

Advance Edition

Daily Christian Advocate

Proceedings of the 2022 Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference
of The United Methodist Church



THIS I KNOW



THIS I KNOW

The logo for this conference features pieces of "stained glass" that are as diverse as we are: different colors, shapes, and sizes. These diverse pieces, when brought together, reveal a single symbol: the cross, the Church's primary symbol of God's love. If any one of these pieces is removed, the cross becomes more obscure. It takes every piece working together to reveal the cross most clearly.

CONTENTS

Welcome from Our Senior Effective Bishop	v
Registration Process	1
Schedule	2
Personnel of the 2016 SEJ Conference	7
Committee on Plan of Organization and Rules of Order	19
Committee on Program and Arrangements	42
Committee on Episcopacy	45
Recommendation Regarding Number of Bishops to Elect	49
Balloting Instructions and Frequently Asked Questions	51
Committee on Coordination and Accountability	55
Committee Report	55
Joint Recommendation on Plan of Organization	59
Boards of Directors of Agencies, Ministries, and Emory University	73
Committee on Finance and Administration	81
Resolution for Name Change for Red Bird Missionary Conference	85
Reports of Episcopal Areas	
Alabama-West Florida Area	86
Birmingham Area	88
Charlotte Area	90
Columbia Area	92
Florida Area	95
Knoxville Area	97
Louisville Area	99
Mississippi Area	100
Nashville Area	103
North Georgia Area	106
Raleigh Area	108
Richmond Area	111
South Georgia Area	114
Biographical Sketches of Episcopal Nominees	117
Diagram of Stuart Auditorium and Seating Area	135

Important Notice

Bring This Document With You!

No printed copies of the Advance Daily Christian Advocate will be published or mailed prior to SEJ Conference 2022, nor will copies be available at the site of the Conference.

All delegates, reserve delegates, conference officials, and guests are urged to download this document and bring a copy with you to the conference. You will need to reference it during Conference proceedings.

We suggest the following alternatives:

- print out a copy and prepare a notebook for yourself
- download the document to your computer, tablet, or smartphone
- download the document to an e-reader (e.g., iPad, Kindle, Nook, etc.)

This e-format for our Advance Daily Christian Advocate is one step toward a “paperless” conference as a way of being better stewards of God’s creation and of the available financial resources.

Please note: Because of a extensive use of WiFi for voting purposes, WiFi will only have limited availability during sessions of SEJ Conference. Downloading or printing a copy of this document will be essential for reference because you will not be able to access the document on the SEJ web site.

No Printed Copies Will Be Available.

Welcome to the 2022 Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference session!

We gather together at beautiful Lake Junaluska under the theme ***This I Know***. Though we are a diverse people representing nine Southeastern states and 14 Annual Conferences of The United Methodist Church, we come together in the knowledge of the love of Christ in our lives.

This I Know is a phrase that echoes through many Scriptures, songs, and hymns, and draws upon the Wesleyan doctrine of assurance. What are the ties that bind us, even in all of our diversity, to eternal truths? What are those elements of our belief that unify us all as United Methodist Christians?

“Jesus loves me, **this I know**...”

“Ask ye what great thing **I know** that delights and stirs me so.... **Jesus Christ, the Crucified.**”

“I do not know how long ’twill be, nor what the future holds for me,
but **this I know**: if Jesus leads me, I shall get home someday.”

In a time when the fabric of our unity is being stretched thin, both in the culture and in the church, we trust that God is gathering God's scattered family into one place at one time for the purpose of providing leadership and guidance into an uncertain future. From the vantage point of our limited sight, outcomes are unpredictable, and that fact requires us to develop courageous vision and the eyes of faith. These times pose a question for us as we gather: What do we KNOW? Amid the roiling waters and breaking waves of opinion and practice, what and who can we trust without reservation?

Your SEJ leadership believes that all of us KNOW two things: First, we know the person and love of Jesus Christ - **Jesus loves us, THIS WE KNOW!** The Bible tells us in every gospel and epistle, every prophet and psalm; it is the heart beating through all of our theology. Second, we know that Christ's love begs for our response. In Mark 12, Jesus is asked which law is the most important. His answer is clear: Love God and love your neighbor, both rooted in the Torah and brought to full blossom in the ministry of Jesus and the cross. **We love Jesus - THIS WE KNOW!**

These twin impulses will unite our work of Christian conferencing:

- At the table, Jesus loves us by becoming both the host and the meal. And Christ invites to his table "all who love him and ... seek to live in peace with one another." **Love of God and neighbor.**
- At the font, we remember that Christ loves us before we ever knew it and places us in a new family that vows to love us into true discipleship. **Love of God and neighbor.**
- At the threshold of the future, we believe that God goes before us into all our little Galilees and that he sends us to make disciples by telling "the old, old story of Jesus and his love." **Love of God and neighbor.**

As SEJ 2022 comes to a close, we will consecrate new episcopal leaders and appoint leadership throughout our connection. But all of us will leave Lake Junaluska with the same mandate and a single message for every church and every community: Jesus loves us, we love Jesus, and we love the world that Jesus loves.

May it be so.

James E. Swanson, Sr.
Senior Bishop

This page left blank intentionally.

2022 Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference REGISTRATION PROCESS

Bethea Welcome Center at Lake Junaluska

Persons needing to check in for lodging at Lake Junaluska will go to the Bethea Welcome Center upon arrival on campus. *No conference business packets or items will be distributed at this location.* A member of the Secretarial Staff will be on duty during peak periods to answer any specific questions about the SEJ 2022 Conference. Also, a “Frequently Asked Questions” answer sheet will be available at the lodging check-in desks.

Credentials for Delegates and Reserves

Name badges in neck sleeves will serve as the credentials for delegates and reserves. Name badges, which serve as your Conference credentials, will be distributed by your Delegation Head to delegates and reserves on Tuesday afternoon, November 1, during the round robin session delegation gatherings. Please see the last page of the Advance Daily Christian Advocate (ADCA) for your delegation’s assigned seats for Conference sessions, which begin Wednesday morning. Reserves, as is customary, will sit outside the bar of the conference, except for the designated Delegation Teller(s) (if that person is a reserve delegate), who will be seated at the end of the delegation.

Members of the Committee on Episcopacy will receive their name badges at their first meeting.

Delegate and reserve delegate contact information will be double-checked and confirmed by your delegation teller during the Tuesday afternoon sessions in your assigned delegation meeting room.

Credentials for Others

- Bishops and Bishops’ spouses will receive their name badge at the first meeting of the College of Bishops.
- Members of the Judicial Council will receive their name badges from Susan Arnold at the front desk in Stuart Auditorium.
- Communicators will receive their name badges from Jasmine Haynes in the Press Room.
- Monitors will receive their name badges from Jennifer Davis at their orientation session.
- Secretarial Staff will receive their name badges from Anne Travis at the staff meeting.
- Episcopal Administrative Assistants will receive their name badges from Susan Arnold at the front desk in Stuart Auditorium.
- At-large pages will receive their name badges from Susan Arnold during their orientation session.
- United Methodist guests representing Agencies and Commissions will their name badges from Susan Arnold at the front desk in Stuart Auditorium.

Guests

Conference guests are welcomed to attend the Conference but will not be issued official credentials or nametags.

**Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference
November 2-4, 2022
Lake Junaluska Conference and Retreat Center
Draft Agenda as of September 30, 2022**

Pre-Conference Schedule (Subject to Change—and Additions)

Sunday, October 30, 2022

Throughout Day/Evening Bishops arrive at Lake Junaluska
Committee on Episcopacy arrives at Lake Junaluska

Monday, October 31, 2022

9:00 a.m. Committee on Episcopacy (2016-2022)
Harrell Center, Room 202

9:00 a.m. SEJ College of Bishops Meeting
Location TBD

7:00 p.m. Secretarial Staff Meeting
Terrace Hotel, Room 213

Tuesday, November 1, 2022

9:00 a.m. Committee on Episcopacy
Harrell Center, Room 202

9:00 a.m. SEJ College of Bishops
Location TBD

12:45 p.m. Heads of Delegation meeting (receive delegation credentials, seating)
Stuart Auditorium

1:30 p.m. Round Robin Sessions with Episcopal Nominees
Terrace, Harrell Center, and Stuart Rehearsal Room
Delegates and Reserve Delegates only

4:30 p.m. Rehearsal for Opening Worship and Communion (College of Bishops)
Stuart Auditorium

7:30 p.m. Delegation Tellers and At-Large Pages Orientation
Stuart Auditorium

7:30 p.m. Committee on Episcopacy
Harrell Center, Room 202

First Day of Conference Session
Wednesday, November 2, 2022

Opening Session

All Sessions in Stuart Auditorium

9:00 a.m. Opening Worship with Holy Communion – The Mission of The UMC
Bishop James E. Swanson, Sr., preaching
Bishop Debra Wallace-Padgett, celebrant

10:15 a.m. Transition Break

Bishop James Swanson, Mississippi Area, Presiding

10:30 a.m. Opening Business Session
Gathering Hymn
Call to Order
Opening Prayer
Roll Call, Quorum Certification
Secretarial Staff Election
Committee on Plan of Organization and Rules of Order
Adoption of Agenda
Welcome to Lake Junaluska
Balloting Instructions and Testing
Committee on Episcopacy
Centering Hymn and Prayer
Ballot
Committee on Program and Arrangements
Results of Ballot
Introduction of any new Nominee(s)
We will continue balloting as time permits until adjournment
Announcements

12:15 p.m. Lunch Break

12:30 p.m. Organizational Meeting for Journal Committee
Terrace Dining Room

Wednesday, November 2, 2022
Afternoon Session

Bishop Sharma Lewis, Richmond Area, Presiding

- 2:15 p.m. Reconvene Business Session
Gathering Music and Prayer
During this session, we will continue balloting and hear the following reports:
Committee on Coordination and Accountability
SEJ Archives and History Update
Nominations from the College of Bishops
Videos will be shown and/or reports will be given between ballots.
- 3:30 p.m. Break

Bishop David Graves, Alabama-West Florida and South Georgia Areas, Presiding

- 4:00 p.m. Gathering Music
During this session, we will continue balloting and hear the following reports:
Monitoring Report
Proposal to Change Name of Red Bird Missionary Conference
Committee on Finance and Administration
Recognition of Bishop Visiting from another Jurisdiction
Recognition of General Agency and Seminary guests present
Videos will be shown and/or reports will be given between ballots.
Unfinished Business
- 5:15 p.m. Dinner Break

Wednesday, November 2, 2022
Evening Session

Bishop Leonard Fairley, Louisville and Raleigh Areas, Presiding

- 7:30 p.m. Reconvene Business Session
Gathering Hymn
During this session, we will continue balloting and hear the following reports:
Panel Discussion with Young Adults – Building Toward the Future
Videos will be shown and/or reports will be given in between ballots.
Unfinished Business
- 8:45 p.m. Evening Recess

Second Day of Conference Session
Thursday, November 3, 2022

Morning Session

9:00 a.m. Centering Morning Worship – Bishop R. Lawson Bryan, Preaching

Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson, North Georgia Area, Presiding

10:00 a.m. Gathering Hymn
During this session, we will continue balloting and hear the following reports:
Committee on Journal
Videos will be shown and/or reports will be given in between ballots.

10:30 a.m. Break

11:00 a.m. Service of Remembrance
Bishop Mary Virginia Taylor, preaching
Bishop William McAlilly, liturgist

12:00 noon Break

Bishop Jonathan Holston, Columbia Area, Presiding

12:15 p.m. Gathering Hymn
During this session, we will continue balloting and hear the following report:
Love Offering for At-Large Pages
Videos will be shown and/or reports will be given in between ballots.
Balloting will continue as needed
Unfinished business as needed

1:00 p.m. Lunch Break

Thursday, November 3, 2022
Afternoon Session

2:00 p.m. Committee on Investigation Organized
Terrace Hotel, Room 211

2:15 p.m. Committee on Appeals Organized
Terrace Hotel, Room 213

2:30 p.m. Business Session (If Needed)

Committees meet to complete their work for final reports on Thursday evening.

- Committee on Episcopacy in Harrell Center, Room 202

5:30 p.m. Dinner Break

**Thursday, November 3, 2022
Evening Session**

Bishop Kenneth Carter, Florida Area, Presiding

7:15 p.m. Reconvene Business Session
Gathering Hymn
Monitoring Report
Celebration of Retiring Bishops
Committee on Episcopacy
Episcopal Assignments for 2023-2024
Adjourning Prayer

9:00 p.m. Area Receptions
(As scheduled by each Delegation by October 1.)

**Third Day of Conference
Friday, November 4, 2022**

10:30 a.m. Consecration of Bishops
Bishop Paul Leeland, Preaching
Bishop Hope Morgan Ward, Consecrating

**PERSONNEL OF THE 2022
SOUTHEASTERN JURISDICTIONAL CONFERENCE**

2022 CONFERENCE MEMBERSHIP AND STAFF

**The College of Bishops
(in order of their election)**

Carlton P. Minnick, Jr. (1980)	Retired	James E. Swanson, Sr. (2004)	Mississippi
Thomas B. Stockton (1988)	Retired	Alfred W. Gwinn, Jr. (2004)	Retired
H. Hasbrouck Hughes, Jr. (1988)	Retired	Richard J. Wills, Jr. (2004)	Retired
Richard C. Looney (1988)	Retired	Mary Virginia Taylor (2004)	Retired
Clay F. Lee (1988)	Retired	Paul L. Leeland (2008)	Retired
Robert E. Fannin (1992)	Retired	L. Jonathan Holston (2012)	Columbia
Kenneth L. Carder (1992)	Retired	Kenneth H. Carter (2012)	Florida and Charlotte
Marshall L. Meadors, Jr. (1992)	Retired	William T. McAlilly (2012)	Nashville
G. Lindsey Davis (1996)	Retired	Debra Wallace-Padgett (2012)	Birmingham and Knoxville
Joe E. Pennel, Jr. (1996)	Retired	Young Jin Cho (2012)	Retired
Charlene P. Kammerer (1996)	Retired	Sharma Lewis	Richmond
J. Lawrence McCleskey (1996)	Retired	David Graves	Alabama-West Florida and South Georgia
Ray W. Chamberlain (1996)	Retired	Leonard Fairley	Louisville and Raleigh
Larry M. Goodpaster (2000)	Retired	Lawson Bryan	Retired
B. Michael Watson (2000)	Retired	Sue Hauptert-Johnson	North Georgia
James R. King, Jr. (2000)	Retired		
Timothy W. Whitaker (2001)	Retired		
Hope Morgan Ward (2004)	Retired		
William H. Willimon (2004)	Retired		

**Southeastern Jurisdiction
Judicial Council Member**

Warren Plowden (SGA)

2022 SEJ Conference Secretarial Staff
(Names of clergy appear in italic type)

Secretary

Anne Travis (HOL)

Associate Secretary

Julie Hager Love (KY)

Conference Minutes Assistant

Celeste Eubanks (AWF)

Delegate Relations

Susan Arnold (HOL)

Episcopal Spouses

Christine Selleck (NGA)

Editor of the *Daily Christian Advocate*

Sybil Davidson (NGA)

Elections and Tellers

Meredyth Earnest (SGA)

Balloting

Otto Harris (WNC)

Jurisdictional Conference Treasurer

David Dommissie (VA)

Media Relations

Jasmine Haynes (MS)

Monitoring

Jennifer Davis (WNC)

Worship Coordinator

Sam Parkes (AWF)

Assistant Worship Coordinator

Kathy James (SC)

Retirement Service

Micheal Selleck (NGA)

Staging and Sound Assistance

Becky Hall (HOL)

News Coverage

SEJ Association of Conference Communicators

Nominated to Serve as Head Tellers

Constance Barnes (SC)

Michael Watts (KY)

2016-2022 COMMITTEE ON EPISCOPACY

(Names of clergy appear in italic type)

CONFERENCE	NAME
AWF	Furr, Steve
AWF	<i>Bryars, Larry</i>
FLA	McEntire, Molly
FLA	<i>Shanks, Alex</i>
HOL	Holley, Del
HOL	<i>Goddard, Kim</i>
KY	Nicholls, Lew
KY	<i>Arnold, Bill</i>
MEM	Reed, David
MEM	<i>McCracken, Sky</i>
MISS	Crisler, Timothy
MISS	<i>Gipson, Mattie</i>
NAL	Lyles, Steve
NAL	<i>Scott, Robin</i>
NC	Innes, Emily
NC	<i>Southern, Gray</i>
NGA	Pinson, Mathew
NGA	<i>Schroeder, Phil</i>
RBM	Osborne, Marilyn
RBM	<i>Amundsen, Robert</i>
SC	Ware, Barbara
SC	<i>McClendon, Tim</i>
SGA	Hatcher, Bill
SGA	<i>Adams, Don</i>
TN	Allen, Jim
TN	<i>Bryan, Harriet</i>
VA	Stokes, Martha
VA	<i>Berlin, Tom</i>
WNC	Davis, Jennifer
WNC	<i>Ingram, Kim</i>

2022 BALLOT TELLERS
(Names of clergy appear in italic type)

CONFERENCE	NAME
AWF	<i>Misty Barrett</i> John Moneyham
FL	<i>Robin Hager</i> Carlene Fogle-Miller
HOL	<i>Caleb Frazier</i> Dawson Kitts
KY	<i>Kelly McClendon</i> Michael Watts
MEM	<i>Sara Corum</i> Solomon Christian
MS	<i>Stephen Cook</i> Kathleen Smith
NAL	<i>Brian Erickson</i> Liz Bowlin
NC	<i>Laura Wittman</i> Caleb Parker
NGA	<i>Eric Lee</i> Tina Kirkland
RBM	<i>Robert Amundsen</i> Cindy Stamper
SC	<i>Constance Barnes</i> David Salter
SGA	<i>Alaina Harrison</i> Jeff Barker
TN	<i>Monica Mowdy</i> Rachel Hagedwood
VA	<i>Jennifer Coffey</i> Jaydee Hanson
WNC	<i>Ben Carson</i> Dana Lyles

Delegates from the Annual and Missionary Conferences

Voting delegates are listed in clergy and lay groups in order of election.

Names of clergy are in italic font. The chairperson of the delegation is indicated with an asterisk

**ALABAMA-WEST FLORIDA (16)
Section 9, Rows A-C**

DELEGATES

Clergy – General Conference

**Larry Bryars
Lisa Ausley
Sung Kuk Hong
Lester Spencer*

Laity – General Conference

Steve Furr
Beverly Maddox
Gene Floore
George Mingledorff

Clergy – Jurisdictional Conference

*Allen Newton
Rurel Ausley
Virginia Kagoro
Doug Pennington*

Laity – Jurisdictional Conference

Frank Moore
Notalsia Whiting
John Moneyham
Bobby Brooks

Clergy Reserves

*Misty Barrett
Matt Mobley*

Laity Reserve

Antonius Barnes

**FLORIDA (32)
Section 2, Rows A-I**

DELEGATES

Clergy – General Conference

**Alex Shanks
Cynthia Weems*

*Brett Opalinski
Magrey deVega
Clarke Evans
Corey Jones
Sharon Austin
Esther Rodriguez-Perez*

Laity – General Conference

Molly McEntire
Derrick Scott
Alice Williams
Heather Pancoast
Carlene Johnson
Judith Pierre-Okerson
Matt Dailey
Antony Larry

Clergy – Jurisdictional Conference

*Candace Lewis
Justin LaRosa
Melissa Cooper
Jenn Stiles-Williams
Debbie Allen
Matthew Williams
Vicki Walker
Clare Chance*

Laity – Jurisdictional Conference

Riley Standifer
Martha Gay Duncan
Steve Gardner
Will Cooper
Jessica Scott
Rushing Kimball
Heidi Aspinwall
Kim Lee

Clergy Reserves

*Vidalis Lopez
Mary Downey
Emily Hotho
Mike Luzinski
Robin Hager
Daphne Johnson
Ivan Corbin*

Laity Reserves

Bob Grizzard
Caryn Royer
Britt Holdren
Raymond Pandley
Elizabeth Preston-Hughes

**HOLSTON (24)
Section 2, Rows I-N**

DELEGATES

Clergy – General Conference

Kim Goddard
Wil Cantrell
Paul Seay
Mary Thompson
Randy Frye
Sharon Bowers

Laity – General Conference

*Emily Ballard
Del Holley
Anne Travis
John Eldridge
Donna Mosby
Becky Hall

Clergy – Jurisdictional Conference

Lauri Jo Cranford
Josh Kilbourne
David Graybeal
Kristen Burkhart
Sarah Varnell
Mark Flynn

Laity – Jurisdictional Conference

Amanda Onks
Charlie McEntyre
Reagan Kelly
Jim Gass
Nate Roark
Burl Lawson

Clergy Reserves

Amy Sumrall
Caleb Frazier

Laity Reserves

Sam England
Dawson Kitts

**KENTUCKY (20)
Section 9, Rows E-H**

DELEGATES

Clergy – General Conference

**Bill Arnold*
Tami Coleman
Iosmar Alvarez
David Grout
James Williams

Laity – General Conference

Alan Beuscher
Sandra Gray
Mark Stallons
Michael Watts
Bethany Harting

Clergy – Jurisdictional Conference

Tom Grieb
Andrew Singh
William Moore
Kelly McClendon
Rebecca Heid

Laity – Jurisdictional Conference

Maggie Hoffman
Delace Canada
Elaine Daugherty
John Denham
Larry Wells

Clergy Reserves

Matt Seel
Michael Sweeney
Esther Jadhav

Laity Reserves

Linda King
Jan Brown-Thompson
Adam McCormick

**MEMPHIS (8)
Section 6, Rows N-O**

DELEGATES

Clergy – General Conference

**Rob Martin*
Cynthia Davis

Laity – General Conference
David Reed
Josh Shaw

Clergy – Jurisdictional Conference
Amanda Hartmann Westmoreland
Sara Corum

Laity – Jurisdictional Conference
Solomon Christian
Elyse Bell

Clergy Reserve
None

Laity Reserve
Melba Mitchell

MISSISSIPPI (20)
Section 8, Rows A-F

DELEGATES

Clergy – General Conference
**Fred Britton*
Mattie Dickens Gipson
Stephen Sparks
Zach Beasley
Mitchell Hedgepeth

Laity – General Conference
David Stotts
David Beckley
LaToya Thompson
Anne Harrington
Jim Ainsworth

Clergy – Jurisdictional Conference
Connie Shelton
Leanne Burris
John Branning
Amy Daniels
Embrea Jackson

Laity – Jurisdictional Conference
Connie Walters
Jaci Murden
Jan Hitt
Steve McAlilly
Ann LaSalle

Clergy Reserves
Fitzgerald Lovett
Karie McCaleb
Stephen Cook

Laity Reserves
Kathleen Smith
Tywanda Johnson

NORTH ALABAMA (16)
Section 6, Rows A-E

DELEGATES

Clergy – General Conference
**Dedric Cowser*
Kelly Clem
Robin Scott
Sherri Reynolds

Laity – General Conference
Steve Lyles
Pat Meadows
Precious Kufarimai
Elizabeth Ann Lee

Clergy – Jurisdictional Conference
Tiwirai Kufarimai
Vaughn Stafford
Mary Henley
Sheri Ferguson

Laity – Jurisdictional Conference
Gail Hiatt
Liz Bowlin
Randall Ham
Rew Howard

Clergy Reserves
Paul Lawler
Brian Erickson

Laity Reserve
Jackie Riggs

NORTH CAROLINA (32)
Section 7, Rows A-F

DELEGATES

Clergy – General Conference

Belton Joyner
Lisa Yebuah
Edgardo Colón-Emeric
Amie Stewart
Eddie Gleaves
Sara Beth Pannell
Liz Roberts
Ben Williams

Laity – General Conference

*Christine Dodson
Ellen Beasley
LaNella Smith
Steve Taylor
Emily Lain
Susan Graebe
Caleb Parker
Mark Schneider

Clergy – Jurisdictional Conference

Kevin Baker
Ismael Ruiz-Millan
Laura Stern
Doug Lain
Chris Brady
Laura Wittman
Harriet Taylor
Tim Catlett

Laity – Jurisdictional Conference

Danny Peck
Claire Cox-Woodlief
Catherine Stallsmith
Cathy Thompson
Lee Rodio
Louise Mitchell
Miles Baker Hunt
Denise Baker

Clergy Reserves

Sangwoo Kim
Ben Roberts
Donna Banks
David Beam

Laity Reserves

Phillip Jefferson
Martha Caves
Mack Parker

NORTH GEORGIA (44)
Section 3, Rows A-H

DELEGATES

Clergy – General Conference

**Byron Thomas*
Phil Schroeder
Alice Rogers
Jasmine Smothers
Bernice Kirkland
Shannon Karafanda
Beth LaRocca-Pitts
Nora Colmenares
Dalton Rushing
Eric Lee
Terry Walton

Laity – General Conference

Jane Finley
Randy Brown
Jeff Jernigan
Odell Horne
Chuck Savage
Debby Stikes
Janet Sligar
Tonya Murphy
Rachel Fullerton
Bill Martin
Ray Cann

Clergy – Jurisdictional Conference

Quincy Brown
Jim Cantrell
Joya Abrams
Dana Everhart
Karen Kagiya
Will Zant
Amy Valdez Barker
Millie Kim
Yvette Massey
Blair Setnor
Jessica Terrell

Laity – Jurisdictional Conference

Nate Abrams
David Gray
Leon Jourolmon
Lee Highsmith
Amy King
Jay Horton
Ben Fletcher
Gwen Hamill
Liza Kittle
Maxine Easom
Dan Parr

Clergy Reserves

Catherine Boothe Olson
Dave Allen Grady
Carolyn Stephens

Laity Reserves

Beth Corrie
Tina Kirkland
Joel Taylor

**RED BIRD MISSIONARY (4)
Section 9, Row D**

DELEGATES

Clergy – General Conference

**Robert Amundsen*

Laity – General Conference

Marilyn Osborne

Clergy – Jurisdictional Conference

Jim Savage

Laity – Jurisdictional Conference

Cindy Stamper

Clergy Reserve

Dan Griffiths

Laity Reserve

Tim Crawford

**SOUTH CAROLINA (32)
Section 8, Rows G-M**

DELEGATES

Clergy – General Conference

Ken Nelson
Robin Dease
Keith Hunter
Susan Leonard
Emily Sutton
Will Malambri
Tiffany Knowlin Boykin
Karen Jones

Laity – General Conference

**Jacquelyn Jenkins*
Jim Salley
Michael Cheatham
Herman Lightsey
Christopher Lynch
Martha Thompson
David Braddon
Emily Evans

Clergy – Jurisdictional Conference

Timothy Rogers
Cathy Mitchell
Fran Elrod
Constance Barnes
Mary Teasley
Kathryn Hunter
Elizabeth Murray
Stephen Love

Laity – Jurisdictional Conference

Betty Void
David Salter
Valerie Brooks-Madden
Marlene Spencer
Jennifer Price
Tony Watson
Lou Jordan
Doug Coffeen

Clergy Reserves

Sara White

Laity Reserves

Marvin Horton
Vicki McCartha

SOUTH GEORGIA (16)
Section 4, Rows L-N

DELEGATES

Clergy – General Conference

**Robert Beckum*
Doreen Smalls
Scott Hagan
David Thompson

Laity – General Conference

Bill Hatcher
Richard Shinhoster
Brenda Kay Adams
Chuck Cowart

Clergy – Jurisdictional Conference

Scott Tucker
Alaina Harrison
Vacant
Vacant

Laity – Jurisdictional Conference

Steve Rumford
Debbie Turner
Jeff Barker
Vacant

Clergy Reserve

None

Laity Reserves

None

TENNESSEE (16)
Section 6, Rows K-N

DELEGATES

Clergy – General Conference

**Harriet Bryan*
Stephen Handy
Marie King
Sam McGlothlin

Laity – General Conference

Jim Allen
Maggie Taylor
George Brown
Tom Lee

Clergy – Jurisdictional Conference

Jeff Furtado
Paul Purdue
Laura Brantley
Monica Mowdy

Laity – Jurisdictional Conference

Leslie Hotzfeld
Rachel Hagewood
Vacant
Vacant

Clergy Reserves

Steph Dodge

Laity Reserve

None

VIRGINIA (44)
Section 5, Rows A-H

DELEGATES

Clergy – General Conference

**Tom Berlin*
Lindsey Freeman
Meredith McNabb
Rob Vaughn
Rhonda VanDyke
Mark Ogren
Grace Han
Beth Givens
Jason Stanley
Kirk Nave
Jonathan Page

Laity – General Conference

Warren Harper
Martha Stokes
Shirley Cauffman
Alison Malloy
Marshall Bailey
Jill Gaynor
Jake Paysour
Mark Elder
Karen McElfish
Andrew Kissell
Kim Johnson

Clergy – Jurisdictional Conference

*Jeff Mickle
Doug Forrester
Leigh Anne Taylor
Dan Kim
Tim Ward
Chenda Lee
David Vaughan
Lyndsie Blakely
Lauren Lobenhofer
Brian Johnson
Jennifer Coffey*

Laity – Jurisdictional Conference

*Debbie Cali
Deb Bowers Angerman
Shawn Kiger
Amanda Holmes
Kenn Speicher
Neal Wise
Richard Underwood
Kip Robinson
Brenda Brooks
Carl Moravitz
Marie Hawks*

Clergy Reserves

*Drew Colby
Esther Agbosu
Gordon Pruitt
Joshua King
Rachel Gilmore
Drew Willson
Lynne Alley-Grant
Sarah Locke
Matt Benton*

Laity Reserves

*Jane Wilson
Jerry Taylor
Jaydee Hanson
Maureen McKay
Michelle Hettman
Carlos Liceaga*

**WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA (40)
Section 4, Rows A-K**

DELEGATES

Clergy – General Conference

**Kim Ingram
Amy Coles
Jeremy Troxler
James Howell
In-Yong Lee
Ashley Crowder Stanley
Shelly Webb
Carter Ellis
Darryl Dayson
Josh Sherfey*

Laity – General Conference

*Jennifer Davis
Amy Johnson
Greg Huffman
Lynne Gilbert
Emma Austin
Havaleh Havelka
Helen Ryde
Lynette Whitaker
Linda Linfors
Tonya Lanier*

Clergy – Jurisdictional Conference

*David Hockett
Sally Queen
Sam Moore
Veranita Alvord
Uiyeon Kim
Lory Beth Huffman
Elizabeth Coppedge-Henley
Stephanie Hand
Julia Trantham Heckert
Sarah Belles*

Laity – Jurisdictional Conference

*Dana Lyles
Sandy Hieronymus
Caroline Wood
Kathy FitzJefferies
Amy DeVore
Matt Sink
Erin Betlej
Tom Jordan
Tim Kincaid
Wade Loftin*

Clergy Reserves

John Boggs
Lynda Ferguson
Ben Carson

None

Laity Reserve

1 **Report of the Committee on Plan of Organization**
2 **and Rules of Order 2022**
3

4 In keeping with the responsibilities of the Committee on Plan of Organization and Rules of
5 Order, Division V, Section 4 (1), the committee conducted a review of the structure and rules of
6 the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference and proposes only minor changes to the Plan of
7 Organization and no changes to the Rules of Order. However, a proposal to revise the structure
8 of the Southeastern Jurisdiction, Plan of Organization Sections V.A and V.B, will be presented
9 later as a part of the report of the Committee on Coordination and Accountability.

10
11 The proposed changes included in our report include the following:

- 12 1) Ensuring the Plan of Organization and Rules of Order are consistent with the 2016 *Book*
13 *of Discipline* and rules adopted by the 2016 SEJ Conference.
- 14 2) Continuing to adapt and refine the plan and rules of the structure that were approved in
15 2008, including significant review of a revision to the Plan of Organization that is being
16 brought as a joint recommendation of the Committee on Finance and Administration
17 (CFA) and the Committee on Coordination and Accountability (CCA).

18
19 **Overview of the Plan of Organization and the Rules of Order Proposed Changes**
20

21 **1. Making the Plan of Organization and the Rules of Order consistent with the 2016**
22 ***Book of Discipline.***

- 23 a. In all references, 2012 is changed to 2016
24

25 **2. Refining the Plan and Structure Based on Experience.**

- 26 a. This Committee reviewed in detail a proposed change to the structure of the
27 Jurisdiction that will be brought to the body by the Committee on Coordination and
28 Accountability. This proposed structural change is a joint recommendation from the
29 CFA and the CCA. The proposal revises Section V.A, eliminates the current Section
30 V.B, and renumbers subsequent sections. After careful and thorough review, the
31 Committee on Plan of Organization and Rules of Order concurs with the proposed
32 restructuring.
33

34 **3. Change in Number of Nominating Committee Members and Tellers.**

- 35 a. We propose deleting reference to 30 members of Nominating Committee (Section
36 V.C) and 30 Tellers (Section V.G.6), based on the decision of the 2021 Called
37 Session of SEJ Conference to unite the former Memphis and Tennessee Conferences,
38 thus changing our total number of conferences. References to “two persons from each
39 annual conference” already in those sections will cover the number of members
40 needed for these groups.
41

42 **4. Editorial Edits Without Change of Intent or Practice.**

- 43 Without notation, the committee has included editorial changes to disciplinary paragraph
44 numbers so we are in harmony with the 2016 edition of *The Book of Discipline*. We
45 propose that the Conference Secretary be granted authority to update any disciplinary
46 references when the 2024 edition is published.

47
48 We have again asked the Conference Secretary to publish in the Advance Daily Christian
49 Advocate the texts of all petitions and reports received by the publication deadline. The ADCA
50 will be provided as a PDF document on the jurisdictional website (www.sejumc.org). **Members**
51 **and guests are responsible for downloading reports and documents from the website.** You
52 are encouraged to download reports to an e-device or computer, or print any desired report.
53 Additional reports and business items will be published and released on the jurisdictional website
54 with as much advance availability as possible.

55
56 We authorize the Conference Secretary to renumber the Plan of Organization and Rules of Order
57 following this session of the Jurisdictional Conference based on action taken by the Conference.

58
59 We have no proposed changes to the Rules of Order as approved by the 2016 Southeastern
60 Jurisdictional Conference.

61
62 We move the adoption of these Rules of Order as printed in the ADCA. We recommend
63 consideration of the Plan of Organization as it will be presented for approval by the Committee
64 on Coordination and Accountability in tomorrow's agenda.

65
66 Submitted,
67 Committee on Plan of Organization and Rules of Order

68 Jan Brown Thompson (KY)
69 *Vicki Landrum* (MS)
70 *Rob Martin* (MEM)
71 *Cory Smith* (AWF)

Ex Officio
David Dommissie, Treasurer
Anne Travis, Secretary

72
73

74 **PLAN OF ORGANIZATION**
75 *(As adopted by 2016 Conference)*
76 *(Proposed Revisions for 2022 Are Highlighted)*
77

78
79 I. OPENING SESSION
80

81 The Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference of The United Methodist Church shall assemble
82 according to the provisions of the 2016 *Book of Discipline* (§¶ 24, 26, 27) *(or Book of Discipline*
83 *as it may hereafter be amended)* and the law of the Church at a place within the bounds of the
84 Southeastern Jurisdiction of the United Methodist Church.
85

86 A. Presiding Bishop
87

88 Following the administration of Holy Communion by the Bishops of the Southeastern
89 Jurisdiction, the conference shall be called to order by a Bishop of the Southeastern Jurisdiction
90 as determined by the College of Bishops; this Bishop shall preside during the first session of the
91 same.
92

93 B. Seating of Special Groups
94

95 Members of the Judicial Council of the United Methodist Church residing within the bounds of
96 the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference shall be seated on the platform of the Jurisdictional
97 Conference and allowed the same Per Diem and travel as elected delegates, and they shall be
98 without vote.
99

100 The general or executive secretaries of the general boards and agencies of the church who are
101 members of the annual conferences within the bounds of the Southeastern Jurisdiction and who
102 are not elected members of the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference shall be seated within the
103 area of the conference and shall have the privileges of the floor on matters affecting the interests
104 of their boards and agencies, but without vote, and at the expense of their respective boards and
105 agencies.
106

107 C. Roll Call and Order of Business
108

109 The following order of business shall be observed:
110

111 1. The secretary of the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference shall call the roll in the
112 following manner:
113

114 a. The names of the Bishops of the Southeastern Jurisdiction and of the
115 delegates-elect of the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference who have died since
116 the adjournment of the preceding Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference.
117

118 b. The names of the Bishops of the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference.
119

120 c. The roll of delegates shall be called by annual conferences. The chairperson of
121 each delegation shall be provided with a blank form on which to report in writing
122 the attendance of its members, noting absentees and substitutions, which reports
123 shall be tabulated by the secretary and published in the Daily Christian Advocate.
124 Any reserve seated in the place of a regular delegate by his/her Annual
125 Conference shall meet the requirements set forth in *The Book of Discipline* 2016
126 of The United Methodist Church (§§ 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 514). Delegates, including
127 reserves, when the latter are substituted for a delegate or delegates, shall be seated
128 in the order of their election. Each Delegation Head will certify daily that his/her
129 delegation is properly seated on a form provided by the Conference Secretary.
130

131 2. A majority of the whole number of delegates elected to the Jurisdictional Conference
132 shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business (§ 518, 2012 *Discipline*). At the
133 conclusion of the roll call, the secretary shall announce whether or not a quorum is
134 present.
135

136 3. The Plan of Organization and Rules of Order, prepared by the Committee on Plan of
137 Organization, shall be submitted to the conference for its action and determination.
138

139 4. The College of Bishops shall present a nomination from the clergy or laity
140 membership of the United Methodist Church within the Southeastern Jurisdiction for
141 secretary designate. Other nominations shall be permitted from the floor. The Agenda
142 Committee shall schedule the time of election. The election, if there are two or more
143 nominees, shall be by ballot with a majority of the votes cast being required for an
144 election. The secretary designate shall assume the responsibilities of the office of
145 secretary as soon after the adjournment of the Jurisdictional Conference as all work in
146 connection with the session, including the preparation, printing, and mailing of the
147 journal, has been completed. The exact date of the transfer or responsibility to the
148 secretary designate shall be determined by the College of Bishops, but shall not be later
149 than six (6) months after the adjournment of the Jurisdictional Conference. Other details
150 about the Conference Secretary position include:
151

152 a. That the Conference Secretary shall be a part-time, paid position.
153

154 b. That the Senior Effective Bishop, the CCA Chair, and CCA Vice-Chair serve
155 as the direct supervisors of the Conference Secretary.
156

157 c. That the Conference Secretary:

158 i. Coordinate the considerable functions associated with planning, executing
159 and reporting on the quadrennial session;

160 ii. Act in executive/administrative role assisting the Committee on
161 Coordination and Accountability as it fulfills its important work; and,

162 iii. Oversee a communications system to connect jurisdictional constituents.

163 iv. Respond to the frequent inquiries for information or action that comes
164 from persons located within the Jurisdiction. (Inquires range from
165 complaining about a position of the church, about some media story, about

166 some action by a pastor, district superintendent or Bishop. Also, calls are
167 received from persons who have some desire to purchase abandoned
168 church property.)

169
170 5. The College of Bishops shall present nominations for the administrative committees,
171 and such other nominations as are hereinafter committed to them, for election by the
172 conference.

173
174 6. Election of Bishop(s) (2016 *Book of Discipline*, ¶ 27.2).

175
176 7. Election of Committee on Episcopacy for the ensuing quadrennium (2016 *Book of*
177 *Discipline*, ¶ 50).

178
179 8. Election of the Committee on Appeals for the ensuing quadrennium (2016 *Book of*
180 *Discipline*, ¶2716.1) and the Committee on Investigation for the ensuing quadrennium
181 (2016 *Book of Discipline*, ¶ 2703).

182
183 9. Miscellaneous business.

184
185 10. Adjournment.

186
187 II. EPISCOPAL MESSAGE

188
189 The College of Bishops and the Program/Arrangements Committee may schedule the hearing of
190 the quadrennial message of the College of Bishops.

191
192 III. LAITY ADDRESS

193
194 The Program/Arrangements Committee may schedule a Laity Address for the quadrennial
195 session. When scheduled, the Jurisdictional Association of Conference Lay Leaders will
196 designate the presenter(s) for the address.

197
198 IV. PRESIDING OFFICERS AND SECRETARIAL STAFF

199
200 A. The effective Bishops of the Southeastern Jurisdiction shall preside over the sessions of the
201 conference in an order determined by the College of Bishops.

202
203 B. The secretary of the Jurisdictional Conference as elected shall serve as herein provided.

204
205 C. The conference shall elect, upon the nomination of the secretary, such assistant secretaries
206 from the clergy or laity membership of the United Methodist Church within the Southeastern
207 Jurisdiction, as it may deem wise.

208
209 D. If in the interim of the Quadrennial Sessions of the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference,
210 the office of secretary shall for any reason be vacated, the College of Bishops of the Southeastern
211 Jurisdiction shall elect a successor.

212
213 V. COMMITTEES

214 NOTE: See the proposed revisions to Section V.A and V.B immediately following the report of
215 the Committee on Coordination and Accountability.

216
217 A. The SEJ Committee on Coordination and Accountability

218
219 The SEJ Committee on Coordination and Accountability is assigned the task of overseeing the
220 work and ministry of the United Methodist Church across the jurisdiction (2012 *Discipline*,
221 ¶530). The responsibilities and function of the committee will include:

222
223 1. Having limited power, but with authority, to act between sessions of the Jurisdictional
224 Conference on matters such as ratifying the election of Trustees or Directors for entities
225 requiring such action (e.g., Emory University Trustees and SEJ Agencies and ongoing
226 ministries) and ratifying By-Laws changes of SEJ Agencies and Ongoing Ministries.

227
228 2. Being the legal body of the Jurisdiction and guardian of the SEJ title and logo

229
230 3. Focusing on the mission and ministry of the United Methodist Church within the
231 Jurisdiction

232
233 4. Coordinating and/or confirming the program of the General Agencies within the
234 Jurisdiction (2012 *Discipline*, ¶529)

235
236 5. Receiving regular reports from the Committee on Finance and Administration, the SEJ
237 Agencies, and jurisdictional groups for mission and ministry

238
239 6. Relating to and holding accountable groups mandated by *The Book of Discipline*,
240 Jurisdictional Agencies, Networking Groups, Monitoring Groups, and Existing Groups
241 organized and functioning within the Jurisdiction (See below, “Definitions”) and
242 maintaining Covenant Agreements with the Jurisdictional Agencies and Existing
243 Ministries.

244
245 The membership of this committee will be fifteen (15) persons:

- 246 • 3 Bishops
247 • 3 Conference Directors of Connectional Ministries or equivalents
248 • 3 Conference Lay Leaders
249 • 6 At-large members with expertise and for inclusiveness

250
251 All 15 members shall be elected by the Jurisdictional Conference upon nomination by the
252 SEJ Nominating Committee in consultation with the Bishops, Directors of Connectional
253 Ministries and Lay Leaders, to identify their representatives and ensure that each annual
254 conference be represented on the committee. Vacancies occurring during the
255 quadrennium shall be filled by the College of Bishops.
256

257 The Secretary of the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference shall be the staff person
258 assigned duties for and on behalf of the committee (ex officio membership, with voice
259 but without vote). The SEJ Committee on Finance and Administration Chairperson and
260 the SEJ Treasurer shall be ex-officio members, without vote, on the CCA.

261
262 The Executive Directors of the three Agencies and Disciplinary Groups and Ongoing
263 Groups (Ministries) may be invited to attend meetings of the SEJ Committee for
264 connections, accountability, and information sharing (voice but without vote).

265
266 The Committee shall elect its own officers. Either a Bishop or lay leader shall serve as
267 the chairperson on a rotating basis for a two-year term. (For example, if a lay leader is
268 chairperson for two years, a Bishop will serve as vice-chairperson, with the next two-year
269 term reversed.) The Jurisdictional Conference Secretary shall arrange an organizational
270 meeting at a time and place determined by the President of the SEJ College of Bishops,
271 who shall be or shall name the convener of the meeting.

272
273 The committee shall meet at least annually, with called meetings held as necessary.
274 Telephone conference meetings and audio-conferencing are acceptable. Those present at
275 a duly announced meeting will constitute a quorum.

276 277 Definitions

278
279 A number of groups, committees, and councils across the jurisdiction will be related to
280 and accountable to the Jurisdictional Conference through the SEJ Committee on
281 Coordination and Accountability. These groups fall into one of five categories.

282
283 1. Disciplinary Groups – Two primary groups and/or events are mandated by *The Book of*
284 *Discipline*: there “shall be” a jurisdictional Commission on Archives and History, and
285 there “may be” a jurisdictional Ministries with Young People Convocation. A system for
286 regularly reporting, coordinating, and overseeing their work will be developed in
287 consultation with the SEJ Committee on Coordination and Accountability.

288
289 There are also jurisdictional organizations for United Methodist Women and United
290 Methodist Men. However, according to *The Book of Discipline*, these two entities are
291 directly accountable to the national United Methodist Women and the General
292 Commission on United Methodist Men, respectively.

293
294 2. Agencies—Three agencies shall be located within the bounds of the Southeastern
295 Jurisdiction: (1) Lake Junaluska Assembly; (2) Hinton Rural Life Center; and, (3)
296 Gulfside Assembly. Each one of these three agencies own property within the bounds of
297 the Jurisdiction and will maintain its own Board of Directors (ratified by SEJ Conference
298 and – between sessions – by the Committee on Coordination and Accountability) that
299 will function as trustees of the property and the ministry. Each Board of Directors will
300 determine the plan of organization and structure for the work and the mission of the
301 agency and will follow all reporting requirements of the jurisdiction. By-Laws changes

302 are to be reviewed and ratified once per quadrennium by the Committee on Coordination
303 and Accountability.

304
305 In this jurisdictional plan, each of the three agencies will have its own Executive
306 Director. Working with the Board of Directors, this person will assist in determining and
307 hiring the appropriate number of staff persons, along with determining the necessary
308 position descriptions. Ultimately, each agency – through its Board of Directors – will be
309 accountable to the Jurisdictional Conference through the Committee on Coordination and
310 Accountability and shall file a quadrennial report, including a budget, a business plan, a
311 ministry plan, and Board of Directors for the upcoming quadrennium to be ratified by the
312 Jurisdictional Conference. When requested by the Committee on Coordination and
313 Accountability, these Agencies shall also file an annual report of the same information.

314
315 The three Agencies shall be asked to maintain a Covenant Agreement with the SEJ
316 Committee on Coordination and Accountability for mutual understanding of roles and
317 responsibilities.

318
319 3. Monitoring Groups – The Book of Discipline requires a jurisdictional organization for
320 both the Commission on Religion and Race and the Commission on the Status and Role
321 of Women and requires a Jurisdictional connection with these two General Commissions.
322

323 Lines of accountability and oversight of their monitoring work will be through the SEJ
324 Committee on Coordination and Accountability. In addition, it is expected and requested
325 that the monitoring function also be applied to SEJ Committee on Coordination and
326 Accountability, both in its membership and participation.

327
328 4. Networking Groups – These informal, ad-hoc groups arise among conference leaders
329 and staff. They share common interests, concerns, and ministry-related areas. These
330 groups may gather periodically to benefit from interaction with peers, to develop
331 contacts, and to exchange information. The understanding is that all Annual Conferences
332 will be invited to participate but doing so will be strictly voluntary. Funding for travel
333 and expenses shall be the responsibility of each participating Annual Conference. Each
334 Networking Group will be responsible for its own life and will have no jurisdictional staff
335 persons assigned.

336
337 5. Existing, Established, Ongoing Ministries – Several groups and organizations provide
338 much needed ministry, training and outreach within the jurisdiction. There are currently
339 two established ministries: (1) Intentional Growth Center and (2) UMVIM. These
340 ministries will be accountable to the Jurisdiction through the Committee on Coordination
341 and Accountability. Each ministry will have its own Board of Directors and/or Advisors,
342 which will be reviewed and ratified annually by the Committee on Coordination and
343 Accountability. By-Laws are to be reviewed and ratified once per quadrennium by the
344 Committee on Coordination and Accountability. Each group will be self-supporting and
345 will file annual reports on the ministry, vision, and results of their programming with the
346 Committee on Coordination and Accountability and a quadrennial report to the
347 Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference..

348
349
350
351
352
353
354
355
356
357
358
359
360
361
362
363
364
365
366
367
368
369
370
371
372
373
374
375
376
377
378
379
380
381
382
383
384
385
386
387
388
389
390
391
392
393

B. The SEJ Committee on Finance and Administration

1. The ministry of the jurisdiction requires a unified budget with one Treasurer’s office, which will serve as the primary place for receipts and disbursement of funds. The Committee on Finance and Administration shall receive and review audits of the Agencies and Jurisdictional groups for mission and ministry and any other matters approved in the Covenant Agreements. Finally, the Treasurer’s office will work with the Committee on Finance and Administration to propose a quadrennial jurisdictional budget and will provide for the operations and financial expenses for the meeting of the Jurisdictional Conference.

2. This committee will be composed of a representative and inclusive group of fifteen (15) persons, nominated by the SEJ Nominating Committee and elected by the Jurisdictional Conference. The committee will elect its own officers at its organizational meeting which will take place at a time determined by the President of the SEJ College of Bishops, who shall be or name the convener of the meeting. For the purpose of information and sharing mutual concerns, the Chairperson and the Treasurer of the Jurisdiction shall make full and regular reports to the Committee on Coordination and Accountability.

a. There shall be a Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference Committee on Finance and Administration, consisting of fifteen (15) members including one representative from each Annual Conference. The Committee shall be constituted quadrennially and shall be composed of eight lay persons and seven clergy persons.

It is recommended that considerations of ethnic background, the place of both men and women, the place of adults and youth, and ability and experience be recognized. Members of the Committee shall take office upon adjournment of the Jurisdictional Conference electing them and shall serve until the adjournment of the next succeeding quadrennial session of the Jurisdictional Conference and until their successors are duly elected. Vacancies occurring during the quadrennium shall be filled by the College of Bishops.

b. The Committee, when elected, shall elect from its members a chairperson, vice-chairperson, and recording secretary, and it shall nominate to the Jurisdictional Conference currently in session a treasurer who, on being duly elected by the conference, shall be an ex-officio member of the Committee. If for any reason the office of treasurer shall become vacant during the interim of the sessions of the Jurisdictional Conference, the Committee shall elect a treasurer, following due consultation with the College of Bishops. The Committee may at any time remove the treasurer from office for cause.

c. The Committee shall have general oversight of all funds included in the Jurisdictional Conference budget. The treasurer shall render to the officers of the

394 Committee an annual statement of receipts and expenditures at the end of each
395 fiscal year and a quadrennial report to each succeeding quadrennial session of the
396 Jurisdictional Conference covering in detail receipts and expenditures for the
397 quadrennium preceding. The treasurer shall be bonded through a suitable bond of
398 a surety company of recognized standing and in an amount fixed by the
399 Committee.

400
401 d. The Committee shall meet at least annually, or on the call of the chairperson or
402 of a majority of the members thereof. Telephone conference meeting and audio-
403 conferencing are acceptable.

404
405 e. No member or employee of any group or any trustee or employee of any
406 institution, which is a beneficiary of the Jurisdictional Conference budget, shall be
407 eligible for membership on the Committee. The expense of the Committee shall
408 be paid out of the Jurisdictional Conference Expense Budget.

409
410 f. It shall be the duty of the Committee to make a careful study of the expense of
411 administration and the causes that may properly be included in the annual
412 Jurisdictional Conference budget, and to recommend to each succeeding
413 quadrennial session of the Jurisdictional Conference for its action and
414 determination an annual budget, showing the share of each Annual Conference in
415 the total. The budget as adopted shall be the Jurisdictional Conference budget for
416 the ensuing quadrennium, including annual budgeted amounts for the ensuing
417 quadrennium, and the apportionment to each Annual Conference as finally
418 determined by the Jurisdictional Conference shall be its annual share in the said
419 budget. Only such items as are distinctly related to the work of the jurisdiction
420 shall be included in the Jurisdictional budget. The jurisdictional treasurer shall
421 transmit annually to the treasurer of each Annual Conference, not less than 120
422 days prior to the regular annual meeting of each Annual Conference, a statement
423 of the amount apportioned such Annual Conference for Jurisdictional causes. The
424 Annual Conference shall apportion the same among the charges of the conference
425 in such manner as it may determine. The Annual Conference treasurer shall remit
426 each month to the treasurer of the jurisdiction the amount on hand for
427 Jurisdictional causes.

428
429 g. The fiscal year of the Southeastern Jurisdiction shall be January 1 through
430 December 31. All accounts of the Committee on Finance and Administration
431 shall be kept accordingly.

432
433 h. The Committee on Finance and Administration may give authority to its
434 treasurer to borrow funds from any reputable bank or trust company to meet any
435 obligation of the Jurisdictional Conference duly authorized in the regular annual
436 budget of the conference; provided, the outstanding indebtedness shall at no time
437 exceed twenty-five percent of the annual budget.

438

439 i. Should any urgent and pressing need arise that had not been anticipated in
440 fixing the jurisdictional budget, and should the same in the judgment of the
441 Committee constitute an emergency, the Committee on Finance and
442 Administration may alter the percentage allowance to any or all agencies or
443 causes receiving funds from Jurisdictional Conference apportionments, or may
444 increase the apportionments to the several annual conferences of the jurisdiction
445 to meet the emergency; provided, such action must be approved by a three-fourths
446 vote of the Committee.

447
448 j. The Committee shall include in the proposed Jurisdictional budget
449 recommended to the Jurisdictional Conference for its actions and determination
450 the following items:

451 i.) The Jurisdictional Conference Expense Budget, which shall provide for
452 the expense of the quadrennial meeting of the Jurisdictional Conference or
453 any called meetings of the same, and the expense incurred in the
454 preparation of such meeting.

455
456 ii.) The Jurisdictional Operating Budget, which shall make provision for
457 the expense of the Jurisdictional personnel in the performance of the stated
458 duties and for the expense of meetings of the committees of the
459 Jurisdiction as defined in Section V. Items in the Administrative
460 Committee budget for salaries and other administrative costs shall be a
461 prior claim against the jurisdictional fund each month.

462
463 iii.) Other items which in the judgment of the Committee should be
464 included in the annual Jurisdictional Operating Fund.

465
466 C. Nominating Committee

467
468 There shall be a committee **of thirty persons** who will serve as a Nominating Committee to
469 consider nominations for the general boards and agencies, and designated Jurisdictional
470 Committees. There shall be two persons from each conference, one of whom shall be a laity
471 delegate and one of whom shall be a clergy delegate, elected to this committee by the Annual
472 Conference delegation. At least two weeks prior to the conference, the members of the
473 Nominating Committee shall be provided with:

474
475 1. A list of the names of the persons being offered by each Annual Conference to the
476 Jurisdictional pool for consideration as members of the respective program boards,
477 commissions, councils, and agencies. These shall be listed by categories on a form
478 prescribed by the General Conference Secretary. Each person's ethnic background shall
479 be indicated (e.g., Native American, Asian, African-American, etc.). An asterisk shall be
480 placed by the name of any person who is an incumbent and who is eligible for re-
481 election, together with the name of the agency on which he/she is serving.

482
483 2. A recommendation of procedure to be followed by the Nominating Committee.

484

485 3. A reminder that the Nominating Committee shall not only seek to maintain insofar as
486 possible the recommendations of the 2016 *Book of Discipline* for having one-third
487 representation each of clergy, lay women, and lay men on general church agencies, with
488 attention given to including youth, young adults, older adults, racial and ethnic persons,
489 persons with handicapping conditions, and persons from small-membership churches, but
490 that these same provisions shall be applicable to the total number of nominations made
491 from each Annual Conference to the agencies of the general church.
492

493 4. A list of the total number of nominees to which each Annual Conference is entitled to
494 the agencies of the general church other than those which the Discipline specifically
495 mandates. These numbers shall correspond to the percentage of members, rounded off to
496 the nearest whole, which each Annual Conference has of the total members of the
497 jurisdiction; notwithstanding the above, the Red Bird Missionary Conference shall be
498 represented in the nominations. In compiling this list, the following nominations shall not
499 be included: those which come from recommendation of the United Methodist Women in
500 Faith for the General Board of Global Ministries, those for the National Council of
501 Churches, and those which come from another agency or group and are only reported by
502 the Nominating Committee. The information from the annual conferences shall be in the
503 hands of the Jurisdictional Conference Secretary no later than June 20. The members of
504 the committee shall bring preference sheets and biographical data for prospective
505 nominees to the first meeting of the committee from the respective conferences. The
506 Nominating Committee shall be convened for organizational purposes at the site of the
507 conference by the president of the College of Bishops of the jurisdiction at 2:00 p.m.
508 three days prior to the opening of the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference. Per Diem
509 expenses for the Nominating Committee shall be provided for the extra days.
510 Nominations shall be in the hands of the conference at a minimum of-three-hours before
511 being presented for election.
512

513 D. Committee on Episcopacy

514
515 The membership of the Committee on Episcopacy shall consist of one clergy and one lay
516 delegate to the Jurisdictional Conference from each Annual Conference elected by the
517 Jurisdictional Conference upon nomination of their respective Annual Conference delegations
518 (§524.1 of *The Book of Discipline* 2016). Each quadrennium, the Committee shall be officially
519 constituted with the election of officers and begin its work at the conclusion of the previous
520 quadrennium's jurisdictional conference session. The committee will continue its work through
521 the conclusion of the following jurisdictional conference when the new committee is constituted.
522

523 The sitting Committee on Episcopacy shall report to the conference the church membership
524 statistics of the Southeastern Jurisdiction and the number of Bishops to which the Jurisdiction is
525 entitled on the basis of church membership and shall recommend to the conference the number
526 of Bishops to be elected and the process and manner of their election (cf. Rule 17). The
527 committee shall perform such other duties as are set forth in §§406.1, 524 of *The Discipline*
528 2016.
529

530 The Committee will recommend minimum housing guidelines for every episcopal residence
531 committee in the Jurisdiction.

532
533 E. Committee on Appeals

534
535 There shall be a Committee on Appeals elected in accordance with ¶2716.1 of *The Book of*
536 *Discipline of The United Methodist Church* 2016.

537
538 F. Committee on Investigation

539
540 There shall be a Committee on Investigation elected in accordance with ¶2703 of *The Discipline*
541 2016.

542
543 G. Administrative Committees

544
545 Nominations to the administrative committees shall be printed in the first edition of the Daily
546 Christian Advocate.

547
548 1. Committee on Plan of Organization and Rules of Order

549
550 There shall be a committee of five, known as the Committee on Plan of Organization and
551 Rules of Order, of which the secretary and treasurer of the conference shall be ex-officio
552 members. The committee shall be convened by the conference secretary or designee until
553 a chairperson is elected. To this committee shall be referred any proposed amendments to
554 the Plan of Organization and Rules of Order (see Rule 38). This committee shall restudy
555 the Plan of Organization and Rules of Order between sessions of the Jurisdictional
556 Conference and, after making such needed changes and adaptations therein as in their
557 judgment are necessary, shall present them to the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference
558 for consideration and final action. Any recommendation by the committee as to the
559 organization of the standing committees, their names, number, and responsibilities
560 (except the Committee on the Episcopacy) shall be transmitted to the secretary prior to
561 the convening of the Jurisdictional Conference. The secretary shall notify the head of
562 each delegation the standing committees as recommended by the Committee on Plan of
563 Organization and Rules of Order so that delegates may make their choice of committee
564 assignments. The committee shall have the authority to consult with various persons and
565 agencies in the exercise of this authority. The Plan of Organization and Rules of Order of
566 the preceding Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference, thus adopted and published in the
567 journal, shall be the Plan of Organization and Rules of Order until they have been altered
568 or amended by the action of the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference.

569
570 2. Committee on Journal

571
572 There shall be a committee of three, known as the Committee on Journal, which shall
573 examine the record of the secretary daily during the session. Any error subsequently
574 discovered in a section of the journal materials, which has been verified, shall be
575 corrected.

576
577
578
579
580
581
582
583
584
585
586
587
588
589
590
591
592
593
594
595
596
597
598
599
600
601
602
603
604
605
606
607
608
609
610
611
612
613
614
615
616
617
618
619
620
621

3. Agenda Committee

There shall be a committee of five, known as the Agenda Committee. The senior effective Bishop and the Conference Secretary shall be two of the committee members. It shall be the responsibility of this committee to see that all items of business required by The Discipline of the church are brought to the attention of the Jurisdictional Conference. Any consideration, proposal, resolution, or communication, which does not clearly refer to the business of the Jurisdictional Conference, as prescribed in the Discipline shall be referred to the Agenda Committee, which shall determine whether or not it shall be presented to the conference and also whether it shall be printed in the Daily Christian Advocate. The Agenda Committee shall report to the Jurisdictional Conference the disposition made of all matters, which have been referred to the Committee. The Agenda Committee shall consult with the Committee of Chairpersons regarding the inclusion of standing committee reports on the agenda of the conference.

No petition shall be assigned to any Jurisdictional Conference committee unless it comes from some organization, clergy person, or member of The United Methodist Church and contains information essential to the verification of the alleged facts concerning its origin. All petitions shall be presented to the Conference Secretary. Each should deal with only one general subject. All petitions requiring funding shall be so designated and the amount to be specified. Petitions with financial implications shall be referred to the Southeastern Jurisdictional Committee on Finance and Administration for their review and recommendation to the conference. All petitions shall be in the hands of the secretary of the conference no later than fourteen days prior to the opening of the conference.

The Agenda committee shall receive all petitions dealing with the regular business of the conference and, after ascertaining that they meet the requirements herein specified, shall distribute them among the several committees according to their respective responsibilities. It may also withhold from reference or publication any document it shall deem improper, promptly advising the author or authors thereof of its action in order that an appeal may be made to the conference, if desired.

When the Agenda committee determines that the particular item of business does not naturally flow toward an existing committee, it shall authorize the creation of an ad hoc committee to deal with this particular item. Upon authorization, the Conference Secretary will contact each delegation leader with a description of the business item and a meeting time and place for the committee (including the possibility of a conference call prior to the convening of conference). The delegation leader will be asked to designate one delegate to represent his/her annual conference on the ad hoc committee. The Conference Secretary or designee shall convene the meeting until a chairperson is elected. The ad hoc committee will consider the item of business and prepare a recommended action for conference's consideration.

4. Committee on Program and Arrangements

622 There shall be a Jurisdictional Conference Program and Arrangements Committee
623 composed of one Bishop, who shall be chairperson; a district superintendent designated
624 by the Bishop; the Secretary of the Jurisdictional Conference; the Treasurer of the
625 Jurisdictional Conference; the chairperson Committee on Coordination and
626 Accountability; the president of the jurisdiction United Methodist Women in Faith or
627 designee; the president of the jurisdiction United Methodist Men or designee; and the
628 chairperson of the Jurisdictional Association of Annual Conference Lay Leaders or
629 designee; the chairperson of the sitting Committee on Episcopacy or designee; and five
630 (5) others who may be selected to insure inclusivity and expertise. The Bishop serving on
631 this committee shall be selected in the order of seniority from the effective Bishops of the
632 jurisdiction. The duties of the committee shall be to arrange the program and logistics for
633 the Jurisdictional Conference, other than that covered by the Plan of Organization. It shall
634 be established policy of the Southeastern Jurisdiction to have a program that will present
635 to the conference a challenge on behalf of the work of the church in its worldwide
636 mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

637
638 The Conference Secretary will organize a team to execute the program planned and the
639 logistical needs of the conference following the guidance of the Committee on Program
640 and Arrangements. Members of this team will be invited to Committee meetings as
641 determined by the senior Bishop and Conference Secretary.

642 643 5. Committee on Chairpersons

644
645 There may be one or more meetings of all committee chairpersons as determined by the
646 Agenda committee. Such meetings may seek to coordinate and streamline the business of
647 the conference or seek to resolve inter-committee disagreements or difficulty. The
648 secretary of the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference shall convene the Committee of
649 Chairpersons.

650 651 6. Tellers

652
653 There shall be a committee of thirty to act as tellers for the purpose of assisting with the
654 ballots ordered by the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference. The committee shall be
655 composed of one clergy and one laity delegate from each of the annual conferences in the
656 Southeastern Jurisdiction. For purposes of this committee only, reserve delegates may be
657 nominated by their delegation and elected as balloting tellers. The committee shall be
658 divided into two groups of fifteen each. In case of emergency, additional tellers may be
659 drafted into service from among the delegation membership.

660 661 H. Financial Implications

662
663 The SEJ Conference shall submit any petition or proposal requiring funding from committees,
664 organizations or individuals to the Committee on Finance and Administration (CFA) for study
665 and recommendations prior to consideration. Submissions shall be made no later than 6:00 PM
666 of the day prior to the CFA report.

667

668 VI. DELEGATES' EXPENSE ACCOUNTS

669

670 A. The report of the Delegation Head shall be the basis for settlement with principal and reserve
671 delegates for their Per Diem allowance.

672

673 B. Travel expense for delegates and first lay and clergy reserve to the conference shall be
674 reimbursed as directed by the conference upon recommendation of the Committee on Finance
675 and Administration. The total travel expense shall be payable to the principal delegate if he/she
676 be present and seated. If during the session of the conference a reserve beyond the first lay or
677 clergy reserve must be seated in his/her place, he/she shall adjust the travel expense with such
678 reserve on the basis of the time served by each.

679

680 VII. EDITORIAL CHANGES

681

682 The Conference Secretary may make editorial changes to the Plan of Organization or Rules of
683 Order whenever there is a need to update Disciplinary references or law, or to clarify language
684 without changing the meaning or intent. Any proposed editorial changes must be approved by
685 two-thirds of the Rules Committee.

686

687

688 **RULES OF ORDER**

689 **I. AGENDA**

690 Rule 1. Agenda.

691
692 (1) The senior effective Bishop and the Conference Secretary, in consultation with the
693 College of Bishops and the Program/Arrangements Committee, will develop the agenda.

694
695 (2) The proposed agenda will be published in pre-conference materials and placed before
696 the conference for adoption in the opening session.

697
698 (3) Once adopted, the Agenda Committee may propose modifications as circumstances
699 may dictate. The conference will be notified of foreseen adjustments in as timely as
700 fashion as possible.

701
702 Rule 2: Worship. Each quadrennial session will begin with an opening worship service.
703 Additional worship experiences will be conducted periodically during the session.

704
705 **II. PRESIDING OFFICERS**

706
707 Rule 3. The Bishop presiding shall be legal chairperson of the Jurisdictional Conference. He/she
708 shall decide points of order raised by the members as he/she deems necessary to conform to these
709 Jurisdictional Conference Rules of Order, subject to an appeal to the conference by any member
710 without debate; except that the chairperson and the appellant, in the order here named, shall each
711 have three minutes for a statement in support of his/her position. A tie vote in the case of an
712 appeal shall sustain the chair. When any member raises a point of order, he/she shall cite by
713 number the rule he/she adjudges to have been violated. The Bishop presiding when the
714 committee is created, unless otherwise directed by the conference, or as directed by the plan of
715 organization, shall name the members of any special committee. (See Rule 38.)

716
717 Rule 4. When the chairperson stands in his/her place and calls the conference to order, no
718 member shall speak, address the chair, or stand while the chairperson stands.

719
720 **III. RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF MEMBERS**

721
722 Rule 5. Attendance and Seating Reserves. No member unless hindered by sickness or otherwise,
723 from being present shall be absent himself/herself from the sessions of the conference without
724 permission of the conference, and all absentees shall be reported by the chairperson of the
725 several Annual Conference delegations to the Conference Secretary. Reserve delegates will be
726 seated as necessary. Each Delegation Head will certify daily that his/her delegation is properly
727 seated on a form provided by the Conference Secretary (Plan of Organization, I. C. (1) c).

728
729 Rule 6. Directions for Securing the Floor. When a delegate desires to speak to the conference,
730 he/she shall arise at his/her seat, respectfully address the presiding officer, and, after recognition,
731

734 proceed to the speaker's platform or to the nearest microphone, where, before speaking, he/she
735 shall state his/her name and the Annual Conference from which he/she comes.

736
737 Rule 7. Interrupting the Speaker. No member who has the floor may be interrupted except for a
738 breach of order, or misrepresentation, or to direct the attention of the conference to the fact that
739 the time has arrived for a special order, or to raise a very urgent question of high privilege.

740
741 Rule 8. Speaking More Than Once. No member shall speak a second time on the same question
742 if any member who has not spoken desires the floor, nor more than twice on the same subject
743 under the same motion, nor longer than three minutes unless his/her time shall be extended by
744 the conference, except as provided in Rule 37. This three-minute limit may be reduced by a
745 majority vote of the conference at any time, and for any period of duration. Note: Any eligible
746 elder, who is not a nominee in the episcopal election process and who receives 10 or more votes
747 on any ballot, will be permitted to address the conference for no more than 10 minutes.

748
749 Rule 9. Question of High Privilege. A member claiming the floor at any time for what he/she
750 believes is a very urgent question of high privilege shall be allowed to indicate briefly the nature
751 of the question, as if it be adjudged by the chair to be such he/she may proceed at his/her
752 pleasure, or until the chair judges that he/she has exhausted the privilege.

753
754 Rule 10. Voting Area of Conference. Only delegates within the area of the conference when the
755 vote is taken shall be entitled to vote. All delegates within the area at the time a question is put
756 shall vote, except such as have been excused for special reasons by the conference.

757
758 Rule 11. Method of Voting. Voting shall be by a show of hands unless otherwise ordered by the
759 conference. An "Aye" and "No" vote by written ballot or a count vote may be ordered on call of
760 any member and supported by one-third of the members present and voting. Ballots and count
761 votes will be taken by electronic voting device when available at the conference session. No
762 other business shall be in order when a vote is being taken, or when the previous question has
763 been called, until the process is completed, except such as relates to the vote itself, or that which
764 can be appropriately fitted into the time while waiting for the report of the secretaries on a count
765 vote, or an "Aye" and "No" vote (see Rule 26 (2)). When a count vote is ordered, and electronic
766 voting devices are unavailable, the count shall be made by the chairperson of the delegation, who
767 shall report to the secretary of the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference the number of those in
768 the delegation voting for and voting against a motion or a report.

769
770 Rule 12. Division of Question. Before a vote is taken, any delegate shall have the right to call for
771 a division of any question, if it is subject to such division as he/she indicates. If no delegate
772 objects, the division shall be made, but if there is an objection the chair shall put the question of
773 division to vote, not waiting for a second.

774
775
776
777
778
779

IV. BUSINESS PROCEDURE

777 Rule 13. Motion for Adoption of Reports and Resolutions Unnecessary. Whenever a report of a
778 committee, signed by the chairperson and secretary thereof, or a resolution signed by two or
779 more members of the conference shall be presented to the conference for its action, it shall be

780 deemed in proper order for consideration by the conference without the formality of a motion to
781 adopt and a second thereto.

782
783 Rule 14. Required Forms for Reports, Resolutions, Motions, and Amendments. All resolutions
784 and committee reports shall be presented in triplicate and electronically, and when requested by
785 the secretary, motions, including amendments, shall be presented in writing.

786
787 Rule 15. Reading of Reports and Resolutions. All resolutions, committee reports, and
788 communications of the conference may be read by the secretary if determined by the conference,
789 except as otherwise provided in Rule 31.

790
791 Rule 16. Alteration of Motions, Etc. When a motion is made and seconded and stated by the
792 chair, or a resolution is introduced and seconded, or a committee report is made or is published
793 in the Daily Christian Advocate, it shall be deemed in possession of the conference and may not
794 be altered except by action of the conference (see Rule 31). Introductory, accompanying or
795 explanatory, material shall not be subject to debate or amendment, nor be considered to have
796 been acted upon by the conference upon adoption of the motion or proposal itself, unless
797 accompanied by a specific motion that such material is included in the action of the conference.

798
799 Rule 17. Episcopal Election Process

800
801 (1) The sitting Committee on Episcopacy has oversight of the election process for that
802 quadrennium. Specifically, the Committee on Episcopacy will determine and oversee the
803 processes, policies, and covenants related to the declaring of nominees and the
804 familiarization with nominees from the various conferences and groups. The
805 Program/Arrangements Committee, in consultation with the Committee on Episcopacy
806 and the College of Bishops, will determine the balloting process and logistics. Once
807 balloting begins, the presiding Bishop shall certify the fairness of the balloting process.
808 Once the balloting process (beginning with the first ballot and concluding with the
809 election of the final bishop) has begun, neither committees nor persons who are not
810 nominees shall be allowed to make reports or speeches designed to influence the
811 balloting.

812
813 (2) An elder is elected a Bishop when that elder has received the votes of 60% of the
814 delegates casting valid ballots in the jurisdictional conference.

815
816 Rule 18. Non-debatable Motions. The following motions shall be acted upon without debate:

817 (1) To adjourn, when unqualified, except to adjourn the conference finally.

818 (2) To suspend a rule or rules or any provisions of the Rules of Order.

819 (3) To lie on the table, except as provided in Rule 35.

820 (4) To take from the table.

821 (5) To call for the previous question.

822 (6) To reconsider a non-debatable motion.

823 (7) To limit or extend the limits of debate.

824 (8) To call for the orders of the day.

825

826 Rule 19. Rights of the Main Question. The main question may be opened to debate under the
827 following motions: To adopt, to commit, to substitute, to postpone, and to reconsider. No new
828 motion, resolution, or subject shall be entertained until the one under consideration shall have
829 been disposed of, except as provided in Rule 11. The foregoing does not apply to secondary
830 motions if otherwise allowable in the existing parliamentary situation.

831

832 Rule 20. Precedence of Secondary Motions. If any one or more of the following motions shall be
833 made when one or more other motions are pending, the order of their precedence in relation to
834 one another shall be the same as the order of their listing below:

835

836 (1) To fix the time to which the conference shall adjourn. (This motion is subject to
837 amendment, or it may be laid on the table.)

838 (2) To adjourn.

839 (3) To take recess.

840 (4) To raise a question of privilege.

841 (5) To call for the orders of the day.

842 (6) To lie on the table.

843 (7) To order the previous question.

844 (8) To limit or extend the limits of debate.

845 (9) To postpone to a given time.

846 (10) To refer.

847 (11) To amend or substitute (one amendment being allowed to an amendment).

848 (12) To postpone indefinitely.

849

850 Rule 21. Tabling Related Motions. No motion, which adheres to another motion, or has another
851 adhering to it, can be laid on the table by itself. Such motions, if laid on the table, carry with
852 them the motions to which they respectively adhere, or which adhere to them.

853

854 Rule 22. Referring a Section of Report. It shall be in order for the conference to refer to a
855 committee a section or part of a report or resolution which is before the conference for
856 consideration or any amendment offered thereunto.

857

858 Rule 23. Procedure for Consideration of Substitutes. When a resolution or committee report is
859 properly before the conference for consideration and action, even if amendments thereto are
860 pending, a delegate may offer a substitute for the resolution or report under consideration. The
861 substitute must be an alternative to what is before the body and not simply a negation of the main
862 motion.

863

864 The conference will first consider the substitution/alternative before the body. Debate on the
865 motion to substitute will be limited to the question of substitution only. No amendments to the
866 main motion or the substitute will be considered during this period of initial consideration.

867 Following the debate on the motion to substitute, a vote on substitution will occur. If the motion
868 to substitute prevails by majority vote, the substitute motion becomes the main motion. If the
869 motion to substitute fails to receive a majority vote, the original main motion remains on the
870 floor for consideration. Debate, including the offering of amendments, moves forward on the
871 main motion as per the rules of procedure.

872
873 The previous question may not be put on the adoption of the report or resolution, or making the
874 proposed substitution, until two members (including the chairperson of the committee presenting
875 the report and the member presenting the substitute shall have spoken.
876

877 Rule 24. Previous Question (see Rules 18 (5), 23, 25, 35). When any member moves the
878 previous question (that is, that the vote be now taken on the motion or motions pending), he/she
879 shall indicate to what he/she intends it to apply, if any secondary motion or motions are also
880 pending. If he/she does not so indicate, it shall be regarded as applying only to the immediately
881 pending question.
882

883 This motion shall be taken without debate and shall require a two-thirds vote of those present and
884 voting for its adoption, and if adopted the vote shall be taken without debate and shall require a
885 two-thirds vote of those present and voting for its adoption, and if adopted the vote shall be taken
886 on the motion or motions to which it applies without further debate, except as provided in Rule
887 35.
888

889 Rule 25. Unlawful Motion after Speech. It shall not be in order for a member immediately after
890 discussing a pending question, and before relinquishing the floor, to make a motion whose
891 adoption would limit or stop debate.
892

893 Rule 26. Exceptions to Majority Vote. A majority of those voting, a quorum being present, shall
894 decide all questions with the following exceptions:
895

- 896 (1) A tie vote sustains the chair, if an appeal is made from his/her decision (Rule 3).
897 (2) One third of those present and voting shall suffice to sustain a call for an “Aye” and
898 “No” vote or a count vote (Rule 11).
899 (3) A two-thirds vote shall be required to sustain a motion to suspend or amend a rule or
900 rules or any provision of the Rules of Order (Rules 37, 38); to sustain a motion for the
901 previous question (Rule 24); to set aside a motion for the previous question (Rule 24); to
902 set aside a special order; to consider a special order before the time therefore; or any
903 motion whose adoption would limit debate.
904

905 Rule 27. Reconsideration. A motion to reconsider an action of the conference shall be in order at
906 any time if offered by a member who voted with the prevailing side. If the motion proposed for
907 reconsideration is non-debatable, then the motion under reconsideration may not be debated.
908

909 Rule 28. Motion to Adjourn in Order, Except. The motion to adjourn, when unqualified, shall be
910 taken without debate, and shall always be in order, except
911

- 912 (1) When a delegate has the floor.
913 (2) When a question is actually put, or a vote is being taken, and before it is finally
914 decided.
915 (3) When the previous question has been ordered and action there under is pending.
916 (4) When a motion to adjourn has been lost, and no business or debate has intervened.

917 (5) When a motion to fix the time to which the conference shall adjourn is pending. The
918 foregoing does not apply to a motion for final adjournment of the conference.
919

920 V. COMMITTEES: DUTIES AND PREROGATIVES

921
922 Rule 29. Preparation and Presentation of Committee Reports. Every committee of the
923 Jurisdictional Conference is hereby authorized to delegate to the chairperson and secretary of the
924 committee the duty of preparing and presenting to the Jurisdictional Conference the action taken
925 by the committee on any given subject, and every committee is authorized to grant to a minority
926 of the committee the right to draft and to present to the Jurisdictional Conference a minority
927 report without reading the same before the full committee, providing the substance of the said
928 minority report has been stated to the committee.
929

930 Rule 30. Alterations in Restrictive Rules. Reports from committees and all other papers which
931 propose an alteration in the restrictive rules of the church shall state that alteration proposed to be
932 made, and the form of the motion shall be: "Will the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference
933 recommend to the General and Annual Conferences the change indicated above?"
934

935 Rule 31. Published Reports in Possession of Conference. A report of any committee signed by
936 the chairperson and secretary thereof shall be regarded as in possession of the conference when
937 posted to the conference website, published in the Daily Christian Advocate, or distributed on the
938 floor of conference. The business shall be in order for consideration at the pleasure of the
939 conference anytime thereafter. The same rule shall apply to a report of a minority of any
940 committee signed by one tenth of the members of the committee or by ten members thereof (see
941 Rule 16 and Rule 23).
942

943 Rule 32. Preparation and Printing of Reports. Reports of the standing committees shall be posted
944 to the conference website and distributed in the Daily Christian Advocate with as much advance
945 notice as possible given the abbreviated duration of conference prior to being presented for
946 consideration by the conference, and they shall not be read unless by its order. Reports of
947 minorities of committees adopted by them with a view to their being offered as substitutes for
948 committee reports shall likewise conform to this rule so far as it is applicable, indicating clearly
949 to what committee the respective minorities belong and for what report or reports, by serial
950 numbers, etc., they propose the respective substitutes.
951

952 Rule 33. Committee on Chairperson Not in Harmony with Report. When a chairperson of a
953 committee is not in harmony with a report adopted by the committee, it shall be his/her duty to
954 state the fact to the committee, which shall elect one of its members to represent the committee,
955 and said representative shall have all the rights and privileges of the chairperson in relation to
956 such report.
957

958 Rule 34. Presentation of Report of Minority. A member selected by the signers of a minority
959 report of a committee to present the same shall have the same rights and privileges in relation
960 thereto which belong to the chairperson in the presentation of the regular (majority) report of the
961 committee.
962

963 Rule 35. Speakers For and Against. When the report of a committee is under consideration, it
964 shall be the duty of the presiding officer to ascertain which side a speaker proposes to speak.
965 The speaker shall not be granted the floor to speak on the same side of the pending question as
966 the speaker immediately preceding if any member desires to speak on the other side thereof.
967 Except for non-debatable motions, no report shall be adopted or question relation to the same
968 decided without opportunity having been given for a least one speech for and one against the said
969 proposal, provided this right is claimed before the chairperson or duly authorized member
970 representing the committee's report, of the minority report if there be such, is present to close the
971 debate. When all have spoken who desire to do so, or when (and after) the previous question has
972 been ordered, the chairperson and/or duly authorized member or members presenting the
973 committee's report (and the minority report, if there be one) shall be entitled to speak before the
974 vote is taken. This right of the chairperson and/or other member or members to close the debate
975 shall prevail in like manner to a limit of three minutes when a vote is about to be taken on a
976 motion to amend, to substitute, to postpone, to refer, to lay on the table, or any other motion
977 whose adoption would vitally affect the report under consideration, provided that this five minute
978 limit shall not apply to a motion to substitute a minority report for a regular (majority) report of a
979 committee.

980
981 Rule 36. Legal Enactment. All actions of the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference of The
982 United Methodist Church shall become effective upon the adjournment of the present session of
983 the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference of The United Methodist Church, unless otherwise
984 specified.

985 VI. SUSPENDING, AMENDING, AND SUPPLEMENTING

986
987
988 Rule 37. Suspension of Rules. The operation of any of the provisions of the Plan of Organization
989 or the Rules of Order may be suspended at any time by a two-thirds vote of the conference (see
990 Rule 26 (3)).

991
992 Rule 38. Amending Rules. The Plan of Organization and these Rules of Order may be amended
993 or changed by two-thirds vote of the conference, provided the proposed change or amendment
994 has been presented to the conference in writing and referred to the Committee on Plan of
995 Organization and Rules of Order, which committee shall report thereon not later than the day
996 following (see Rule 26 (3)).

997
998 Rule 39. Roberts Rules of Order, Revised: Supplemental Authority. In any parliamentary
999 situation not clearly covered by this Plan of Organization or these Rules of Order, the
1000 Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference shall be governed in its actions by *Roberts Rules of*
1001 *Order, Revised.*

Report of the Committee on Program and Arrangements

The 2016 Committee on Program and Arrangements, under the able guidance and direction of Bishop Hope Morgan Ward (2019-2021) and Bishop James E. Swanson, Sr., (2022) and with support provided by Bishop Jonathan Holston, held multiple meetings during this extended quadrennium to plan first for the postponed 2020 Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference, then for the virtual 2021 Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference, and finally for the 2022 Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference approved by the Judicial Council. All meetings of this Committee were held virtually by Zoom.

The work of this Program and Arrangements Committee was made much more difficult as we have prepared for not one, but three, Jurisdictional Conference sessions. Fortunately, much of the work done in preparation for the postponed 2020 session carried forward to 2022, but planning and preparing for a 2021 virtual Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference was a new experience for all of us. The committee is to be commended for its patience and perseverance in preparing for these meetings under ever-changing circumstances.

Membership on this committee included the following persons, for whose work we are most grateful:

Senior Effective Bishop 2016-2021: *Bishop Hope Morgan Ward*
Senior Effective Bishop 2021-2022: *Bishop James E. Swanson, Sr.*
Bishop Assisting with Planning and Agenda: *Bishop Jonathan Holston*
Conference Secretary (2016-2021): Anne Travis
Conference Secretary (2021-2022): *Brad Brady*
Conference Secretary (2022): Anne Travis
Associate Conference Secretary (2022): *Julie Hager Love*
Conference Treasurer: David Dommissie
District Superintendent: *Ray Broadwell*
Committee on Coordination and Accountability Chair: Gary Locklear
Jurisdictional President UMM: Hank Dozier
Jurisdictional President UMW: Patty Stricklin
Association of Conference Lay Leaders Chair: Steve Lyles
Committee on Episcopacy Representative: Barbara Ware

At Large:

<i>Stephanie Hand</i>	WNC
<i>Rinaldo Hernandez</i>	FL
<i>June Jernigan</i>	AWF
<i>Susan Leonard</i>	SC
<i>Juan Quintanilla</i>	NGA

Decisions

Significant decisions made by the Program and Arrangements Committee included theme, plans for five worship services, teaching/learning time, panel discussion to include young adults from the

delegations, agenda, method of balloting, housing protocol, and per diem. Most of this work was completed prior to March 2020, at which time the pandemic caused postponement of the planned 2020 Jurisdictional Conference.

As it became evident in 2021 that we would still not be able to have an in-person Jurisdictional Conference because of the ongoing pandemic, the Committee began planning for a called virtual session to be held in July 2021. As indicated by the call from the College of Bishops, the purpose of this session was to vote on the unifying of the Memphis and Tennessee Conferences to form the Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference. This vote was time-sensitive because of work already done prior to 2020 and because of legal documents prepared to enact this transition. With only a handful of persons gathered in person at Lake Junaluska, the called session was held virtually on July 21, 2021, and the unifying vote was approved overwhelmingly.

Rev. Dr. Brad Brady, who was named by the College of Bishops to assume the role of Conference Secretary in September 2021, began the work of preparing for an in-person session. Following his untimely death in February 2022, Anne Travis was asked by the College of Bishops to serve for the remainder of 2022, with very able assistance from Rev. Julie Hager Love as Associate Secretary.

In summer 2022, the Program and Arrangements Committee and the Worship planning team picked up where they left off in March 2020 and carried forward with most of the plans that had been made in 2020 but with some minor adjustments. Had it not been for the very able work done by the Program and Arrangements Committee, under the leadership of Bishop Hope Morgan Ward, in 2019 and 2020, the planning for this 2022 Conference would have been done under even greater time pressure. We are grateful for the capable work done so that the 2022 session could be arranged on much shorter notice than is typical.

Balloting

The committee originally selected Option Technologies of Florida to guide our electronic balloting for 2020. Following the use of GNTV for streaming and balloting using smart phones for the virtual session in 2021, the decision was made to contract with GNTV from Macon, GA, for the 2022 session.

Per Diem and Travel

The per diem was recommended at \$165/day based on double occupancy onsite at Lake Junaluska using the American Meal Plan. The per diem will begin with lunch on Tuesday, November 1, and will conclude following breakfast on Friday, November 4. This extension of the per diem allows delegates to attend the Committee on Episcopacy activities on Tuesday afternoon, November 1.

The travel allowance will be \$0.30 per mile for automobile travel. For delegates flying to Lake Junaluska, the delegate will be reimbursed at \$0.30/mile for the distance from home address to Lake Junaluska.

Delegate Seating

Delegate seating was assigned based on seating in 2016, with some rotation occurring to allow those who were further back in 2016 to be closer to the front in 2022. Delegate seating will allow for social distancing, with the amount of distancing based on Covid numbers at the time of the Conference. The Committee also developed a Covid protocol for the Conference as we care for the protection, health, and safety of each other when we gather together.

Paperless Work

Pre-Conference work will all be done using the SEJ Conference web site. The ADCA and other pertinent documents will be posted on this web site (www.sejumc.org).

To further our efforts at being paperless, the 2022 SEJ Journal will be provided to all delegates in .pdf format via a link that will be emailed to delegates following the publication of the Journal. Any delegates desiring a paper copy of the Journal may obtain it via print on demand; the information for print on demand will be provided to delegates along with the link to the Journal in .pdf format.

Secretarial Staff

Anne Travis, Conference Secretary, and Julie Love, Associate Conference Secretary, have recruited a highly capable staff to assist with the many details associated with the planning and administration of the 2022 SEJ Conference. The following persons will be serving on the Secretarial Staff:

Celeste Eubanks (Conference Minutes)
Sybil Davidson (DCA Editor)
Susan Arnold (Delegate Relations)
Christine Selleck (Episcopal Spouses)
Meredyth Earnest (Elections and Tellers)
Otto Harris (Elections Balloting)
Jasmine Haynes (Media Relations)

Jennifer Davis (Monitoring)
Sam Parkes (Worship)
Kathy James (Worship)
Micheal Selleck (Retirement Service)
Becky Hall (Staging)
David Dommissie (Treasurer)

Many other persons will assist this secretarial staff as volunteers throughout the Conference to attend to all details and needs of the attendees. We are grateful to each of these persons for their willingness to serve.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Travis, Conference Secretary
2022 SEJ Conference

Report of the Committee on Episcopacy 2016-2022

The *2016 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church* describes the work of the Jurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy (COE) as:

1. Responsibilities of the Jurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy (§524)
2. Duties of the Jurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy (§524.3)
3. Assignment Process (§406)
4. Vacancy in the Office of Bishop (§407)
5. Termination of Office (§408)
6. Status of Retired Bishops (§409)
7. Leaves (§410)
8. Review and Evaluation of Bishops (§412)
9. Complaints Against Bishops (§413)

Typically, in a quadrennium, the Southeastern Jurisdiction (SEJ) COE and College of Bishops (COB) meet concurrently, in January of each year, and spend time meeting together. During the quadrennium, some of the January gatherings also included conference lay leaders and conference directors of connectional ministries.

On **July 15, 2016**, the COE met following the conclusion of the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference to organize and elect officers: Steve Furr (Chairperson), Tom Berlin (Vice Chairperson), Kim Ingram (Secretary).

The **January 5, 2017**, COE meeting included time spent building relationships, creating a covenant, and establishing relational teams between the bishops and COE members. The COE met individually with each newly elected and assigned bishop and finalized the episcopal evaluation process for the quadrennium.

During the joint meeting of the COE and COB, participants reviewed the election and assignment process that had been used with suggestions and reflections; agreed to a process of onboarding new bishops in their conferences; and, discussed the episcopal evaluation process.

The SEJ Committee on Episcopacy Team Covenant

With God as our witness and help, we covenant together as the Southeastern Jurisdiction Committee on Episcopacy to labor for the whole good of the Southeastern Jurisdiction by:

- Prayer: committee members will pray for one another and for the Bishops by name each Friday.
- Participation: committee members will be fully present and fully attentive at each meeting. We will turn cell phones off or silent when in session as a committee. We will complete assignments between meetings in a timely fashion.
- Faithfulness: committee members will attend each meeting unless illness or crisis prevents participation. Notification of absence will be given to the Chairperson. The Executive Committee will give ample notification of meetings to committee members.

- **Accountability:** committee members will speak the truth in love and receive the truth in grace. When discussing situations in Annual Conferences and the work of each Bishop, we will be fully honest throughout the quadrennium when we meet. We will be transparent in our discussions, and enable other committee members to understand the state of each Annual Conference as well as the leadership of each Bishop.
- **Confidentiality:** committee members will practice discretion of speech and not discuss confidential matters outside of the committee so that we can be fully honest with each other. Matters that are to be shared with the Bishops or others will be made explicit so that committee members can share them freely.
- **Spiritual Discernment:** committee members will rely on a process of spiritual discernment for the assignment of Bishops. The needs and opportunities of each Annual Conference will be the priority of the assignment process while considering the gifts of each Bishop. This process will happen during the meetings of the SEJ COE. There will be no deliberations regarding episcopal assignments among committee members except during official meetings.

The **January 9-11, 2018**, COE meeting included relationship and trust building, meeting of relational teams, report of the episcopal evaluation process, conversation about the episcopal residence requirements, discussion regarding preparation of delegations for the 2019 Called Session of General Conference, and an SEJ COE financial update.

An extra meeting was called for **September 12, 2018**, that included the SEJ College of Bishops, Heads of Delegations, and Commission on a Way Forward Members, as well as the COE. The purpose of the meeting was as follows:

- Explore the values, principles and behaviors that will make General Conference 2019 a healthy gathering.
- Share and clarify the form and history of the report from the Commission.
- Provide resources.

Time together included reflections on *The Anatomy of Peace* from the Arbinger Institute, a presentation from Wespath, and further reflections/table conversations.

The **January 16-19, 2019**, COE meeting included reports from each annual conference, meeting and reports of relational teams, an overview of the pre-election process, discussion of the complaint process as it relates to bishops, and reports due by each conference in preparation for the 2020 Jurisdictional Conference.

On **February 27, 2019**, the SEJ COE and COB convened following the adjournment of the 2019 General Conference to process the experience and talk about implications for the SEJ.

The **January 7-9, 2020, meeting** included a report from the Jurisdictional Study Committee, a presentation about the Protocol of Reconciliation and Grace Through Separation, conversation and preparation for 2020 election of bishops, individual meetings with non-retiring bishops, and a review of the episcopal assignment process.

Then COVID hit and there was not a 2020 General Conference or a 2020 SEJ Conference! The membership of the SEJ COE remained the same and the work continued. Throughout COVID, the SEJ COE has met by Zoom.

The **January 5, 2021**, COE meeting updated the episcopal evaluation process, received annual conference updates, and established a task force regarding episcopal leadership. The joint COE/COB meeting was facilitated by Claire Bowen (layperson from North Georgia) and included reports from the Council of Bishops' Sustainability Task Force, the SEJ task force on episcopal leadership, the COB officers, and the Protocol Mediation Team. Using Force Field Analysis, the group identified driving and restraining forces related to the retirement of bishops, the impact of the possibility of no elections, and interim episcopal area coverage. On January 4 in the evening, the 2020 Heads of Delegations were included in the work and on the evening of January 5, all 2020 delegates were invited into the work.

In addition to the annual January meetings, the COE continued to meet as needed by Zoom (**2020**: April 1, April 22, May 6, September 30; **2021**: March 3, May 5, August 26; **2022**: March 18, March 29, August 2) to assess the needs of the jurisdiction, hear reports from annual conferences, support the bishops, prepare for anticipated jurisdictional conferences, respond to complaints as outlined in ¶413, and provide communication to the jurisdiction.

In the spring of 2021, four bishops requested retirement effective September 1, 2021: Bishop Paul Leeland, Bishop Hope Morgan Ward, Bishop Mary Virginia "Dindy" Taylor, and Bishop Lawson Bryan. According to ¶407, the SEJ COE was consulted by the SEJ College of Bishops. The College of Bishops made a recommendation to the Council of Bishops who approved a plan for shared interim assignments for four bishops. These assignments were announced by the Council of Bishops in May of 2021 and became effective on September 1, 2021:

- Bishop Carter as resident bishop of Florida and Western North Carolina
- Bishop Fairley as resident bishop of Kentucky/Red Bird and North Carolina
- Bishop Graves as resident bishop of Alabama-West Florida and South Georgia
- Bishop Wallace-Padgett as resident bishop of North Alabama and Holston.

The **January 4, 2022**, COE meeting was a joint meeting of the COE and COB, and the meeting included review of the covenant and updates on the episcopal evaluation process. Then, through small group conversation, participants identified signs of hopes and concerns, considered questions related to disaffiliation, and reflected on the force field analysis and values from a previous meeting. The meeting included a report on the state of the Episcopal Fund, a report from the conferences and leaders who are sharing bishops, and engagement of next steps.

In preparation for the election of bishops at the 2022 Jurisdictional Conference, the COE established a pre-election process with clear guidelines to encourage fairness, equity, and consistency.

The COE approaches the episcopal assignment process collectively, with the missional needs of the Jurisdiction and each Annual Conference as the first priority. No episcopal assignment recommendations are made until all elections are complete (see ¶406). All recommendations for assignments will be reached by dialogue and prayerful consensus, with all assignments being considered. The COE will work until it seems good to the Holy Spirit and us and will bring its final

recommendations to the Jurisdictional Conference for final action during the Jurisdictional Conference in November.

The COE has engaged its work faithfully throughout the last 6 years. Members have been responsive and faithful; and the conversations and work have been full of the Holy Spirit. Relationships have developed in order to do hard work with love. The COE is grateful for the collegial relationship experienced with the College of Bishops.

Respectfully submitted:

Steve Furr, Chairperson

Tom Berlin, Vice Chairperson

Kim Ingram, Secretary

Committee on Episcopacy Recommendation Regarding the Number of Bishops to Elect in 2022

Background Information:

Judicial Council Decision No. 1445 issued on May 20, 2022, and Judicial Council Memorandum No. 1446 issued on May 31, 2022, clarified the plan for Jurisdictional Conferences scheduled for November 2-5, 2022. The Judicial Council reviewed and clarified the relevant *Discipline* provisions (§§ 26, 27.2, 45, 404.2, 405, 406, 407, 408.1 and 512.2) and clarified the role of the Jurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy (see ¶524) as it relates to making a recommendation to the Jurisdictional Conference regarding the number of bishops to be elected.

In the spring of 2021, four bishops requested retirement effective September 1, 2021: Bishop Paul Leeland, Bishop Hope Morgan Ward, Bishop Mary Virginia “Dindy” Taylor, and Bishop Lawson Bryan. Each had served beyond their expected terms and had reached mandatory retirement. Additionally, Bishop James Swanson will retire effective December 31, 2022. Each of these bishops have served faithfully and willingly. We are grateful for their service.

Based on these five retirements, the current formula outlined in *The Book of Discipline* (see ¶404) and approved by General Conference in 2016, authorizes the election of up to five (5) additional Bishops in the Southeastern Jurisdiction. The Southeastern Jurisdiction does not *have to* elect five additional bishops, but five is the maximum number that can be elected according to the formula.

Recommendation from the SEJ COE to the delegates of the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference:

The SEJ Committee on Episcopacy (COE) recommends the election of three (3) Bishops at the SEJ Conference to be held from November 2-4, 2022.

Rationale supporting this recommendation:

In the absence of a General Conference in 2020 and 2021, it became necessary to realign and reassign responsibilities of the remaining bishops to ensure coverage for each Episcopal areas of the SEJ. Since the retirement of four bishops on September 1, 2021, four of our current Bishops (Bishop Ken Carter, Bishop David Graves, Bishop Leonard Fairley, and Bishop Deborah Wallace-Padgett) have been serving multiple episcopal areas.

With the election of three bishops in November of 2022, only two bishops would be asked to begin or continue serving multiple areas until September 2024. We anticipate one mandatory retirement in 2024.

We believe strong and consistent episcopal leadership is needed in this time as we experience the disaffiliation of some churches, denominational uncertainties, and as we respond to other changes wrought by the pandemic and challenging societal issues. There is stress in our system and stress on our bishops.

Further, we understand the desire for the presence of a bishop in each episcopal area. We realize that asking a bishop to serve conferences that are not contiguous makes the situation even more strenuous.

To be clear, at this time, the SEJ COE is not recommending which episcopal areas would be combined and served by one bishop. With three elections, two bishops will be asked to serve two areas until September 2024. The combinations will be determined by the SEJ COE as part of the assignment discernment process.

Additionally, we believe it would be irresponsible to ignore the potential negative financial impact of electing five bishops until we have clearer evidence of the sustainability of such elections. At least four conferences have planned a called Annual Conference meeting regarding disaffiliation this Fall, which adds to this uncertainty.

Bishops are elected and assigned to an area to serve until retirement, and their positions are funded by apportionments.

Therefore, realizing the anxiety of not knowing the future, while trusting that future into God's hands, we are confident that our recommendation offers a prudent resolution based on the information known to us today.

No decisions or discussions regarding potential assignments will be made until the COE begins the assignment process following the November 2022 episcopal elections.

Balloting Instructions

GNTV Voting Guide

Practice Online Voting Webpage

demo.gntvmedia.com

What Do You Need to Vote?

1. Six digit “Voter ID” as provided in advance.
2. A web browser on your device (phone, tablet, computer, etc...)

Practice Voting is Now Available!

1. Visit demo.gntvmedia.com
2. At demo.gntvmedia.com, enter the practice Voter ID: “123456”
3. Click the “Submit” button
4. The practice ballot will show on your screen
5. Make your voting selection(s)
6. Click the blue “Submit Vote” button
7. You will receive confirmation that your vote has been received.

That’s it! Go ahead and practice again!
You can click the green “Load Ballot”
to load the ballot again

The screenshot shows a mobile device interface for the GNTV voting system. At the top, there are icons for a cloud, a globe, and a smartphone. Below these is a green button labeled "Load Ballot" and an orange button labeled "Get Recognized". Underneath the buttons, the text "VOTER ID: 123456" is displayed. A white box contains the question "Do you speak more than one language?" with two radio button options: "Yes" and "No". At the bottom of this box is a blue button labeled "Submit Vote".

Need Help?

Contact your delegation teller.

GNTV Secure Online Voting Frequently Asked Questions

Voting Identification Number

Each delegate and reserve delegate will have a unique identifying number with which to vote. If somehow a person loses her/his unique number (which will be located on the back of your nametag), that person may report to the Elections Secretary, Meredyth Earnest.

If a reserve delegate is seated for a primary delegate, the primary delegate's unique identification number will be deactivated, and the reserve delegate's unique identification number will be activated. The Head of Delegation will fill out a form giving the name of the delegate being replaced and the name of the reserve delegate being seated. Your delegation teller must take that form to the Elections Assistant, Otto Harris, *before a vote is opened by the presiding Bishop*.

We realize that emergencies can occur, but we ask that delegates be seated for the duration of one session if at all possible (not changing between a delegate and a reserve delegate during a session while voting is occurring).

What if I want to vote for a write-in name?

First, only elders in full connection may be written in. When your ballot appears, you will have a place to type in the name of an elder in full connection if you desire to do so.

What constitutes an invalid ballot?

This system generally prevents invalid ballots because you will get a notice indicating what is incorrect with your submission and, while the ballot is still open, you will have the opportunity to correct your ballot. However, if a voter submits a ballot that has selected to enter one or more "Write In" names without entering a name(s), or has entered the wrong number of names, or has entered the name of someone not an elder, then that ballot will be deemed invalid.

How would a person know they have an invalid ballot when writing in a name?

The system will give you an "error" message on most votes. However, the individual would also know if they did not enter a name in the "Write In" area of the ballot.

If someone enters an invalid ID, does it prevent them from submitting their vote?

Yes. If a voter enters an invalid ID that is outside the working range of the system, they will receive an "Invalid Voter ID" error and will not be able to log in to load ballots. If the person is using an ID that is not activated (for example, if they are the reserve delegate and have not properly notified the Elections Assistant), they will be able to log in but will not be able to load ballots; instead, they will receive a message saying they are not eligible to vote on this ballot.

If a reserve delegate is duly seated for a delegate who is not present during a ballot, the teller for your delegation must notify the Elections Assistant, Otto Harris, using the above process. See above "Voter Identification Number" for the correct process.

If I start my ballot but do not successfully submit it, is it invalid?

You must click the “Submit Ballot” button before the Bishop closes the ballot. Only submitted ballots can be marked invalid. If you do not click the “Submit Ballot” button (that is, your ballot is not submitted), then your ballot is not counted at all and cannot be considered valid or invalid.

How do I know my ballot is submitted?

A confirmation message (“thank you for your vote” with a green box) appears when your ballot is successfully submitted.

You must click the “Submit Ballot” button before the Bishop closes the ballot.

I’m getting a message that there are “No Ballots currently available. Ballots are only available to eligible voters.”

- Are you the active voting delegate, for example, if you were the reserve delegate, did the chair of your delegation notify the Elections Assistant that you are taking an open delegate position?
- You only see a ballot if one is open for voting. Is a ballot currently open?
- The ballot does not open until the vote is officially called by the presiding Bishop.
- If you believe it should be open, please wait a few seconds and click the Load Ballot button again. You may have been just a little faster than the Bishop and our team on opening the ballot.

Can we vote before the “Please Vote Now” message appears on screen?

The ballot does not open to accept submissions until the vote is officially called, but you can vote before the “Please Vote Now” message if the ballot is open.

What do I do if I need more time to vote?

Please raise your hand and alert a teller before the ballot is closed by the presiding Bishop. Once closed, ballots cannot be reopened.

I already submitted my vote but I need to change my answer.

You can submit your ballot more than once while a ballot is open. Once the presiding Bishop closes the ballot, your final submission will become your vote and will be counted. If you submit your ballot again before the ballot is closed by the Bishop, it will erase your first selection and replace it.

Are votes confidential? Does my voter ID mean the conference knows how I vote?

The unique voter IDs are privately assigned and distributed by the voting system administrator and the conference office. Voter IDs are recorded with each ballot submission and used for validation purposes to ensure only the ballots cast by valid voters are counted. Records of the votes are maintained for post-session audit, but no voter information is made available outside of the voting system to ensure confidentiality of each ballot cast.

Will there be practice ballots?

There will be practice ballots onsite to give everyone time to practice.

Can Lake Junaluska WiFi handle the balloting load?

Lake Junaluska has very recently made significant investments in upgrading their internet connectivity and access points to handle our voting needs in Stuart Auditorium.

Reminders

- Each time, you will have limited time to convey your vote.
- If you don't want to participate in a particular vote, don't push any buttons during the voting interval.
- If you make a mistake in voting, simply vote again before the ballot is closed. The system will tabulate the last vote that you enter.

Questions

If you have any questions regarding the electronic voting systems or procedures, please ask your delegation teller or visit the electronic voting help desk in the rear of the Stuart Auditorium.

Report of the Committee on Coordination and Accountability

Introduction

In 2008, the SEJ Conference approved a structure that created the Committee on Coordination and Accountability (CCA), a group to oversee the work and ministry of The United Methodist Church across the Southeastern Jurisdiction. During the 2008-2012 quadrennium, the CCA worked to understand its role and function, the scope of its work, and its relationship with the agencies and ministries of the Jurisdiction.

Since 2012 under this structure, the CCA has continued living into its understanding of responsibilities, as outlined in the 2008 Journal and reported in the 2012 Journal:

1. Having limited power, but with authority, to act between sessions of the Jurisdictional Conference on matters such as elections of Trustees or Directors for entities requiring such action (e.g., Emory University Trustees and SEJ Agencies).
2. Being the legal body of the Jurisdiction and guardian of the SEJ title and logo.
3. Focusing on the mission and ministry of The United Methodist Church within the Jurisdiction.
4. Coordinating and/or confirming the programs of the General Agencies within the Jurisdiction (§528).
5. Receiving regular reports from the Committee on Finance and Administration and jurisdictional groups for mission and ministry.
6. Relating to and holding accountable groups mandated by *The Book of Discipline*, Networking Groups, Monitoring Groups, and existing groups organized and functioning within the Jurisdiction.

During 2016-2020 according to the SEJ Plan of Organization, 15 persons (one from each Annual Conference) were elected to serve on this committee:

- Three Bishops: Bishop Sharma Lewis (VA), Bishop William McAlilly (TN), and Bishop Mary Virginia Taylor (HOL), who was then replaced by Bishop Debra Wallace-Padgett (HOL).
- Three Conference Lay Leaders: Gary Locklear (NC), who was then replaced by John Hall in 2020; Steve Lyles (NAL), and Jane Wood (WNC), who was then replaced by John Crane in 2020.
- Three Directors of Connectional Ministries: Sharon Austin (FL); Julie Hager Love (KY), who was then replaced by William Moore in 2019; and Denise Walton (SGA), who was then replaced by Nita Crump in 2017 and by Kelly Roberson in 2020.
- At-Large: Robert Amundsen (RBM), Zachary Beasley (MS), Roger Hopson (MEM), Jeremy Pridgeon (AWF), Timothy Rogers (SC), and Philip Schroeder (NGA).
- Ex-officio (without vote): Anne Travis (Conference Secretary), David Dommissie (Conference Treasurer), and Frank Dunnewind (Chairperson of SEJ Committee on Finance and Administration).

Bishop William McAlilly was elected chairperson for the first two years of the quadrennium and Gary Locklear served as Vice-Chair. Bishop McAlilly and Mr. Locklear switched roles for the second two years of the quadrennium. Timothy Rogers assisted as the secretary.

Then in Fall 2020, the CCA was deeply saddened to learn of the death of Gary Locklear as a result of the COVID pandemic. Gary was serving so ably as the Chair of CCA at the time of his death. He was widely known, respected, and loved across the SEJ and, indeed, across the entire United Methodist Church. The Committee on Coordination and Accountability deeply mourned his loss, and Bishop McAlilly participated in Gary's Memorial Service on our behalf.

The SEJ CCA has met once each year in a face-to-face meeting until 2020, as needed via conference calls, and annually in zoom meetings since Spring 2020. Attendance and participation have been high throughout the quadrennium. The CCA met with the Director and chairperson (or representative) of the Board from each agency and ministry at our annual fall meeting. Each time we met with Directors of the agencies and ministries, the meeting was a joint meeting with SEJ Committee on Finance and Administration (CFA) so that all were hearing the reports together. Written reports were received and reviewed at these meetings, as well as financial information. SEJ CCA and CFA continue to find these joint meetings to be most helpful.

One major item of business that was accomplished during this quadrennium with the approval of the 2016 Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference was the establishment of a Covenant Agreement with the Agencies and Ministries. These Covenant Agreements will be included in the 2022 Journal of the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference.

Celebration of Ministries

The CCA affirms and celebrates the ministries of the Southeastern Jurisdiction. We are grateful for the faithful leadership that each ministry executive and governing board offers for the sake of these ministries. We appreciate the time and attention they give to annual reporting and financial accountability to our CCA and CFA.

In the pages following the CCA report, you will find individual reports from each of these jurisdictional ministries, which have been a part of CCA's ongoing review:

Agencies

Gulfside Assembly
Hinton Rural Life Center
Lake Junaluska Conference and Retreat Center

Disciplinary Group

Archives and History (Heritage Center)

Existing Ministries of SEJ

Intentional Growth Center
United Methodist Volunteers in Mission

We affirm the fruit of each ministry and invite local churches, districts, and annual conferences to explore more fully the resources each ministry offers. Some of their resources would enhance the disciple-making ministry in your local church, while other ministry offerings would expand the reach of your local ministry. Each of these ministries needs financial support to carry out their work, and most of that support comes from those who receive benefits and feel connected to these ministries.

As a celebration, the CCA wants to recognize the Board of Directors of the Intentional Growth Center (IGC) for the hard work they have done and difficult decisions they have made to address their finances. Additional information can be found in their report, but we commend the Board for their decisions and look forward to their future in ministry in the Southeastern Jurisdiction.

Support Provided to the Agencies and Ministries

During this quadrennium, the CCA has supported the Agencies and Ministries by affirming their work annually when meeting with the Executive Directors and a Board representative annually. We also express appreciation to the Committee on Finance and Administration for their support of the Agencies and Ministries through an annual grant of up to \$10,000 each to support an annual audit of their finances. In reading the CFA report, you will also hear of grants provided to each to assist with cash flow during the 2020 Covid pandemic shutdown.

One concern expressed to CCA and CFA meeting jointly in Fall 2019 was the need to upgrade their respective web sites to gain greater visibility for their ministries. Because of this expressed need, CFA made grants available to each agency and ministry for web site development. We appreciate the spirit of cooperation between CCA and CFA in recognizing needs and responding to those needs as we are able.

The CCA also is following closely the work of the Board of Directors of the SEJ Archives and History as they look with great discernment toward their future role in the SEJ. The CCA is supportive of the work being done by this Board in finding a suitable means to continue the work of Archives and History, as well as a repository for the collection.

Concerns of the CCA During this Quadrennium

A primary concern of the CCA during 2016-2020 has been with the fragile financial position of several Agencies and Ministries. We have sought to understand, support, and advise those Agencies and Ministries during this time, and we have seen growth in the work of their Boards of Directors in addressing their situations.

Recommendation from the 2016-2020 (extended to 2022) SEJ CCA

At the Fall 2019 joint meeting of SEJ CCA and SEJ CFA, a motion was made and passed unanimously to recommend to the 2020 Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference that a Task Force made up of members of SEJ CCA and CFA be formed to recommend at the 2024 SEJ Conference a more streamlined structure for the oversight work of these two committees. The structure would combine the work of the two SEJ committees into one committee with a smaller membership.

Requisite changes to our Plan of Organization and Rules of Order would also need to be a part of any 2024 recommendation from the Task Force.

Given the postponement of the 2020 SEJ Conference, this task force was formed and work was begun under the leadership of Rev. Dr. Brad Brady, who had assumed the responsibilities of the SEJ Conference Secretary on September 1, 2021. The Task Force met and reviewed the SEJ Bylaws and Plan of Organization and prepared the revisions, which are being presented to the 2022 SEJ Conference for approval; nominations to the new structure are to be enacted at the 2024 SEJ Conference.

Sadly, yet again, the CCA and CFA found themselves mourning a sudden passing when Brad died on February 7, 2022. He is deeply missed still, and the secretarial staff has spoken of him with fondness so often as we have prepared for this Jurisdictional Conference session because Brad was a leader, a mentor, a friend.

The revisions which Rev. Brady meticulously prepared and which were unanimously endorsed in a joint meeting of the SEJ CCA and CFA on March 7, 2022, are presented to the 2022 SEJ Conference for your approval in the following pages.

Respectfully submitted,

Bishop William McAlilly, Chair

1 **Joint Recommendation on Plan of Organization**

2
3 **Proposed jointly by:** the Jurisdictional Committee on Finance and Administration (CFA) and the
4 Jurisdictional Committee on Coordination and Accountability (CCA):

5
6 **Summary of proposed action:**

7 The CCA and CFA propose that the work of their two committees be merged into one committee to
8 be known as the Committee on Coordination and Accountability effective at the conclusion of the
9 next 2024 Jurisdictional Conference session.

10
11 **Summary of rationale:**

- 12 • The CFA and CCA have worked closely since this structure was implemented at the
13 conclusion of the 2008 Jurisdictional Conference;
- 14 • The CFA and the CCA’s scope of work has significantly reduced as financial support for
15 jurisdictional programming has been virtually eliminated over recent quadrennia;
- 16 • The CFA and the CCA access the same information to make appropriate decisions. Steps
17 taken to eliminate unintended silos revealed redundancy and inefficiency. In short, thirty
18 jurisdictional leaders are not needed to accomplish this work; and
- 19 • The CFA and CCA believe merging the two committees and reducing the duplication of
20 persons engaging in this oversight is more efficient, more cost effective, and enhances a
21 holistic approach for decision-making given the concentrated scope of work.

22
23 **Proposed amendments to the relevant sections of the Jurisdiction’s Plan of Organization:**

24 (These changes begin with Section V.A of the Plan of Organization. ~~Strike-throughs~~ are proposed
25 deletions. Double-underlined sections represent additions. Subsequent sections of the Plan of
26 Organization will be renumbered accordingly.)

27
28 V. COMMITTEES

29
30 A. The SEJ Committee on Coordination and Accountability (CCA)

31
32 The SEJ Committee on Coordination and Accountability (also known as, “CCA”) is assigned the
33 task of overseeing the work and ministry of The United Methodist Church across the jurisdiction
34 (2016 *Discipline*, ¶530). The responsibilities and function of the committee will include:

- 35
36 1. Having limited power, but with authority, to act between sessions of the Jurisdictional
37 Conference on matters such as ratifying the election of Trustees or Directors for entities
38 requiring such action (e.g., Emory University Trustees and SEJ Agencies and ongoing
39 ministries) and ratifying By-Laws changes of SEJ and SEJ Agencies and Ongoing Ministries;
- 40
41 2. Being the legal body of the Jurisdiction and guardian of the SEJ title and logo;
- 42
43 3. Focusing on the mission and ministry of The United Methodist Church within the
44 Jurisdiction;
- 45

46 4. Coordinating and/or confirming the program of the General Agencies within the
47 Jurisdiction (2016 *Discipline*, ¶529);

48
49 5. Providing financial oversight of the Jurisdiction and its ministries. The CCA will form a
50 subcommittee from within its membership to work directly with the Jurisdictional Treasurer
51 in carrying out this aspect of its work, with CCA receiving full reporting and maintaining
52 responsibility for any decision-making not reserved by the Jurisdictional Conference. (See
53 subcommittee on Finance duties beginning at line 146 and below);

54
55 6. Receiving regular reports from the subcommittee on Finance and Administration, the SEJ
56 Agencies, and jurisdictional groups for mission and ministry; and

57
58 ~~6.~~ 7. Relating to and holding accountable groups mandated by *The Book of Discipline*,
59 Jurisdictional Agencies, Networking Groups, Monitoring Groups, and Existing Groups
60 organized and functioning within the Jurisdiction (See below, “Definitions”) and maintaining
61 Covenant Agreements with the Jurisdictional Agencies and Existing Ministries;

62
63 ~~The membership of this committee will be fifteen (15) persons:~~

64 MEMBERSHIP: There shall be one representative from each Annual Conference. The
65 membership shall be comprised of the following positional representation.

- 66 • ~~3~~ 2 Bishops
- 67 • ~~3~~ 2 Conference Directors of Connectional Ministries or equivalents
- 68 • ~~3~~ 2 Conference Lay Leaders
- 69 • 2 Annual Conference Treasurers
- 70 • 6 At-large members with expertise and for inclusiveness.

71 (The SEJ Nominations Committee shall work to achieve balance in representation, as far as
72 possible, by considering lay/clergy, female/male, and ethnic participation. Additionally,
73 clergy representation from local church settings is encouraged.)

74
75 All ~~15~~ members shall be elected by the Jurisdictional Conference upon nomination by the
76 SEJ Nominating Committee in consultation with the Bishops, Directors of Connectional
77 Ministries, ~~and~~ Lay Leaders, and Conference Treasurers, to identify their representatives and
78 ensure that each annual conference be represented on the committee. Vacancies occurring
79 during the quadrennium shall be filled by the College of Bishops.

80
81 ~~The Jurisdictional secretary of the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference and the~~
82 Jurisdictional treasurer shall be ex-officio members, without vote, on the CCA. The secretary
83 shall be the staff person assigned duties for and on behalf of the committee. ~~(ex-officio~~
84 ~~membership, with voice but without vote).~~ The treasurer shall manage the Jurisdictional
85 treasurer’s office, carry out accounting duties necessary for the Jurisdiction, and assist CCA
86 and the subcommittee on Finance in providing general oversight of its financial duties found
87 below. The SEJ Committee on Finance and Administration Chairperson and the SEJ
88 Treasurer shall be ex-officio members, without vote, on the CCA.

90 The Executive Directors of the ~~three~~ Jurisdictional Agencies, ~~and~~ Disciplinary Groups, and
91 Ongoing Groups (Ministries) may be invited to attend meetings of the CCA Committee for
92 connections, accountability, and information sharing (voice but without vote).
93

94 The Committee shall elect its own officers. Either a Bishop or lay leader shall serve as the
95 chairperson on a rotating basis for a two-year term. (For example, if a lay leader is
96 chairperson for two years, a Bishop will serve as vice-chairperson, with the next two-year
97 term reversed.) The Jurisdictional Conference secretary shall arrange an organizational
98 meeting at a time and place determined by the President of the SEJ College of Bishops, who
99 shall be or shall name the convener of the meeting.

100
101 The committee shall meet at least annually, with called meetings held as necessary.
102 Telephone conference meetings and audio/video-conferencing are acceptable. Those present
103 at a duly announced meeting will constitute a quorum, provided at least one-third of the CCA
104 membership is present.

105
106 Subcommittee on Finance and Administration

107
108 Guidelines for the CCA and its subcommittee on Finance shall include, but not be limited to
109 the following:

110
111 1. The ministry of the jurisdiction requires a unified budget with one Treasurer's office,
112 which will serve as the primary place for receipts and disbursement of funds. The
113 subcommittee on Finance and Administration shall receive and review audits of the Agencies
114 and Jurisdictional groups for mission and ministry and any other matters approved in the
115 Covenant Agreements. Finally, the Treasurer's office will work with the subcommittee on
116 Finance and Administration to propose a quadrennial jurisdictional budget and will provide
117 for the operations and financial expenses for the meeting of the Jurisdictional Conference.

118
119 ~~2. This committee will be composed of a representative and inclusive group of fifteen (15)~~
120 ~~persons, nominated by the SEJ Nominating Committee and elected by the Jurisdictional~~
121 ~~Conference. The committee will elect its own officers at its organizational meeting which~~
122 ~~will take place at a time determined by the President of the SEJ College of Bishops, who~~
123 ~~shall be or name the convener of the meeting. For the purpose of information and sharing~~
124 ~~mutual concerns, the Chairperson and the Treasurer of the Jurisdiction shall make full and~~
125 ~~regular reports to the Committee on Coordination and Accountability.~~

126
127 a. ~~There shall be a Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference Committee on Finance and~~
128 ~~Administration, consisting of fifteen (15) members including one representative from~~
129 ~~each Annual Conference. The Committee shall be constituted quadrennially and shall~~
130 ~~be composed of eight lay persons and seven clergy persons. The subcommittee on~~
131 ~~Finance shall be composed of three (3) members from CCA; one of whom shall be~~
132 ~~laity, one of whom shall be clergy, and one shall be a Conference Treasurer. The SEJ~~
133 ~~Conference Treasurer will be an ex officio member of this subcommittee.~~

135 b. It is recommended that the CCA consider ethnic background, the place of both men
136 and women, the place of adults and youth, and that ability and experience be
137 recognized when appointing this subcommittee. The subcommittee will elect its own
138 chair. Members of the Committee shall take office upon adjournment of the
139 Jurisdictional Conference electing them and shall serve until the adjournment of the
140 next succeeding quadrennial session of the Jurisdictional Conference and until their
141 successors are duly elected. Vacancies occurring during the quadrennium shall be
142 filled by the College of Bishops.

144 ~~b. The Committee when elected, shall elect from its members a chairperson, vice-~~
145 ~~chairperson, and recording secretary, and it~~ c. CCA shall nominate to the
146 Jurisdictional Conference currently in session a treasurer who, on being duly elected
147 by the conference, shall be an ex-officio member of the Committee. If for any reason
148 the office of treasurer shall become vacant during the interim of the sessions of the
149 Jurisdictional Conference, the Committee shall elect a treasurer, following due
150 consultation with the College of Bishops. The Committee may at any time remove the
151 treasurer from office for cause.

153 2. The CCA shall have general oversight of all funds included in the Jurisdictional
154 Conference budget. The treasurer shall render to the ~~officers of the CCA and/or its~~
155 subcommittee on Finance quarterly statements of receipts and expenditures ~~at the end~~
156 ~~of each fiscal year~~ and a quadrennial report to each succeeding quadrennial session of
157 the Jurisdictional Conference covering in detail receipts and expenditures for the
158 quadrennium preceding. The treasurer shall be bonded through a suitable bond of a
159 surety company of recognized standing and in an amount fixed by the subcommittee.

161 ~~3.~~ 3. The subcommittee on Finance shall meet at least annually, or on the call of the
162 chairperson of CCA or the chairperson of the subcommittee, or of a majority of the
163 members thereof. Telephone conference meeting and audio/video conferencing are
164 acceptable.

166 e. 4. No member or employee of any group nor any trustee or employee of any
167 institution which is a beneficiary of the Jurisdictional Conference budget shall be
168 eligible for membership on the Committee or its subcommittee.

170 f. 5. It shall be the duty of the subcommittee on Finance to make a careful study of the
171 expense of administration and the causes that may properly be included in the annual
172 Jurisdictional Conference budget, and to recommend to each succeeding quadrennial
173 session of the Jurisdictional Conference for its action and determination an annual
174 budget, showing the share of each Annual Conference in the total. The budget as
175 adopted shall be the Jurisdictional Conference budget for the ensuing quadrennium,
176 including annual budgeted amounts for the ensuing quadrennium, and the
177 apportionment to each Annual Conference as finally determined by the Jurisdictional
178 Conference shall be its annual share in the said budget. Only such items as are
179 distinctly related to the work of the jurisdiction shall be included in the Jurisdictional
180 budget. The jurisdictional treasurer shall transmit annually to the treasurer of each

181 Annual Conference, not less than 120 days prior to the regular annual meeting of each
182 Annual Conference, a statement of the amount apportioned such Annual Conference
183 for Jurisdictional causes. The Annual Conference shall apportion the same among the
184 charges of the conference in such manner as it may determine. The Annual
185 Conference treasurer shall remit each month to the treasurer of the jurisdiction the
186 amount on hand for Jurisdictional causes.
187

188 ~~g. 6.~~ The fiscal year of the Southeastern Jurisdiction shall be January 1 through
189 December 31. All jurisdictional financial accounts ~~of the Committee on Finance and~~
190 ~~Administration~~ shall be kept accordingly.
191

192 h. 7. The CCA may give authority to its treasurer to borrow funds from any reputable
193 bank or trust company to meet any obligation of the Jurisdictional Conference duly
194 authorized in the regular annual budget of the conference; provided, the outstanding
195 indebtedness shall at no time exceed twenty-five percent of the annual budget. The
196 Conference treasurer and/or Conference secretary are authorized to sign previously
197 approved banking or loan documents on behalf of CCA.
198

199 i. 8. Should any urgent and pressing need arise that had not been anticipated in fixing
200 the jurisdictional budget, and in the judgment of the subcommittee is an emergency,
201 the CCA may alter the percentage allowance or grant to any or all committees or
202 agencies receiving funds from Jurisdictional Conference apportionments, or may
203 increase the apportionments to the several annual conferences of the jurisdiction to
204 meet the emergency, provided such action is approved by a three-fourths vote of the
205 Committee.
206

207 ~~j. 9.~~ The CCA shall include in the proposed Jurisdictional budget recommended to the
208 Jurisdictional Conference for its actions and determination the following items:

209 i.) The Jurisdictional Conference Expense Budget, which shall provide for the
210 expense of the quadrennial meeting of the Jurisdictional Conference, or any
211 called meetings of the same, and the expense incurred in the preparation of
212 such meeting.
213

214 ii.) The Jurisdictional Operating Budget, which shall make provision for the
215 expense of the Jurisdictional personnel in the performance of the stated duties
216 and for the expense of meetings of the committees of the Jurisdiction as
217 defined in Section V. Items in the Administrative Committee budget for
218 salaries and other administrative costs shall be a prior claim against the
219 jurisdictional fund each month.
220

221 iii.) Other items which in the judgment of the CCA should be included in the
222 annual Jurisdictional Operating Fund.
223
224
225
226

227 Definitions

228

229 A number of groups, committees, and councils across the jurisdiction will be related to and
230 accountable to the Jurisdictional Conference through the CCA. These groups fall into one of
231 five categories.

232

233 1. Disciplinary Groups – Two primary groups and/or events are mandated by *The Book of*
234 *Discipline*: there “shall be” a jurisdictional Commission on Archives and History, and there
235 “may be” a jurisdictional Ministries with Young People Convocation. A system for regularly
236 reporting, coordinating, and overseeing their work will be developed in consultation with the
237 CCA.

238

239 There are also jurisdictional organizations for United Women in Faith and United Methodist
240 Men. However, according to *The Book of Discipline*, these two entities are directly
241 accountable to the national United Methodist Women and the General Commission on
242 United Methodist Men, respectively.

243

244 2. Agencies—Three agencies shall be located within the bounds of the Southeastern
245 Jurisdiction: (1) Lake Junaluska Assembly; (2) Hinton Rural Life Center; and, (3) Gulfside
246 Assembly. Each one of these three agencies owns property within the bounds of the
247 Jurisdiction and will maintain its own Board of Directors (ratified by SEJ Conference and –
248 between sessions – by the CCA) that will function as trustees of the property and the
249 ministry. Each Board of Directors will determine the plan of organization and structure for
250 the work and the mission of the agency and will follow all reporting requirements of the
251 jurisdiction. By-Laws changes are to be reviewed and ratified once per quadrennium by the
252 CCA.

253

254 In this jurisdictional plan, each of the three agencies will have its own Executive Director.
255 Working with the Board of Directors, this person will assist in determining and hiring the
256 appropriate number of staff persons, along with determining the necessary position
257 descriptions. Ultimately, each agency – through its Board of Directors – will be accountable
258 to the Jurisdictional Conference through the CCA and shall file a quadrennial report,
259 including a budget, a business plan, a ministry plan, and Board of Directors for the upcoming
260 quadrennium to be ratified by the Jurisdictional Conference. When requested by the CCA,
261 these Agencies shall also file an annual report of the same information.

262

263 The three Agencies shall be asked to maintain a Covenant Agreement with the SEJ
264 Committee on Coordination and Accountability for mutual understanding of roles and
265 responsibilities.

266

267 3. Monitoring Groups – The Book of Discipline requires a jurisdictional organization for
268 both the Commission on Religion and Race and the Commission on the Status and Role of
269 Women and requires a Jurisdictional connection with these two General Commissions.

270

271 Lines of accountability and oversight of their monitoring work will be through the SEJ CCA.
272 In addition, it is expected and requested that the monitoring function also be applied to CCA,
273 both in its membership and participation.
274

275 4. Networking Groups – These informal, ad-hoc groups arise among conference leaders and
276 staff. They share common interests, concerns, and ministry-related areas. These groups may
277 gather periodically to benefit from interaction with peers, to develop contacts, and to
278 exchange information. The understanding is that all Annual Conferences will be invited to
279 participate, but doing so will be strictly voluntary. Funding for travel and expenses shall be
280 the responsibility of each participating Annual Conference. Each Networking Group will be
281 responsible for its own life and will have no jurisdictional staff persons assigned.
282

283 5. Existing, Established, Ongoing Ministries – Several groups and organizations provide
284 much needed ministry, training and outreach within the jurisdiction. There are currently two
285 established ministries: (1) Intentional Growth Center and (2) UMVIM SEJ. These ministries
286 will be accountable to the Jurisdiction through the CCA. Each ministry will have its own
287 Board of Directors and/or Advisors, which will be reviewed and ratified annually by the
288 CCA. By-Laws are to be reviewed and ratified once per quadrennium by the CCA. Each
289 group will be self-supporting and will file annual reports on the ministry, vision, and results
290 of their programming with the CCA and will file a quadrennial report to the Southeastern
291 Jurisdictional Conference.
292

293 B. The SEJ Committee on Finance and Administration 294

295 ~~1. The ministry of the jurisdiction requires a unified budget with one Treasurer's office,~~
296 ~~which will serve as the primary place for receipts and disbursement of funds. The Committee~~
297 ~~on Finance and Administration shall receive and review audits of the Agencies and~~
298 ~~Jurisdictional groups for mission and ministry and any other matters approved in the~~
299 ~~Covenant Agreements. Finally, the Treasurer's office will work with the Committee on~~
300 ~~Finance and Administration to propose a quadrennial jurisdictional budget and will provide~~
301 ~~for the operations and financial expenses for the meeting of the Jurisdictional Conference.~~
302

303 ~~2. This committee will be composed of a representative and inclusive group of fifteen (15)~~
304 ~~persons, nominated by the SEJ Nominating Committee and elected by the Jurisdictional~~
305 ~~Conference. The committee will elect its own officers at its organizational meeting which~~
306 ~~will take place at a time determined by the President of the SEJ College of Bishops, who~~
307 ~~shall be or name the convener of the meeting. For the purpose of information and sharing~~
308 ~~mutual concerns, the Chairperson and the Treasurer of the Jurisdiction shall make full and~~
309 ~~regular reports to the Committee on Coordination and Accountability.~~
310

311 ~~a. There shall be a Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference Committee on Finance and~~
312 ~~Administration, consisting of fifteen (15) members including one representative from~~
313 ~~each Annual Conference. The Committee shall be constituted quadrennially and shall~~
314 ~~be composed of eight lay persons and seven clergy persons.~~
315

316 It is recommended that considerations of ethnic background, the place of both men
317 and women, the place of adults and youth, and ability and experience be recognized.
318 Members of the Committee shall take office upon adjournment of the Jurisdictional
319 Conference electing them and shall serve until the adjournment of the next
320 succeeding quadrennial session of the Jurisdictional Conference and until their
321 successors are duly elected. Vacancies occurring during the quadrennium shall be
322 filled by the College of Bishops.
323

324 b. The Committee, when elected, shall elect from its members a chairperson, vice-
325 chairperson, and recording secretary, and it shall nominate to the Jurisdictional
326 Conference currently in session a treasurer who, on being duly elected by the
327 conference, shall be an ex-officio member of the Committee. If for any reason the
328 office of treasurer shall become vacant during the interim of the sessions of the
329 Jurisdictional Conference, the Committee shall elect a treasurer, following due
330 consultation with the College of Bishops. The Committee may at any time remove the
331 treasurer from office for cause.
332

333 e. The Committee shall have general oversight of all funds included in the
334 Jurisdictional Conference budget. The treasurer shall render to the officers of the
335 Committee an annual statement of receipts and expenditures at the end of each fiscal
336 year and a quadrennial report to each succeeding quadrennial session of the
337 Jurisdictional Conference covering in detail receipts and expenditures for the
338 quadrennium preceding. The treasurer shall be bonded through a suitable bond of a
339 surety company of recognized standing and in an amount fixed by the Committee.
340

341 d. The Committee shall meet at least annually, or on the call of the chairperson or of a
342 majority of the members thereof. Telephone conference meeting and audio-
343 conferencing are acceptable.
344

345 e. No member or employee of any group or any trustee or employee of any
346 institution, which is a beneficiary of the Jurisdictional Conference budget, shall be
347 eligible for membership on the Committee. The expense of the Committee shall be
348 paid out of the Jurisdictional Conference Expense Budget.
349

350 f. It shall be the duty of the Committee to make a careful study of the expense of
351 administration and the causes that may properly be included in the annual
352 Jurisdictional Conference budget, and to recommend to each succeeding quadrennial
353 session of the Jurisdictional Conference for its action and determination an annual
354 budget, showing the share of each Annual Conference in the total. The budget as
355 adopted shall be the Jurisdictional Conference budget for the ensuing quadrennium,
356 including annual budgeted amounts for the ensuing quadrennium, and the
357 apportionment to each Annual Conference as finally determined by the Jurisdictional
358 Conference shall be its annual share in the said budget. Only such items as are
359 distinctly related to the work of the jurisdiction shall be included in the Jurisdictional
360 budget. The jurisdictional treasurer shall transmit annually to the treasurer of each
361 Annual Conference, not less than 120 days prior to the regular annual meeting of each

362 Annual Conference, a statement of the amount apportioned such Annual Conference
363 for Jurisdictional causes. The Annual Conference shall apportion the same among the
364 charges of the conference in such manner as it may determine. The Annual
365 Conference treasurer shall remit each month to the treasurer of the jurisdiction the
366 amount on hand for Jurisdictional causes.
367

368 g. The fiscal year of the Southeastern Jurisdiction shall be January 1 through
369 December 31. All accounts of the Committee on Finance and Administration shall be
370 kept accordingly.
371

372 h. The Committee on Finance and Administration may give authority to its treasurer
373 to borrow funds from any reputable bank or trust company to meet any obligation of
374 the Jurisdictional Conference duly authorized in the regular annual budget of the
375 conference; provided, the outstanding indebtedness shall at no time exceed twenty-
376 five percent of the annual budget.
377

378 i. Should any urgent and pressing need arise that had not been anticipated in fixing
379 the jurisdictional budget, and should the same in the judgment of the Committee
380 constitute an emergency, the Committee on Finance and Administration may alter the
381 percentage allowance to any or all agencies or causes receiving funds from
382 Jurisdictional Conference apportionments, or may increase the apportionments to the
383 several annual conferences of the jurisdiction to meet the emergency; provided, such
384 action must be approved by a three-fourths vote of the Committee.
385

386 j. The Committee shall include in the proposed Jurisdictional budget recommended to
387 the Jurisdictional Conference for its actions and determination the following items:

388 i.) The Jurisdictional Conference Expense Budget, which shall provide for the
389 expense of the quadrennial meeting of the Jurisdictional Conference or any
390 called meetings of the same, and the expense incurred in the preparation of
391 such meeting.
392

393 ii.) The Jurisdictional Operating Budget, which shall make provision for the
394 expense of the Jurisdictional personnel in the performance of the stated duties
395 and for the expense of meetings of the committees of the Jurisdiction as
396 defined in Section V. Items in the Administrative Committee budget for
397 salaries and other administrative costs shall be a prior claim against the
398 jurisdictional fund each month.
399

400 iii.) Other items which in the judgment of the Committee should be included
401 in the annual Jurisdictional Operating Fund.
402

403 C-B. Nominating Committee

404

405 There shall be a committee of thirty persons who will serve as a Nominating Committee to consider
406 nominations for the general boards and agencies, and designated Jurisdictional Committees. There
407 shall be two persons from each conference, one of whom shall be a laity delegate and one of whom

408 shall be a clergy delegate, elected to this committee by the Annual Conference delegation. At least
409 two weeks prior to the conference, the members of the Nominating Committee shall be provided
410 with:

411
412 1. A list of the names of the persons being offered by each Annual Conference to the
413 Jurisdictional pool for consideration as members of the respective program boards,
414 commissions, councils, and agencies. These shall be listed by categories on a form prescribed
415 by the General Conference Secretary. Each person's ethnic background shall be indicated
416 (e.g., Native American, Asian, African-American, etc.). An asterisk shall be placed by the
417 name of any person who is an incumbent and who is eligible for re-election, together with the
418 name of the agency on which he/she is serving.

419
420 2. A recommendation of procedure to be followed by the Nominating Committee.

421
422 3. A reminder that the Nominating Committee shall not only seek to maintain insofar as
423 possible the recommendations of the 2016 *Book of Discipline* for having one-third
424 representation each of clergy, lay women, and lay men on general church agencies, with
425 attention given to including youth, young adults, older adults, racial and ethnic persons,
426 persons with handicapping conditions, and persons from small-membership churches, but
427 that these same provisions shall be applicable to the total number of nominations made from
428 each Annual Conference to the agencies of the general church.

429
430 4. A list of the total number of nominees to which each Annual Conference is entitled to the
431 agencies of the general church other than those which the Discipline specifically mandates.
432 These numbers shall correspond to the percentage of members, rounded off to the nearest
433 whole, which each Annual Conference has of the total members of the jurisdiction;
434 notwithstanding the above, the Red Bird Missionary Conference shall be represented in the
435 nominations. In compiling this list, the following nominations shall not be included: those
436 which come from recommendation of the United Methodist Women in Faith for the General
437 Board of Global Ministries, those for the National Council of Churches, and those which
438 come from another agency or group and are only reported by the Nominating Committee.
439 The information from the annual conferences shall be in the hands of the Jurisdictional
440 Conference Secretary no later than June 20. The members of the committee shall bring
441 preference sheets and biographical data for prospective nominees to the first meeting of the
442 committee from the respective conferences. The Nominating Committee shall be convened
443 for organizational purposes at the site of the conference by the president of the College of
444 Bishops of the jurisdiction at 2:00 p.m. three days prior to the opening of the Southeastern
445 Jurisdictional Conference. Per Diem expenses for the Nominating Committee shall be
446 provided for the extra days. Nominations shall be in the hands of the conference at a
447 minimum of-three-hours before being presented for election.

448
449 D. C. Committee on Episcopacy

450
451 The membership of the Committee on Episcopacy shall consist of one clergy and one lay delegate to
452 the Jurisdictional Conference from each Annual Conference elected by the Jurisdictional Conference
453 upon nomination of their respective Annual Conference delegations (§524.1 of *The Book of*

454 *Discipline* 2016). Each quadrennium, the Committee shall be officially constituted with the election
455 of officers and begin its work at the conclusion of the previous quadrennium's jurisdictional
456 conference session. The committee will continue its work through the conclusion of the following
457 jurisdictional conference when the new committee is constituted.
458

459 The sitting Committee on Episcopacy shall report to the conference the church membership statistics
460 of the Southeastern Jurisdiction and the number of Bishops to which the Jurisdiction is entitled on
461 the basis of church membership and shall recommend to the conference the number of Bishops to be
462 elected and the process and manner of their election (cf. Rule 17). The committee shall perform such
463 other duties as are set forth in ¶¶406.1, 524 of *The Discipline* 2016.
464

465 The Committee will recommend minimum housing guidelines for every episcopal residence
466 committee in the Jurisdiction.
467

468 E. D. Committee on Appeals

469

470 There shall be a Committee on Appeals elected in accordance with ¶2716.1 of *The Book of*
471 *Discipline of The United Methodist Church* 2016.
472

473 F. E. Committee on Investigation

474

475 There shall be a Committee on Investigation elected in accordance with ¶2703 of *The Discipline*
476 2016.
477

478 G. F. Administrative Committees

479

480 Nominations to the administrative committees shall be printed in the first edition of the Daily
481 Christian Advocate.
482

483 1. Committee on Plan of Organization and Rules of Order

484 There shall be a committee of five, known as the Committee on Plan of Organization and
485 Rules of Order, of which the secretary and treasurer of the conference shall be ex-officio
486 members. The committee shall be convened by the conference secretary or designee until a
487 chairperson is elected. To this committee shall be referred any proposed amendments to the
488 Plan of Organization and Rules of Order (see Rule 38). This committee shall restudy the Plan
489 of Organization and Rules of Order between sessions of the Jurisdictional Conference and,
490 after making such needed changes and adaptations therein as in their judgment are necessary,
491 shall present them to the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference for consideration and final
492 action. Any recommendation by the committee as to the organization of the standing
493 committees, their names, number, and responsibilities (except the Committee on the
494 Episcopacy) shall be transmitted to the secretary prior to the convening of the Jurisdictional
495 Conference. The secretary shall notify the head of each delegation the standing committees
496 as recommended by the Committee on Plan of Organization and Rules of Order so that
497 delegates may make their choice of committee assignments. The committee shall have the
498 authority to consult with various persons and agencies in the exercise of this authority. The
499 Plan of Organization and Rules of Order of the preceding Southeastern Jurisdictional

500 Conference, thus adopted and published in the journal, shall be the Plan of Organization and
501 Rules of Order until they have been altered or amended by the action of the Southeastern
502 Jurisdictional Conference.

503
504 2. Committee on Journal
505

506 There shall be a committee of three, known as the Committee on Journal, which shall
507 examine the record of the secretary daily during the session. Any error subsequently
508 discovered in a section of the journal materials, which has been verified, shall be corrected.
509

510 3. Agenda Committee
511

512 There shall be a committee of five, known as the Agenda Committee. The senior effective
513 Bishop and the Conference Secretary shall be two of the committee members. It shall be the
514 responsibility of this committee to see that all items of business required by The Discipline of
515 the church are brought to the attention of the Jurisdictional Conference. Any consideration,
516 proposal, resolution, or communication, which does not clearly refer to the business of the
517 Jurisdictional Conference, as prescribed in the Discipline shall be referred to the Agenda
518 Committee, which shall determine whether or not it shall be presented to the conference and
519 also whether it shall be printed in the Daily Christian Advocate. The Agenda Committee
520 shall report to the Jurisdictional Conference the disposition made of all matters, which have
521 been referred to the Committee. The Agenda Committee shall consult with the Committee of
522 Chairpersons regarding the inclusion of standing committee reports on the agenda of the
523 conference.
524

525 No petition shall be assigned to any Jurisdictional Conference committee unless it comes
526 from some organization, clergy person, or member of The United Methodist Church and
527 contains information essential to the verification of the alleged facts concerning its origin. All
528 petitions shall be presented to the Conference Secretary. Each should deal with only one
529 general subject. All petitions requiring funding shall be so designated and the amount to be
530 specified. Petitions with financial implications shall be referred to the Southeastern
531 Jurisdictional Committee on Finance and Administration for their review and
532 recommendation to the conference. All petitions shall be in the hands of the secretary of the
533 conference no later than fourteen days prior to the opening of the conference.
534

535 The Agenda committee shall receive all petitions dealing with the regular business of the
536 conference and, after ascertaining that they meet the requirements herein specified, shall
537 distribute them among the several committees according to their respective responsibilities. It
538 may also withhold from reference or publication any document it shall deem improper,
539 promptly advising the author or authors thereof of its action in order that an appeal may be
540 made to the conference, if desired.
541

542 When the Agenda committee determines that the particular item of business does not
543 naturally flow toward an existing committee, it shall authorize the creation of an ad hoc
544 committee to deal with this particular item. Upon authorization, the Conference Secretary
545 will contact each delegation leader with a description of the business item and a meeting time

546 and place for the committee (including the possibility of a conference call prior to the
547 convening of conference). The delegation leader will be asked to designate one delegate to
548 represent his/her annual conference on the ad hoc committee. The Conference Secretary or
549 designee shall convene the meeting until a chairperson is elected. The ad hoc committee will
550 consider the item of business and prepare a recommended action for conference's
551 consideration.

552
553 4. Committee on Program and Arrangements

554
555 There shall be a Jurisdictional Conference Program and Arrangements Committee composed
556 of one Bishop, who shall be chairperson; a district superintendent designated by the Bishop;
557 the Secretary of the Jurisdictional Conference; the Treasurer of the Jurisdictional Conference;
558 the chairperson Committee on Coordination and Accountability; the president of the
559 jurisdiction United Methodist Women in Faith or designee; the president of the jurisdiction
560 United Methodist Men or designee; and the chairperson of the Jurisdictional Association of
561 Annual Conference Lay Leaders or designee; the chairperson of the sitting Committee on
562 Episcopacy or designee; and five (5) others who may be selected to insure inclusivity and
563 expertise. The Bishop serving on this committee shall be selected in the order of seniority
564 from the effective Bishops of the jurisdiction. The duties of the committee shall be to arrange
565 the program and logistics for the Jurisdictional Conference, other than that covered by the
566 Plan of Organization. It shall be established policy of the Southeastern Jurisdiction to have a
567 program that will present to the conference a challenge on behalf of the work of the church in
568 its worldwide mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

569
570 The Conference Secretary will organize a team to execute the program planned and the
571 logistical needs of the conference following the guidance of the Committee on Program and
572 Arrangements. Members of this team will be invited to Committee meetings as determined
573 by the senior Bishop and Conference Secretary.

574
575 5. Committee on Chairpersons

576
577 There may be one or more meetings of all committee chairpersons as determined by the
578 Agenda committee. Such meetings may seek to coordinate and streamline the business of the
579 conference or seek to resolve inter-committee disagreements or difficulty. The secretary of
580 the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference shall convene the Committee of Chairpersons.

581
582 6. Tellers

583
584 There shall be a committee of ~~thirty~~ to act as tellers for the purpose of assisting with the
585 ballots ordered by the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference. The committee shall be
586 composed of one clergy and one laity delegate from each of the annual conferences in the
587 Southeastern Jurisdiction. For purposes of this committee only, reserve delegates may be
588 nominated by their delegation and elected as balloting tellers. The committee shall be divided
589 into two groups of fifteen each. In case of emergency, additional tellers may be drafted into
590 service from among the delegation membership.

591

592 H. G. Financial Implications

593
594 The SEJ Conference shall submit any petition or proposal requiring funding from committees,
595 organizations or individuals to the Committee on ~~Finance and Administration (CFA)~~ Coordination
596 and Accountability (CCA) for study and recommendations prior to consideration. Submissions shall
597 be made no later than 6:00 PM of the day prior to the ~~CFA~~ CCA report.

598
599 VI. DELEGATES' EXPENSE ACCOUNTS

600
601 A. The report of the Delegation Head shall be the basis for settlement with principal and reserve
602 delegates for their Per Diem allowance.
603
604 B. Travel expense for delegates and first lay and clergy reserve to the conference shall be reimbursed
605 as directed by the conference upon recommendation of the Committee on ~~Finance and~~
606 ~~Administration~~ Coordination and Accountability. The total travel expense shall be payable to the
607 principal delegate if he/she be present and seated. If during the session of the conference a reserve
608 beyond the first lay or clergy reserve must be seated in his/her place, he/she shall adjust the travel
609 expense with such reserve on the basis of the time served by each.

610
611
612 VII. EDITORIAL CHANGES

613
614 The Conference Secretary may make editorial changes to the Plan of Organization or Rules of Order
615 whenever there is a need to update Disciplinary references or law, or to clarify language without
616 changing the meaning or intent. Any proposed editorial changes must be approved by two-thirds of
617 the Rules Committee.
618

**Boards of Directors of the SEJ-Related Agencies and Ministries
and Emory University**

**Gulfside Association, Inc.
Board of Directors
September 2022**

Cheryl Thompson, Executive Director	Louisiana Annual Conference
<i>Rev. Dr. Elijah Stansell</i> , President	Texas Annual Conference
<i>Rev. Dr. Vincent Harris</i> , Vice Chair	Texas Annual Conference
Vera Thomas, Vice Chair	Mississippi Annual Conference
Ora Franklin, Secretary	Mississippi Annual Conference
David Stotts, Treasurer	Mississippi Annual Conference
Eva Baham, PhD	Louisiana Annual Conference
<i>Rev. Nathaniel Barkum</i>	Mississippi Annual Conference
David Beckley, PhD	Mississippi Annual Conference
<i>Bishop Earl Bledsoe</i>	New Mexico Annual Conference
Delano Funches, JD	Mississippi Annual Conference
Erin Hawkins	California Annual Conference
<i>Rev. Lindsey Robinson</i>	Mississippi Annual Conference
Dr. James Salley	South Carolina Annual Conference
Cory Sparks, PhD	Louisiana Annual Conference
<i>Bishop James Swanson</i>	Mississippi Annual Conference
<i>Rev. Dr. Jacqui Rose Tucker</i>	North Georgia Annual Conference

**Hinton Rural Life Center
Board of Directors**

Ricky Beggs, Second Term, WNC Conference
Rev. Kevin Days, Second Term, NGA Conference
David Elder, First Term, NGA Conference
Mark Franza, First Term, WNC Conference
Christina Goings Russell, First Term, WNC Conference
Dr. Jacqueline Gottlieb (Ex Officio), WNC Conference
Don Homer, Jr., First Term, HOL Conference
Rev. Kathleen Kilbourne, First Term, FL Conference
Rev. Dr. Jae Lee, First Term, WNC Conference
Rev. Dr. Stephen Love, First Term, SC Conference
Harvey Lowd, First Term, WNC Conference
Bil Meldram, Second Term, WNC Conference
Rev. Dr. Tim Moore, First Term, WNC Conference
Brian Pace, Second Term, WNC Conference
Mary Jo Reeves, Second Term, NGA Conference
Blaine Russell, First Term, WNC Conference
Alexa Smarr, First Term, WNC Conference
Mollie Stewart, Third Term, NAL Conference
Matt Waldroup, First Term, Louisiana Conference
Jeff Stuerman (Honorary), Missouri Conference
Rev. Dr. Al Ward (Honorary), WNC Conference

Lake Junaluska Assembly, Inc.
Board of Directors

D'Andre Ash, WNC Conference
Amy Bradley, NC Conference
Rev. Gina Gilland Campbell, Rio Texas Conference
Bishop Ken Carter, WNC Conference
Rev. Pam Carter, WNC Conference
Ryan Church, TWK Conference
Susan Slye Giles, WNC Conference
Rev. Stephanie Hand, WNC Conference
David Hanson, not United Methodist
Camilla Hicks, Baltimore-Washington Conference
Bishop Jonathan Holston, SC Conference
Nancy Hood, WNC Conference
Dr. Ken Jenkins, SC Conference
Frances Jones, not United Methodist
George Kenney, WNC Conference
Charles W. Lipp, WNC Conference
Jody Lipscomb, WNC Conference
Bill Musgrave, WNC Conference
Rev. Mickey Rainwater, HOL Conference
John Scott, KY Conference
Rev. Dr. Connie Shelton, MS Conference
Melvin Spain, TWK Conference
Robert Taft, WNC Conference
Bishop Debra Wallace-Padgett, HOL Conference
Anne Warren, NAL Conference

SEJ Commission on Archives and History
SEJ Heritage Center
Board of Directors 2021-2024

Alabama-West Florida Conference

Term (1)
Jackie Earnest
5957 Alabama Hwy. 153
Deatsville, AL 36022

Florida Conference

Term (2)
Leah Pittard
4061 Taggart Cay North, Apt. 103
Sarasota, FL 34233

Holston Conference

Term (1)
Mike Feely – *Vice Chairperson*
9148 Colchester Ridge Rd.
Knoxville, TN 37922

Kentucky Conference

Term (2)
Foster Ockerman, Jr. – *Chairperson*
835 Glendover Rd.
Lexington, KY 40502

Mississippi Conference

Term (1)
The Reverend Marcus Thompson
736 Monterey Rd.
Pearl, MS 39208

North Alabama Conference

Term (2)
George Cobb, D.D.
4665 Neely Street
Cedar Bluff, AL 35959

North Carolina Conference

Term (1)
The Reverend Bryan Huffman
2315 Elizabeth Ave.
New Bern, NC 28562

North Georgia Conference

Term (1)
Ginger Hicks Smith - *Secretary*
2664 River Oak Dr.
Decatur, GA 30033

Central Appalachian Missionary Conference

Term (1)
The Rev. Robert Amundsen
95 Red Bird Rd.
Thousandsticks, KY 41766

South Carolina Conference

Term (1)
A.V. Huff
30 Glenrose Ave.
Greenville, SC 29617

South Georgia Conference

Term (2)
Ellen Reynolds
617 Briarcliff Rd.
Warner Robins, GA 31088

Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference

Term (1)
Gratia Strother
520 Commerce St., Suite 205
Nashville, TN 37203

Virginia Conference

Term (2)
Laurie Preston
McGraw-Page Library
Randolph-Macon College
PO Box 5005
Ashland, VA 23005-5505

Western North Carolina Conference

Term (2)
Dr. Sandra T. Williamson
6024 Tamannary Dr.
Greensboro, NC 27455

At-Large Members

Term (2)
Larry Davis, MBA, CCA – *Treasurer*
Treasurer/Director of Administrative Services
Tennessee-Western Kentucky United
Methodist Conference
304 South Perimeter Park Drive
Nashville TN 37211

Term (2)
Natalie J. Hawkins
1465 South Lakeshore Dr., Unit B4
Lake Junaluska, NC 28745

Term (2)
Steve Lyles
81 Willow Rise
Alexander City, Alabama 35010

Term (2)
David Martin
PO Box 184
4474 Brick Church Pike
Whites Creek, TN 37189

Term (1)
Brandon Wason, PhD
Pitts Theology Library
Emory University
1531 Dickey Drive, #560
Atlanta, GA 30322

Ex-Officio Members

President, SEJ Historical Society
The Rev. Dr. Roger Gramling
31 Palmetto Wood Court
Irmo, SC 29063-2882

Director, SEJ Heritage Center
Nancy Watkins
SEJ Heritage Center
125 N. Lakeshore Dr., Suite 3
Lake Junaluska, NC 28745

**Intentional Growth Center
Board of Directors**

Elaine Robinson Beattie

5570 Victoria Place
Ellenwood, Ga 30294
Term: Began 2021
Laity

Mark Conforti

217 South Church Street
Salisbury, NC 28144
Term: Began 2022
Clergy, Western North Carolina Conference

Ellie Crain

2213 Fernwood Drive
Nashville, TN 37216
Term: Began 2021
Laity

Amanda Dean

4893 Preserve Drive
Chattanooga, TN 37416
Term: Began 2021
Clergy, Holston Conference

Donna Gaither

246 Henry Dingus Way
Maggie Valley, NC 28751
Term: Began 2014
Clergy, TWK Conference

Bill Gattis

585 Gilmore Rd. Chapel Hill, NC 27516
16 J.B. Ivey Ln. Lake Junaluska, NC 28745
Term: Began 2018
Clergy, North Carolina Conference

Alison Malloy

2233 Cartwright Place
Reston, VA 20191
Term: Began 2020
Laity

Derrick Scott

4158 Trieste Place
Jacksonville, FL 32244
Term: Began 2022
Laity

Marcus Stallworth

110 Linden Avenue
Cobbs Creek, VA 23035
Term: Began 2022
Clergy, Virginia Annual Conference

2022 IGC Board Officers

Board Chair: Donna Gaither
Vice Chair: Alison Malloy
Finance Chair: Bill Gattis
Secretary: Elaine Robinson Beattie

Staff

Leslie Butters

12514 Twelvetrees Lane
Huntersville, NC 28078
Email: lbutters@IntentionalGrowthCenter.org

**United Methodist Volunteers in Mission,
Southeastern Jurisdiction (UMVIM, SEJ)
Board of Directors**

Rev. Robert Craig, President
Memphis Conference

Mr. Derrick Scott, Vice President
Florida Conference

Rev. Shannon Baxter, Secretary
South Georgia Conference

Mr. Daniel Kasbohm, Treasurer
North Georgia Conference

Bishop James Swanson, Sr.
College of Bishops Representative

Rev. Nathan Arledge
North Carolina Conference

Rev. Lisa Pierce
Alabama-West Florida Conference

Mr. Brian Mateer
Western North Carolina Conference

Mrs. Abby Stanton
Tennessee Conference

Mr. Miles Baker Hunt
North Carolina Conference

Rev. Elizabeth Pollard
North Georgia Conference

Vacant Position (TBD)
Florida Conference

Rev. Vicki Walker
Florida Conference

Ms. Una Jones, Ex Officio
United Methodist Volunteers in Mission
Global Ministries

Rev. Matt Lacey, Ex Officio
SEJ United Methodist Volunteers in Mission

Pam Garrison, Liaison
United Methodist Committee on Relief
Global Ministries

**Emory University Board of Trustees
June 2022**

Kathelen Amos 79C – Secretary	Deborah Ann Marlowe 80C
Facundo L. Bacardi 96L	William T. McAlilly 81T – Vice Chair
Thomas I. Barkin	Lee P. Miller 82L
William A. Brosius 85B	Gregory V. Palmer
Sarah B. Brown 89B	John G. Rice
James W. Burns 93C	Rick M. Rieder 83B
Crystal Edmonson 95C	Teresa M. Rivero 85 OX 87B 93MPH
Shantella Carr Cooper 89C 95B	Adam H. Rogers 92C 96M
Allison Dukes 06B	William H. Rogers
Andrew W. Evans 88C	Timothy C. Rollins
Robert C. Goddard III – Chair	Stuart A. Rose 76B
Javier C. Goizueta	Cynthia M. Sanborn 87C
David W. Graves 90T	Leah Ward Sears 80L – Vice Chair
Sue Hauptert-Johnson 95T	Rosa Tarbutton Sumter 89C
L. Jonathan Holston	Mitchell A. Tanzman 81C
Muhtar Kent	Gregory J. Vaughn 87C
John L. Latham 79L	William C. Warren IV 79M 82 MR
Allegra Lawrence-Hardy	Mark A. Weinberger 83C
Jonathan K. Layne 79B 79L – Vice Chair	Edward Jenner Wood III

Report of the Committee on Finance and Administration

The SEJ Committee on Finance and Administration (CFA) was created by the 2008 SEJ Conference in the Plan of Organization. The focus of the work of the SEJ CFA was to oversee jurisdictional finances. That included periodic review of the SEJ Agencies finances.

2021- 2024 Budget. While the 2017-2020 quadrennium budget remained in effect until a new budget is approved by the SEJ Jurisdictional Conference, the Jurisdiction is currently operating on the lower budget that is being presented to you today. The GCFA formula was used to establish apportionments to the SEJ Annual Conferences.

Apportionment. Your CFA recommends a reduction of approximately 15.44% for the 2021–2024 quadrennium, to **\$1,500,000**. This amount is projected to be sufficient for the ongoing operational costs of the Jurisdiction and its committees; covering expense of the 2021 called SEJ Conference; providing financial assistance for attendance at the Global Youth Event; as well as provide a cushion for unforeseen contingencies as the future unfolds; and should there be a need to fund emerging ministries or an additional special called session of Jurisdictional Conference during the quadrennium.

SEJ Treasurer. We wish to acknowledge and thank David Domnisse Treasurer of the Southeastern Jurisdiction, for his service to the Jurisdiction since 2015. CFA is thankful for David’s gift of his service, experience and expertise to our Jurisdiction. CFA is nominating David Domnisse to continue as Treasurer for the SEJ.

SEJ Audits. Jurisdictional Financial Records have been audited each fiscal year. For the fiscal years ending December 31, 2019 and 2020, CFA engaged the services of Dixon Hughes Goodman (which recently changed its name to FORVIS, LLP) to audit our financials. The most recent financial report by SEJ’s auditors is posted on the SEJ website at www.sejumc.org.

Over the quadrennium, the SEJ CFA and the Committee on Coordination and Accountability (CCA) met jointly with representatives of the SEJ Agencies and reviewed their financial reports. We provided feedback to the agencies from our perspective on the ministries to the Jurisdiction. You will find more about that process in the CCA report found elsewhere in this Advanced Daily Christian Advocate.

During the quadrennium, additional financial assistance has been provided to the Episcopacy Committee and College of Bishops in the form of grants. We provided grants of up to \$4,000 to agencies and ministries for improving their media presence. We provided COVID pandemic relief grants to the agencies and ministries totaling \$125,000.

Recognizing the financial hardship the pandemic created for the churches in the jurisdiction and the resulting impact on the Annual Conferences, CFA provided an “Apportionment Holiday” to annual conferences during July through September 2020. The effect of this holiday was to give 100% credit to conferences that paid 75% of the annual apportionment.

Additionally, in 2021 CFA returned to the annual conferences \$1,095,000, in the form of grants, from the net assets of the jurisdiction.

While CFA has provided reimbursement to agencies and ministries of up to \$10,000 each year for their completed annual audit of their financial records, CFA will end this support following the audit of fiscal year 2022. The 2021-2024 proposed budget reflects this decision.

CFA approved paying ongoing legal expense regarding cases against the SEJ in the Boy Scouts of America Abuse Litigation.

Both CFA and CCA were shocked and saddened to learn of the senseless murder of Aтура Eason-Williams during a carjacking outside her home. Aтура was a gifted and fearless spiritual leader. Aтура was loved and admired across the United Methodist Church. She was serving as the Secretary of the SEJ CFA at the time of her death. She will be deeply missed.

A detailed Proposed Budget with Apportionments to the Annual Conferences follows this report. That report reflects a faithful commitment to the ministries of the Jurisdiction with collections on apportioned funds to a projected payment of over 98% in the current quadrennium.

The Committee on Finance and Administration of The Southeastern Jurisdiction of The United Methodist Church presents the following recommendations to the 2022 Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference for action:

1. We recommend a budget for the 2021-2024 quadrennium in the total amount of \$1,500,000 allocated as provided in the Proposed Budget which follows.
2. We recommend that this amount be apportioned to the annual conferences as also provided in the Proposed Budget which follows.
3. In conjunction with the CCA, members of CFA have agreed that good stewardship of resources calls for a reduction in the structure of both the CCA and CFA. We support the CCA recommended changes to the SEJ Plan of Organization.
4. We recommend the election of David Dommissе as Treasurer of the Southeastern Jurisdiction for the 2021–2024 quadrennium.

Respectfully submitted,

Frank Dunnewind, *Chair*

**Committee on Finance and Administration
Proposed Budget and Apportionments
2021-2024**

SEJ Proposed Budget

	2017-2020 Budget	2017-2020 Actual	2017-2020 Budget to Actual Variance	2021-2024 Proposed Budget
Income				
Apportioned	1,774,000	1,774,000	-	1,500,000
Less: Allowance for uncollected apportionments	(89,000)	(39,326)	49,674	(75,000)
Interest income	-	102,188	102,188	1,425,000
Total Income	1,685,000	1,836,862	151,862	1,425,000
Expenses				
Jurisdictional Conference Session	500,000	7,773	(492,227)	450,000
Called Sessions, Operations and Contingency	245,000	26,871	(218,129)	100,000
Committee on Coordination and Accountability				
Board expenses	69,000	28,584	(40,416)	60,000
Conference Secretary, taxes and travel	80,000	69,381	(10,619)	100,000
Pre-GC Educational program for SEJ Delegates	10,000	-	(10,000)	10,000
2020 Projected Grants-Pandemic Relief Grants		125,000	125,000	
Committee on Finance and Administration				
Board expenses	38,000	20,632	(17,368)	40,000
SEJ Treasurer	80,000	80,449	449	80,000
Audit	60,000	53,300	(6,700)	60,000
Insurance	10,000	6,099	(3,901)	15,000
Legal fees	-	-	-	10,000
Agency audit support/reimbursement	200,000	106,200	(93,800)	110,000
Young People's Global Convocation	-	-	-	5,000
Bishop's meeting support request		26,340	26,340	
Committee on Episcopacy	82,000	130,208	48,208	125,000
Committee on Appeals	25,000	4,229	(20,771)	25,000
Commission on Archives and History	240,000	257,138	17,138	260,000
Committee on Program and Arrangements	15,000	3,870	(11,130)	25,000
Miscellaneous administrative expenses	31,000	9,892	(21,108)	20,000
Total Expenses	1,685,000	955,966	(729,034)	1,495,000
Net Revenues/(Expenses)	-	880,896	880,896	(70,000)
Beginning fund balance	1,262,536	1,262,536		1,048,426
Total Fund Balance	1,262,536	2,143,432		978,426
Funds returned in 2021 to Conferences		(1,095,006)		
Remaining fund balance		1,048,426		

Proposed Annual Conference Apportionments 2021-2024

Proposed Annual Conference Apportionments 2021-2024

	Per GCFA	2021-2024	Annual
Alabama- West Florida Conf	6.315%	94,720	23,676
Florida Conference	12.161%	182,410	45,600
Holston Conference	5.573%	83,590	20,904
Kentucky Conference	4.387%	65,800	16,452
Mississippi Conference	5.095%	76,430	19,104
North Alabama Conference	6.298%	94,470	23,616
North Carolina Conference	7.195%	107,930	26,976
North Georgia Conference	12.895%	193,430	48,360
Red Bird Missionary Conference	0.034%	520	132
South Carolina Conference	7.822%	117,330	29,328
South Georgia Conference	4.592%	68,880	17,220
Tennessee-West Kentucky Conference	7.125%	106,870	26,724
Virginia Conference	9.982%	149,730	37,428
Western North Carolina Conference	10.526%	157,890	39,480
Southeastern Total	100.000%	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 375,000

Resolution for Name Change

Red Bird Missionary Conference

WHEREAS, the Red Bird Missionary Conference has a 100+ year history of serving the people of Central Appalachia, making disciples, providing Christian education, and facilitating fellowship in the Eastern Kentucky region; and

WHEREAS, at the 2020 session of the Red Bird Missionary Conference held virtually on September 12, 2020, delegates voted to change the name of the Missionary Conference to The Central Appalachian Missionary Conference; and

WHEREAS, for reasons discerned to be missionally effective, and to fulfill the mission of the Conference to serve the entire Central Appalachian Region of Kentucky, the naming of the Conference as Central Appalachian Missionary Conference more clearly identifies the Conference in its scope and mission;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the delegates of the 2022 Session of the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference, as authorized in compliance with paragraph 41 Article IV of *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church 2016*, are requested to affirm the name change of the Red Bird Missionary Conference to The Central Appalachian Missionary Conference.

Respectfully submitted by:
Bishop Leonard E. Fairley, Resident Bishop, Louisville Area
Rev. Karen Stigall, Conference Superintendent, Red Bird Missionary Conference
Rev. Robert Amundsen, Conference Secretary, Red Bird Missionary Conference

Reports of Episcopal Areas

ALABAMA-WEST FLORIDA AREA REPORT

Bishop David W. Graves

Over this past quadrennium, congregations of the Alabama-West Florida Conference have made great strides as they continue to focus on mission and ministry despite all that can distract them. With this have come times of great joy, and likewise times of great sorrow, especially as we have dealt with denominational struggles, a global pandemic, and natural disasters. However, out of times of uncertainty and tragedy, we have seen the birth of new ministries and rebirth of existing ministries. Additionally, we have seen ministries in our annual conference continue to expand and reach out to the outermost parts of the world.

There were four priorities that truly exemplify the work carried over from the previous quadrennium and helped guide our work over the first part of the current quadrennium. Those focus areas were:

- Growing God's kingdom by making disciples and developing a multiplication mindset throughout the annual conference.
- Attracting and retaining exceptional talent that helps promote a culture of call for clergy and laity.
- Teaching, training, and coaching to support excellent preaching so that people encounter Jesus and live out the Great Commission.
- Being adaptive leaders through uncharted times emphasizing connectionalism and focusing on Kingdom work.

The COVID-19 pandemic and denominational issues caused a level of uncertainty and anxiety within the congregations of our conference midway through this quadrennium. As such, we found it necessary to readjusted and sharpen our focus with three words in mind – proclaim, grow, and adapt. More specifically, we committed to:

- Proclaim the gospel in new and innovative ways.
- Grow more like Christ as individuals and churches; help to expand the kingdom of God on earth.
- Adapt our approach and leadership strategies as necessary.

As we speak of growing the kingdom through discipleship and developing a multiplication mindset, there are several ministry areas that come to mind. Communities of Transformation (COT) was rebranded in 2016 and expanded its footprint in our Annual Conference branching into Florida and launching additional sites in Alabama. Over this past quadrennium COT has continued to diversify its financial portfolio and partnerships. This has aided them in becoming a sustainable ministry that is not solely dependent on conference funding. COT continues to hold true to their mission of breaking the cycles of poverty and taking people from simply surviving to thriving.

In October 2018, our annual conference was hit by Hurricane Michael leaving a trail of destruction along the Florida panhandle. Out of this tragedy, a sustainable disaster response ministry was birthed. It was our goal to see how we could fund a continual disaster response team that would be organized and ready for when the next storm threat arose. This team has done great work in the wake of Hurricane Michael and has continued to reaffirm the need for this ministry as our conference has

endured Hurricanes Sally and Zeta along with a string of tornadoes that affected several rural and underserved areas within our annual conference. As a result of creating this sustainable disaster response ministry, Abide Community, a new church start, was birthed. With this model we have experienced discipleship-making at its best while also using entrepreneurial strategies to make sure that funding is always available for disaster response.

The pandemic hit many ministries hard throughout our connection, especially camping ministries. Many camping ministries did not survive. Blue Lake Camp, our own camping ministry, had to undergo an in-depth strategic plan. We are excited to have hired a new director and focused on that plan in such a way that we are seeing our camp beginning to survive and thrive once again. Camping ministry is a vital place where people grow spiritually, where they rest and renew, and where young people and people of all ages often find a call to a specific ministry and full-time ministries. We need our camping ministries to be healthy!

During this extended quadrennium, one of the best decisions made by the Office of Connectional Ministries was the hiring of a contract full-time grant writer. She has helped us secure millions of dollars in disaster response funds as well as funds to revitalize extension ministries and local ministries within our conference that help to serve the marginalized.

At the start of the quadrennium we began to experiment with learning cohorts and soon found that this was a great model for us to follow. We have continued to live into this model and have started several cohorts that speak to various interest groups. We provide cohorts for pastors of rural churches, children's ministry leaders, youth ministry leaders, female clergy of color, and those serving in older adult ministries. While many of these cohorts came about during the pandemic, hosting these in primarily virtual environments have made them cost-effective and convenient for participants.

In addition to hosting the learning cohorts, there were a number of other learning opportunities hosted virtually. Jason Moore led a "Both/And" training, and we hosted "Bishop's Time Apart" events primarily for clergy. At these virtual gatherings, we gained insights from John Paul Lederach, Susan Beaumont, Olu Brown, Tod Bolsinger, April Casperson, Leah Schade, and Stephen Handy. These events spoke to our focus of teaching, training, and coaching to support excellent preaching, but also created times of connection for our clergy during a time of isolation. Like the learning cohorts, these events had a dual benefit in that they were both cost-effective and convenient.

Alabama-West Florida's priority to promote a culture of call for clergy and laity continues with its partnership with the Huntingdon Leadership Academy. This reaffirms the importance of helping youth discern calls to vocational ministry – both as clergy or laity. This also gives us the opportunity to support a thriving ministry at one of our local United Methodist institutions – Huntingdon College.

An Excellence in Preaching Team was also created during this quadrennium. In 2018 and 2019 the team led a series of events to aid pastors in teaching and preaching as well as proclaiming the gospel in new and innovative ways – two of our priorities. As part of this effort, the team did a survey for clergy and laity defining preaching and identifying the crucial tasks that make preaching effective. They then had several events to help with sermon preparation and development.

For the last four years we have continued to live into our commitment with the United Methodist Church of Tanzania through our Teaming with Tanzania partnership. This is one of the ways we have been proclaiming the gospel in new and innovative ways. Several teams have traveled to Tanzania to conduct trainings with new teams planning to go in 2023. The pandemic has taught us to be adaptive in our leadership, and we have held a virtual leadership development seminar this fall. This seminar was attended by 24 pastors from 25 churches across three districts in Tanzania.

Our commitment to grow more like Christ as individuals and churches as well as our focus on racial justice has caused us to continue work on developing our cross-cultural competency and addressing the issue of racism within our conference. In this last quadrennium we have gotten four new Qualified Administrators for the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) who have conducted several IDI trainings with churches within the conference. In this same vein, the deaths of Ahmaud Arbery, George Floyd, and Breonna Taylor in 2020 charged us to live into our baptismal vows as United Methodists “to resist evil, injustice, and oppression.” That being so, the Coalition on Disrupting and Dismantling Racism was created to speak to the racial injustices happening both within our Conference and in the world. This coalition has hosted panel discussions, provided resources, and led a Lamentation of the History of Racism in Our Conference at the 2022 Annual Conference.

As mentioned at the start of this report, this quadrennium has had great moments of joy and celebration but has also had more than its fair share of trials, struggles, and uncertainty. But thanks be to God, we were equipped with all that we needed to weather this storm. While we are still in the midst of the storm, we are hopeful for the future of The United Methodist Church and specifically the Alabama-West Florida Conference.

BIRMINGHAM AREA REPORT

Bishop Debra Wallace-Padgett

During this extended quadrennium of 2016-2022, the North Alabama Conference has sought ways to increase our faith and witness. Our focus is on discipleship as we continue to navigate through this challenging season that has included the COVID-19 pandemic, racial injustices, political divisions, delayed General and Jurisdictional Conferences and continuing denominational conflict within our beloved United Methodist Church.

Here in North Alabama, we know that how we respond to these challenges is an opportunity to be a witness of God’s grace and love at work within us. Indeed, we believe that what we do and how we do it are of equal importance.

We have taken this time to pivot in ministry by using innovation, experimentation, and implementation of new strategies. This has included new experiences such as holding two virtual Annual Conferences due to COVID-19. The Cabinet and I have also partnered with the Multicultural Ministries Team, New and Renewing Church Team and Board of Ordained Ministry to sponsor an ongoing, online continuing education series called EVOLVE. These learning experiences

feature top-notch leaders who provide powerful tools, information and resources to help North Alabama Conference clergy and laity courageously lead into a future we cannot yet imagine.

We have also taken intentional steps to vision our future as an Annual Conference during this time of denominational uncertainty. Working with first the Context Team and now the NAC3 Team (a group of clergy and lay leaders committed to Christ, community and clarity) we are seeking to move forward together and develop a future where our differences allow us to reach more persons for Christ.

As we have been pivoting and experimenting, we have also continued our intentional focus on Conference ministry priorities and objectives. These have included:

- **New and Renewing Churches** – Through the leadership of our New and Renewing Church Team we have focused on developing “new places to reach new people” as an effective way to introduce new people to Jesus Christ. This has included numerous Fresh Expressions throughout our Annual Conference such as dinner churches, coffee house gatherings, summer waterfront worship services, accessible faith experiences at golf courses and many Celebrate Recovery groups across the Conference.
- **Multicultural Ministries** – We continue to strengthen and equip ethnic congregations in a variety of ways. For example, our new Multicultural Grant Cohort allows multiple congregations to walk with each other as they identify needs and work toward desired outcomes.
- **Ministry with the Poor** – This Conference priority is part of the heart and history of the North Alabama Conference. We have had numerous successful initiatives that enable us to be in ministry with our under-resourced neighbors. An example is the Bazillion Book Drive, during which all local churches were challenged to collect and donate new children’s books to agencies in their communities. In addition to working toward the goal of increasing childhood literacy, this drive also helped establish new ministry partnerships throughout our Conference. Since 2018 we have also provided life-changing summer mission experiences to college-age young adults exploring vocations of being in ministry with the poor. We have partnered with QuadW Missional Internship each summer to invest in our commitment to under-resourced communities.
- **Dismantling Racism** – During a time that has spotlighted racial injustices in our country, our Conference Leadership Team has committed to journeying together to increase our awareness, build interracial relationships, and develop a lifelong commitment to racial justice. These leaders have invited every local church to join them on this journey. As a Conference, we have developed resources and information to help our Christian witness include working for racial justice.
- **Discipleship Systems** – We recognize the local church is a primary venue for discipleship. Our Conference teams continue to resource congregations in this mission. We have also developed some Conference-wide opportunities for personal discipleship to encourage all North Alabama United Methodists to participate in life-changing holy habits. In 2018, we

offered a Conference event focused on prayer with the theme, “Lord Teach us to Pray: Prayerful Living in a Broken World.” The Conference Adult Discipleship Team has also led several spiritual-growth initiatives. The first is Read Together, where every year since 2019 the Conference has invited people to read through the entire Bible. A reading plan, weekly podcast and Facebook page for discussion are provided for participants. The team also has created the Pray Together podcast that invites people to expand their understanding of prayer as a way of life.

- **Clergy Care** – Our clergy have faced increasing levels of stress during this difficult season. Many had to learn new skills as they continued to minister faithfully during the pandemic. The conflict in our world and denomination are continuous stressors. Our Cabinet, Board of Ordained Ministry and Clergy Care Team have focused on ways to best support clergy including promoting personal care, providing needed resources, and creating renewal experiences.

The clergy and churches in North Alabama are a blessing to each other as well as Lee and me. Despite many challenges, the ministry of the North Alabama Conference remains strong and fruitful. I praise God for the privilege of knowing and serving the North Alabama Conference.

CHARLOTTE AREA REPORT **Bishop Kenneth H. Carter, Jr.**

I begin with a word of gratitude to the dedicated followers of Jesus Christ, laity and clergy, who lead local churches and extension ministries across the Western North Carolina Conference. I am blessed to serve in this episcopal area, and give thanks to God and the church for the assignment. In reading my previous report to this Jurisdictional Conference, and reflecting on reports of others over the past years, I am struck by how orderly they are. And in the present moment, I am conscious that the past few years present a challenge to our desire for order. The experience of a global pandemic has disrupted our ways of doing ministry, our sequencing of conferencing at every level of the church, and our discernment on the meaning of metrics that measure faithfulness and fruitfulness. This report will seek to give an account for the mission of this Western North Carolina Conference in these years, with the request that the reader consider the historical context, and reflect on it with some measure of grace. As I write I claim, through it all, the promises of God, in particular that the “One who began a good work in us will be faithful to complete it” (Philippians 1. 6).

It is essential, at the outset, to express gratitude to Bishop Paul Leeland, who served as the resident bishop of Charlotte Area for five of these six years (2016-2021). Paul and Janet were a warm, faithful and encouraging presence during these years, with a deep love for the church, and much of this report expresses ministry accomplished during their tenure.

My focus as an episcopal servant of Western North Carolina Conference has first been on the local church; a blessing in serving here is that I was a local church pastor in Western North Carolina for twenty eight years. With a diverse and gifted cabinet, we give several months a year to a process of discernment, along with the laity, in making appointments of clergy to local churches. The Western North Carolina Conference has made a major investment in planting new churches and in cultivating

fresh expressions of church. There are at present 984 local churches and 152 fresh expressions of church across the Western North Carolina Conference. In our focus on the local church, we have been seeking new places for new people, we have come alongside churches to move them from good to great (Transformation Journey); and, through the Bishop's Emerging Leadership Initiative, we have developed new and emerging leaders who will create and inspire fruitful congregations.

In our focus on Antiracism, the annual conference developed a Plan of Equity, established a Just Compensation Task Force, and named a Director of Equity and Justice Ministries, Dr. Bill White, who serves on the appointive cabinet. In addition, the conference implemented mandatory Antiracism Ethics training for all clergy throughout the quadrennium. The Board of Ordained Ministry instituted an Equitable Interview Process Covenant and Policy to ensure fairness. We are grateful for the partnership of the United Methodist Foundation of Western North Carolina in several aspects this journey.

In the area of Clergy Wellness and Development, the Duke Endowment offered intensive training in stress reduction practices. Through Ministerial Services, clergy and ministry professionals received grants for spiritual renewal. During COVID, the annual conference offered pension and health benefit cost relief to clergy and local churches. The Connexion Fund provided grants to help with salary costs for pastors. This focus has been essential, as the pandemic and public experiences of racial violence have contributed to health challenges among our clergy and spiritual leaders.

A fourth and emerging area of importance lies in our identity as United Methodists. I was privileged to serve as both a moderator of the Commission on a Way Forward and as a participant and signatory of the Protocol of Grace and Reconciliation through Separation; concurrent with this work we held listening forums and dialogues across the annual conference with clergy and laity leaders. And yet, in the aftermath of the 2019 General Conference and our Annual Conference held a few months following, there has been a deepening division and a climate of escalating conflict in our local churches.

We recognize the historic nature of the time in which we serve, and, again, we give thanks for those who serve and lead through the United Methodist Church. We affirm the principles of the #BeUMC initiative of making disciples of Jesus Christ, belonging and including, connection and impact, and experiencing the Triune God through the UMC. In our connection there is strength for today, and bright hope for tomorrow. God is good!

While we are on a journey toward accurate metrics that account for the complexity of the present moment, we share the following: the Western North Carolina Conference has 247,800 members, with an average worship attendance of 200,868 persons, and this includes the both/and of in-person and online; our apportionment giving has averaged 84%; and our members gave over \$250,000 to those whose lives were disrupted by the floods in Haywood County, near Lake Junaluska in the western mountains.

I want to conclude by thanking the assistant to the bishop, Rev. Amy Coles, whose ministry is a profound gift, and the cabinet of the Western North Carolina Conference. In addition I express gratitude to our conference staff, who have worked remotely and sacrificially in a challenging season. And I give thanks to Rev. Kim Ingram and Jennifer Davis, who serve on the SEJ Episcopacy

Committee. In a sixteen month period I have served two annual conferences, Florida and Western North Carolina. Here I thank my wife Pam for her patience and the people of both conferences for their understanding of the different working relationship. Lastly, I thank the people of the Western North Carolina Conference, with whom I have served over the past fifteen months. You were the conference that welcomed me into ordained ministry and gave me an opportunity to fulfill this calling. You have taught me about all that is good in our tradition—the grace of Jesus Christ, the love of God and neighbor as our path to holiness, and the connection of a people who hold us accountable in order to be faithful and fruitful. I am grateful to serve again among you.

Kenneth H. Carter, Jr.
Resident Bishop

COLUMBIA AREA REPORT **Bishop L. Jonathan Holston**

The South Carolina Annual Conference desires to live into the mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. In doing so, conference leaders have been immersed in the covenant to seek a more excellent way this quadrennium by connecting laity and clergy on every level. Building relationships, establishing trust and striving toward proficiency in respectful conversation around difficult issues have strengthened our ability to support and resource local churches as they gather the information necessary to reflect on their past, candidly assess their present reality within their communities, and discern their future opportunities for ministry.

In 2016-2017, we centered our endeavors to seek a more excellent way on the theme, “Making Space for God to Work.” Conference leadership embarked on a new, voluntary process developed by a team of clergy and laity that is based on The Book of Discipline ¶213. This “Forward Focus” process is uniquely designed for vitality rather than viability. It allows churches to discern their full potential, to seek a hopeful future for their congregation, and to help them decide what they need to shed to allow them to live into that hopeful future. Again visiting all 12 districts, conference leadership embarked on “The Bishop’s Forward Focus Tour,” seeking to encourage church leaders to take advantage of this process.

Forward Focus was designed to help local churches answer four basic questions: “Who are we? Who is our neighbor? What are we here for? What are we going to do about it?” Hundreds of South Carolina churches have employed this effective assessment tool to achieve a clear idea of the next steps for their congregation, to lead an informed discernment of God’s will for their congregation and to reclaim a healthy process for how their congregation should operate.

In October 2016, Hurricane Matthew ravaged some of the same communities that were still struggling to recover from historic floods a year earlier. The Disaster Recovery team made a difference in the lives of hundreds affected by both events with crucial support from the United Methodist Committee on Relief and thousands of volunteers and donors.

In 2017-2018, we practiced “Walking By Faith, Not By Sight.” Conference leaders and I visited each district to meet with church leadership teams, inviting them to consider how their congregations

could be equipped to walk faithfully into God’s vision for God’s church by reviewing the results of the congregations who already had participated in Forward Focus.

Simultaneously, a leadership challenge was issued to conference boards and agencies. Recognizing that the purpose of the Annual Conference is to equip local churches for ministry and connect them in ministry beyond themselves, the work and priorities of all conference agencies needed to shift toward this goal based on information now available. I posed two key questions to conference leaders through the Ministry Advisory Team – “How do we get all the boards, councils and committees talking about how Forward Focus will change the way they do their work?” and, “What necessary endings need to happen in order for all of these groups to re-orient themselves to local church vitality?”

In 2018-2019, the South Carolina Conference sought to be “In Mission From Anywhere to Everywhere.” This theme reminded churches that all congregations can be in mission with those in need around the block, around the country, and around the world – regardless of their size, budget or location.

The Cabinet turned with intentionality to a more organic model of leadership, one that seeks to meet local needs as identified by the superintendent as missional strategist working with their district leadership teams. This new flexibility resulted in more community-specific outreach during my 12 district visits, which included events and activities such as wrapping Christmas gifts at local stores, dialogue with young adults, preparing gift baskets for the elderly, and listening sessions with college students.

In September 2018, the third major disaster in four years struck our conference. Hurricane Florence caused severe flooding damage, again centered on communities that already had dealt with devastation in 2015 and 2016. The Disaster Recovery team – with financial and strategic help from UMCOR, other agencies, and volunteers and donors from around the world – set out to accompany communities in need over the long haul of their recovery.

In what we had expected to be the final year of the quadrennium, 2019-2020, conference leaders looked toward “A Future With Hope.” Throughout these sometimes-chaotic times, we echoed the importance of remaining focused on our mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. We encouraged congregations to be informed and to practice ways to be in conversation with each other, especially those with whom we might not always agree. We challenged each district leadership team to consider how we might best support and resource churches in their efforts to make disciples. Serving as an example of this hope-filled posture, we remained focused on meeting the diverse and specific needs in each geographic area during our district visits.

With the extension of the quadrennium into 2020-2021, we continued to seek a more excellent way – even amid the uncertainty of global pandemic, unrest and divisiveness. Inspired by the theme of our 2020 Annual Conference – “Beyond the Bounds of Expectations” – we began the process of aligning our efforts around “Our 4 Priorities,” identified by conference leadership as: Developing Leaders, Engaging Our Communities, Connecting With and Growing Disciples, and Measuring Current Realities and Evaluating Missional Possibilities.

With these priorities as the framework for the way we do ministry, we were able to pivot with confidence – leaning into the challenges and opportunities that arose during the COVID-19 pandemic. Conference leaders set the tone by maintaining focus on our mission, and intentionally and persistently encouraging district and local leaders to do the same. We developed, gathered and shared a raft of new digital tools to help local churches continue and expand ministry during this time of isolation. We worked to strengthen our Connection and maintain community across the conference in numerous ways, including my daily video prayer – still shared each day on the conference website, social media and email – and the establishment of Lay Leadership Virtual Retreats, through which we continue to build the relationships begun with episcopal visits to each district in previous years.

Even as we grappled with the complications of pandemic, we could not ignore the conflict and strife that often seemed to overwhelm our world – both within and outside the church. We initiated “Our Response To Racism,” a compendium of resources designed to provide tools to address racism through a response of love, education, communication and scriptural background, while working together as the body of Christ. These tools are intended to help groups learn about the history of racism in our nation, how to listen and hear often-difficult personal stories, and how to lead discussions that form and strengthen relationships. It is intended to be helpful in the process of healing in our churches and communities, viewing all as equal human beings.

In 2021-2022, the South Carolina Conference, still grappling with the uncertainty of pandemic, focused simply on “Taking The Next Faithful Step” – a theme that prompted us to see and act on what God put in front of us each day, and not to get caught up in the dread of an imagined future. This mindset allowed us to be fully present as we sought to resource local churches that were beginning to transition from fully online worship to fully in-person worship – or to a new hybrid model of worship. By “listening to the edges,” we developed a set of Best Practices for this time of transition – guidelines developed by a team of laity and clergy from the local church level. By “listening to the edges,” we heard the cry for help from so many of our clergy who were becoming overwhelmed by the stress of ministering to others, a responsibility further complicated during the pandemic. We commissioned a team of lay and clergy – comprised of both experts in various fields of care, and those who have experienced the need for that care – to address this urgent need. Our new Clergy Care Ministry provides a holistic approach to clergy self-care – physical, mental, emotional and spiritual. Resources range from coaching, counseling and spiritual direction; to personal video testimonials from fellow clergy; to opportunities for clergy to gather for time away – both virtually and in-person.

Building on the foundation established in the previous year, we fully introduced “Our 4 Priorities” to laity and clergy across the conference, leading to their formal adoption by the 2021 South Carolina Annual Conference. We look to these priorities as a reminder that the secret of living each day to the fullest is to align our will with God’s will.

In 2022-2023, we are maintaining confidence and trust in ourselves and in our Connection by “Trusting, Believing and Knowing That God Is With Us.” In spite of the cacophony of voices that tend to distract us, we are choosing to maintain our focus on our mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. We endeavor to help congregations make the best

decisions that enable them to make disciples. We do this with intention, with determination, and with calm clarity. We do not seek out conflict, but during those times when we can't avoid it, we seek first to listen before trying to be heard. We seek to understand before trying to be understood. And, most importantly, we love. We love God with all of our hearts, with all of our souls, and with all of our minds – and we love our neighbor. When we find ourselves drifting away from this focus, we ask ourselves a question that snaps us back to the time and place in which God has placed us: When was the last time you led someone to Christ?

Felecia and I are grateful for the opportunity to be in ministry with the laity and clergy across the Columbia Area. We thank South Carolina United Methodists for allowing God to work through each of you and to use every one of us to make a difference in our communities and the world for the sake of Christ.

Grace and peace,

L. Jonathan Holston

FLORIDA AREA REPORT
Bishop Kenneth H. Carter, Jr.

I begin with a word of gratitude to the amazing followers of Jesus Christ, laity and clergy, who lead local churches and extension ministries across the Florida Conference. I have been blessed to serve in this episcopal area and give thanks to God and the church for the assignment. In reading my previous report to this Jurisdictional Conference and reflecting on reports of others over the past years, I am struck by how orderly they are. And in the present moment, I am conscious that the past few years present a challenge to our desire for order. The experience of a global pandemic has disrupted our ways of doing ministry, our sequencing of conferencing at every level of the church, and our discernment on the meaning of metrics that measure faithfulness and fruitfulness. This report will seek to give an account for the mission of the Florida Conference in these years, with the request that the reader consider the historical context and reflect with some measure of grace. As I write I claim, through it all, the promises of God, in particular, that the “One who began a good work in us will be faithful to complete it” (Philippians 1:6).

My focus as an episcopal servant of Florida has first been on the local church. I have preached in several hundred churches across this peninsula over the past years. With a diverse and gifted cabinet, we give several months in the year to a process of discernment, with the laity, in making appointments of clergy leaders to local churches. In our “mixed ecology of church” the Florida Conference has also made a major investment in “Fresh Expressions of Church” through the visionary leadership of Rev. Dr. Michael Beck and others. Fresh Expressions are intentional gatherings beyond the walls of our churches, led by laity and clergy. Florida has over eight hundred (800) local churches and Fresh Expressions of church, and both are instrumental in our missional strategy of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

An increasing area of focus and even reckoning has been our ongoing and unfinished work in anti-racism. The Florida Conference is on a journey to being an anti-racist annual conference. Intentional work has been done in decreasing and ultimately closing the salary gap between clergy who are

Anglo and persons of color. This was done through grants in each of the districts this past conference year. The journey of anti-racism is related to our church as an institution and our engagement in our state, nation, and world. Particular initiatives included relationships with law enforcement, strengthening the right of citizens to vote, and responses to public experiences of racial violence. A Bishop's Task Force on Anti-racism has led much of this work.

A priority during the pandemic has been the health, well-being and resilience of clergy and spiritual leaders. We are aware that the multiple dislocations of a health pandemic, racism, economic uncertainty, and mental health crises have worn on those who are on the "front lines", holding churches and communities together and preaching and leading in worship that has of necessity, been in-person and online. A tangible response has been the awarding of a grant of \$1,000 to clergy and leaders in campus ministry for physical, mental, and spiritual renewal. Over \$500,000 in grants were awarded during these years, and we thank the Florida Conference Preacher's Relief Fund. In addition, we have recently begun a counseling fund for our clergy to support them in this season.

We have continually sought to name the reality that these first three areas of focus—the vitality of the local church and fresh expressions, the journey to anti-racism, the health and well-being of spiritual leaders—are intimately related. And thus, Bishop Janice Huie gave a presentation on resilience to our Conference Table, Bishop Greg Palmer gave a lecture on anti-racism as discipleship and sanctification, and Dr. Gary Mason of Belfast, Northern Ireland has led three cohorts on preaching in contexts of polarization, and the legacies of slavery and violence.

A fourth and emerging area of importance lies in our identity as United Methodists. I was privileged to serve as both a moderator of the Commission on a Way Forward (along with two others from the Florida Conference, Alice Williams and Rev. Jorge Acevedo) and as a participant and signatory of the Protocol of Grace and Reconciliation through Separation. Concurrent with this work, we held listening forums and dialogues in every region of Florida and with thousands of clergy and laity leaders. And yet, in the aftermath of the 2019 General Conference and our Annual Conference held a few months following, there has been a deepening division and a climate of escalating conflict.

We have responded in several ways: through a continuing message that all are welcome in the Florida Conference; through care for appointments of pastors to contexts that match their theological ethos; through complaint processes undertaken in consistency with *The Book of Discipline* and using the framework of restorative justice (which is also Disciplinary); and through pastoral calls and conversations over meals. Through all this engagement, however, we experienced a lawsuit filed by 106 churches seeking to disaffiliate, an inability to approve the pool of candidates for commissioning to ministry in 2022 by a very narrow vote, and complaints filed against the Board of Ordained Ministry and the bishop. We are seeking to respond to the lawsuits and complaints with patience, legal wisdom, and a continuing offering of an openness to mediation based upon the church's Discipline.

We recognize the historic nature of the time in which we serve, and, again, we give thanks for those who serve and lead through The United Methodist Church. We affirm the principles of the #BeUMC initiative of making disciples of Jesus Christ, belonging and inclusion, connection and impact, and experiencing the Triune God through The United Methodist Church.

While we are on a journey toward accurate metrics that account for the complexity of the present moment, we share the following: the Florida Conference has 191,902 members in over 800 churches and fresh expressions of church; our average worship attendance is 191,902 and this includes the both/and of in-person and online; our apportionment giving has averaged 85.6%; during COVID, we shared over 7 million meals in an initiative known as Fill the Table; and during COVID we offered an online Bible Study, Summer in the Scriptures, where over 2,500 persons read the four gospels over 90 days.

I want to conclude by thanking my extraordinary assistant to the bishop, Rev. Alex Shanks, and the cabinet of the Florida Conference. In addition, I express gratitude to our conference staff, who have worked remotely and sacrificially in a challenging season. In a sixteen-month period I have served two annual conferences – Florida and Western North Carolina. Here I thank my wife Pam for her patience and the people of both conferences for their understanding of the different working relationship. Lastly, I thank the people of the Florida Conference for the past eleven years. You have taught me about living in grace, becoming more holy, discovering joy in Christ, and overcoming adversity, and the never-ending journey to justice and mercy rooted in the love of God. Thank you.

KNOXVILLE AREA REPORT Bishop Debra Wallace-Padgett

It has been my privilege and joy to serve as the episcopal leader for the Holston Conference since Bishop Mary Virginia Taylor's retirement in August 2021. Much of what is described in this report took place during her ten-year tenure as bishop of the Holston Conference. Many thanks to Bishop Taylor for her service and ministry.

I have focused during my first year as Holston's bishop on listening sessions, building relationships, and developing adaptive teams of clergy and lay leadership. A major purpose of these teams is to equip spiritual leaders to inspire and form Christ-followers who model the love of God.

This includes:

- 1) the Extended Cabinet Leadership Team that is involved in a process of developing spiritual lay and clergy leaders and teams that focus on discipleship, building on the strong foundation developed over the past several years by our Strategy Team
and
- 2) the newly formed Invitation Team, a group of diverse Holston clergy and lay leaders committed to discerning a vision for our Conference's future.

The Holston Conference is known for our mission-oriented, whole-hearted discipleship. Throughout this extended quadrennium Holston United Methodism has emphasized the mission of making disciples for the transformation of the world. Whether in a period of growth, decline, discernment, turmoil, hardship, or celebration, it is always the right season for an emphasis on discipleship.

Since 2016 the leaders of the Conference have been engaged in a discernment process on how we can best develop strong spiritual lay and clergy leaders to lead the way forward in offering Jesus Christ to a hurting world. One of the outcomes of this time of discernment has been the development

of Missional Hubs across the Conference. These Hubs consist of laity and clergy from churches coming together to find the best ways to serve the communities in which they reside. It has been a time for us to realize anew that we can do more together than on our own. Another outcome of this process has been expanding our emphasis in communications. Our communications department has grown in size and scope for the purpose of doing the important work of supporting and enabling churches to improve their ability to share the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Another aspect of the discernment process was discussion and implementation of redistricting from twelve to nine districts in 2018. After 60 years with twelve districts, Holston discerned that due to changes in communities, transportation, and technology, transitioning to nine districts would better steward our resources.

The Holston Conference continues to work in missions locally, nationally, and around the world. Our hands-on mission focus during Annual Conference over the past 25 years has been to support Zimbabwe and Liberia with food buckets, health kits, school kits, and cleaning kits. These are life-sustaining provisions for the children and the communities of Zimbabwe and Liberia. A highlight of Annual Conference continues to be a celebration of sending off the trucks filled with kits from churches in every corner of the conference. We also remain committed to our work in South Sudan, Costa Rica, the Czech Republic, Estonia, and more. A highpoint of our ministry abroad occurred in 2019 at the South Sudan-Uganda Annual Conference when three of the pastors with whom we have been working for 13 years were ordained as elders in the United Methodist Church. One of those pastors will be named as the District Superintendent of the South Sudan District this year at their Annual Conference. This transition to an indigenous district superintendent is indeed a celebration as the Holston Conference has supplied a pastor for this role in South Sudan since 2006.

The Holston Conference continues to be known for our commitment to camping ministry. We have four residential camps within Holston that are making a difference in the lives of children and youth across the Conference and beyond. Every summer many children make new or renewed decisions of faith and grow in their walk with Christ. This quadrennium we have added a non-residential camp to our ministry. Camp in the Community is a traveling camp designed to take the camping ministry into communities and to children who might never attend one of our residential camps. Camp in the Community partners with local churches serving as host sites. The camp has grown from serving seventy-seven campers the first year to over 1400 each summer.

A strength in youth ministry in Holston is our annual Resurrection event, which typically reaches 8,000+ teenagers and young adults for Christ. This is a major venue through which Holston fosters a call to full-time ministry for youth across our area.

My husband Lee and I are inspired by the churches, clergy, and laity of the Holston Conference. We anticipate a bright future for Holston as the Conference continues moving forward in ministry, discipleship, and service for the transformation of the world.

LOUISVILLE AREA REPORT

Bishop Leonard Fairley

The Louisville Area covers ninety percent of the Commonwealth of Kentucky and includes the Red Bird Missionary Conference and the Kentucky Annual Conference. The mission statement of the Kentucky Conference is to Discover, Develop, and Send passionate spiritual leaders and resources to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

To emphasize and further develop our mission, the Annual Conference themes for this quadrennium have been:

2021: *Know the Love of God*

2022: *Grow in the Love of God*

2023: *Show the Love of God*

2024: *Lead with the Love of God*

In alignment with our mission statement, the Kentucky Conference has pointed much of its focus on aligning the mission of the local church of making Passionate Spiritual Disciples and the mission of the conference of making Passionate Spiritual Leaders. A key process in this alignment was the development of a Passionate Spiritual Leader Pathway. This pathway contains three areas of focus – discover, develop, and send. While the work of this pathway was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, movement on the ‘develop’ portion of this pathway has begun again, and includes four key areas of development for all leaders (Spiritual formation, discipling skills, cross-cultural ministry, and leadership development). Our next step is developing a number of call-specific pathways beyond ordination.

In addition to our continued work to develop Passionate Spiritual Leaders and Passionate Spiritual Disciples, dialogue expectations shared with the annual conference offered an invitation for those who hold diverse convictions to be in relationship with one another. These dialogue expectations provided the opportunity to have a day set apart for our clergy to worship together, not as anything other than water-washed, spirit-born children of the living God. Organized by several clergy of varying political views and theological ideals, this worship service was the first opportunity since the pandemic that our clergy were able to gather in over three years.

Another key aspect of our work over the past several years has been the creation of a Cultural Competency Development Plan. A conference team was formed that has, and is, creating informational and transformational experiences that energize the dismantling of systemic, institutional, and individual racism in the Kentucky Annual Conference. As a result, all clergy and lay leaders in the Conference are required to attend Anti-racism and Cultural Competency Training once a quadrennium. In addition, the conference is currently working to hire a full-time director to focus on African-American ministries, a demographic that has been greatly underserved in Kentucky.

Red Bird Missionary Conference

Following a long discernment process, the Red Bird Missionary Conference Clergy and Conference Operational Team submitted to the 2020 Red Bird Missionary Annual Conference delegates, a proposal to rename the conference, The Central Appalachian Missionary Conference. The conviction is that this name more clearly identifies their missional area, which reaches beyond the Red Bird Valley.

Red Bird has also refocused their mission to be a missionary conference serving this geographical region by making disciples through personal transformation, leadership transformation and community transformation. Their vision is to be a healthy, revitalized missionary conference that is missionally relevant. All Glory to God, the motion to rename passed.

MISSISSIPPI AREA REPORT

Bishop James E. Swanson, Sr.

The Mississippi Annual Conference – empowered by love, generosity, justice, and apprenticeship – forms spiritual leaders, faith communities, and connections so more disciples of Jesus Christ transform the world.

Spiritual Leadership

Living Out the POWER of We has been the focus for The Mississippi Annual Conference for this quadrennium (6 years). For us, this means that we are affirming that the POWER lies with God's Holy Spirit, and that we are called to live our lives out of that POWER. We are all seeking to live out that POWER with all we are and all we do.

Forming spiritual leaders (both clergy and lay) has been a focus of the office of Spiritual Leadership as well as the work of the appointive cabinet. The emphasis upon clergy excellence has been a primary focus for training and nurture of the clergy by emphasizing not just fruitfulness, but faithfulness that produces fruitfulness. Amid the COVID pandemic, a need to focus on spiritual wellness arose and is now offered to all clergy through days away and/or retreats to provide an opportunity to examine their individual faith journey with Jesus Christ. Our belief is that clergy who are intentional about their personal faith journey are better able to lead faithfully in their churches and communities.

There has also been an intentional focus upon clergy debt and how to be of assistance to those preparing to enter full-time ordained ministry within the United Methodist Church in Mississippi. This work is now being expanded to include local pastors and students by utilizing the Saving Grace program. The Residency in Ministry (RIM) program continues to be a place where these important discussions happen.

The current structure of the annual conference has focused upon the importance of training clergy and laity together, so the yearly Collaborative Leadership Conference has become the standard by which we seek to do ministry together. Another example of collaborative leadership is healing

teams, made up of both clergy and laity, have been trained to walk alongside churches who are experiencing grief, conflict, and crisis.

The Office of Spiritual Leadership also works with campus ministers and their ministries in all our community college campuses as well as all our four-year institutions. This work is an opportunity to resource campus ministers who can, in turn, help our young adults engage their faith and become more faithful disciples of Jesus Christ.

Faith Communities

The Office of Faith Community Formation's vision is to form faith communities to transform the culture of the Mississippi Annual Conference into a culture of vitality by forming new faith communities and revitalizing existing congregations. Presently the goal is to form as many as four new faith communities and revitalize up to twenty-five congregations per year. The underlying focus is to make new disciples of Jesus Christ. The Mississippi Annual Conference established a national partnership in Fresh Expressions.

We utilize several tools and resources – both in and out of the annual conference – for the clergy of The Mississippi Annual Conference. Many of these are in collaboration with the Office of Spiritual Leadership/ Appointive Cabinet and include the following:

- Coaching
- Identifying, vetting, and equipping qualified church planters
- Utilizing the processes delineated in Paragraph 213
- Readiness 360 and Readiness 360+
- Mission Insite
- Disciple Like Jesus
- Vital Signs
- Route 121

The Episcopal office has brought together all the advocacy leaders into a working Advocacy Team that better enables these leaders and their committees to examine justice issues in a more broad-based way. This has birthed the End Racism for Good (ER4G) team that is providing racial healing training across the annual conference and is serving as a resource for all aspects of mission and ministry throughout United Methodism in Mississippi.

The birth of the African American Leadership Academy focuses, in part, on generosity within African American churches and leaders in Mississippi is beginning under the leadership of the Episcopal office.

We are also continuing to work in the format of Loving, Learning, and Leading both in the Mississippi Leadership Team and beyond.

Presently there is a committee that is looking at district realignment which includes “right-sizing” the number of districts for the future.

Connections

The Office of Connectional Ministries continues to work with the Vital Congregations Committee, a collaboration that began as an experiment in 2014. This committee is made up of nine of the most vital churches in the Mississippi Annual Conference. During the last several years this committee has been reviewing all church reports from charge conferences with the goal being to give a conference-wide view of the trends, needs and assets of the annual conference. This work is beginning to shift the culture resulting in a more intentional review of the local church's ministry, and it is being reflected in the reports. This work is shared with the annual conference with the goal of helping to shift programming to meet the needs of the local church in a more direct and significant way.

Disaster Response is always key to the life and ministry within the Mississippi Annual Conference. We have been actively involved in restoration from hurricanes, tornadoes, and floods in the past several years. We work with many partners and have been able to assist hundreds of people by helping them get into secure homes (either restored or new) following life altering events in their lives. Most recently, we have been actively involved in the Jackson, Miss. water crisis delivering water to those who are unable to get out of their homes/apartments.

We also celebrate our connection with the following entities within the life of The Mississippi Annual Conference:

- Community Centers
 - Bethlehem Center
 - Edwards Street
 - Good Shepherd
 - Moore Community House
 - St. Andrews Mission
 - Wesley House
- Camps
 - Gulfside
 - Seashore
 - Lake Stephens
 - Wesley Pines
- Baddour Center
- United Methodist Senior Services
- Methodist Rehabilitation Center
- Methodist Children's Home
- Delta Grace
- Millsaps College
- Rust College

All of this work is undergirded with the work of Administration and Communications. There is much to celebrate in these areas:

- **Administration**
 - Our 2019 mission shares paid out at 78.87%. In 2020 (first COVID year) our percentage only declined 16/100 of 1%. In 2021 we grew our payout rate to 80.67% which is back to pre-COVID payout ratio.
 - We have continued to pay our SEJ mission shares at 100%.
 - We decreased our budget each year by an amount equal to or more than the amount apportioned to churches that were closing and/or disaffiliating.
 - From 2016-2021 we decreased our overall budget 22%.
 - In 2021 we increased the collection rate on every line item including general and jurisdictional apportionments for the first time in 20 years.
 - We continued to apportion the General Church apportionments in compliance with The Book of Discipline as directed by the Judicial Council ruling.
 - In 2020 we assisted our churches in applying for and obtaining forgiveness on over six million dollars of PPP loans.
 - In 2021 we were able to build our reserves back to the pre-pandemic level.
 - In 2019, 2020 and 2021 we did not spend any of our reserves – living into the spending of by only what the local churches paid in mission shares to the annual conference.

- **Communications**
 - Trained local churches in best practices for communications
 - Developed crisis communications protocols
 - Resourced clergy/churches
 - Prepared and disseminated all email blasts
 - Prepared and distributed monthly Circuit Rider (email newsletter)
 - Oversight of conference data base
 - Wrote, edited, and prepared Souvenir Circuit Rider magazine for The Sessions of The Mississippi Annual Conference
 - Responsible for branding for the annual conference

In closing, Delphine and I are grateful for our 10 years of ministry with the clergy and laity of The Mississippi Annual Conference. We have been privileged to live out the core values of love, generosity, justice, and apprenticeship with the people in Mississippi and look forward to seeing what God has in store for them as they continue to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. And I am looking forward to putting into practice the lessons I have learned through my experiences with the people of Mississippi.

Gratefully submitted,
Bishop James E. Swanson, Sr.

NASHVILLE AREA REPORT
Bishop William T. McAlilly

Eugene Peterson, in his book, *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction: Discipleship in an Instant Society*,² captures the experience of the Nashville Episcopal Area. The faithfulness, the persistence,

the tenaciousness, and the deep sense of God's preferred future allowed the Tennessee and Memphis Conferences to become the Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference (TWK), January 1, 2022.

This task had taken a major step forward under the leadership of Bishop Ben Chamness, who had been assigned to serve the Nashville Area ad interim in 2011 and was passed to me upon my appointment in September 2012.

In 2018, after six years of research, working on aligning duplicate committees, and fact finding, I appointed a New Conference Guide Team and an Advisory Team that drew upon leaders, lay and clergy, across the two legacy conferences to guide and reflect upon the process of forming the new conference. In total, nearly 1000 people across the two legacy conferences were engaged in the process.

We were able to celebrate the completion of this great work with the adoption of the Plan of Union and the resolution for unification by the Southeast Jurisdiction Delegates at the called Jurisdictional Conference in July of 2021.

Since January 1, 2022, we have been living into the new conference more fully by engaging in the continued work of aligning committees, boards, and agencies, and creating processes and systems which help to complete our greater mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ.

We adopted a new ministry structure patterned after the general church with the establishment of a Connectional Table that works to keep the mission, vision, and values of the TWK at the forefront of our connected ministry. The five strategy teams— Administration, Equip, Discover, Connect, and Send provide the basis for our structure. Ministry partners, mission initiatives, and the strategies of the conference are assigned to one of these five teams based on the context and focus of their ministry.

Much of the work of the Connectional Table and the associated Strategy teams has been helping the legacy conference teams, entities and committees to become one through affirming common values and aligning strategies with our common mission and purpose. While in some ways, the work has been slow and steady, we are beginning to see the flywheel take its early revolutions as Jim Collins reminds us in his book, *Good to Great*.

Living in covenant with each other is becoming a common practice for our boards, agencies, and ministry teams, as well as in local churches. Shepherding collaboration and witnessing the breaking down of isolated and siloed ministry is now becoming evident. Leaders and congregations are remaining adaptive, having the experience of strengthening those muscles during the past two years. Teams are formed without baggage of legacy traditions, but with a new vision in mind. Although we are still doing a lot of learning, we are witnessing God at work in amazing new ways.

We retained the combined 9 districts of the legacy conferences in order to provide consistency and stability for the local churches across the area as we grow toward further unity and stronger relationships in the new conference. We anticipate the completion of an exploration into the future geographical makeup and number of districts in our conference by July 1, 2023.

The mission of the Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference remains the same as it was for the legacy conferences that came together. That is, “to discover, equip, connect, and send lay and clergy leaders who shape congregations that offer Jesus Christ to a hurting world, one neighborhood at a time.” This mission helps to complete the greater mission of the United Methodist Church.

In the work of accomplishing this mission we hold the following values:

1. The local church is the primary disciple making center.
2. Transparency and integrity in our communication.
3. Seek a purposeful and more generous way to love.
4. Courage to explore possibilities and take risks by being nimble, experimental, permitting failure, and staying the course.
5. Empowering all leaders and enabling leaders with gifts and graces for the task.
6. Seeking input from both people and useful data.
7. Welcoming diversity, rooted in Christ, by expressing a deep love for one another and celebrating differences.

Our mission and values will be lived out as we seek to accomplish four strategic initiatives which include:

1. To develop transforming clergy and lay leaders
2. To invest and empower young (18-35 y/o) and diverse people.
3. To engage the mission field through partnering with communities.
4. To create fruitful and faithful congregations.

In June, at the inaugural session of the Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference the Holy Spirit was present as we celebrated this new beginning. The conference focused on these words from Psalm 46:1,4-7

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble... There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High. ⁵ God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved; God will help it when the morning dawns. ⁶ The nations are in an uproar, the kingdoms totter; he utters his voice, the earth melts. ⁷ The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

As well as these from the Book of Revelation 22:1-2:

... the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ² through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

For many years, the Tennessee River was a dividing line between the legacy conferences. In this time, we now see that there is a vast river system in Tennessee and Western Kentucky in which all rivers are connected and serve as a symbol of uniting us through the visible waters that flow through our area but also spiritually as the living water of Christ flows through each of us as acknowledged at our Baptism. We truly are “one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry...”

We concluded the inaugural session of the Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference with the following benediction attributed to William Sloane Coffin:

May the Lord Bless you and keep you.

May the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you.

May God give you grace not to sell your selves short,

Grace to risk something big for something good.

Grace to remember that the world is now too dangerous for anything but truth, and too small for anything but love. May God take your minds and think through them.

May God take your lips and speak through them.

May God take your hands and work through them.

May God take your hearts and set them on fire.

May it be so.

Bishop William T. McAlilly

Nashville Episcopal Area

November 2, 2022

NORTH GEORGIA AREA REPORT

Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson

It is a joy for me to report that there is excitement and enthusiasm across the North Georgia Conference. In a world that is hurting and hungry for hope and grace, our clergy, laity, local congregations, and ministries are responding. Our single most important goal is to introduce each and every person to Christ and his love.

At the start of my assignment in the North Georgia Conference, conference leadership and I set a vision for alignment of mission, stewardship, and resources. Today we are experiencing the fruit of that work, even as it continues to unfold. After a great deal of study, the Annual Conference voted in 2020 to support a new eight-district structure drawn in a mission-focused manner reflective of today's North Georgia Conference and the communities we serve. The eight new districts, reduced from 12, follow county lines and each contains a similar number of churches. Every new district includes some high-growth counties. Population (as well as population growth) is balanced between the districts. This change that has now been fully implemented is saving the Conference upwards of \$1 million annually.

Through excellent, ongoing financial stewardship, there is firm footing for The United Methodist Church in North Georgia. The apportionment budget has been reduced each year of this extended quadrennium for the purpose of allowing more resources to remain at the local church level. These reductions have been accomplished through the new district structure, by reducing budget line items, and utilizing reserve funds. The 2023 apportionment budget is the lowest in 20 years.

In addition to allowing more resources to remain at the local church level, we are asking churches, “What might God be calling your church to do?” and investing in the answer. This quadrennium, the North Georgia Conference launched a new initiative to distribute funds from the sale of closed church property in an equitable, accountable manner to fund ministry initiatives across all eight districts. The Barnes Fund, overseen by a newly formed committee, has a robust process in place for granting the funds. The Barnes Fund has invested more than \$1,806,869.00 in innovative mission and ministry since its inception.

We are intentionally cultivating new faith communities for the purpose of moving people into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ. Some of these new places resemble existing church styles, and others are gatherings that create authentic, Christian communities in secular places. We have seen new faith opportunities and communities develop through Fresh Expressions, new church plants, multi-campus expansions, and strategic mergers.

Diversity is among the richest blessings of the North Georgia Conference. Our communities have a wide range of race and ethnicities; churches in rural, urban, and suburban areas; younger and older congregations; and large and small membership churches. United Methodists in North Georgia worship in English, Spanish, Korean, Portuguese, and Vietnamese! With this diversity in mind, I appointed our Conference’s first Director of Inclusion and Advocacy. This work is foundational to our mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ, from all communities, for the transformation of the world.

Nearly half of my 6-year tenure in North Georgia has been walking together through the challenges and changes of the COVID-19 pandemic. Churches rose to the challenges, catapulting ahead in their use of technology, re-envisioning their facilities, and turning outward to serve their communities in ways we haven’t seen before.

The North Georgia Annual Conference held successful virtual sessions in 2020 and 2021. And in 2022, 1,800 United Methodists gathered in Athens, Georgia for a conference session that felt like a homecoming!

At Annual Conference we adopted five areas of focus to guide the Conference through 2024. They are:

- Scriptural Literacy and Imagination
- Health and Wellbeing
- Community Engagement
- Racial Justice and Healing
- New Faith Opportunities and Communities

I am grateful to be serving Christ and fulfilling the mission with the people of the North Georgia Conference of The United Methodist Church.

RALEIGH AREA REPORT

Bishop Leonard Fairley

God's Generosity in all Seasons has been the 2016-2020 ministry focus of the North Carolina Conference, with four unfolding annual emphases on God's abundant provision in all places, in all creation, with all people, and in all worship. We see and celebrate God's goodness as we read and proclaim God's word, as we share life in Christ together, and as we engage in Christ's mission in all the world.

The mission focus statement of the North Carolina Conference continues to be *Healthy Congregations and Effective Leaders in Every Place making Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World.*

Strengthening leadership is a central priority. The Center for Leadership Excellence resources the conference with Days of Learning, the Leadership Fellows, the Impact Rural Church Program, the Black Church Renew and Connect Program, Focused Support for Clergywomen, Preaching Well retreats, and increased offering of webinars to increase access for lifelong learning. Continued partnerships with Duke Divinity School and The Duke Endowment include Thriving Rural Communities and Hispanic House of Study. We report with thanksgiving the call of many persons to lay and clergy leadership. In this quadrennium, we celebrate the commissioning of 71 as Hispanic lay missionaries, 5 deaconesses and home missionaries; the licensing of 114 as local pastors, the commissioning of 67 as probationary members, and the ordination of 64 deacons and elders.

Gary Locklear, Conference Lay Leader and Home Missionary, is a remarkable leader in Lay Ministries and Disaster Recovery Ministries. 35 Servant Lay Ministers and over 1000 Lay Servant Ministries are now trained. A vital conference youth program features training of youth and adult youth leaders as well as conference events - Kaleidoscope, Summer Breakaway, Annual Conference Session for Youth, Global Vision, Youth Mission Workteam, and Pilgrimage, the annual capstone event drawing an average of 5000 youth for a November weekend of inspiration, connection and mission. Increased numbers of youth are lay members of the Annual Conference, and resolutions demonstrating youth engagement in Christian witness in the world are regularly submitted to the Annual Conference for discussion and decision.

We give focused attention to the health of congregations. 50 trained and active Conflict Transformation Ministers lead the growing ministry of over 115 consultations to date, helping churches engage well the conflict which is a natural yet challenging aspect of life together. A Sexual Ethics Response Team is re-created, trained and available for service. Opportunities for training, equipping and coaching are offered to laity and clergy and congregations.

The North Carolina Conference continues to be a denominational leader in the planting of new churches. We focus simply and profoundly on *planting* and *renewing*. 12 Anchor Churches are engaged in planting new faith communities, and 18 congregations are in discernment toward anchoring of a church plant. We are a strategic partner for Path 1's *Churches Planting Churches* initiative. Over 100 Wesleyan Small Groups incorporate over 1200 people in our curriculum and practice called *Good Friends* which locates discipleship within the discipline of holy friendship. The New Room Society, an order of 56 lay and clergy members with 24 more in discernment, is

devoted to apostolic hospitality, centering on common prayer, common practices and common learning. We celebrate these new ways of ordering of our ministry of church planting yielding the chartering of 6 new churches, the planting of 8 new campuses from Anchor Churches, and 9 new pioneer faith communities.

With the Western North Carolina Conference, we share ministries with children in public schools: Congregations for Children and United Methodists Advocating for Public Schools. 85% of our churches are engaged in providing basic necessities for students, literacy support through tutoring and summer reading programs, training adults (particularly men) to volunteer, and helping people understand the effects of poverty on the learning lives of students. We are committed to advocacy in the state legislature for public policy that supports public education, children, teachers and school staff and administration.

Hurricanes Matthew in 2016, Florence 2018, Michael in 2018 and Dorian in 2019 devastated communities across our annual conference. A staff of 85 have lead volunteer efforts in 15 centers in eastern North Carolina, receiving as of 3/1/2020, 26,873 volunteers offering assistance valued at \$22,598,330. The youth of the conference garnered in one year \$567,361 for Disaster Response. The youth effort was supported by a generous match by CFA up to \$500,000. In total \$12,230,000 has been raised by the North Carolina Conference for our rebuilding recovery efforts, inclusive of all offerings and refundable grants.

Our strong connection to public schools in our communities served as a vital link in the aftermath of successive hurricanes. United Methodists leaders and others created FAST-NC (hurricane funds to assist students and teachers). The fund reached over \$1,050,000 and was distributed in grants to teachers for replacement of teaching supplies, books, band instruments, playgrounds, and athletic equipment.

We lament persistent racism and are deeply committed to anti-racism and multicultural ministry. Each district has an anti-racism team creating experiences to deepen our historical understanding particularly in regard to white privilege, and to equip our churches for faithful ministry with all people. Shared experiences are enriching this effort: journeys to sites of pain and hope in North Carolina and beyond, participation in public advocacy for all people, an annual Crossroads Anti-Racism Retreat, a growing partnership with AMEZ Church, common reading and coaching by civil rights veterans and prophetic mentors.

In this season of particular challenge in regard to the unity of the church, we have convened gatherings to help laity and clergy connect, be informed, pose questions and concerns, share hopes, and move forward together into the future. We remain committed to the United Methodist connection.

The Global outreach of the North Carolina Conference is extensive, with partnerships and efforts such as Project AGAPE in Armenia, Ganta Mission Station in Liberia, Rotifunk Hospital in Sierra Leone, Pilgrimages to US-Mexico border, Peru Covenant, and Vietnam Mission Initiative. We celebrate the approval of Partners in Ministry in Laurinburg as a National Project by the UMW in 2019.

We are committed to social holiness, as evidenced by our collaborative work with immigrants and refugees through a legal aid clinic, the creation of a JFON Clinic (Justice For Our Neighbors), and a Creation Care Team with 30 trained EarthKeepers, leading us in community gardens and creation care ministries. We have engaged with military service members and their families, with retreats and resources for churches.

The North Carolina Conference has the long and unique strength of raising funds a year ahead for the current year's budget. Strongly connectional, our conference supports General Church apportionments in full. We celebrate achieving the fully-funded status in regard to retiree pension and health insurance plans.

Technology continues to be used in new and innovative ways. Eight districts are led by district superintendents who lead as district mission strategists, supported by a central district office staff. We celebrate a lively and effective ministry of Communications: weekly *Connections* email with a video message from the Bishop and ministry updates, the launching of three new podcasts (nccumc.fm), implementation of a new communications strategy with conference offices and districts, videography including a Women in Ministry video reaching over 164,000 views, continuation of the Every Day Grace television show, and expansion of communications staff to better implement marketing and communications channels in Disaster Recovery Ministries (nccumc.org/disaster).

Church Transformation Ministries, funded with support from The Duke Endowment, helps churches envision their legacy and the connection maximize resources for mission. Congregations engage in discernment and long-range planning to discern a path of revitalization, redevelopment, or legacy. These church transformations strengthen the health, fruitfulness, and missional stewardship of the conference while providing consistency, continuity, and coordination amid denominational transformation.

Pilgrimage is valued as a path to spiritual growth. Journeys with God and one another have included pilgrimages to Israel and Palestine, McAllen and Reynosa, Brownsville and Matamoros, Lindesfarne and Iona, Guatemala for Spanish-language immersion, Washington DC for learning at the National Museum of the American Indian and the National Museum of African American History and Culture, and Seneca Falls and Auburn, NY, to engage the history of the struggles for abolition of slavery and for the right to vote for women.

It is a great privilege and honor to serve in ministry in The North Carolina Conference. In the words of Psalm 84, "they go from strength to strength." May it be so, now and always.

Hope Morgan Ward, Bishop, Raleigh Area, 2016-2021

RICHMOND AREA REPORT

Bishop Sharma D. Lewis

The Virginia Annual Conference focus in 2016-2020 has been on casting and implementing the new conference vision. The vision of the Virginia Annual Conference *is to make disciples of Jesus Christ who are lifelong learners who influence others to serve.*

Therefore, the first year of the quadrennium involved me visiting all 16 districts and hosting the Bishop's Chat and Chew Sessions with clergy and laity. This was a time for praying, sharing and listening. After the sessions, we compiled the data which was essential in casting the new vision. During the 2017 annual conference, the theme "A New Thing," provided the opportunity and excitement for introducing the new vision. The Bishop's Steering and Strategic Collaboration Teams analyzed all data collected from the Bishop's Chat and Chew. The Bishop's Steering Team utilized the SLI3 (Spiritual Leadership Institute – Loving, Learning and Leading) model to discover, develop and deploy the next steps. In addition, a strategic planning consultant was hired to assist the Strategic Collaboration Team in strategizing the transformative work in implementing the vision. This process brought energy to the Office of Connectional Ministries and as a result, several new initiatives, caucus workgroups and events were created. It also led to a 3-Minute Stir Video explaining the new vision and the strategic process. The Latino/Hispanic clergy caucus, and the Immigration and Outreach Workgroup were formed as well as a conference-wide initiative of reading the Bible in a year was established. The conference took an active role in utilizing the model of Fresh Expressions to revitalize new congregations. The annual conference has welcomed (13) new faith communities since 2017.

2017-2018

The Bishop's Steering and Strategic Collaboration Teams continued to work on the implementation of the vision. Furthermore, the Office of Connectional Ministries continued the work of the Four Areas of Ministry Focus of The United Methodist Church: *Overcoming Poverty Together, Seeking Health and Wholeness for All, Leading Where God Calls and Making New Disciples in New Places.* The conference hosted the first Bishop's Convocation on Race and Reconciliation and the Virginia Conference Immigration Seminar. The conference continued to take a leading role in Disaster Response, UMCOR and missionary support. We have a strong partnership with our Central Conferences providing mission and missionaries to Mozambique, Cambodia, Brazil and Africa University known as Partnerships of Hope. In addition, we collaborated with GBHEM, West Ohio Annual Conference, Ginghamburg Church and East Africa Annual Conference (Burundi) in teaching and implementing the Course of Study for East African pastors.

Bishop's Chat and Chew (2.0) regional meetings were designed to share the progress of the Steering and Strategic Collaboration Teams. Simultaneously, the Commission On The Way Forward (COWF) released their final report. The Virginia conference clergy, laity and delegation took an active role in studying and engaging the work of the COWF to prepare for the upcoming Special General Conference. The annual conference theme in 2018 was "Servant Leaders Making A Difference." The conference engaged in the first "Great Day of Service" in Hampton, Virginia. 1637 clergy and laity participated in approximately (55) projects consisting of a Stop Hunger Now packaging event, prayer walking, ramp installations, painting, cemetery and school clean up and gardening.

2018-2019

The Virginia Annual Conference delegation met several times to prepare for the Special General Conference of 2019. The Bishop's Way Forward Workgroup was established to examine several critical areas (communication, pension and health benefits, foundation/development corporation, credit union, appointments, etc.) as we approached the Special General Conference.

Unfortunately, in December 2018, I was diagnosed with a degenerative hip disease that caused me to take a six-month medical leave. During this leave, I had four hip surgeries along with rehabilitation and outpatient therapy. I want to thank the Virginia Annual Conference clergy and laity for their love and support. I want to thank the Virginia Cabinet, the conference staff and Interim Bishop Peter Weaver for their leadership while I was recovering. Finally, I want to thank the Southeastern Jurisdiction and the General Church for their many expression of love during my medical leave. I was blessed to experience The United Methodist Church Connection at its best! The Bishop's Steering Team and the Bishop's Way Forward Workgroup continued to meet while I was on medical leave. The 2019 annual conference theme was "Moving Forward in God's Mission." The theme allowed us to reflect on the Great Commission that Christ gave us and provided a space to participate in our first 5K Walk, Run, Bike and Yoga Event. These events allowed an opportunity for fitness, fellowship, and fundraising in the Roanoke City Community.

2019-2020

In 2019-2020, The Office of Connectional Ministries and Clergy Excellence realigned to support the vision and to function more efficiently. The restructuring of the Office of Connectional Ministries developed three new positions that aligned with the conference vision. As a result, the Associate Directors of Lifelong Learning, Influencing and Serving Ministries were established. In addition, the administrative staff workload was combined and a Digital Media Specialist position was added to Connectional Ministries. The work of the Bishop's Steering and Strategic Collaboration Teams ended as The Office of Connectional Ministries became fully aligned with the vision of the annual conference and transitioned from development to deployment with the vision

In March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic hit the country and we were challenged to do church differently and keep the annual conference safe and informed. I took an active and comprehensive role in leading the conference through this pandemic. Several groups were created: 1) *In-Person Worship Workgroup* – A workgroup comprised of district superintendents, clergy, laity, church leaders, medical and legal professionals prepared a comprehensive plan. Our plan included: a handbook, Technical Assistance Manuel (TAM) and visual presentations for churches to address how to approach returning to worship; 2) *Mission and Ministry Workgroup* – A workgroup comprised of district superintendents, clergy, laity and church leaders that developed policies and guidance to the conference faith communities equipping them to execute mission and ministry during the pandemic; and 3) *Post COVID Re-entry Workgroup* – This workgroup incorporated members of the two current workgroups. This workgroup began the proactive work of resourcing churches for ministry in the post-pandemic environment. The workgroup continued to focus on assisting churches to engage in safe practices as they conducted in-person worship and ministry. Lastly, the conference was a part of Governor Ralph Northam's Faith-based Community Cohort. The cohort met frequently during the pandemic to be updated on the actions and executive orders of Governor Northam.

The death of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor and the racial unrest all over the country led us to take an active and comprehensive role in dismantling racism and community policing. The conference “Call to Action” initiative led to the birthing of The Racial Reconciliation and Justice Workgroup, the creation of the “The Virginia Roots, Race and Discipleship Curriculum” and the collaboration with Attorney General Mark Herring on community policing. The 2020 annual conference theme was “See All the People.” Because of the pandemic, we hosted our first virtual annual conference at Woodlake United Methodist Church, in Richmond, Virginia.

2020-2021

In the last quarter of 2020, the DAT (District Alignment Team) was established to address this questions: “*How can districts most effectively order themselves for the adaptive challenges of the 21st century in order to facilitate our vision of local churches developing disciples as lifelong learners who influence others to serve?*” There were six recommendations from the DAT that reflected the perspectives of clergy and laity around the annual conference collected through the diligent use of surveys, interviews with conference leaders, best practices from other annual conferences and recent emerging demographics of the Virginia Annual Conference. The 2021 annual conference did not affirm the DAT’s recommendations.

The 2021 conference theme was “United As One.” Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the annual conference planning team decided to host the second virtual conference at Reveille United Methodist Church, in Richmond, Virginia.

2021-2022

The 2021-2022 focus of the Virginia Annual Conference was to continue to discern and design a new district organizational and leadership structure by reducing districts from sixteen to eight. As the District Alignment Team (DAT) concluded its work, I reframed our district alignment strategic planning through a new team named the District Initiative (DI). The purpose of the District Initiative was to create a contextual framework for the new districts that would best support and resource our churches and communities to share the love of Christ in real, tangible and transformative ways. While the 2021 annual conference did not affirm the DAT’s recommendations, the 2022 annual conference fully embraced the District Initiative after a vital yearlong season of adaptive leadership.

The 2022 annual conference theme was “United As One In Worship.” There was added excitement to be back in-person and the conference challenged our members by hosting a 5K Walk, Run and Bike Event.

Currently, the conference is engaged in working through the Boy Scouts sexual misconduct cases and The UMC disaffiliation process.

The Gospel of Luke 12:48 states, “To whom much is given, much will be required.” As an annual conference, we are held responsible for what God has blessed us with and it is expected that we share our blessings. In 2020, the pandemic negatively impacted our apportionment collection to 74.28% To God’s glory in 2021, we collected 80.65.%

I am grateful for the privilege of serving Jesus Christ, for the last six years, with the wonderful people of the Virginia Annual Conference of The United Methodists Church.

SOUTH GEORGIA AREA REPORT **Bishop David W. Graves**

It has been my joy and honor to serve the South Georgia Annual Conference this past year.

In 2016, Bishop R. Lawson Bryan was assigned to South Georgia. The understanding at that time was that he would have four years to serve before reaching mandatory retirement age for bishops. Because the global pandemic prevented the meetings that were necessary to elect new bishops, Bishop Bryan was given the opportunity to serve an additional year. He has said that the fifth year was a gift for which he will always be grateful.

For five years, Bishop Bryan emphasized Ephesians 2:5, “even though we were dead in our trespasses, God made us alive together in Christ.” For five years, South Georgia explored what it means to be Alive Together in Christ: in worship; in the world; in witness; and alive together at the table.

God truly did create us to be Alive Together in Christ, and I am thankful I get to see firsthand the richness and aliveness of God at work through the people called United Methodists in the South Georgia Conference. Our local churches – through our faithful clergy and laity – are daily seeking to fulfill our mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Together Bishop Bryan and conference leadership determined that in this unusual season of the church South Georgia needed processes more than programs. Programs come and go; processes are ways of living together that serve to refresh us and renew us for the mission of Christ in the world. So, together, South Georgia introduced processes and groups such as: OnBoarding, Appreciative Inquiry, Strengths Finder, Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), the Compass Group, the Leadership Forum Task Force, the Laity Cabinet, the Bishop’s Emerging Leadership Initiative, and Conscious Culture Building. These are propelling South Georgia forward, and they will continue to do so in the years ahead.

South Georgia has been through conference staff restructure and realignment of resources all in efforts to support the local church and be good financial stewards of the money entrusted to us.

South Georgia experienced a long season of major destruction following Hurricane Matthew in 2016, straight line winds and tornadoes in 2017, and Hurricane Michael in 2018. With two hurricanes less than two years apart and storms in between and after, South Georgia United Methodist congregations had ample opportunity to show hospitality to their neighbors, open their doors as shelters, put together cleaning kits, send monetary gifts, and offer refuge to evacuees. Our Early Response Teams were trained and ready to then go into these communities to clean, tarp, and chainsaw. The connection was seen in these immediate needs and also in the long-term recovery efforts established in these communities. South Georgia provided caseworkers, training, and funding to assist those in the affected communities so they could recover, then grow and thrive in the aftermath of the disaster. We are thankful to South Georgia Conference’s Disaster Response

ministry, the churches in these communities, and the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) for responding to the needs.

In 2020, the South Georgia Conference established a mission partnership with the North Katanga Annual Conference. An exploratory team traveled to North Katanga in 2019, and funds have been allocated to assist with various ministries. As the South Georgia Conference continues to live into being an Acts 1:8 conference by our local, regional and worldwide ministry connections, we look forward to seeking more ways we can be in partnership with North Katanga and Bishop Mande Muyombo, resident bishop of the North Katanga Area.

As the nation dealt with racial unrest over the last quadrennium, South Georgia became a focal point after the murder of Ahmaud Arbery in Feb. 2020 in Brunswick, GA. As the trial for the three men convicted of murder ensued over the next years, I am thankful for the pastoral and lay leadership of our Brunswick-area churches who sought to help people express themselves in a spirit of peace. Everyone wants justice. Yet, we are reminded in times like these that we live in an unjust world. As followers of Jesus, we are reminded that mercy, grace, forgiveness, and love must abound amid the injustices of this world. However, we must strive to eliminate the injustices that continue to happen to people, especially people of color.

Our camping and retreat ministries continue to be an impactful, life-changing and challenging place where youth grow closer in their relationship with Christ.

Creativity and collaboration were a primary focus throughout the pandemic as staff worked together to resource churches through online trainings, online worship services, and online Annual Conference sessions. As churches pivoted to virtual platforms for worship, Sunday School and Bible studies, resources were offered for technology and groups were connected in unprecedented ways. These connections fostered creative ideas, think tanks, and encouragement as new ways to do ministry during challenging circumstances were navigated and explored.

We have set three priorities for South Georgia:

1. Resourcing the local church in ways that refocuses our energies on mission and ministry
2. Dismantling racism and focusing on social justice in our communities
3. Creating a culture that gives priority to mental health for clergy

Several strides have already been made around these areas this year. We have created “Restart” cohorts, a Task Force on Diversity, Inclusion, and Vitality, and a Task Force on Clergy Mental Health.

I do not take lightly the responsibility to lead an Annual Conference through the uncertain times we find ourselves in. I have witnessed the graciousness of South Georgia as we have navigated denominational conversations, voting on church disaffiliations, and conducting special called sessions. Yet, despite all that is going on around us, I am excited about our focus on mission and ministry and the great work we will be doing in connection with one another as we move forward.

When the announcement came that I would be serving South Georgia, people asked me repeatedly what I thought about serving as bishop of two Annual Conferences. My response was, “It is going to be A Great Adventure!”

Every day has been an adventure. I give thanks to God for all He has done in my life and in the lives of the laity and the clergy in the South Georgia Annual Conference. The words of the Psalmist ring so true, “Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever” (Psalm 23:6).

Bishop David Graves

Biographical Information of Episcopal Nominees

Iosmar Alvarez

Awakening local churches for the glory of God is the call upon Rev. Dr. Iosmar Alvarez's life. A pastor to all, the Lexington District Superintendent who leads over 70 diverse churches of various cultures and demographics has spent over 20 years in the Kentucky Conference serving as a bridge between cultures. Rev. Dr. Alvarez has a proven track record of fruitful church planting and revitalization, caring for the sick and downtrodden, the burdened and the marginalized, across races, cultures, ideologies, and generations. As a Cuban-American, his courageous and yet humble attitude of relational servant leadership has enabled him to skillfully and powerfully bridge ethnic and racial barriers, powerfully reach communities and cultivate a spirit of collaboration. At the age of 27, Alvarez followed God's lead and left the difficulties and closed doors of his native Cuba to use his gifts of relationship building and cross-cultural faith sharing to come to America. A door was immediately opened to plant the very first Hispanic UMC in Kentucky. A sought-after coach and leader in the Commonwealth, he is now making history as the first Hispanic Episcopal nominee from the Kentucky Conference.

Alvarez formed the *Lexington Disciple Making Network* as a platform to launch district initiatives for church health, collaboration, multiplication, and to provide support and mentorship to young leaders. He founded *The Hispanic Christian Academy* in partnership with United Theological Seminary and the Kentucky Conference which is training leaders nationwide. He was elected to serve as Kentucky Conference Delegate in 2016, 2019 and 2020 and has worked on cabinet-level projects in several conferences. Through Alvarez's direct collaboration with *SBC 21* (Strengthening the Black Church for the 21st Century) in the Lexington District, local churches are awakening and revitalizing.

A visionary pastor and thought leader, Alvarez has authored five books and has been a frequent speaker for nationally recognized networks on leadership development and church growth. He is founder and CEO of *Disciple 21 Church Planting Network*, an international multicultural network with a goal of planting 2,500 churches by 2028. He has been recognized nationally by the UMC for his exemplary leadership in church planting, development, and transformation.

Alvarez believes his experience in leadership is both a gift of the Spirit and a skill.

"A leader needs to be able to discover, develop, and deploy passionate spiritual disciples," he said.

Alvarez's extraordinary and inspiring journey is a testimony to the United Methodist understanding of social and personal holiness; his life a reflection of prevenient, justifying and sanctifying grace. Traveling light, he left Cuba in 2001, stripped of everything except a backpack and a heart for Jesus. Upon his arrival in Kentucky, he stepped into uncertainty, trusting God for his next move.

That year, Preston Highway UMC in Louisville happened to be praying for a leader to help reach their rapidly growing Hispanic population when Alvarez, unaware of the prayer efforts and need,

joined the church. Within a year he became a disciple-making leader and a local pastor for the congregation as people came in droves to receive Jesus.

“It’s just part of my personality,” he said. “When I am a part of something, I am all in, 100%.”

Soon, a new church was born, becoming the fastest-growing Hispanic church plant in the Kentucky Conference. With a fire in his soul for cultivating transformation where the broken find hope and healing, Alvarez felt called to establish new spaces for faith communities to grow into United Methodist Churches. In the midst of his ministry and service, he earned a Master of Divinity from United Theological Seminary in Dayton, OH, and a Master’s in Christian Leadership from Lindsey Wilson College, and a Doctorate in Church Planting Ministry from Asbury Theological Seminary.

By 2003, The Kentucky Conference’s New Church Development Office recruited Alvarez to plant a new church in Hopkinsville at St. John UMC. The church grew rapidly, baptisms abounded, several small groups formed, and the community at large was transformed through outreach ministries. However, that year Alvarez faced his life’s most painful trial; his faith tested like never before. His loving wife, Janet, passed away in a car accident. Devastated, he re-evaluated his life. Once again, he was stripped of everything except his heart for Jesus.

“I realized that Christ was all that mattered,” he said. “The Holy Spirit said to me in prayer to just keep walking and that I would see my wife again, as she had become a part of that great cloud of witnesses, just as every loved one who has ever died in Christ.”

Urgency swept Alvarez after the tragedy; his awareness of human fragility more apparent than ever. His passion to bring others to Christ grew stronger. In 2004 he was appointed to pastor Fuente de Avivamiento (Springs of Revival) UMC in Lexington, where under his leadership the church lived up to its name, growing more than he could have ever imagined. The church led the Conference with the most professions of faith for three consecutive years.

He met and married Zulayne, who also became a licensed local pastor, joyfully shouldering the ministry alongside him. New leaders emerged and new churches were planted. Soon a second campus and house churches sprang up in revival around the city and beyond, impacting Richmond, Georgetown, Springfield, and Winchester. The church became the fastest growing in the Jurisdiction, and Alvarez was honored by the UMC with the Harry Denman Evangelism Award.

“The opportunity to serve as a pastor to all has been a means of God’s sanctifying grace in my life,” Alvarez declared.

Today, all churches Alvarez has had the privilege of planting are flourishing and continuing to make disciples to advance the Kingdom of God around the world. Centered on building inclusive relationships, Alvarez’s goal is to live into the man God has called him to be. His wife, Zulayne, along with their young daughter, Sulam, are his ardent encouragers and supporters. He finds joy in adding value to others, identifying their gifts, and encouraging them through words and actions, eagerly responding to his call to awaken local churches for the glory of God.

Sharon Austin

#BeUMC

Sharon G. Austin was selected as the Florida Conference Episcopal nominee in 2020 and was recently affirmed as the Florida Conference Episcopal nominee for the 2022 Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference. Her pronouns are she/her/hers. She has been a clergywoman for over 40 years and has celebrated twenty-five years in The United Methodist Church. When she decided to transfer to The United Methodist Church, she described the transfer of orders as a leading of the ‘Holy Spirit.’

She has served as the Conference Director of Connectional and Justice since 2013. She has served five Cross-Racial/Cross-Cultural Appointments: including appointments to three local churches, and later as a District Superintendent (of the former South-Central District). She had oversight of a complex district comprised of ninety churches and missions in rural, suburban, and urban communities. She has served on a host of District and Conference leadership teams and, as Director of Connectional and Justice Ministries, serves as an officer of the Florida Annual Conference. She also serves on numerous Southeastern Jurisdictional and General Church boards, agencies, and committees (refer to Episcopal Questions #6 and #7 for a more robust listing). She has represented the Florida Annual Conference at General and Southeastern Jurisdictional Conferences in 2012, 2016, and General Conference 2019 and elected to serve at General Conference 2020. Last year, she served as Co-interim District Superintendent of the Gulf Central District simultaneously while serving as Director of Connectional and Justice Ministries.

She was born in 1955 and is a native of Jamaica, New York, who grew up during the Civil Rights Movement. She was baptized in the Congregational Church and raised in Lutheran Churches on Long Island, New York. Her parents (who met and married in NY) were native Floridians with North and South Carolina and Baptist and A.M.E. roots. She was actively involved in her neighborhoods, churches, schools, girl scout troops, and dance classes. The culturally diverse membership of these organizations significantly informed her passion for and expectation of diversity and inclusion. The family later moved to Florida and joined the Baptist church of her grandparents. Every place and denomination in which she worshipped, she experienced the power of God, the love of Jesus Christ, and the movement of the Holy Spirit! Her father responded to a call to ministry, as had Austins before him.

She is *now* a proud sexagenarian who realizes that when decades of experience are needed, little if anything else can suffice. Her ecumenical exposure, ordination in two denominations, serving in a denomination that represented a split primarily over social justice issues, ministry of care and healing in several chaplaincy settings, history of ‘firsts,’ continued advocacy and activism for justice and inclusion, saturation in and commitment to The United Methodist Church and abiding faith in the Kingdom work of inclusion uniquely qualify her for leadership. People in Austin’s personal life and professional associations have spoken into her life and ministry over the years. The Spirit’s nudging has prompted her toward listening and now responding to the call to offer herself as an Episcopal leader of The United Methodist Church.

Austin fondly and frequently says, “every clergyperson was once a layperson.” As a child and teenager, she was an active layperson, teaching Sunday School at age 16 and responding to her call

to ministry in 1975 while a student at Berry College in Mt. Berry, GA. She was attracted to the ministry of a young United Methodist campus chaplain who influenced the course of her future vocation. He invited her to join the chapel choir and serve as a chapel assistant. Her call to ministry grew louder in contrast to the Baptist Church's exclusive boundaries, which grew more stringent. Her home pastor never acknowledged her call to ordained ministry. She was also attracted to a tall, smart guy with an 'afro,' and they later married. Their chaplain later officiated their wedding, invited her to preach at the College Chapel, and remained a friend and confidante until his untimely death. Austin earned a bachelor's degree in Psychology with a double minor in Religion and Philosophy. She later attended Candler School of Theology, Atlanta, GA (and as a National Baptist) on the recommendation of her chaplain and Religion and Philosophy Department faculty. She was a founding member of Candler's Baptist Studies Program. She was inducted into Omicron Delta Kappa in Seminary (a National Leadership Honor Society).

She joined Historic Ebenezer Baptist Church while in seminary (which was dually aligned with the Progressive National and American Baptist Conventions). When Austin graduated from Candler in 1977 with a Master of Divinity degree, only one previous class included an African- American woman. She was later licensed and ordained by Ebenezer Baptist Church, becoming the first woman to be ordained in the congregation's 95-year history. Notably, the late Martin Luther King, Sr. was among those who served on her ordination council. She was later 'called' to serve as the first woman to join the pastoral staff.

Austin has served as a clinical chaplain for a women's prison, completed 8.5 units of Clinical Pastoral Education in several hospitals, served as adjunct faculty at the Interdenominational Theological Center (The I.T.C.) and Candler School of Theology, and served as a hospice chaplain. Following her move to FL, she attended and graduated from the Barry University Doctor of Ministry program in Miami, FL.

Over the years, she has experienced many 'firsts' and received numerous accolades and awards from civic groups and sororities. Among her civic engagement has been membership on the board of Planned Parenthood, a Domestic Violence Shelter board, and law enforcement Citizens Advisory Boards. She has been quoted in newspapers and magazines and appeared on "Good Morning, America." Her broad ecumenical exposure uniquely positions her to reach out and connect with people and populations across a broad spectrum. Her extensive international travel defines her as a 'global citizen.'

She enjoys traveling and eating unusual and locally sourced foods, cooking favorite foods for family gatherings, reading, gardening, and dancing (explained by some as the reason she is no longer Baptist)! She is married to Michael Holliday (retired). They are the proud and grateful parents of four gainfully employed children; three daughters, Erin, Genise, and Desiree, and one son, Nicholas (sometimes affectionately referred to as 'the critics'). Nicholas and Nerli are parents to sons Collin, a toddler, and Dillon, an infant, who are a joy!

and economically poor in its community and in ministries in the U.S. and around the globe through its annual Christmas Eve Offering.

- An exciting part of Floris UMC’s international outreach has been the establishment of the Child Rescue/Reintegration Centre (CRC) for children affected by food scarcity, child labor, and trafficking in Bo, Sierra Leone. This has been done in partnership with the Sierra Leone Annual Conference of the UMC since 2000. Recently, the CRC was renamed the Child Reintegration Centre and has moved from a residential setting to family-based care in the community. The ministry now serves more than 600 children in the Bo community providing school fees, medical care, mentoring to caregivers, and training so that their families can be self- supporting and independent.
- The Child Reintegration Centre became a part of the 501(c)(3) Helping Children Worldwide, Inc. (HCW) in 2003. Currently, 16 partner churches have joined Floris UMC in supporting HCW and its ministries in Sierra Leone.
- In partnership with HCW and the Sierra Leone Annual Conference of the UMC, Mercy Hospital opened in 2007 on the campus of the Child Rescue Centre. Mercy is the only hospital in Bo, Sierra Leone, that treats patients regardless of ability to pay and supports community health initiatives including malaria, HIV & AIDS, prenatal care, and nutrition with a special focus on maternal and infant survival. This 26-bed facility currently treats 10,000 patients per year and includes an operating suite which opened in 2019.
- Represented HCW in numerous meetings in Sierra Leone held by Bishops Humper and Yambasu on their board of directors for the CRC and Mercy Hospital.
- For further review of Floris UMC ministries, visit www.florisumc.org

Pastor, Toms Brook United Methodist Church, Toms Brook VA July 1991 - July 1997

- Located in the rural Shenandoah Valley, Toms Brook UMC grew from 100 in worship each week to a 280-person worshipping congregation during this time. It was characterized by a strong sense of community, an active outreach to people in need in Shenandoah County, and a church known for its ministry to children and students.

Pastor, Brucetown-Welltown Charge, Frederick County VA July 1988 – July 1991

- Two small membership churches in a two-point charge.

Assistant Pastor, Duluth UMC, Duluth GA August 1986 – June 1988

Ministry and Connectional Experience

Delegation Leader, Virginia Delegation to General Conference	2020
Member, Mediation Team for the Protocol of Grace through Separation	2020
Delegation Leader, Virginia Delegation to Called General Conference	2019
Clergy Member, Commission on a Way Forward	2016 - 2018
Chair, Wesley Theological Seminary Board of Governors	2012 - 2022
Board of Governors, Wesley Theological Seminary	2010 - present
Southeastern Jurisdiction Committee on Episcopacy	2008 - present
Committee on Episcopacy, Virginia Conference	2004 - present

Board of Directors, Helping Children Worldwide, Inc.	2003 - 2019
Clergy Leader, Virginia Delegation to General Conference	2016
Co-Chair, Five Talent Academy, Virginia Conference	2012 2-15
Delegation Leader, Virginia Delegation to General Conference	2012
Board of Directors, Jeanie Schmidt Free Clinic, Herndon VA	2008 - 2012
All Things New Task Force, Virginia Conference	2008 - 2010
Clergy Leader, Virginia Delegation to General Conference	2008
Board of Ordained Ministry, Virginia Conference	2004 - 2008
Chair, Common Table Task Force, Virginia Conference	2002 - 2004
Clergy Delegate, Virginia Delegation to General Conference	2004
Bishop's Initiative on Children and Poverty, Virginia Conference	1997 - 2001
Author and speaker at a variety of District and Conference training events in the United Methodist Church	

Publications

Courage: Jesus and the Call to Brave Faith	Abingdon Press, 2021
Reckless Love: Jesus' Call to Love Our Neighbor	Abingdon Press, 2019
Restored: Finding Redemption in Our Mess	Abingdon Press, 2016
Defying Gravity: Breaking Free From the Culture of More	Abingdon Press, 2016
The Generous Church: A Guide for Pastors	Abingdon Press, 2016
High Yield: Seven Disciplines of the Fruitful Leader with Lovett Weems	Abingdon Press, 2016
6 Blocks Small Group Studies – 6 Decisions That will Change Your Life, 6 Things We Should Know About God, 6 Ways We Encounter God	Abingdon Press, 2014
Overflow: Increase Worship Attendance and Bear More Fruit with Lovett Weems	Abingdon Press, 2013
Bearing Fruit: Ministry with Real Results with Lovett Weems	Abingdon Press, 2011

Education

B.A. Public Administration, Virginia Polytechnic and State University	September 1981 – May 1985
M.Div., Candler School of Divinity, Emory University	September 1985 - 1988

Sharon Bowers

Rev. Sharon L. Bowers, 60, is the Holston Annual Conference's Black Methodist for Church Renewal and the Committee on the Status and Role of Women's nominee for the 2020 episcopal elections. She is a General Conference delegate, Church and Society 2 and is presently serving as Executive Director and Lead Pastor at the University of Tennessee Knoxville Wesley Foundation.

Rev. Bowers is a champion of diversity and embraces ecumenism. She is a local and national member of Black Methodist for Church Renewal (BMCR) and was instrumental in reviving the local chapter in the Holston Conference. She is also the Chair of the Commission on the Status and Role of Women (CSROW). Rev. Bowers was the catalyst for planning, developing and establishing a Holston Conference relationship with the General Church Agency, Strengthening The Black Church for the 21st Century (SB21) and establishing an African American Task Force Team to monitor efforts of expressions of diversity in the Holston Conference. She is very active in the Holston Conference of the United Methodist Church where she serves as the Chair of the Order of Elders, a member of the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry and the Tennessee Valley District Board of Ordained Ministry, a member of the Pastoral Oversight Committee for the Holston Conference Center for Well Being, the Sexual Ethics and Boundaries Task Force, the Clergy Convocation Committee, the Clergy Eight Year Assessment Task Force, the Out Reach and Advocacy Committee and various other ad hoc committees and initiatives.

Rev Bowers has led two of the largest African American churches in the conference and has helped each of them become financially solvent and develop leaders who are actively involved in district and conference ministry. Also, she served as lead pastor of a five-point charge cooperative parish. She is best known for developing leaders and has mentored many people in the provisional process. She most recently mentored four candidates who are all successfully leading as local pastors in diverse and cross racial appointments. Since July of 2018, Rev. Bowers has been serving in a cross racial appointment as the Executive Director and Lead Pastor of the University of Tennessee Wesley Foundation Campus Ministry.

Rev. Bowers has been teaching and preaching since 1977 and in full-time ministry since 1987. She is the founder and CEO of Character Based Leadership Institute, Inc., an innovative leadership and personal development ministry helping Christians and others lead and live with character. She is the author of *Mark the Perfect Man: Leading and Living With Character*, a tool for developing character, fostering accountability and empowering clergy and other leaders throughout the globe. She has a Master's Degree in Sociology from Morgan State University and a Masters of Divinity from Gammon Theology Seminary both graduating with honors. She has completed the requirements for the PhD in Political Science from Clark Atlanta University (ABD) where her current dissertation title is: *Reclaiming Intersectionality as a Form of Resistance to Hegemonic Power or Agency and Its Articulations Exhibited in the Formation of Race, Gender, Human Sexuality, Class and Nation*.

Rev. Bowers is a widow and her husband Rev. Carl Marshall also served in the Holston Conference until his death in April 2018. She is the proud "Auntie Sherry" to many nieces and nephews. Rev. Bowers solicits your prayers as she is committed to serving with character, faithfulness and integrity.

Amy Coles

Rev. Amy Coles is the Western North Carolina Conference nominee for episcopal election at the 2022 SEJ Jurisdictional Conference. She was elected 2nd in the delegation at 2015 WNCC Annual Conference and serves as the group's secretary/treasurer.

Amy is a summa cum laude graduate of the University of North Carolina-Greensboro with a Child Development and Family Relations major and a 1992 graduate of Duke Divinity School, where she served as the Student Representative Assembly President during the 1991-1992 school year.

A lifelong United Methodist, Amy was ordained as a deacon in 1991 and as an elder in 1994. She served in a variety of local churches before becoming a district superintendent in 2009, a small rural church, a new church start, and a medium-size rural church. Guided by the Wesleyan understanding of holiness of heart and life, she understands her call as a pastor to include preaching, teaching, and modelling the interrelationship of discipleship and mission as a faithful response to Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

As a District Superintendent, she served as the missional strategist for the 86 churches of the Albemarle District followed by the 66 churches of the Smoky Mountain District. She was a member of the Conference's Transition Team, which facilitated the move from 15 districts to 8 districts. She then had the opportunity to implement that team's strategies while continuing to serve as a District Superintendent. For the past 7 years, she has served as the Assistant to the Bishop, supporting the Bishop and District Superintendents, coordinating the ministry of the Conference Staff, and working with the Conference Trustees in re-missioning and selling closed church property.

Rev. Coles is an active participant with the denominational Connectional Table, serving on the Agency Evaluation Advisory Group, the Leadership Discernment and Community Life Committee, the Budget Allocations Task Force, the Connectional Table Representative to the GCFA Economic Advisory Committee, and as the Co-Chair of the Board Makeup Task Force. She is also currently active with the Board of Rural Faith Development CDC, the ImagineHub Board of Advisors, and the Junaluska Associates Council at Lake Junaluska. Previously, Amy served on the Boards of Disciple Bible Outreach Ministries, Givens Estates, Hinton Rural Life Center, Mount Shepherd Retreat Center, Pfeiffer University, and the Western Carolina Wesley Foundation. She was also active with the Thriving Rural Communities Initiative at Duke.

She is the guardian of her 24-year-old nephew, Sergeant Brandon Estrada, who serves in the United States Army, and she now oversees care for her 21-year-old niece, Mae Coles.

Service Record

Assistant to the Bishop	2015 – present
Smoky Mountain District Superintendent	2012 - 2015
Appalachian District Superintendent	2012
Albemarle District Superintendent	2009 - 2012
Fairview United Methodist Church	1999 - 2009
Covenant Church United Methodist	1996 - 1999
Hopewell United Methodist Church	1992 – 1996

Additional Training

- CAST 1 & 2 (Coach Approach Skills Training)
- Cabinet Leadership Development
- Denominational Leadership: Serving God and the Church as an Executive Leader
- OnBoarding Facilitator Training
- Royce and Jane Reynolds Certificate Program in Church Leadership

Denominational Service

- Connectional Table
 - Agency Evaluation Advisory Group
 - Leadership Discernment and Community Life Committee
 - Budget Allocations Task Force
 - Representative to Economic Advisory Committee
 - Co-Chair, Board Makeup Task Force
- Delegate to General Conference in 2012, 2016, 2019, & 2020

Jurisdictional Service

- Associates Council, Lake Junaluska
- Board member, Hinton Rural Life Center

Annual Conference Service

- Board of Ordained Ministry
- Board member, Disciple Bible Outreach Ministry
- Board member, Givens Estates
- Board member, Mount Shepherd Retreat Center
- Board member, Pfeiffer University
- Board member, Rural Faith Development CDC
- Board member, Western Carolina Wesley Foundation
- Commission on Equitable Compensation
- Conference Finance and Administration
- Location of Annual Conference Task Force
- Thriving Rural Communities Initiative, Duke Divinity School
- Transition Task Force – Chair, Finance & Property Sub-Committee

Edith (Edie) Gleaves

God's prevenient, justifying, and sanctifying grace were at work in the lives of my grandfather, and great-grandfather, who were Methodist Episcopal pastors. In their times African Americans were not included as a full part of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Yet, in hope they chose to remain and serve, to transform the church from within to be the best it could be, and to be transformed themselves within this rich tradition. I too, by God's grace, am committed in hope to offering the gifts God has given me to see our beloved United Methodist Church be the best it can be and continue to make disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. I believe my gifts include a lively relationship with Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior, leading as a non-anxious presence while following the Holy Spirit's direction, building community, invitingly reaching out to ALL neighbors, working through conflict, building bridges towards reconciliation, unity, peace, justice, and open to new, innovative learnings.

I give thanks to God for over thirty-seven years of service at the local, district, Annual Conference, and global levels of our Church which have helped to form and shape me as a Christian rooted deeply in Wesleyan theology and practice in head, heart and life:

- 2020-present, Lead Pastor, Ocean View UMC, Oak Island. Large, multi-staff church, cross-racial appointment. Continue to increase in mission and professions of faith amid COVID pandemic.
- District Superintendent, Harbor District (2016-20). Over 100 rural, small town, suburban and large churches. A particular sense of accomplishment is in the growing partnership with our local UMC churches and African Methodist Episcopal Zion churches in efforts towards fostering racial reconciliation and justice, one of the eleven primary mission strategy foci of the district.
- Associate at Wrightsville UMC (2010-16). Cross-racial, large suburban church. Partnered with laity there to establish what evolved into the NC Conference Mission Partnership Initiative with the Sierra Leone Annual Conference—the Mission of Hope: Rotifunk Hospital.
- Deputy General Secretary for Mission Personnel for the General Board of Global Ministries (2000-10). Led in commissioning and sending four hundred new U.S. and global missionaries in Jesus name and established the Home Missioners and Global Missionaries (focus on Global Health) programs during my leadership.
- Pastor, Resurrection UMC (1995-2000) Mid-sized suburban cross-racial appointment. Awarded the district evangelism award, doubling membership from 200 to 400.
- NC Annual Conference, Director of Multicultural Ministries, Spiritual Formation and Social Concerns. (1990-95) First ordained woman of color to serve as Conference staff.
- Associate pastor, North Raleigh UMC, (1987-90) first ordained cross-racial appointment in NC Conference.
- Pastor, Cokesbury UMC, (1985-87). Small African American church, increased membership by a third in two years. Mentored two new UMC pastors who were laity of that church.
- NC Conference General Conference delegate for 2020. Jurisdictional and reserve various years.
- Served at various General and Jurisdictional Annual Conferences as resource staff for GBGM.

My sister and my three adorable little rescue dogs make up our joyful family. I am grateful for the honor to be the episcopal nominee for the N C Annual Conference and to be considered for such a time as this.

Ken Nelson

Education

- Master of Divinity, Duke Divinity School (1993)
- Bachelor of Arts, Newberry College (1990) (*cum laude*)
- Doctoral Coursework, Wesley Theological Seminary
- Additional Studies, Center of Theological Inquiry

Ordination

South Carolina Conference

- Deacon, June 1, 1993
- Elder, June 1, 1995

Personal

- Born in Beaufort, South Carolina
- One of five children, two brothers, two sisters

Hobbies

- Travel
- Sports
- Tennis

Appointments (South Carolina Conference)

2020 – District Superintendent, Orangeburg District

2014 – Coordinator of Clergy Services

2007 – Congregational Specialist, Conference Connectional Ministries

2006 – Silver Hill Memorial UMC (Spartanburg)

2002 – Centenary/Kingsville Charge (Hartsville)

2000 – St. John's UMC (Aiken) Associate Minister

1998 – Duke University Chapel, Asst. Dean & Director of Religious Life

1994 – St. John's UMC (Aiken) Associate Minister

1993 – Mt. Zion-St. Mark UMC (Sumter)

Service on Conference Boards and Agencies

2014-present – Secretary of the Annual Conference

2009-14 – Board of Ordained Ministry Chairperson

2006-09 – Board of Ordained Ministry Registrar

2004-14 – Conference Board of Ordained Ministry

2007-12 – Columbia District Committee on Ministry

2006-07 – Spartanburg District Committee on Ministry

2004-06 – Hartsville District Committee on Ministry Chair

2002-06 – Hartsville District Committee on Ministry

- Formation in Ministry (formerly Residency I) Group Leader
- Frequent Workshop Leader:

- Local Church Lay Leadership Training
- South Carolina Ministries With Young People
- United Methodist Men
- United Methodist Women
- Formerly:
 - Hartsville Vision 2000 Worship Attendance Coordinator
 - Orangeburg Coordinator for Youth Ministries (DCOM)
 - Epworth Children’s Home Board of Directors
 - Orangeburg & Hartsville Resident II Group Leader
 - SCMYM Mission Possible Brazil Mission Trip Co-Leader
 - Conference Camps & Retreat Ministries Board of Trustees
 - Hispanic Ministries Task Force

Service on General Boards

2016-present – Connectional Table

- Worldwide Nature of The Church
- Leadership Discernment & Community Life Chairperson
- Search Committee for CCMO Chairperson (2017)

2012-16 – General Board of Church and Society

General and Jurisdictional Conference Service

2020 – General and Jurisdictional Conference Delegate

2019 – General Conference Delegate

2016 – General and Jurisdictional Conference Delegate

- Higher Education and Ministry
 - Subcommittee Chairperson

2012 – General and Jurisdictional Conference Delegate

- Higher Education and Ministry

2008 – General and Jurisdictional Conference Delegate

- Committee on Discipleship

2007-2014 – National Black Staff Forum

1995 – World Methodist Conference (Brazil) Delegate

Jurisdictional Leadership

Southeastern Jurisdiction Committee on Plan of Organization and Rules of Order

Southeastern Jurisdiction Black Methodists for Church Renewal

Awards & Recognition

2016 – Joseph B. Bethea Award Recipient

Presented to a person who has performed outstanding service in working for racial justice

2010 – Founder of the South Carolina Conference Summit on the Black Church

1990 – Harry Denman Evangelism Award Lay Recipient

Honors United Methodists in each annual conference whose exceptional ministry of evangelism – expressed in Word, Sign and Deed – brings people into a life-transforming relationship with Jesus Christ.

Missional Travel

- Brazil
- Guatemala
- Holy Land
- Honduras
- Kenya
- Norway

Connie Shelton

I am passionate about the mystery of the Triune God, the Word of God, the Word made flesh, the Body of Christ redeemed by his blood, the power of the Holy Spirit that works in us, among us, because of us and in spite of us! I serve as Superintendent and Chief Missional Strategist for the East Jackson District of the Mississippi Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church. Since July 1 of this year, I am also on a team of four superintendents who together serve the Hattiesburg District.

I am married to Rev. Dr. Joey Shelton, Dean of the Chapel and Director of Church Relations at Millsaps College. We have two daughters, Bailey, 24 (a surprise after 11 years of marriage) and Jessica, 19, (another surprise after 16 years of marriage). My family brings joy, laughter, and truth telling to my life.

I am a native of Picayune, MS, reared in the Southern Baptist tradition where I developed a relationship with God's word through Bible drills and scriptural memorization. The word made flesh in Jesus drew me into a relationship with God as a child. My great-grandmother, an immigrant from Lebanon, discovered Methodism upon her arrival in the U.S. in the early twentieth century. In 1986, I found Methodist theology and ministry resonated with my life. I subsequently joined Oak Grove United Methodist Church, Hattiesburg, MS when I was twenty-one years old.

My degrees in communication have served me in every ministry context. My bachelor's degree is in Radio, Television, and Film and my master's degree is in Public Relations, both from the University of Southern Mississippi.

A single story frames my life. In 1995, as a second career student at Duke University Divinity School, I was invited to sing at a weekly chapel service. After the service, my preaching class professor, Dr. William Turner, approached me and asked, "Where did you learn to sing?" I replied that I did not really know. The best answer I could come up with was, "I took a few voice lessons while in college." He looked discerningly into my eyes and asked again, with more emphasis, "Where did you *learn* to sing?" His sincere intensity forced me to go deeply inside myself.

After months of reflection and prayer, I discovered my earliest memories of music reflected my mother and me sitting at the piano, singing and playing together. I remembered her joy and patience, even as she (unbeknownst to me) was dying with cancer and preparing to leave a young husband and three little children. My song was birthed out of a suffering mother whose faith was deep. God's redemptive Spirit has transformed my sorrow into hope (Romans 5). (I further discovered that my mother led music at a Methodist church while I was in her womb.) That is where I learned to sing.

The answer to Dr. Turner's spiritual question has defined my calling and every aspect of my ministry. I am drawn to those who are suffering and trust God's hope that does not disappoint. In every ministry appointment, I am called to lead others to join God's mission to be present with those on the margins, oppressed, voiceless, and powerless.

When my husband, Joey, and I married in 1987, we served as volunteer lay youth directors for Oak Grove United Methodist Church, Hattiesburg, MS. The seven years that followed were seasons of discerning our call to full-time ordained ministry. I was serving as church relations director for The United Methodist Hour television and radio ministry and Joey was practicing law. After several months of deep struggle, we answered God's call to attend Divinity School at Duke University. We sold everything and moved to Durham, NC.

The three years of spiritual formation and education at Duke Divinity School were transformational. We were stretched and expanded in ways we could not have imagined, from Dr. Frederick Herzog's liberation theology to Dr. Susan Keefe's church history. We would never be the same.

In 1997, we returned to serve three small membership churches, two rural and one urban. The rural churches taught us to live in community. The urban church taught us how to do church differently with those in our neighborhood.

In December of 1998, I was appointed as Executive Director of The United Methodist Hour television and radio broadcast which reached across the Southeastern United States. As the weekly preacher, I had the privilege of bringing the good news of Jesus to a diverse audience – from church people preparing to attend worship at their local church to inmates in prison. I was ever surprised by the embrace of Jesus' love and grace extended.

In January of 2005, I was appointed as Field Education Director at Duke Divinity School. Assigning 300 students per year to their contextual learning sites demanded deep listening and discernment of both students and churches/extension ministries. Hearing stories of God's activity in these field education experiences was inspiring!

In January of 2008, we returned to Mississippi to serve historic Galloway Memorial United Methodist Church, a flagship congregation birthed in 1836 located across from the state Capitol. The congregation taught us how to follow Jesus between the power of the legislature and the powerlessness of the people who called the streets of Jackson, MS, home.

In July of 2013, I was appointed Director of Connectional Ministries and Communications for the Mississippi Annual Conference. With joy, I had oversight over the discernment process and roll out of a new structure for our conference. We identified our purpose: "The Mississippi Conference - empowered by love, generosity, justice, and apprenticeship – forms spiritual leaders, faith communities, and connections, so more disciples of Jesus Christ transform the world." We restructured conference staff to be more nimble and effective to accomplish this mission.

In July of 2015, I was appointed as District Superintendent of East Jackson. The 63 churches in the district continue to ignite great ministry as they hone their disciple-making systems and innovate new places for new people. Serving on the cabinet is a joy to my life. Across our theological diversity and the breadth of leadership styles, we have deep trust and an awareness

that “iron sharpens iron” (Proverbs 27:17). We also share a great deal of laughter which often serves as a means of grace.

In July of 2022, the MS Conference Cabinet embarked on an experiment. Four superintendents, along with their present appointed districts, will oversee the Hattiesburg District and three superintendents will oversee the Greenwood District. I am privileged to walk with 25 churches in the Hattiesburg District along with the 63 churches in the East Jackson District.

Ministry has allowed me to share countless moments in sacred space and places of pain and suffering with the people of my parishes in hospitals, nursing homes, rehabilitation centers, board rooms, mission stations and residences. We have wept and laughed, sang songs and conversed, spoken and listened, prayed and engaged together in the fellowship of the Triune God. In preaching the gospel, I am called to share from my heart the good news of Jesus’ love that surpasses understanding. In the work of district administration, mission strategy, and connectional systems thinking, my focus is fueled by joining God in what God is already doing (John 5:17).

I am deeply compelled to help the local church to dream God’s dreams for their futures, practice spiritual formation and discernment, birth new spaces for people who don’t know Jesus’ love, form lay and clergy spiritual leaders, and value unity as a gift from the Triune God. Jesus’ prayer in John’s gospel speaks to us, “As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one... (John 17).” I believe the glory that Jesus has given us – the disciples – is demonstrated in our unity as God draws us “in” the life of the Triune God. When we are divisive and demonize one another, how will the world believe that the Father sent Jesus? We are called to embody the prayer of Jesus for one-ness - in how we speak, pray, and trust one another.

I dream of a church that welcomes, includes, and affirms all people – and the diversity of theological perspectives and scriptural interpretation find space to follow Jesus without vilification. I pray for faithful followers of Jesus to be freed from animosity, from the need for power, and return to Jesus’ clarity of the greatest commandment: “to love God with your heart, soul, and mind and your neighbor as yourself.”

In this complex season in the life of our beloved United Methodist Church, I sense that my communications educational formation and practice will serve our church well. We desperately need episcopal leaders who take the role of communication seriously and innovate new ways of connecting the connection.

My deep covenant relationships are across the theological, racial, educational, socio-economic and geographic spectrum. I don’t “tolerate” diversity. I deeply value diversity. The deep convictions of faithful disciples of Jesus are demonstrated in multiplicity of thought, interpretation, word, and deed. I believe Jesus Christ is inviting us to bear witness to the breadth of his Church, where, through baptism, *we are incorporated into God’s mighty acts of salvation.* We offer ourselves *in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice in union with Christ’s offering for us.*

Byron Thomas

Byron E. Thomas is a native of Aliquippa, Pennsylvania. A veteran of the United States Air Force, he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Religion and Philosophy from Virginia Union University in Richmond, Virginia and a Master of Divinity degree from Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas. He also holds a Certificate in Executive Leadership from McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago, Illinois. In 2016, Pastor Thomas graduated from the Association of Chicago Theological Schools (ACTS) program with a Doctor of Ministry (D.Min) in Preaching through McCormick Theological Seminary.

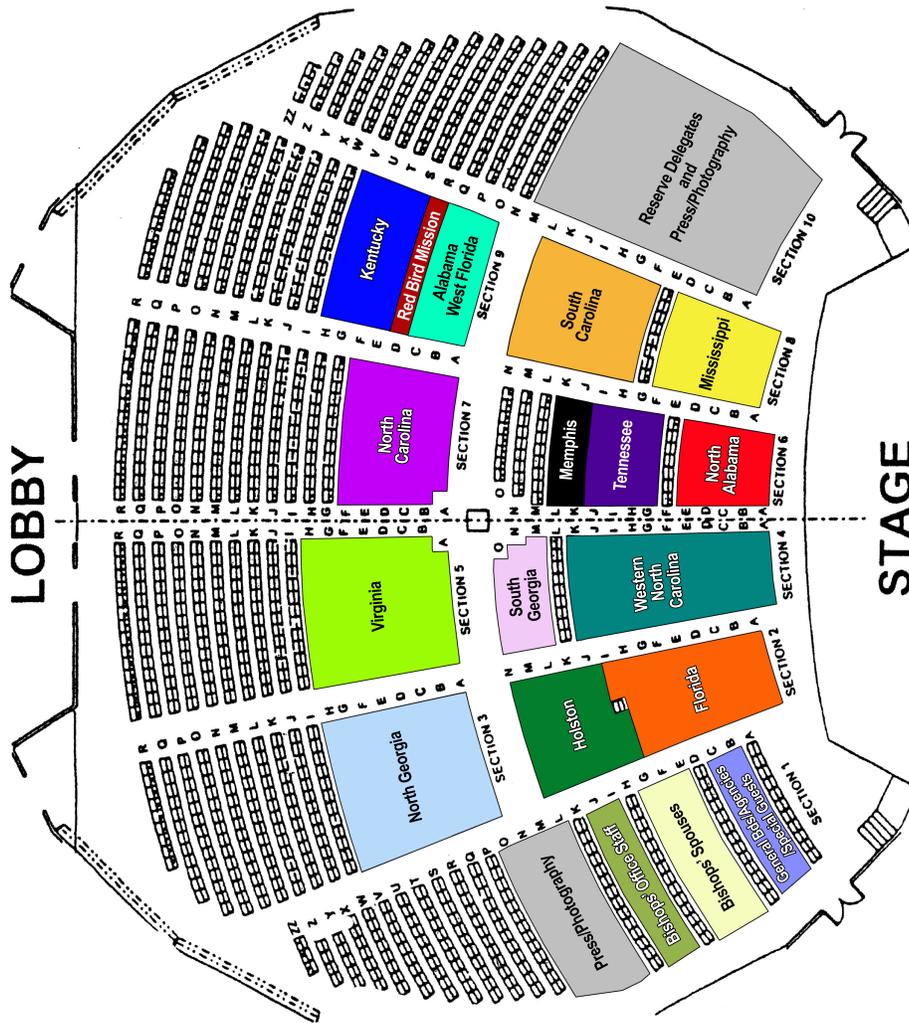
Pastor Thomas served as Senior Pastor of Ben Hill United Methodist Church in Atlanta, Georgia from June 2013-June 2021. Placing a premium on discipleship as opposed to membership, he emphasized the importance of spiritual formation as foundational for faithfully executing the ministry God has entrusted to the Church. He also strongly believes that United Methodist churches operate best when the mission of the church is being carried out by laity who are Christ-centered and demonstrate a love for God, for themselves, and for the people of God.

Pastor Thomas teaches the Six Marks of Discipleship as foundational principles and practices that support the vision and mission of the church. He encourages believers to participate in worship weekly, engage in daily Bible Study, engage in daily prayer, serve others, give, and develop spiritual friendships.

Pastor Thomas has previously served as the Pastor of Central United Methodist Church in Atlanta, GA, Associate Director in the Office of Connectional Ministries for the North Georgia Conference of the United Methodist Church where his primary area of concentration was Advocacy, and as Pastor at the Fort Street United Methodist Church in Atlanta, GA. He also served in various capacities within the North Georgia Conference and the Southeastern Jurisdiction including Chairperson of the Committee on Related Agencies, Chairperson of the Committee on Ethnic Local Church Concerns, Chairperson of the Advocacy Committee, and Member of the Board of Directors of the Hinton Rural Life Center in Hayesville, North Carolina. He served the Atlanta-College Park District as a member of the District Board of Ordained Ministry and as the Chair of the District Committee on Superintendency. He has twice served as Chaplain and Educational Liaison at the United Methodist Children's Home and has also chaired the Board of the Interfaith Children's Movement (ICM). In May 2015 Pastor Thomas was elected as the President of the North Georgia Black Methodists for Church Renewal (NGBMCR). In October 2015 he was elected as the Coordinator for the Southeastern Jurisdiction Black Methodist for Church Renewal (SEJBMCR). At the 2015 North Georgia Annual Conference in Athens, Georgia, Pastor Thomas was elected as a Clergy Delegate to the 2016 General and Jurisdictional Conferences. In 2019 he was elected to lead the North Georgia Conference Delegation to General Conference. Dr. Thomas was appointed as the Central South District Superintendent effective July 1, 2021.

Pastor Thomas enjoys spending time with his family, traveling, reading, walking, spending time at the beach as well as in the mountains. He is married to DuWanna and they are the proud parents of two wonderful sons, Ntchwaidumela and Mustafa.

DIAGRAM OF STUART AUDITORIUM



- Alabama West Florida: Section 9, Rows A-C
- Florida: Section 2, Rows A-I (3 seats on center aisle in Row I)
- Holston: Section 2, Rows I-N (4 seats on left aisle in Row I)
- Kentucky: Section 9, Rows E-H
- Memphis: Section 6, Rows K-L
- Mississippi: Section 8, Rows A-F
- North Alabama: Section 6, Rows A-E
- North Carolina: Section 7, Rows A-F
- North Georgia: Section 3, Rows A-H
- Red Bird Mission: Section 9, Row D
- South Carolina: Section 8, Rows H-N
- South Georgia: Section 4, Rows M-O
- Tennessee: Section 6, Rows G-J
- Virginia: Section 5, Rows A-H
- Western North Carolina: Section 4, Rows A-K

- General Boards/Agencies/Special Guests:
Section 1, Rows B-C
- Bishops' Spouses: Section 1, Rows E-G
- Bishops' Office Staff: Section 1, Rows I-J
- Press/Photography: Section 1, Rows L-O
Reserve Delegates and Press/Photography
Section 10, Rows A-M