of educating faithful and creative leaders for the church's ministries throughout the world depends upon your prayers, partnership, and support. Thank you for the countless ways you advance this vital ministry in the life of our denomination. Candler invites you to visit in person or online at candler.emory.edu.

Jan Love, Dean

4. DUKE DIVINITY SCHOOL

L. Gregory Jones, Dean of the Divinity School and Ruth W. and A. Morris Williams Jr. Distinguished Professor of Theology and Christian Ministry, had his term as dean extended for a full five years through 2023.

The Duke Endowment awarded Duke Divinity School (DDS) a \$12 million grant in support of DDS's three core priorities and traditions: Thriving communities enlivened by healthy congregations and gifted pastors, embodied wisdom through rigorous intellectual vitality, and creative institutions that inspire imaginative and transformative leadership, including the Thriving Communities Fellowship program, which will provide 52 new full-tuition scholarships over the next four years.

Duke Divinity School launched the Duke Divinity: Black Pastoral Leadership Collaboration which will draw on original research in Black church traditions and historical examples of effective Black church leadership to train and build networks of effective leaders for the Black church of today and the future. The collaboration will be led by the Rev. David Emmanuel Goatley, research professor of theology and Black church studies and director of the Office of Black Church Studies at Duke Divinity School.

In 2019, Duke Divinity School welcomed 215 new students from 33 different states and seven other countries: Canada, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, and Zimbabwe. The Master of Theological Studies (M.T.S.) and Master of Arts in Christian Practice (M.A.C.P.) degree programs received record enrollments of 35 students and 22 students, respectively. The Master of Theology (Th.M., 14 students), Doctor of Ministry (D.Min., 20 students), and Doctor of Theology (Th.D., four students) all had strong enrollment. The D.Min. program was named the top online program by www.TheBestSchools.org. Duke Divinity's new Certificate in Theology and Health Care will enroll eight students, all of whom are fellows with the Theology, Medicine, and Culture (T.M.C.) Initiative at the school. The M.T.S. program also includes eight students who are T.M.C. fellows, for a record year of 16 total fellows. The M.Div. degree program gained 110 new students, with minority students comprising more than 32 percent of the incoming M.Div. class, and Black students comprising 18 percent of the incoming M.Div. class. Female students made up 44 percent of incoming M.Div. students, while males were 56 percent. There were 24 denominations represented in the M.Div. entering class, with 42 percent affiliated with The United Methodist Church.

Two new faculty members, Brent Strawn and Brett McCarty, joined the DDS faculty in July 2019. Strawn, Professor of Old Testament, is an ordained elder in the North Georgia Conference of The United Methodist Church. Strawn has a secondary appointment as a Professor of Law at Duke University School of Law. Prior to joining the Duke faculty, Strawn taught at Candler School of Theology at Emory University for eighteen years.

McCarty, Assistant Research Professor of Theological Ethics, is a theological ethicist whose work centers on questions of faithful action within health care. He is associate director of the Theology, Medicine, and Culture Initiative at Duke Divinity School, and he holds a joint appointment in the School of Medicine's Department of Population Health Sciences.

Randy Maddox, William Kellon Quick Professor of Wesleyan and Methodist Studies, general editor of the Wesley Works Editorial Project, and elder in the Dakotas Conference, retires at the end of the 2019-2020 academic year.

United Methodist faculty member Brittany Wilson received tenure and promotion to the rank of Associate Professor.

Tito Madrazo joined the administrative leadership of the Divinity School as Senior Strategist for the Hispanic House of Studies. He will also serve as a consulting faculty member.

The Hispanic-Latino/a Preaching Initiative is currently in its fifth year of providing high-quality theological education to current and aspiring Hispanic-Latino/a ministers. Twenty-one students from multiple denominations are taking courses this year.

The Duke Endowment has also awarded Duke Divinity School a grant of \$5.5 million over five years to cultivate meaning and purpose across diverse professional schools at Duke. The Lilly Endowment has also awarded grants to Duke Divinity School to coordinate initiatives on "Thriving in Ministry" and "Thriving Congregations" across the United States.

Duke Divinity School has a partnership with Huntingdon College and Virginia Wesleyan University to create streamlined admissions process and private campus events in order to better equip students from those institutions with a calling to serve the church. In an effort to expand access for quality theological formation to students, pastors, and lay leaders in the Nashville Episcopal Area, DDS is also partnering with the Turner Center at Martin Methodist College to offer theological training for innovative and entrepreneurial ministries.

L. Gregory Jones, Dean

5. GAMMON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Gammon Theological Seminary, located in Atlanta, GA, is the United Methodist constituent member of the Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC), a consortium of historically African-American theological schools. Gammon/ITC is a co-educational, professional graduate school of theology. The faculty personifies vigorous scholarship, rigorous academic discipline, and significant research in the service of the church and other communities in the world. Gammon/ITC is the world's premier resource for black church scholarship and faith-based solutions to the spiritual and socio-economic challenges confronting the African-American community and beyond.

Founded in 1883 by the Methodist Episcopal Church and with assistance from the Freedman's Aid Society, today Gammon Theological Seminary is one of the 13 theological schools of The United Methodist Church. The faculty and administration of Gammon/ITC create an environment in which critical thinking, investigative reflection, decision making, and responsible action are fostered. Gammon/ITC is a member of the Atlanta University Center Complex, the world's largest enterprise of African-American higher education. It is also a member of the University Center of Georgia and the Atlanta Theological Association. The school is fully accredited by the Association of Theological Schools and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Gammon/ITC offers the following degree programs: the Master of Divinity, the Master of Arts in Christian Education, and the Doctor of Ministry. Admission is open to qualified men and women of The United Methodist Church.

The support of this annual conference helps Gammon/ITC students carry on a proud tradition. They are taught to think independently and communicate effectively. They are also challenged to become involved in finding solutions to problems that affect the human condition, and to become active in the community beyond this campus. Additionally, graduates of this institution are encouraged to maintain a lifelong desire for intellectual growth, spiritual development, and the acquisition of skills for the practice of ministry.

Gammon/ITC has had a very exciting and busy year living out its mission, which is to recruit, support and educate pastors and leaders for The United Methodist Church. Gammon Theological Seminary is extremely grateful to this annual conference for the support of theological education, and for the commitment to ensuring that God's church will be served by persons who are called and trained to lead Gammon/ITC forward.

Ken J. Walden, President-Dean
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6. METHODIST THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL IN OHIO

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

MTSO and the school's generous donors have pledged to extend a full-tuition pledge to all prospective students who are pursuing United Methodist elder or deacon candidacy. This pledge applies to qualified prospective students who apply by July 1 for the 2020-21 academic year. The MTSO admissions staff is happy to answer questions at 800-333-6876 or admissions@mtso.edu.

Two young scholars appointed to faculty:

MTSO President Jay Rundell has announced the appointment of Tejai Beulah and Kyle Brooks to the faculty, effective July 1. Beulah has been appointed assistant professor of history, ethics, and black church and African diaspora studies. She earned her doctorate in American religious history from Drew University; a Master of Theological Studies degree from MTSO; a master's degree in African American and African studies from Ohio State University; and a bachelor's degree in English, history and gender diversity studies from Xavier University. Brooks has been appointed assistant professor of homiletics, worship, and black church and African diaspora studies. He has served for two years as a Louisville Institute postdoctoral fellow at MTSO while completing his doctoral dissertation in pursuit of a Ph.D. from Vanderbilt University with a concentration in homiletics and liturgics. He holds a Master of Divinity degree from Yale Divinity School, and an Master of Arts degree in Urban Education Studies and a Bachelor of Arts degree from Yale University.

Al Gore among participants at MTSO conference:

In June 2019, more than 100 religious leaders, scholars, scientists and farmers gathered at MTSO for a three-day conference, "On Food and Faith: Ministry in the Time of Climate Change." Former Vice President Al Gore, founder and chairman of the Climate Reality Project, participated in all three days of the conference, delivering a multimedia climate presentation during a plenary session.

Faculty offer reading recommendations:

MTSO's faculty members, who are widely published themselves, have compiled a list of theological books that shaped their lives and work. Their brief reviews cover titles from *Down in the Chapel: Religious Life in an American Prison* to *Dakota: A Spiritual Geography*. They are available online at www.mtso.edu/goodbooks.

Danny Russell, Director of Communications

7. UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

For nearly 150 years, United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio, has been preparing faithful, fruitful leaders to make disciples of Jesus Christ.

Students:

In the Fall 2019 semester, United equipped 459 women and men for leadership in the Church, including 272 masters' students and 187 doctoral students. An ecumenical community of many denominations, races, and nationalities, United welcomed students from 11 countries, 42 states, and 37 denominations, with the student body composed of 49 percent African American students, 42 percent Caucasian students, and 10 percent ethnic/racial minority students. The seminary prepared 165 course of study students and served 36 students through the Hispanic Christian Academy, a three-year Spanish online course of ministry program for Hispanic/Latino lay pastors and leaders. Altogether, approximately 660 students followed God's call through United Theological Seminary.

Alumni/ae:

United graduates are making an impact in their communities as they spread the Good News.

- 88 percent of alumni/ae are currently employed in or retired from ministry
- 70 percent serve in local parishes
- The Rev. Dr. Brad Kalajainen (D.Min. '99) received the 2019 Effective Ministry Award for his transformative leadership of Cornerstone UMC in Grand Rapids, MI.
- The Rev. Dr. James Bushfield (M.Div. '79, D.Min. '92) received the 2019 Distinguished Alumnus Award for his leadership and ministry in the Indiana Conference of The United Methodist Church.
- The Rev. Dr. Sandra Coley (D.Min. '14) received the Outstanding Doctor of Ministry Award for her advocacy of organ donation among African American communities.

New at United:

United introduced a 36-hour Master of Arts (M.A.) degree, designed for those who wish to earn a degree while completing the requirements for Advanced Course of Study in pursuit of ordination in The United Methodist Church. The Master of Arts program is available fully online, on campus, or in a combination.

United continues to offer innovative learning through its Live Interactive Virtual Education (LIVE) environment introduced in 2018. In the first year, 59 students participated in LIVE courses, connecting with classmates on campus in Dayton, Ohio, and across the country by attending classes in real time via simultaneous webcast.

Becoming Debt Free:

United remains committed to becoming debt free by the seminary's 150th anniversary on October 11, 2021. Thanks to the support of generous donors, United has received more than \$2.5 million toward its goal of raising \$4 million to "burn the mortgage." Becoming debt free as an institution will enable United to focus on generating income for scholarships that lighten the load of student debt for seminarians.

In Romans 10:14, St. Paul writes: "How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?" For 150 years, United has been preparing faithful and fruitful Christian preachers and leaders who proclaim the Good News of God's unconditional love which has come to us in Jesus Christ. Thanks be to God!

Kent Millard, President



South River UMC - 101 year old Miss Myrtle Deadman at Drive-In Worship
Photo by Cindy Weaver Moore



Sedgefield UMC, Charlotte - Drive-Thru Fall CARnival Photo Booth
Photo by Kimberly Little