VIII. ANNUAL REPORTS

REPORT OF THE DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENTS

Let me begin this year's report of District Superintendents with one of my favorite scripture lessons:

"There is a time for everything and a season/purpose for every activity under heaven." (Ecc. 3:1)

Last July 18th, in a conference room in Harrisburg, PA, a group of delegates to the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference from the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference, and several other clergy and lay members, flocked together in thanksgiving to welcome back a very special person in our lives and spiritual journey: Our spiritual leader and the good shepherd, Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar!

As the new Dean of Cabinet, I had the privilege of making a welcoming speech at the end of the gathering. I requested to our Bishop that, with his leadership, we would work faithfully and diligently together so that we may bring another spiritual Great Awakening to our Annual Conference and beyond. I believe that has already begun. Now is the time to move forward and make it happen.

We welcomed three new district Superintendents to the Cabinet table last year: Fran Noll, Richard Nichols, and Bob Scott. Congratulations on finishing your first church conference and appointment making seasons! They shared their experience of their first year as rookie DSs as follows:

New District Superintendents' Report:
"We feel the experience has been an exciting adventure. Of course it has been filled with searching for answers to questions we had no idea how to answer, but the support and guidance of the Bishop and our colleagues on the Cabinet has been invaluable. Often there are many challenges, but God's grace has been sufficient and we give praise to God for the opportunity to serve the Lord Jesus Christ."

I just realized that they never mentioned anything about the "Baptism of Fire" in their report. So I say that the report is incomplete. (Ha, Ha, Ha!) When I became a District Superintendent five years ago, I asked a question to one of the colleagues around the cabinet table, "What is it like to be a District Superintendent?" And he answered, "It's not something that anyone can explain, but it's something that you will have to experience to know what it is like." I am sure that it has been quite an experience to each one of you.

"In 2004-2005, the Lewis Center for Church Leadership of Wesley Theological Seminary administered a four-part survey of new United Methodist District Superintendents in their first year of service." (From *A Report on Research with New United Methodist Church District Superintendents* by Lovett H. Weems, Jr.)

The research shows that the most pressing needs and greatest opportunities new District Superintendents see in their districts are: making disciples, congregational development, and leadership development. I believe that these are the needs, opportunities, and challenges not only for new District Superintendents, but also for all Christian disciples who are in ministry today.

As we begin another season of ministry, we will face the same challenges: making disciples, congregational development, and leadership development. May I humbly make three suggestions for all of us to respond to these challenges?

<u>First, let's set our goals high and even higher.</u> We are all aware of the state of our economy these days, but I would like to appeal to you to set your goals high and even higher and bring the best of who you are and what you can do so that we may accomplish more in the ministry of disciple making..

Dr. Douglas Lewis states, in his book *Meeting the Moment*, "Leadership is the art of influencing other people to move in a particular direction or toward a certain goal. The critical issue is who decides the goal … The danger

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is manipulation and control by the leaders. Others, such as Gary Wills … defines a leader as "one who mobilizes others toward a goal shared by leader and followers." (*Meeting the Moment*, by Douglas Lewis, p. 9)

Our Bishop and the Cabinet hope to hear less about church leaders who have been telling the congregations, "You either do it my way or take the highway." If we have one leader who does that, it's one too many. We know better that "my way" cannot and should not be the goal of any church of Jesus Christ.

Henri Nouwen states in his book, *In the Name of Jesus*, "The mystery of ministry is that we have been chosen to make our own limited and very conditional love the gateway for the unlimited and unconditional love of God. Therefore true ministry must be mutual. When the members of a community of faith cannot truly know and love their shepherd, shepherding quickly becomes a subtle way of exercising power over others and begins to show authoritarian and dictatorial traits." There should not be any "power and control" issue to set the goals in our ministry if we truly exercise servant leadership that Jesus Christ exemplified.

Once again, I suggest that each church set their goals high and even higher so that all leaders and followers may mutually work hard to gather more fruits of our ministry for the coming harvest season.

Second, let us be more intentional about being fully connectional churches. I want to remind all of us that "being fully connectional" not only means paying 100% shared ministry, but it also means to participate in conference and district sponsored learning opportunities.

We have seen some churches that hold the shared ministry giving hostage when some leaders are not happy about certain decisions and directions of our denomination, conference, district, and local church. That should not be the way to express anyone's unhappiness about certain decisions and directions of our ministry. Please, do not hold hostage of our shared ministry giving in any circumstance because there are innocent victims who need to be nurtured by our connectional ministry.

We, as District Superintendents, endeavor to schedule our District Resource Days and make the schedules available to everyone in advance and we have witnessed growing participation in the District Resource Days. However, it is always frustrating to know that there are a good number of pastors who neither attend nor make the information and invitation available to the laity in their churches. Although all nine district offices send out the information to multiple recipients of each church, it really needs to be supported by the pastors. I suggest that pastors and lay leaders sit together to make specific lists of people who could learn and grow through those learning opportunities.

I learned a story about a lady who was sick and went to see the doctor. He examined her, did a number of tests and told her the bad news. "I'm sorry to have to tell you this, but I'm afraid you've contracted rabies." The doctor left the room for a minute, and when he returned the woman was busy writing on a piece of paper. He asked, "What are you doing, writing your will?" She said, "No, I'm making a list of all the people I'm going to bite."

Let us be intentional about making a list of people that each one of us wants to invite to our Christian journey and to the learning and growing opportunities, especially to our District Resource Days. We don't have to bite them to invite them to our Christian journey. We only need to tell God's stories that have been manifested through us and in spite of us.

Third, let us transform the world through prayers. This is the theme of this year's Annual Conference, "Disciples Transforming the World: Through Prayers". If you are looking for someone who is really good at prayer ministry, do not look further because you are looking at one. Our Bishop!

There is a funny episode that I want to share with you. When our Bishop came to us in 2004, he visited all the churches in this Annual Conference. All nine District Superintendents accompanied him to hundreds of churches in the fall. When Bishop was in a specific district we would call the respective DS to ask about how things were

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going. More than several times, we advised each other, “Never close your eyes when Bishop says, ‘Let us pray’ while you are driving.” He would invite anyone at any time when there is a need to offer a prayer.

The most important lesson that I learned is not to lose the moment. When someone approaches you and requests a prayer for any reason, please do not lose the moment. Just say a prayer right at that moment. It could be the very moment that we start to build our personal relationship. It could be the very moment that we start to earn trust. It could be the very beginning of our following Jesus as he commands, “Love one another as I have loved you.” Then ministry happens – the transformation of the world through prayers.

Our Bishop and the Cabinet made 33 full-time appointments and 34 part-time appointments during this appointment making season. I urge all pastors to bring the gift of prayers as you visit your new church family members. I still remember one of the elderly ladies that I served long ago who shared her philosophy of ministry during my first year of a new appointment. She said, “Visitation is the salvation of the ministry.” Where I come from when you visit someone you bring a gift. I cannot think of any better gift than a sincere pastoral and ministerial prayer as Christian disciples.

I believe that many positive transformations have been happening in our Annual Conference because of our Bishop’s and many others’ prayer ministries. It is not a secret that our Bishop has been making many pastoral calls to the clergy and the laity anywhere in the world when there’s a need. One of the District Resource Days speakers, Terry Teykl, inspired many churches to have prayer rooms in their church buildings. Prayer surely can change the world!

Last Thursday, the Palisades District was richly blessed by Rev. Dr. Zan Holmes who came as a speaker for our District Resource Day. I was so touched by his opening prayer. Please allow me to share it with you.
“Lord, rescue me from me. Please get rid of my low expectation. Help me to be transparent so that people can see the cross and your glory. Amen.” Our ministry is not about you or me at all. It is all about God. We can do anything and everything with God’s grace.

“There is a time for everything and a season/purpose for every activity under heaven. (Ecc. 3:1) This is a time for us to gather our hearts, minds and souls to make more disciples, revitalize our congregations and strengthen the leadership of our clergy and laity. And I believe God’s purpose is for us to be faithful and successful in our ministry. On behalf of our Bishop and the Cabinet, I want to express our sincere thanks to each and every congregation in this Annual Conference for your faithful and fruitful ministries.

All nine District Superintendents will be ready to be on the road again for another season of church conferences. And we will be ready to spend days and nights to make appointments with Bishop again. And we will be ready to say, “Here I am Lord, send me” anytime because we know that our ministry is all about making more disciples of Jesus Christ and giving glory to God. I am proud to present our newly re-appointed faithful District Superintendents. Could you join with me to welcome again your District Superintendents?

Respectfully submitted by,

Rev. Sung H. Ahn
Dean of the Cabinet
Palisades District Superintendent

REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE LAY LEADER

Bishop Devadhar, my spiritual and temporal leader, Mrs. Devadhar, our visiting Bishops, Cabinet Members, the Laity Council, all Laity and Clergy and to all the saints in Christ Jesus of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference – Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

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Before I get started with my message, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Laity Council for its work this year. If you have worked for the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference by serving on the Laity Council, please stand.

I would also like to thank the Conference staff who has been more than accommodating to me and to the Laity Council over this past year. We offer a special "thank you" to the Dean of the Program Staff, Rev. Varlyna Wright, who is assigned as the Conference Staff Advisor to the Laity Council. Rev. Wright has been very generous in sharing her knowledge and keen insight with us; she has been very patient with me; and we have all experienced her pastoral care. Thank you Rev. Wright.

Most of all, I would like to thank those of you in this Conference who have prayed for me and for the Laity Council over the past year, those of you who have stopped to pray with me in the hallways, and those of you who have whispered words of encouragement when we have met.

The Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20) challenges us to actions that make Disciples of Jesus Christ. Our love of God and neighbor are supposed to spark in us a desire to share the good news of Jesus Christ so that we attract the un-churched and the marginalized to be part of our communities of faith so that they can develop a relationship with God through Jesus.

We have heard time and again this past year, and certainly over the past few days by experts who have studied trends in our churches that many of our churches are having difficulty reaching new people for Christ, many churches have taken in no new members by profession of faith this year, and in way too many of our churches, the attendance has declined over the past year.

We have been presented with all kinds of fancy strategies like new church plants and plans for revitalization for our struggling churches. We have plans to educate and support our clergy, ways to empower and train our laity, and have developed ways to help all of us become more involved in ministry in our churches and in our communities.

We've participated in many trainings including studying fruitful practices of effective congregations. The Council of Bishops has us currently looking at four areas of focus: to develop principled Christian leaders, develop new places for new people and renewing existing congregations, ways to engage in ministry with the poor and to find ways to help stamp out the killer diseases of poverty, helping to improve health globally. **L**ET US PRAY.

"And it came to pass, that, as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret, 2. And saw two ships standing by the lake; but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing their nets. 3. And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the people out of the ship. 4. Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, 'Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.' 5. And Simon answering said unto him, 'Master, we have toiled all the night and have taken nothing; nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net.' 6. And when they had this done, they enclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net broke." KJV Luke 5:1-6

This is an exciting time to be in ministry, especially in the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference under the leadership and in partnership with Bishop Devadhar and his Cabinet. But, in this year of "Disciples Transforming the World: Through Prayer", how do we face the challenge for laity and clergy who, like Peter, say to us, "Master, we have toiled all night and still our attendance is down. I've toiled all night and I have no young people in my church, nor can I pay my apportionment. What do we do when our clergy and our lay ministers say to us, "This ministry business is wearing me down. I have too many meetings. I run back and forth to the hospital to minister to people. I have grieving families to take care of. My loving spouse is suffering from depression from helping to shoulder all of my burdens, or my spouse has emotionally deserted me because the burden is too much – I don't think that I can go on".

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We, as lay and clergy might be tempted to think that God has overlooked us and our ministries – that God doesn't see the hundreds of hours that we put into the mission field and the juggling that we do to make it all work. We may doubt our call, or may be measuring our worth by the empty nets that we face day after day.

We are all acutely aware of the pain and suffering in this world, the lack of health care, the poverty. But the burdens of coping with our own stuff sometimes makes it hard for us to incorporate and use all of the exciting things that we learn in our seminars and conferences, things that we should be incorporating into our ministries, but find hard to do when we ourselves are struggling.

I know that God put this Scripture in my path for a reason. I tried to give you a business report on things that the laity have done over the past year (and there are many exciting projects being done throughout the conference). But, I could not move away from this Scripture. One reason I believe that God is using this Scripture from the Gospel of Luke is to help me to think differently about my own call to lay ministry and the catch in my net over the past year. Simon Peter resonates with me in this story because his story doesn't look like a lot of the other stories in the Bible. There is no burning bush like Moses, no blinding light on the road to Damascus like Paul, no distinct voice of God in a temple filled with incense like Isaiah. No, with Simon Peter, his call does not come as a summons, but as an invitation and it comes to an ordinary man who is in the midst of his own struggle to make a living for himself and for his family.

So Jesus is sitting in Simon's boat after the crowds have gone. Jesus knows that Peter is exhausted from fishing all night. He also knows that he has caught nothing, but he still turns to him and invites him to do something, "Go out into the deep water," he says, "and there let down your nets". How simple that sounds! But control freaks that we pastors and laity are, we know deep down inside that Jesus is asking us to trust him.

Trust him so much that you and I and Peter would be willing to leave the shallow places in our lives and begin to explore the depths - - to go to the limits of what we think is possible, not only for us, but for the hurting people around us. "Go into the deep water," says Jesus. "Trust me, and see what happens."

It is so easy to do what Simon Peter did and resist God's call, to question the importance or effectiveness of our ministries. We hear ourselves saying, "Bishop, there is no reason to try this new thing. I've tried something like that and my net is still empty. I've fished these waters before. I've tried to pray. I've tried to study and take new approaches. I've tried to become a servant like Christ. I've tried to live out my faith in a way that would please Jesus. I've come up with empty nets every single time. I'm just tired. I'm tired of fishing these same waters. There is nothing in the depths for me."

It's another way of saying, "Lord have mercy on me - - I'm just not good enough to do this thing you've called me to do. I'm not smart enough. I'm not young and energetic enough. I'm not old and experienced enough. I'm not faithful enough. Father, it's best that you let me be. Find someone else to do it."

It is at this point that Peter becomes our model for discipleship. Let us be blessed and find hope in Peter's response, "Nevertheless, at thy word". Then he goes out, perhaps still reluctantly, out in the deep water and there finds abundance like he never imagined. Abundance that demonstrates how rich God's grace and love are and how much God wants, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to be in relationship with us.

Bishop Devadhar reminded us last evening in his Episcopal address that "it is at those moments of our helplessness that God is there with us and God sends angels to us and the Holy Ghost surrounds us".

Jesus is not calling Peter or you and me to be anything but who we are. He didn't call Peter to be a rabbi like him or me to preach with fire and brimstone and run up and down the aisles preaching, while not missing a beat. That gift he gave to Dr. Lloyd Preston Terrell who graced us with his powerful sermon to open this conference.

Peter remained at heart, a fisherman who had a heart for Jesus and the humanity that Jesus served. Jesus' call is a call into a deeper relationship with God through him. Through strengthening this relationship is how we transcend all obstacles to fill our nets.

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Nevertheless—my brothers and sisters, may the Holy Spirit so mightily work upon us all that we will do anything and everything that Christ commands, however contrary to what we think. We are not our own. The mark of the precious blood of Jesus is upon us. We have been bought with it. It is our duty to step out and do whatever our Lord bids us.

When your heart is faint to follow Christ, when you feel like you are so tired that you are about to die, keep your hands in God's hand and if your soul is almost in despair, hold on to him and keep your eyes on him. Whatever obstacle there is in the way of your obedience to the command of Christ, let us all have the courage to say, "Nevertheless, at your word".

Bishop Devadhar also reminded us last night that God won't leave us. Bishop Devadhar said that "we can find confidence and strength to continue in our ministries with the help of the One who called us".

Do not be afraid. It is at God's word that seraphs fly and cherubs bow. At God's word that angels rally. It is at God's word that the Red Sea parted and at his word that space and time first came into existence and all things that are. It was by His word that the Heavens were made. By His word, when the earth was formless and dark, that He let there be light. At His word appeared the sun and the moon. At His word, we were knitted in our mother's womb.

Imagine, Greater New Jersey, each one of us working for our people and our churches in partnership in the power of the Holy Spirit. We must labor together in entire dependence on God. Think of how many souls we could capture for Christ when we preach, teach and labor AT HIS WORD.

Let us be under orders of Christ; willing to persevere under difficulties; willing to begin at this hour in His service, at His word.

Amen,
Ressie L. Fuller, Conference Lay Leader

Commission on Archives and History

The Commission continues to maintain the Conference Archives, located at the Archives Center of the General Commission. The Conference Archives house the records of closed churches as well as the records of the Annual Conference and the predecessor Annual Conferences. All of the records are catalogued and the records are maintained in proper archival storage.

The Commission receives and researches inquiries regarding baptismal, membership marriage and death marriage records from churches that have closed. Some of those inquiries relate to living individuals, and some are from those researching their ancestors.

The Commission has begun to plan for events in this Quadrennium including support of local church historians and the development of local church histories. The Commission will raise awareness of church history by presenting programs to commemorate historical events.

Timothy M. Griscom
Chairperson

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GNJ Chancellor Arpert Named as U.S. Magistrate Judge

From the United Methodist Relay of The Greater NJ Conference, May 2009

OCEAN — Douglas E. Arpert, who has served the Greater New Jersey Conference as a chancellor, has left that post following his appointment as a Federal United States magistrate judge for the District of New Jersey, effective Monday, April 6. This word went out recently in a letter from Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar to clergy and lay leaders of the conference.

"We have been blessed and honored to have witnessed the ministry of Doug and his outstanding service in the Greater New Jersey Conference for nearly twenty years," the Bishop wrote. "…I am indeed grateful to Brother Doug for his outstanding, committed, loyal and faithful advice to me and the conference as an excellent and brilliant chancellor."

The newly appointed judge served with distinction as a conference chancellor, first in the Northern New Jersey and then, following the 2000 union, in the Greater New Jersey Conference.

"He provided wise counsel and direction during the period of the merging of the two conferences of the Greater New Jersey Area," the Bishop noted.

His professional experience included managing partner of the firm Norton, Arpert, Sheehy & Higgins which he helped to establish in West Paterson. In addition to his private practice, he was also mediator/arbitrator for the Superior Court of New Jersey, prosecutor for West Paterson, and Public Defender for Wyckoff.

A graduate of Franklin and Marshall College, he continued his legal education at Emory University, Atlanta, where he was the recipient of several prestigious awards and received his Doctor of Jurisprudence degree in 1984.

In 1985 he was admitted to the New Jersey bar and has practiced law in the state, the U.S. District Court for New Jersey, the Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, and in 2003 the Supreme Court of the United States.

Active in Community Affairs in Glen Rock where he resides, he has also been a trustee and officer of the Ocean Grove Camp Meeting Association, a director of the Cedar Lawn Cemetery of Paterson, and the Matthew Larson Foundation for Pediatric Brain Tumor Research.

Judge Arpert, and his wife, Jeanne, have two sons, Eric and Jack. They are all active members of Grace United Methodist Church in Wyckoff.

In commenting on Judge Arpert's service, Bishop Devadhar said, "He truly is a faithful Christian and loyal United Methodist who always places his heart and mind together with great integrity and Christian witness. I will truly miss him, but I celebrate this wonderful opportunity God has bestowed on him in serving the wider community. We offer our best and prayerful wishes to Doug and his family. May they be blessed with God's gracious blessings."

Commission on Camps, Conferences and Retreats

A new camp director has been hired. Timothy Goodwin will serve as the director of both Aldersgate and Pinelands Center. He started March 1st.

The camps are doing great. Pinelands Center is almost fully staffed. Aldersgate, however, needs more volunteer help. We are looking for summer staff including counselors, lifeguards, health directors and volunteer weekly directors. We also need campers at both camps. I encourage everyone to volunteer and to send campers.

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The Hulitt Hall re-dedication, to honor and remember the ministry of Dan Hulitt, took place on March 21st at Pinelands Center.

We are planning for Rally days and Clean-Up days at both camps. Check out the brochure at www.gnjumc.org for more information.

Erica Munoz
GNJAC Staff Liason to the CCCR, Inc.

Candler School of Theology

With a new building, new faculty and staff, new curriculum, newly expanded financial aid initiatives---and even new art!---Candler School of Theology is moving with enthusiasm and grace through changes that enhance its ability to fulfill its mission: *to educate faithful and creative leaders for the church's ministries in the world*. To this end, Candler is constantly working to deepen its already vital relationship with The United Methodist Church.

As one of the 13 official seminaries of The United Methodist Church, Candler is grounded in the Christian faith and shaped by the Wesleyan tradition of evangelical piety, ecumenical openness, and social concern. As one of nine graduate level, professional schools of United Methodist-related Emory University, Candler provides a context for learning and formation that engages the most complex and difficult issues of our day. As a school located in the major metropolitan area of Atlanta, Georgia, Candler offers students the opportunity for practice in a highly diverse community, a global crossroads where church growth is expected, cultivated, and actually happening! There is no better place for preparation that resonates with and addresses our major denominational priorities: developing leaders, starting and growing churches, ministry with the poor, and improving global health.

On September 25, 2008, and with abundant joy, we dedicated Phase I of the new Candler School of Theology Building. A LEEDS silver certificate building, the "CST" includes offices and classrooms that provide the opportunity for technologically sophisticated work and community in an environmentally sound setting. Phase II, to be built in due time, will house the Pitts Theology Library, the Wesley Teaching Chapel, and additional offices and classrooms.

This year we welcomed six new faculty and senior staff, five of whom are United Methodists. Forty two percent of the faculty and senior staff is United Methodist, and all but five are ordained. Two new staff positions were created, the Director of Lifelong Learning, filled by Dr. Bob Winstead, a member of the North Georgia Annual Conference, and the Associate Dean of Methodist Studies, filled by Dr. Anne Burkholder, a member of the Florida Annual Conference. Both of these new positions serve the larger church as they connect clergy with new opportunities for learning; connect conferences and students who are ultimately seeking ordination; engage with denominational organizations at a variety of levels; oversee denominational certifications and the Course of Study; advise students; and teach courses. In addition, Bishop Ruediger Minor is with us for two years as the inaugural holder of the Hankey Chair in World Evangelism and Bishop Walter Klaiber is with us as Bishop-in-Residence during the spring semester.

Candler is in the second year of its new curriculum, designed to assist students in aligning their course selection with their call to ministry and integrating the classroom with their contextual education settings. This emphasis is accomplished through the selection of a concentration, the opportunity for special certifications, and joint programs and initiatives with three other Emory graduate schools: Goizueta Business School, Emory Law School, and Rollins School of Public Health.

We are delighted to report that in spite of the difficult economic realities that have had a serious impact on us all, Candler School of Theology and Emory University are faring well, due to sound fiscal stewardship and

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excellent donor support. The Emory Capital Campaign has achieved $881 million of its $1.7 billion goal. Candler's goal of $60 million will enable us to achieve strategic priorities regarding facilities, student support, lifelong learning, endowed professorships, programs and curriculum development, and international initiatives.

Candler has always been deeply committed to assisting students with generous financial aid, but in light of the current economic climate, we have deepened our commitment to significant student support in two very important ways. This academic year, 80 percent of eligible students received scholarships or grants, with an average award covering 79% percent of tuition. Through these awards, more than $2.5 million was provided to 196 United Methodist students. In addition, we created "Leadership Candler," an all-expenses-paid discernment experience that draws together distinguished prospective MDiv students from across the country and the world to explore the richness of life and study at Candler.

As a part of its contribution to the new building, Emory University provided Candler with a major grant for the purchase of new artwork. As a result, Candler is now home to the world's largest collection of original works by John August Swanson. Comprising both serigraphs and paintings, the collection focuses on biblical narratives and reflects the storytelling traditions of Swanson's Mexican-Swedish heritage as well as the influence of mosaics and stained glass from the Byzantine and medieval eras.

Candler's student body truly reflects the denominational emphasis on the importance of attracting younger and more diverse people. Our enrollment stands at 493, with 401 seeking the Master of Divinity, 50 the Master of Theological Studies, 18 the Master of Theology, 13 the Doctor of Theology, and 11 enrolled as Special, Non-Degree students. Eighty-three percent are enrolled full-time. The total student population is 24% US ethnic minority, 12% international, and 51% women. More than 50 denominations are represented, with 52% of MDiv students being United Methodist from 40 Annual Conferences, including Bulgaria, East Angola, Mozambique, and Korea. Other Methodist denominations include African Methodist Episcopal, African Methodist Episcopal Zion, Christian Methodist Episcopal, Church of the Nazarene, Free Methodist, Wesleyan Methodist, and the Methodist Church of Korea. The average age of our students is 32, with 56% under thirty. The median age of our MDiv students is 27.

Candler is deeply committed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the development of persons for Christian ministry, especially in the United Methodist Church. We are grateful for your support of Candler through the Methodist Education Fund, visits, prayers, nurture of our students, and direct donor support. Come and see us! We would love to welcome you on campus to share your interest, your concerns, and your ideas!

Jan Love
Dean and Professor of Christianity and World Politics

Christian Outreach Project

A NJ Nonprofit Corporation

The Christian Outreach Project celebrated our 26th anniversary providing no-cost home repairs to persons in need. COP was started in 1983 by a faithful group of volunteers from First UMC Newton. It quickly expanded to a program where youths and adults from multiple churches throughout the conference donate their caring and time to this important program. Typical projects include wheelchair ramps, painting, roof replacement, and general repairs. For many participants sharing their faith with the home owners is one of the most rewarding aspects of the project.

Last year we incorporated as a NJ Nonprofit corporation. Since last annual conference we received our 501(c)(3) recognition from the IRS. We have made great progress as a non-profit board.

We reached a milestone in the past year as Matt Ballentine resigned as our Executive Director to take a teaching job in Ohio. Matt served us very well over the past several years. We recently hired David Kihm as our new

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Executive Director. Dave grew up through the program as a youth participant and later came back as one of the adult leaders. He brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to his new role.

We are greatly appreciative of the Greater NJ Conference. Erica Munoz is our conference staff liaison and sits on the Board. We received a generous Parish and Community Development grant. A portion of this grant will be dedicated to providing intentionally inclusive scholarships to introduce the program to new churches. In 2009 we anticipate over 100 youth and adult volunteers will provide home repairs in this tough economy. Our weeks are made vibrant by worship, singing and recreational activities.

The following persons serve on our Board of Directors:

1. Jeffrey Spelman – Chairperson
2. Rev. Steven Bechtold – Vice-Chairperson
3. Joseph Sikora – Treasurer
4. Paulette Harland – Secretary
5. David Kihm – Executive Director
6. David Brown
7. Doug Bull
8. Linda Diffley
9. John Edwards
10. Kate Hanley
11. Erica Munoz
12. Brenda Wheeler-Ehlers

Please visit our website to learn more about our program at www.christianoutreachproject.org.

Jeffrey Spelman, Chair

Commission on Christian Unity and Inter-religious Concerns

The Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns has many disciplinary tasks and as a new committee we have tried to delve right into those tasks. One of the reasons why we were able to have such a strong beginning is because of the work done by the previous commission. Rev. Jacqueline Burgess did a lot of work creating ecumenical and interfaith partnerships including work with Interfaith Dialogue Center, New Jersey Council of Churches, and much more. At the 2008 Annual Conference she presented Christian Unity Awards to Michele and Dave Peron for their work with migrant workers in the Hammonton area and the UMC of New Brunswick for their interfaith men's shelter. So much of her hard work has paved an excellent path for our new work.

At one of our first meetings it became clear that being an integral part of interfaith dialogues is one of our top priorities. We continue to have a strong relationship with the Interfaith Dialogue Center and a few of our UM Churches have even been host congregations for these dialogues. In a brainstorming session, we dreamed about the possibility of more local congregations participating in Interfaith Dialogues. In order to facilitate this goal we are developing a curriculum to present at each of the 2010 District Days of Learning.

In 2008 we also supplied the Media Center with many relevant and current resources regarding Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns. Some of the new resources include the Enlightenment Game which will help you discover more about other faiths, Christianity and World Religions: Planning Kit, a Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement - 2nd edition, and the History of the Ecumenical Movement. CCUIC also agreed to send me, as the chair, to the Quadrennial Training Event in Jacksonville Florida. At this training event I was able to connect with the CCUIC chairs of many other conferences to share ideas with one another, learn more about the four areas of focus for the quadrennium, and come back with an extra suitcase filled with resources.

As a committee we are challenged to maintain and build upon the ecumenical partnerships that have been formed. We have worked to remain in conversation and ministry with the NJ Council of Churches, the NJ Ecumenical Clergy Group, and the ELCA as we continue to form a new agreement with them. In 2009 we anticipate participation in the National Workshop on Christian Unity in Phoenix, Arizona. We also look forward to working with the GNJAC Board of Church and Society to continue having dinners throughout the Conference.

I personally am deeply thankful to Bishop Devadhar for his passion for Ecumenical work, Rev. Lyssette Perez, Ginny Kaiser, Jacqueline Burgess, and everyone serving on the commission. I look forward to seeing where God leads us in this quadrennium.

Jessica Campbell
Chairperson

Board of Church and Society

The Board of Church and Society has planned its work for the next four years. We appreciate the conference asking Boards and Committees to relate their work to the four goals. It has challenged our Board to work on issues that impact the lives of people living in the state of New Jersey, nationally and internationally.

This Board needs to be the eyes and ears of the Conference regarding peace and justice issues. As we considered the goals, communication was essential. We plan to train Public Theology Advocates (PTAs) who are elected by the local church. We will continue to have workshops such as the Energy Audit Workshop to help our churches to be conscious (or the conscience) of our world; write articles for the RELAY and ask districts to include at least one peace and justice issue for the District Resource Days.

When we had our first meeting, a variety of issues were raised that we could work on. They were: environmental justice, housing, immigration, education, employment, health, the prison system, and reduction of violence. Whatever we select to work on would need to relate to our urban, suburban and rural communities.

There are many people in our state that are working on issues that need to be recognized and affirmed for their efforts. We also need for their work to be uplifted so that others can help to support their efforts. We plan to have recognition events, dinners and receptions.

As the new chair of this Board, I am excited to work with the members. Each has gifts and talents which are needed to make our endeavors a success. I look forward to sharing with you, each year, the work of the Board and we are making this world hopefully a better place.

Cynthia Ann Kent
Chairperson

Congregational Development Team

During the past year the Congregational Development Team successfully implemented a system to identify, train and assess new church planters. Upon the recommendation of the District Superintendents and the Bishop, 12 persons attended the New Church Planter Leadership Institute in Richmond, Virginia from November 3-6, 2008. Subsequent to the meeting an “Assessment Interview Team” from among our members interviewed all candidates. Assessment reports were forwarded to the Bishop and Cabinet for possible appointment to New Church Development situations.

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The team approved to continue funding the Monroe Community Church as a new church plant for a third year ($75,000). It approved continued funding for a relocation/new plant of the Asbury United Methodist Church in Woodlynne, NJ ($40,000 in calendar year 2009). It provided continued support for an ecumenical union of a Presbyterian and United Methodist Church for 2009.

As part of the fulfillment of the directives of the 2008 approved "**Study on Effectively Fulfilling our Missional Responsibilities,"** the team implemented a Coach Certification Program for the Annual Conference. The Office of Congregational Development continues to provide oversight to implementation of Natural Church Development (NCD) throughout the conference. Over 100 churches in our conference have engaged this process. In 85% of the churches that have completed a cycle of NCD, there has been measurable improvement in both average worship attendance and overall health.

The Team Coordinator of Congregational Development published a book, *Roadmap to Renewal: Rediscovering the Church's Mission*, which is a resource to bring revitalization to the local church. The book is available at Cokesbury bookstores and online at www.cokesbury.com.

The Congregational Development Team supports the Conference by securing up-to-date demographic information through "Link 2 Lead." It supports the conference in carrying out its primary focus by encouraging and supporting the development of new and established congregations. It reports to the Primary Task Team and supports the work of the Congregational Development Coordinator in his responsibilities to resource the development of a Conference-wide plan for planting new churches. The charter for this team was adopted at the 2006 Greater New Jersey Annual Conference. Membership of the team is composed of one representative from each of the District Boards of Church Location and Building as well as five "members at large." Readers of this report are encouraged to visit the congregational development website of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference to learn of the various resources available for the local church (www.yourchurchcangrow.org).

Dr. Douglas Ruffle, Team Coordinator of Congregational Development
Dr. Lloyd Preston Terrell, Chair of the Congregational Development Team

The Connectional Table

So what is the Connectional Table, who's on it, and what do they do?

The Connectional Table was formed at the 2004 General Conference and its purpose is to be an open space where ministry and money are brought to the same table to coordinate the mission, ministries, and resources of the United Methodist Church. It is comprised of 60 members representative of our 21 Jurisdictions, 7 Central Conferences, 11 Agency Presidents, 13 General Secretaries, 5 Racial-Ethnic Caucuses, the Chair of our Table from the Council of Bishops, a Youth Representative and a Young Adult Representative. The general secretaries of our various agencies, the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits, and the president and publisher of the UM Publishing House have voice, but no vote. I was elected to this Table from the Division on Ministries with Young People as the young adult representative and I have been appointed to two task groups; the Advisory and Planning Team as well as the Emerging Ministries Fund.

At our fall meeting we discussed our dreams for the United Methodist Church. We also nominated people for the Worldwide Nature of the Church Study Committee, which has now been approved, and our own Rev. Lysette Perez has been appointed. During our meeting we discussed and have now inquired across our connection of conference leaders as to what are the important conversations that need to be taking place in relation to the 7 Essential Functions of Table as outlined in the *Book of Discipline* (Para 905).

Our spring meeting's theme is "Entrusted With a Gift, Called to Serve." This meeting will occur the beginning of May in Nashville, TN in conjunction with GCFA's meeting. Together we will further discern and discuss the financial needs of the church and how we are going to meet them, even in our times of economic crisis.

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I feel very blessed to be a part of this table and the important work and conversations that we are having and will have in the future. "For everyone born, a place at the table, for everyone born, clean water and bread, a shelter, a space, a safe place for growing, for everyone born, a star overhead (Global Songs p.4)."

Bethany Amey,
Young Adult Representative to The Connectional Table

Director's Report – General Board of Discipleship

At the Jurisdictional Conference in July, 2008, I was nominated and re-elected to the General Board of Discipleship for the 2008-2011 quadrennium. I was also elected to serve on the Additional Members Nominating Committee that meets prior to the organizational meeting to identify areas where representation is needed by ethnicity, gender, lay/clergy, and age; and to nominate persons (whose names are already in the pool from the jurisdictions) to those positions who serve as at-large members; and to prepare a slate of persons to the various offices on the Board, and to assign the members to the various Divisions that comprise the total work of the Board.

Bishop Devadhar was also returned to the Board for a second quadrennium of service. Bethany Amey was elected to the Division on Ministries with Young People by the Jurisdictional Conference. Weagba Nelson of GNJ is also serving on the Division. The Division on Ministries with Young People is housed with and relates to the Board of Discipleship by *The Book of Discipline*, but not all of its members are voting members of the GBOD. Bishop Devadhar, at his request, was assigned to this division. I was assigned to the Upper Room Ministries Division. This is the one Division of the Board that is self supporting through the sale of its print and other resources. The two additional Divisions of the GBOD are Discipleship Ministries and Curriculum Resources.

The General Board of Discipleship held the first meeting of the quadrennium late September in Nashville, TN All of the persons elected or appointed from Greater New Jersey Annual Conference were present.

I recommend to you the website of the General Board of Discipleship, which provides a myriad of resources for use by the local church www.GBOD.org . The GBOD is providing a number of training pieces for clergy and laity, among them Discipleship University and Path1. The GBOD was a partner in the Jacksonville, FL training event held in January of this year.

Due to the economy, within the last several weeks several actions have been announced to help the Board stay within its anticipated income over the next few years. Unfortunately, this has meant the consolidation of several work areas and a reduction in staff that effects professional and support staff. Please pray for those who have left the staff or those who will be leaving in the next few months and for the remaining staff as each assumes additional responsibilities in this belt-tightening age.

I am grateful for the opportunity to be a part of GNJ Annual Conference and the United Methodist Church beyond our conference boundaries. Thank you and let's be about the work of making disciples for Jesus Christ!

June D. McCullough
General Board of Discipleship Director

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Director of Chapel and Religious Life/University Chaplain - Drew University

This is my third year in this full-time appointment, and my work continues to evolve and grow as I come to know the community, its needs, desires and concerns, and become better equipped to address them. I report directly to Dean Maxine Beach of Drew Theological School and to Interim Dean of Student Life and Campus Affairs, Virginia Samuel.

I have several basic responsibilities which I continue to try to approach creatively and with new energy and excitement. As Director of the Chapel, I schedule, develop and implement three midday worship services each week, primarily for the theological school community at Drew. I also offer a Sunday evening emerging worship experience geared towards younger students both in the college and the theological and graduate schools. I offer spiritual guidance and counseling to students, faculty and staff, as well as provide clergy leadership for major campus-wide events like baccalaureate, convocation and commencement, memorial services, weddings, etc. I convene the Religious Life Council which involves the student leaders of our seven religious student groups and meets frequently in order to brainstorm, share ideas and information, and create interfaith events. I also serve on several university committees, including the University Senate, the Diversity Committee, and the Executive Board of the University Staff Association. I also work closely with the university's centers for Religion, Culture and Conflict and Civic Engagement. I would estimate my total student contact each week at approximately 2 – 300 students, including one-on-one and group activities. My faculty/staff contact would increase that number by about 50 people per week.

One of my first goals when appointed to this position was to continue to grow the religious life staff to adequately care for the diverse needs of our interreligious community. Last year, we added an imam to our staff of religious advisors and he has been very helpful in supporting our active and multi-national Muslim Student Association. We recently chartered a new student organization interested in earth religions, and we will continue to cultivate resources which will enable them to nurture their own faith journey, as well as educate the campus community.

This year, I have had the opportunity to begin to connect the Drew faith community with life beyond campus. I was asked in the fall of 2007 to join a new interfaith organization in Newark called the Coalition for Peace and Hope. We came together following a summer of escalating violence in the city to see how we could, as a faith-based coalition, help to address a culture of gang violence and poverty. Through this Coalition, I have become active with an organization designed to mentor young women at risk called 9 Strong Women. This organization was recently nominated by Drew's Center for Civic Engagement for the Creative Civic Engagement Project of the Year.

As a candidate in the Ph.D. program at Drew Graduate Division of Religion, I am currently researching and writing on Millennium Generation women and friendship. I expect to complete my dissertation in the fall semester of 2010.

I continue to be actively involved in conference activities. I serve on the Board of Ordained Ministry, and sit on the Executive Committee of the BOM as the Coordinator for Clergy Mentors. For the last two years, I have sat on the Sessions Committee of the GNJAC as Worship Chair. My home church charge is Chatham United Methodist Church; this year, my husband and I are teaching confirmation class, and I occasionally participate in worship leadership.

Again, I appreciate always the support of the CBHEM as well as the General Board, and of our Greater New Jersey Annual Conference.

Rev. Tanya Linn Bennett

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The Educational Society

The Educational Society offers loans and scholarships toward the education of members of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference who are called by God to full-time Christian service. Scholarship recipients are enrolled in an accredited theological seminary or graduate school, demonstrate a worthy level of academic achievement and economic need, and agree to serve at least five years full-time in the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference. Loan recipients are enrolled in an accredited college, seminary, graduate school or Course of Study.

In 2008 the Educational Society of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference fulfilled its stated purpose by awarding $46,775 in scholarships to ten students and granting loans totaling $8,000 to four students.

Additionally this year, in accordance with the decision that we made at our September, 2007 meeting to clarify our identity as an agency of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference, and to clear up legal ambiguities that may have put the Society and its members at risk, The Educational Society turned over administration of its funds to the Conference Treasurer who will receive all funds for deposit and issue checks upon request from The Educational Society.

The Educational Society is supported by local churches, friends of the Annual Conference, the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference itself, and the repayment of loans. Effective communication of our mission to the Annual Conference, responsible investment of principal, and recovery of delinquent accounts are goals of the Educational Society toward better stewardship of this ministry. Greater support by local churches and individual members, can help ensure that we continue to have well-educated, effective, spirit-filled clergy to serve our Annual Conference.

The Educational Society membership includes ten lay persons and ten clergy. Through our Nominations Committee we seek to reflect the diversity of our Annual Conference. A class of members is elected annually by the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference for a term of four years. Members are limited to serving no more than two full terms consecutively. We thank the Annual Conference, its local churches, and friends for supporting this important ministry and praise God for the opportunity to serve in support of those called by God to full-time Christian service in the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference.

Emil Winkelspecht, President
856-935-5219
enjwink@aol.com

Conference Council on Finance and Administration

Although 2008 was a bad year for the economy as a whole, conference collections only slipped about 2%. We are grateful to the churches of the conference for their wonderful stewardship under trying circumstances. Again in 2008 a majority of our churches paid 100% of their shared ministry fund allocation.

In addition, conference staff and leadership were prudent in their use of budgeted funds with the result that we ended the year with an addition to surplus, giving us a total surplus of $1.9M. Since the minimum surplus we are required to maintain by conference legislation is about $900K, the Council felt that the use of about $300,000 from the conference surplus to pay our General Church Apportionments was appropriate. As a result, for the second consecutive year, our conference was on the list of 17 conferences that paid 100% of their general church apportionments for 2008. After this transaction, our surplus remains at about $1.6M.

We thank the Bishop and Cabinet for their leadership in achieving these results and we thank all those in the local churches whose hard work made these results possible.

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Other items of note from our activities this year:

1. The listing of those churches that achieved 100% payment of their Shared Ministry allocation in 2007 was published, and the payment percentages of all churches in 2007 was also published. Also published was the listing of disciples made for the year. These efforts to recognize the achievements of our churches will be continued.

2. As announced at the 2008 Annual Conference, we have agreed with the Cabinet that our formula should not include membership as part of the basis for allocation of the conference Shared Ministry budget. We have been working on this during this year and will be proposing an interim formula for 2010 and will bring a final proposed formula to the 2010 Annual Conference.

3. As a result of the continuing efforts of the Bishop and Cabinet, all of the churches receiving supplemental or equitable compensation paid 100% of their Disciplinary Obligations. This is the first time for this result and we are grateful to those churches and their clergy for making this possible.

4. Financial training has again been provided to all districts through our participation in the District Days of Learning. The emphasis this year was on the payroll and income taxes. We continue to have churches running afoul of the IRS through misunderstanding of these requirements.

5. Investments did not perform well in 2008, losing about 25%. This is about the average of results for similar funds. We anticipate that as the economy improves, our investment portfolio will reflect that improvement with commensurate gains. Our portfolio is well diversified. We were able to continue the policy of providing 4% cash flow to the various organizations that depend upon these funds for their work. We also anticipate that we will be able to continue this 4% level in 2009.

6. The project to get all churches properly incorporated is continuing. Efforts are being made with the NJ Attorney General to determine whether there may be a way to change the status of a number of churches at once. If successful, this will reduce the cost and difficulty of accomplishing this task.

7. The on-line entry of each church's annual report continues to go well. The GCFA has been able to provide us with a number of reports not readily obtainable with our previous system. The information is confidential and each church has a unique password.

8. Work was completed on a recommended records retention schedule and on information to assist local churches to comply with employee immigration status requirements. The first has already been distributed to local churches and the second will be shortly.

The Conference CF&A wants to thank Bishop Devadhar and the Cabinet for their continuing support and encouragement. We also want to thank John Cardillo, Conference Treasurer and Director of Administrative Services, and his staff for their hard work and support.

John Bishop,
President

General Council on Finance and Administration

The GCFA has 40 members, 20 lay and 20 clergy and it does its business through a variety of subcommittees. The members conduct the ongoing business of the GCFA and make recommendations to the GCFA where action or change is needed. There are representatives of other agencies that have voice but no vote at GCFA meetings, notably the General Secretaries of the other agencies.

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As a new member, I am just becoming familiar with the work of the GCFA and have been appointed to four of the subcommittees. They are the Financial Services Subcommittee that deals with the budget and financial control matters; The Audit Subcommittee that oversees the work of the GCFA Internal Audit function and works with the outside auditors; the Legislative Committee, that drafts legislation for the next General Conference and the Legal Affairs Committee that oversees GCFA's legal department and related matters.

At the fall meeting of GCFA, we reviewed the 2009 expenditure proposals of the various general boards and agencies, comparing them to the budget and assessing them for reasonableness of assumptions. Following the review, they were approved.

John W. Bishop, Member
General Council on Finance and Administration

Conference Board of Global Ministries

The General Board of Global Ministries began this quadrennium with emphasis on the four goals that General Conference has given:

Global Ministries' goals are (1) Make Disciples of Jesus Christ; (2) Strengthen, Develop and Renew Christian Congregations and Communities; (3) Alleviate Human Suffering; (4) Seek Justice, Freedom and Peace. The Greater New Jersey Annual Conference Board of Global Ministries is working closely to interpret the above goals according to the needs of our conference and local churches. The General Board of Global Ministries has Volunteers in Mission representatives at the conference and district level engaging local churches in mission and ministries. We are working closely with the Bishop, the ministries team and the CF&A to evaluate and determine criterion for ministry effectiveness of the conference Advance specials. The Conference Board of Global Ministries met with the Bishop and Ministries Team Coordinator of our conference to discern our Global Mission involvement. Bishop Devadhar encouraged us to be involved in mission and ministry with the poorest of the poorest. He wanted us to discern with careful thought and prayer coming together as a conference and then make the decision. He advised us to work with the Area Executive Secretary for connectional relations of the General Board of Global Ministries from Asia, Latin America and Africa so that we can make an informed decision. On March 5th 2009 the Conference Board of Global Ministries met with the Area Executives in the presence of the Bishop, Ministries Chair, Representative from CF&A and the Ministries Team Coordinator.

Those present from the GBGM were:
Rev. Rachel Simeon – Deputy General Secretary Mission Contexts and Relationships Unit.
Executive Secretaries by Areas:
Africa – Liberia - Rev. Caroline Njuki; North Katanga – Robert Kabyla Mpoyo
Asia – Rebecca Asedillo
Latin America- Cuba- Rev. Edgar Avitia

We elected the new Mission Partnership Chair, Rev. Anna Thomas. Also elected were the members of the National Plan for Hispanic/ Latino Ministries in GNJAC. The Russia Initiative presented its Program and Mission Goal statements. Their mission statement is:

1) Sharing our Faith
2) Continuing the Partnership with the Western District of the Northwest Provisional Annual Conference in church development and humanitarian aid in the city of Smolensk, Russia.
3) Supporting communities of faith that may become future congregations
4) Working towards eliminating human suffering
5) Being in ministry with the poor
6) Supporting ministry with children and youth
7) Providing leadership development for communities of faith

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This year a team from our conference will be leaving for Russia to be in ministry there. Youth from Russian churches also have visited us and have been hosted by churches in our conference. This was a very productive meeting.

This year, once again, the Conference Board of Global Ministries provided Community Outreach Grants to local churches to start new ministries. The Board is working closely with the District Superintendents to encourage second mile giving after churches have given their first mile giving so that they can develop Covenant Relationships with missionaries in the United States and around the world and learn more about the ADVANCE. One of our goals is to provide opportunities for local churches to do mission and ministry and make Disciples of Christ.

I am thankful for the participation and support of all the members of the Board and Rev. Lyssette Perez for her guidance. I am very thankful for being able to attend the Quadrennial Training Event for the Denomination held at Jacksonville, Florida.

Anna Thomas,
Chairperson

Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry

As the Board of Higher Education and Ministry reflected upon the past year, we continued to realize that although we were able to present scholarships in various areas of study, one fact remained steadfast, and that was there were more people in need of financial assistance than available scholarship money. And, although we were able to give one more Merit Scholarship than in previous years, many requests for monetary help were still left denied.

To address this issue, the Board discussed ways in which our friends and local congregations could assist the numerous scholarship/award applicants enter into institutes of higher education. The concept was briefly shared at last year's Annual Conference. One of the ways considered was for people to set up and include endowments in their financial planning. It was agreed that more details via a resolution would be presented at the 2009 Annual Session.

By way of the on-line *Digest*, we have kept scholarship information supplied by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry and those of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference Board of Higher Education and Ministry in the forefront. This helped to keep people aware of eligibility requirements, types of opportunities and timelines. The Board attended some of the District Resource Days to present scholarships to award recipients. Presentations were given to parents or the pastor of the student if the recipient was not able to attend.

One of the goals of the Board was to increase the relationship between the campus ministers/ chaplains and the Conference Board of Higher Education. This was semi-accomplished through written and face-to face reports. The expectation is to continue strengthening the relationship between the two. One of the ways we chose to make a stronger connection was to assign a contact member of our Board to each institute of higher learning we financially support.

Another effort was to increase the number of local church contacts near campuses so that students attending schools away from home would maintain a connection to a church and chaplains/ campus ministers. We are happy to have had another church volunteer to be a connecting church.

Plans are in the making to have a Scholarship Dinner in Ocean Grove for recent persons, and their family, who have received financial awards from General and GNJ Boards of Higher Education. Finalization of this

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endeavor and all of the particulars will be mailed to all local churches for their support. Stay tuned.
Finally, we encourage everyone to pursue your dreams, continue supporting United Methodist Student Day and begin thinking about setting up an endowment so that deserving persons may attain their goals. Here are the institutes supported by GNJBHEM:

- Rutger's University: Rev. Ellen Little, Campus Minister
- Drew University: Rev. Tanya Bennett, Campus Minister
- Rockland Community College: Rev. Warren R. Brandt, Campus Minister
- Wesley Foundation at Princeton: Rev. Keith Brewer

Carolyn Pendleton, Chairperson

Wesley Foundation at Princeton

This is currently my seventeenth year as Chaplain of the Wesley Foundation at Princeton University where I am also a Fellow of Mathey College and frequently appointed to the faculty as a Lecturer in both the Department of Religion and the University Center for Human Values.

The mission of the Wesley Foundation is to extend the presence of the United Methodist Church to the academic setting of Princeton University in order to meet the special needs of students for spiritual formation, intellectual inquiry, and service to others. The Wesley Foundation either promotes or sponsors Christian education classes, worship services, fellowship gatherings, Bible studies, prayer meetings, discussion groups, service projects, off-campus retreats, mission trips, regional and national student conferences, and pastoral care. The ministry of the Wesley Foundation is accountable to the Board of Trustees of the Wesley Foundation, the Deans of the Chapel and the Office of Religious Life at Princeton University, and the Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry of the Greater NJ Annual Conference.

There are two different fellowship groups that meet weekly. The Graduate Christian Fellowship meets each Tuesday evening all year long (except the week between Christmas and New Year's) for worship, Bible study, monthly faculty speakers, announcements, sharing and prayer, snacks and fellowship. There are also two small groups that meet each week, a men's group and a women's group. I meet with the four student leaders of the Graduate Christian Fellowship every other week on Tuesday evenings before the large group meeting. There is a weekly lunch and informal conversation for graduate students on Fridays. Service projects and social activities are also regular activities of the Graduate Christian Fellowship. The Undergraduate Discussion Group meets each Thursday evening during the regular academic year for pizza and other snacks, Bible study, and sharing and prayer. I regularly participate with students from the Wesley Foundation in many special worship services in the University Chapel throughout the year including opening exercises, the Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols, Maundy Thursday Service of Holy Communion, and the Seven Last Words from the Cross on Good Friday. I have been an active member of Princeton United Methodist Church for the past sixteen years. Working with college and graduate students in campus ministry at Princeton University is a very challenging and rewarding vocation. I am extremely grateful for this wonderful opportunity.

Dr. B. Keith Brewer, Chaplain

Campus Ministry at Rockland Community College, Suffern, NY

The purpose of this campus ministry is to provide students, faculty and staff with the availability of a Protestant Spiritual Advisor, and to assist, in part, as a provider for networking with other campus departments in times of need. We minister in:

- Student Activities: Advisor to the Christian Fellowship Club
- Liturgically: 9-11 Remembrance Ceremony (September 11, 2008)
- 8:15 A.M.: Thanksgiving, Advent and Lenten Services

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- Counseling: Provide student, faculty and staff on an as needed basis
- Social Justice: Emergency Food Pantry, Crop Walk, Habitat for Humanity
- Academics & Teaching: Counselor and advisor for Christian Fellowship Club Bible Study

In addition, I provide the invocation and/or benediction for programs and ceremonies on a rotating basis with the Newman Club (Catholic) and Hillel (Jewish). To show my faithfulness to God, and to provide effectiveness to the campus ministry with relationship to the students and all areas of humanities in our Religious Life office, we provide food, clothing and housing for students that are in need for whatever reason, or find themselves in an emergency situation. The campus ministry at RCC is a holistic ministry of faith in God, interfacing the needs of the students and the faculty to whom I minister. It is effective.

The local United Methodist churches in Rockland are a group called UMPROC (United Methodist Parish of Rockland). The parish of ten churches provides a support system to the campus minister. I attend their bi-monthly parish meetings and make a report to them. I also preach in the churches and promote campus ministry, as well as invite the members that might attend RCC to contact me on campus. Most of the local churches support our ministry with a yearly donation. The UM Campus Ministry at Rockland Community College seeks to witness to God's love for people through listening, counseling and teaching about Jesus.

Some of the Activities for the Year 2007/2008

- Meet with Christian Fellowship Club (CFC): Thursdays 12:30-1:30
- Staff Religious Life Office: Monday & Thursday 10:00AM-2:00 PM
- April 25th & 26th: CFC sponsored a *Walk By Faith Musical* featuring Stations of the Cross and Redemption
- August 6th: Welcome New Students' Day; Gideons gave out 783 Testaments in five different languages. We also had a Prayer Request sign-up line.
- October 28th: Trip to Times Square Church in New York
- November 8th: Concert to support Habitat for Humanity
- April 26th: Participated as captain of the event in RCC's Annual Food Drive for local county food pantry, "People to People"

Due to the rising cost of higher education, RCC has experienced an increase in student enrollment. We believed that a two-year community college provided direction for students seeking their specific vocation. This is my twenty-first year serving my Lord and ministering to a local two-year community college housing a predominantly Jewish enrollment of about 6000 students.

Our Christian presence is important in the lives of our students. It is my prayerful request that this committee (Higher Education and Ministry) continues its support of campus ministry with your prayers and your yearly financial support of six thousand dollars ($6000). I would like to thank the entire committee for their support of this ministry. I thank the local UMPROC churches for their continued support as well.

Rev. Warren R. Brandt,
Campus Minister

Wesley Foundation at Rutgers

To help you understand the complexity of ministry to those who might not know Rutgers, the university has developed by including nearby separate colleges. It began as an all-male college, Rutgers College. This is now referred to as the College Avenue campus. RU came to include Cook College which began as an agricultural institution and Douglass College, which started life as the New Jersey College for Women. The Cook/Douglass campus is on the other side of New Brunswick, about 5 miles apart. Then across the Raritan River, Livingston College was added in the 1970's and the Busch campus developed, which is primarily the sciences. This

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includes the College of Engineering, The College of Pharmacy and The College of Nursing. There are five separate student centers, and most students generally focus on one or two of them, depending on where their classes are and where they live. Getting across the farthest areas of the campus in good times can take nearly an hour. During heavy traffic times it can take much longer. Making contact is a challenge.

First, let me address our name. Our legal name is the Wesley Foundation at Rutgers. We had so many people thinking we gave money away that we decided to follow the lead of other Wesley Foundations and change our name on campus to the Wesley Fellowship. It's clearer that we are a ministry group.

Our program is both to United Methodist students, faculty and staff, and also to the university. It has been a bit of a struggle to get the University to welcome being ministered to, but in the time I have been here the campus ministries have gone from being on the fringes of campus life to having an official Religious Life Council answering directly to a university vice-president. Our concerns are now part of the RU executive board agenda. Since I have been nagging successive administrations to bring such an organization into being, I smile like a proud parent at our RLC meetings.

I sit on the Committee to Advance our Common Purposes, the Committee that handles issues of justice and inclusiveness. I am the only non-university staff on the Committee, which is a sign of how the ministries are being seen, closer as central to the university mission.

As these concerns are reflected in official policies and programs, it makes being a religious student a little easier. In a Campus Climate Survey completed four years ago, 46% of students and 34% of staff reported experiencing bias on the basis of their faith. I also serve on the committee to try to address this on behalf of students and staff.

The United Methodist presence is definitely felt on campus—I sometimes get calls from counseling staff, program coordinators and policy committees asking for opinions and resources from a faith perspective. This is a new thing at Rutgers.

Our Thursday night dinner, worship and discussion program has a total population of about 20-25 students, but seldom at the same time. Their participation is enthusiastic but erratic. Our students nearly all have to work and generally try to graduate in four years, which is not easy. I'm impressed by how much they are willing to take on. There is also a weekly faculty/staff Bible study that has been going on for nearly 30 years, a very dedicated and intense group.

An interesting program is called Listening Post, created by another campus pastor and now practiced widely in the U.S. Basically you set up in an obvious place (I set up once a week outside the Food Court on the College Avenue Student Center) with snacks on the table and a sign that says "let's talk, no agenda--what are you thinking, get a load off your chest...). Some weeks there are few takers, others it's quite amazing the response. Sitting in the chaos of lunchtime, students have told me about the deaths of someone close to them, frustrations with their church (for lots of different reasons), roommate problems and more. A few have found their way into our door, but mostly it's e-mail contact after this.

It seems strange to list the computer as a program, but there are many students who keep in regular e-mail contact but never show up at an event. It's a new world out there... It's not like running a church youth group. Individual conversation over lunch or dinner or between classes seems to be the primary personal connection.

Since I am a staff of one with a limited budget, I try to hook on to other programs whenever possible. The on-campus chaplains (as opposed to ministries led by a pastor who stops by RU from time to time) share programs when we invite all students to participate.

In the fall, Hillel spearheads the Day Without Hate, where we have workshops at various places on campus (I worked with a campus dean on Douglass campus on religious issues) and in many ways ask for a commitment

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to be a voice of peace and reconciliation everywhere they go. Over the last few years it has grown from a few students on the College Avenue campus to a full day of programs on all the campuses.

The Catholic Center organizes a celebration of all Christian groups in January (sort of linked to the World Day of Prayer without using their materials), where we also work with groups like Campus Crusade and Intervarsity. It's a one-night celebration of music, prayer, singing, really LOUD guitars, and just being together rather than noticing how different Christians can be from each other.

The Lutheran and Protestant Campus Ministries organize the Midnight Run once each semester, taking food and warm clothing into areas where the homeless hang out.

Wesley Fellowship took the lead in an interfaith program called Trialogue where Jewish, Muslim and Christian students met to talk in small groups over issues like how and why do you pray, what are the holidays you practice, what do you wish others knew about your faith and what would you like to know about others' faith, and lots more. I received a $3,000 grant from the GBHEM to sponsor this program. About 60 students came and--get this--when we finally served the food they wouldn't stop talking! They hung around more than an hour after the program was officially over (at 9:30 PM). About 20 students have signed up to continue the discussion in small groups the rest of the semester. I have enough grant money left to continue the program next fall, which many of the students requested.

This should give you a sense of our ministry. It is exciting, and fun, frustrating and discouraging--pretty much like ministry everywhere. When I first began campus ministry, one resource I read said it would be most realistic to think of it as a mission field rather than congregational ministry. Now that I've been at it for a few years, I add a fervent "amen" to that. But it's immensely satisfying. You can feel good about the young people who are coming into adulthood.

Rev. Ellen Little
Director

Lay Speaking Ministries

In the summer of 2008 twenty-two lay speakers participated in the School of Missions training as their re-certification for Lay Speaking.

Last fall’s Certified Lay Speaker classes involved 230 lay speakers from across the Conference. “Leading in Prayer” was the focus of the fall training courses.

This spring 125 local church leaders are taking the Basic Lay Speaking class.

Last weekend twenty-four youth attended the Youth Lay Speaking Ministries weekend at Ocean Grove under the direction of Erica Munoz and Larry Brown.

In January, I attended the annual conference for Directors of Lay Speaking Ministries in Nashville. I gained a far greater understanding of the resources available through the Global Board of Discipleship and the overall organization of the Lay Speaking Ministries across the country.

In conclusion, over the course of the last year, over 400 lay people from the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference have completed some level of training in Lay Speaking Ministries. This was all made possible through the efforts of our dedicated District Directors of Lay Speaking Ministries, who without question, are one of the most motivated and faithful groups of disciples with whom I have ever been involved.

Mark Halverson,
Director

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Leadership Development Team

The 2008 Annual Conference approved the recommendations made by the Primary Task Team to engage a "Study on Effectively Fulfilling Our Missional Responsibilities." The recommendation being acted on by the Leadership Team is as follows:

1. To develop a process for developing church clusters in the districts - (in process).
2. Leadership Development Team and Laity Council will help clergy identify the next leaders (youth and up) within their local church.
3. Leadership Development Team and the Board of Ordained Ministry shall develop an assessment tool and process for the selection of pastors for the creation of healthy churches.
4. Leadership Development Team and Laity Council shall employ or develop an assessment tool and process for the selection of lay leaders (diversity of age, gender, ethnicity), and potential (next leaders) for the creation of healthy churches.
5. Annual evaluation of these assessment tools.
6. Leadership Development Team is to develop a core curriculum using the definition of a healthy church to engage churches in the revitalization process. This curriculum will be the development of a holistic Christian Education plan.

In addition, we have planned an Adult Trip to Taize scheduled for Oct. 2009.

It is our hope that all of these recommendations will be completed by our 2010 Annual Conference.

Emmanuel De La Paz, Chair

Division on Ministries with Young People

This past summer at the Northeast Jurisdictional Conference I was elected to serve as the Young Adult Representative to the Division on Ministries with Young People.

This division was created to connect the young people of our connection and those in ministry with young people to each other, to the church, and to God. The purpose of the Division is to empower young people as world-changing disciples of Jesus Christ, to nurture faith development, and to equip young leaders.

We have four Tables that our division has decided to work with and through this quadrennuim. They are Advocacy, CRN (Communications, Resources, and Networking), Diversity and Outreach, and Resourcing. We also have three networks that we are doing work through: the Young Adult Network, Youth Network, and also Workers with Youth or Young Adults. When choosing which table to be a part of, I chose to be a part of the Diversity and Outreach table. Most of our conversations have centered on equal representation of jurisdictions and central conference members to Global Convocation. We have also been in discussion about the promotion of the Youth '11 gatherings.

As a division we are currently in the process of the planning for the Global Young People's Convocation, which will be held in Berlin, Germany in July 2010. Young people from across our connection will come and worship together, celebrate, learn from each other, grow in understanding in faith, and work to change our church and the world. We will also have Bible study together, leadership development time, and just have the opportunity to talk with people from other cultures. Another aspect of Global Convocation will be the Legislative

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Assembly. This is a time where we, a group of young people, will be able to develop and vote on legislation that will be presented to the 2012 General Conference.

Another project that is in the planning stages is Youth ’11 which will be held in two locations, Perdue University and Sacramento, California.

We are proud to have Bishop Devadhar as our presiding Bishop over the Division and thank him for all his guidance and assistance.

We (as youth and young adults) are not the future of the United Methodist Church; we are the now. I am blessed to be able to be a voice for the young adults of our jurisdiction and conference and am encouraged daily by the support of our conference in youth and young adult ministries. I look forward to the next four years.

Bethany Amey
Northeast Jurisdiction’s Young Adult Representative
to the Division on Ministries with Youth People

Multi-Ethnic Coordinating Committee Ministry

The Multi-Ethnic Ministry of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference provides resources to local congregations and their lay leadership for the development and enhancement of multi-ethnic and cross cultural ministries to make more disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

The Multi-Ethnic Ministry encourages, assists and supports local churches with existing ethnic ministries to align their ministries to the conference quadrennial focus and helps other churches to develop multi-ethnic ministries in context to their communities.

The committee offers a limited number of grants each year to churches which are broadening their ministry to explore, celebrate, or strengthen ministry across ethnic and cultural boundaries. Preference is given to new ministries and those churches that have not received a grant recently. For the past year, 2008, a total of $17,200.00 was awarded to churches across the conference. For this year, 2009, the committee will continue to offer support to churches that fit the criteria for the grant.

The quadrennium poses a challenge for the committee as it begins to envision a whole new approach to enhancing the awareness of the local congregations and the conference as a whole of the Multi-ethnic Coordinating Committee focus and ministry. Acknowledging the multi-ethnic diversity of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference, the committee is committed to partner with other ministries to achieve the churches’ mission in making disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

The following are some of the committee’s foci for the next four years:

Lay Leadership

- Promote leaders from different ethnic ministries/multi-ethnic churches to participate in multi-ethnic programs offered by the conference.
- Support and encourage lay leadership in churches to participate in the on-going exploration and identification of multi-ethnic ministries’ needs.

Congregational Development

- Hold a Multi-Ethnic Celebration on the 3rd Sunday in October annually. (This annual celebration is not only limited to worship and cultural festivities, but includes other venues of celebration forums such as a “multi-cultural /cross-cultural convocation”.)

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- Obtain congregational data in collaboration with the congregational development team regarding existing ethnic ministries in local churches.
- Support the work of the conference national plans.
- Providing multi-ethnic ministries' financial support through grant approval.

It is a joy and honor for the committee to serve and be a part of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference's Ministries Team. With God as our leader, Christ as our light, and the Holy Spirit as our guide and comforter, we are certain, that we will achieve the purpose of God in our ministries. To God be all the glory!

Judy C. Colorado, Team Leader
Team Members: Rev. Ellen Little, Avery Grant, Angel Santos, Rev. Lyssette Perez,
Rev. Hey Young Horton & Rev. Jerry Ruff

Board of Ordained Ministry

With the election of a new quadrennial board at the 2008 Annual Conference, the Board of Ordained Ministry of our conference has been active in training, reorganizing, and refocusing its work for the coming four years. The *Discipline* charges the Board of Ordained Ministry with the recruitment and enlistment of new clergy, interviewing and recommending persons for commissioning and ordination, supporting and caring for persons in the candidacy/ordination process through mentoring and a Residency in Ministry program, and to work with persons seeking to make changes in their conference relationship as our major responsibilities. The majority of our recommendations and actions in these areas are reported and processed in the clergy session.

The Board has been working on developing a plan for recruitment, particularly among youth and young adults. From 1985 - 2005 the United Methodist Church experienced a consistent decline in clergy under the age of 35 from 15% of all elders to a low of 4.69%. In the past three years there has been a modest increase to 5.1%, but more work needs to be done. While the average age of persons in our area is approximately 37 years old, the average age of persons in the United Methodist Church is 57. If we are serious about making new disciples and reaching new generations for Jesus Christ, it is imperative that we encourage young people to consider ordained ministry and journey with them as they discern God's calling on their lives.

Effective leadership for the 21st century also calls us to actively recruit the most qualified persons from the rich diversity that is God's family. The call to ordained ministry comes to persons of all ages, nations and races, and the Board is committed to being proactive in this area of its work. But we are also dealing with immigration laws which need to be followed. Immigration status should not be a barrier to answering God's call. We are therefore, working to develop clear guidelines to help persons navigate the immigration process so that we can commission and ordain persons who represent all of God's people. These various recruitment initiatives will aid the Annual Conference in developing new leadership for the diverse and changing population that is the Greater New Jersey area and many places beyond the boundaries of our conference where our clergy are appointed, reaching out to persons who are not currently in our churches.

Disciplinary changes have required that the Board review and evaluate a number of policies, a sometimes tedious yet necessary process. With this work done, however, we are better able to focus on other issues in the coming year. Within the quadrennium, it is our hope that we will be able to put much of the process for commissioning and ordination online. A number of annual conferences have already done so, and it is our hope to learn from them how we can more efficiently and effectively help persons to walk through what can sometimes be a confusing process.

The *Discipline* has charged the Board of Ordained Ministry to work with the Cabinet to develop guidelines for effectiveness. A task force for the Board is reviewing a national study and other materials to begin this process. Integrally related is the work of the Continuing Education Committee. As we progress through the quadrennium, we hope to approve guidelines for the use of Ministerial Education Funds to use them in ways that will assist our clergy in improving effectiveness and strengthening ministry in this ever-changing society.

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As developing principled Christian leaders is one of the four areas of focus identified by the denomination, the work of these two groups will be an important part of our conference's response to this and the other areas.

Part of the work of the Board is to support and encourage provisional members in their formation as clergy persons. Our Residency in Ministry program, previously called the Probationary Support Program (PSP) is

being updated and refined to better meet the needs of persons as they journey from commissioning to ordination. Vicki Miller Brendler, Jana Purkis-Brash, and David Ravinder are the new leadership team for this program. Tanya Bennett has taken over as the coordinator for the Clergy Mentoring program, another aspect of the support offered to persons in process. I thank them for their commitment to this very important work.

The ongoing work with persons in process is coordinated by our team of registrars. Juliann Henry is our Candidacy Registrar. She has planned training for candidacy mentors to work with persons early in the discernment process. Dottie Johns is the Registrar for Local Pastors. She also represents the Fellowship of Local Pastors and Associate Members on the Executive Committee. Wayne Plumstead is the Provisional Member registrar, and Grace Pak serves as the Registrar for Full Membership. Giselle Esquivel serves as our Psychological Assessment specialist. Other members of the executive committee are Vice-Chair Bobbie Rambach, who coordinates the Committee on Conference Relations. Doug Baitinger is our Secretary and Gina Hendrickson, Treasurer. Rounding out the Executive Committee are the chairs of the Order of Deacons and Elders, Christina Zito and Heasun Kim, and our two cabinet members: Paul Maliel and Vivian Rodeffer. I thank all of these persons for their faithfulness in doing the work of the Board. In addition, I want to thank committee chairs Ed Hann, Continuance, Brian Eble, Clergy Effectiveness, Rich Knox, Continuing Education, and Recruitment, Drew Dyson for their extra efforts on behalf of the Board in these important areas of our work.

It is a privilege to work with all the members of the Board of Ordained Ministry. The Board's work involves far more than meetings. There are hours of work in preparation for interviews, including participating in a new process of In-Parish/In-Ministry Interviews, plus reading hundreds of pages of paperwork. The members of the Board take this work seriously, as each person who comes to us is responding to God's call on her or his life. It is our task to journey and discern with each person how that call is to be lived out within the church. We do our work surrounded in prayer, and seek God's guidance in all that we do. I am honored and humbled to serve as their chair.

Steven G. Bechtold, Chairperson

Board of Pensions and Health Benefits

The Greater New Jersey Conference Board of Pensions and Health Benefits is authorized by *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church* to contribute to the support, relief, assistance and pensioning of clergy and their families, as well as other church workers and lay employees of the United Methodist Church.

Pensions

Working with the General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits, this Board endeavors to implement and interpret national and conference policy.

The 2010 Past Service Annuity Rate for pre-1982 annuitant payment will be $572 per year of service. The pre-1982 pension program is fully funded and in a strong position.

The rates of remittance for CRSP/MPP and CPP declined from last year's rates to 89.6% and 89.5% respectively – continuing to remain short of the 2003 remittance rate of 94% and 95%. A significant portion of churches continue to struggle with the issue of **financial integrity**, with 17% unable to pay these bills on time. Below is a summary of 2008 remittances:

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Type	Remittance Rate	Shortfall	#Churches < 100%	%Churches < 100%
CRSP	89.6%	$332,746	101	17%
CPP	89.5%	$64,791		

Since the Greater New Jersey Conference fully pays delinquent church accounts so as to maintain clergypersons' participation, using funds from the Reserve Account at the General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits, the Board is increasingly concerned that some churches are not fully meeting their obligations.

By 2008 year end the overall amount owed on CRSP/MPP was $823,000 and $218,000 on CPP – a total of $1,041,000, an increase of 42%.

We thank those churches that maintained faithful stewardship, paying 100% of their obligation. Churches with arrearages on 2002 - 2007 CRSP, MPP & CPP bills have achieved some progress. Thanks also go to our district superintendents and to Alexa Taylor, Pensions Coordinator, for the Conference's continuing efforts to collect past due balances.

The balances owed have grown so large that in 2006 the Stewardship Team developed and presented to PTT recommended procedures for collecting all billed amounts (e.g., CRSP/CPP, health insurance, property insurance) owed to the Conference. The Cabinet was asked to designate each year which churches are 'missional churches' that require some assistance in paying for pastor CRSP/CPP and health insurance. Instead the Cabinet created a trial program with five churches to create self-development plans for reaching self-sufficiency over a four to five year period; certain conference committees and boards were asked to underwrite or waive a portion of payments for health insurance, disability, pastor's pension and building insurance.

The Conference also created a staff position of Local Church Financial Liaison filled by Betty LaSalla to work with churches to achieve full fiscal accountability.

The 2004 General Conference adopted a new pension plan, Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) – a hybrid of defined benefit and defined contribution approaches which took effect in 2007. For 2010 churches pay CRSP at 15.5% of clergy plan compensation and for CPP at 3% of fulltime clergy's plan compensation, totaling 18.5% of plan compensation. For less than full-time clergy, the CPP rate is 3.4% of Denominational Average Compensation (DAC) for ¾ time and ½ time and at 4.4% of DAC for optional coverage (1/4 time and leave status). Starting 2007 deacons were included as CRSP participants.

Two retirement seminars were held at Bridgewater United Methodist Church on March 5-6, 2009: a pre-retirement seminar, *Ready to Retire* for those anticipating retirement within five years, and a *Destination: Financial Security* Seminar focusing on younger pastors. Over fifty persons attended. Presentations by Peter Hang of the General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits and by conference staff provided valuable guidance to assist retirement planning. We'd like to thank a new presenter Joseph Pistell, Planned Giving Director, and representatives from Willis HRH and the Cigna Group who attended and answered questions regarding the change in health insurance. We extend special thanks to Donna Hough for organizing these events and to Bridgewater UMC for their gracious hospitality. Thanks also go to Barbara Gruezke, Health Insurance Coordinator and Alexa Taylor, Pensions Coordinator.

Health Insurance

Health insurance continues to dominate the attention of the Board of Pensions and Health Benefits. Assisted by consultants from Willis HRH, BOPHB negotiated with CIGNA HealthCare no increase in premium rates for churches with no changes in benefits for 2009. The following chart shows church premium rates for 2009.

Healthcare Insurance Premiums for 2009	
Employee	$6,912
Employee & Child(ren)	$11,136
Employee & Spouse	$15,096
Employee & family	$16,476

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Connectional Benefits Fee	$1,728

The Board thanks all churches that fully paid their health insurance premiums in 2008. Overall, churches paid 90.2% of the total $4,760,697 health insurance billings, a decrease from the 2007 rate of 95.1%. Of those churches failing to pay premiums in full, the 2008 shortfall was approximately $466,240. By 2008 year end the amount owed from prior years had been reduced by $102,868; the cumulative amount owed on health insurance bills had increased to $563,170. Churches failing to fully pay their premiums burden all churches, resulting in higher premiums.

Thanks go to Conference/BOPHB Treasurer John Cardillo and Health Insurance Coordinator Barbara Gruezke and the district superintendents for continued strong efforts to collect unpaid 2002-2007 health insurance arrearages.

The 2006 Annual Conference ratified the Bishop's Health Advisory Group's proposal to allow pastors to opt out of the Conference health insurance plan if they can provide evidence of other comparable coverage from a spouse's plan or as a retiree from a prior job. By action of the Annual Conference the connectional opt-out rate was set equal to one quarter of the single premium for churches whose pastors opt out of the Plan. In 2007 thirty pastors opted out of the plan; by the end of 2008 a total of thirty-three pastors were opted out.

The Annuitant Health Insurance Contingency Fund, initiated by 2003 GNJ Annual Conference and earmarked exclusively for healthcare costs for annuitants to cover higher costs expected in future years, held a balance of $2,686,097 as of December 31, 2008 after transferring $234,803 to the Annuitant Health Insurance account to avoid a negative balance at year-end. This year approximately $326,000 came into the fund (representing the 2% clergy and staff salary contributions toward the cost of their health insurance) plus the Centenary Fund's annual contribution (in excess of $200,000, separate from their $100,000 contribution directly to the annuitant health insurance account).

Annuitant Health Funding Initiative

In 2007 the Board commissioned a new study of GNJC's unfunded annuitant health insurance liability under FAS 158, in light of Congress's 2006 adoption of prescription coverage under Medicare. In 2009 the Conference received $220,000 from CMA in Medicare D reimbursements. As of 2008 the FAS liability for annuitant healthcare costs in the amount of $47.5 million was posted to the Conference balance sheet, a liability amount more than double all Conference assets, with no countervailing fund assets to offset it.

Together with the Centenary Fund, representatives of CFA, the Cabinet and the Association of Retired Ministers and Spouses (ARMS), the Board is proposing the creation of a long term Fund to offset this liability and to ensure that retirees continue to enjoy conference-paid health insurance. The proposal encompasses an 8-9 year period during which excess pre-1982 retirement funds would be used to pay CRSP defined-benefit requirements and comparable funds from churches would be used to create a permanent Retiree Health Fund. This is a critical initiative, since it is clear that the Conference cannot continue to fund retiree health insurance on a cash basis out of the Conference Budget.

Clergy Wellness Initiative

In January 2008 a Clergy Wellness Task Force was formed in response to the GBOPHB report on Denominational Health. Clergy health nationwide has been found to be significantly less well than the normal population. GBOPHB has asked each conference to support clergy and their families to improve their health and wellness, for their own sakes and so that Christ may be more fully served. The Task Group is comprised of representatives from each district, as well as other interested experts.

BOPHB sent a representative to GBOPHB's Servant Self-Care Covenant Workshop November 20-21, 2007 and the Conference Forum, March 12-13, 2008. With financial help from the Board of Ordained Ministry two persons attended the basic Self-Care Train the Trainer workshop December 1-3, 2008. Plans are being made to offer one or more eight-hour Self-Care workshops later this year.

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The Clergy Wellness Task Force met throughout 2008, preparing programs dealing with walking, Servant Self-Care, support groups, and a presentation to District Days of Learning: Wellness for Those Who Minister or Support Ministry. With the change of the Conference healthcare insurance company, the Wellness Task Force will be working in coordination with Cigna to introduce wellness initiatives. Deborah Kauffman and Don DeGroat co-chair the Task Force.

The Board Itself
The Conference Board of Pensions and Health Benefits endeavors to serve the Conference and the needs of those in ministry. There will always be much to accomplish, especially in the challenging field of health insurance. Christ strengthens us to meet these challenges and we pray for the Holy Spirit to guide and inspire our actions.

The current leadership is Donna Hough, Secretary; Rev. Carlton Bodine, Vice-Chair; and Eleanor Hartley, Chair.

Property and Liability Insurance Committee

2009 Insurance Renewal:
The 2009 insurance renewal process resulted in a $219,000 premium savings, or 7.6%, versus the expiring policies. Most policies continue to be provided by Mercer Mutual Insurance Company. The Insurance Committee, through broker Sovereign Insurance, investigates the insurance marketplace for attractive alternative products in advance of each insurance policy renewal. Mercer continues to offer the best value proposition to GNJAC for its insurance needs.

GNJAC has been insured by Mercer since the 2005 policy period. The loss experience for GNJAC has been very favorable since 2005, and premiums have been reduced each year. Current premiums are 25% lower than 2005 premiums.

Property insurance levels have increased 20% or $200 million since 2005. Each year, the Insurance Committee reviews the insurance policies and requests coverage improvements. Mercer has granted a number of coverage enhancements since 2005 at no additional cost to GNJAC.

It is important to note that GNJAC has been a profitable insured for Mercer Insurance Company. The Insurance Committee believes there is value in the continuity of our insurance program with Mercer. The built-up value of the business relationship with Mercer will help our program withstand the infrequent large loss that is inherent in the GNJAC exposures, such as $8.5 million loss in 2004.

Workers Compensation:
Workers Compensation premiums were reduced from $311,000 to $272,000 due to the favorable loss experience over the past four years. GNJAC loss experience is 32% better than the average for all churches in the State of New Jersey. The GNJAC workers compensation insurance program saves over $225,000 annually versus the cost of churches insuring individually.

Automobile Insurance:
The Insurance Committee continues to make available a voluntary automobile insurance program for church-owned vehicles. The premium cost is slightly lower than 2007. Each church has access to this insurance facility and pays the premium cost for any vehicle insured.

Church Arrearages and Collections:
For year ended 12/31/08, collection of current year premium lagged year earlier collections by 2%. Conference staff is diligent in collection efforts, and attributes the slight deterioration in results to the timing of church

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payments received as well as to the general malaise in financial conditions. Progress continues in collecting outstanding prior year premiums. However, the aggregate uncollected premium has grown from $528,000 last year to $ 672,000 in 2008.

Claims Experience:

Since the inception of the GNJAC Insurance Program in March, 2002 the ratio of losses to premiums is about 75%. During the last four years with Mercer Insurance, the ratio of losses to premiums is less than 35%.

Loss Prevention:

The Insurance Committee is committed to helping churches minimize the number and severity of injuries and damage. We continue to follow up on insurer recommendations made to 281 churches. The recommendations involve correcting conditions that might cause injury or property damage. 167 churches have completed the recommended corrections, and an additional 74 churches continue to work toward correcting conditions. However, there are 40 churches that have not yet responded in any way to as many as seven follow-up letters. The Insurance Committee understands that financial limitations may preclude complying with some of the recommendations. However, we are concerned about injury or property damage that might result from known unsafe conditions. The complete lack of a response from 40 churches sends a negative message to the insurer that reflects poorly on the other GNJAC churches. We recommend that the 40 non-responding churches address each of the recommendations, even if they are not able to comply at this time.

Parity Implementation:

The Parity Implementation Plan approved at the 2007 Annual Session continues to be implemented according to the original plan. In 2008 and again for 2009, the Insurance Committee has funded parity relief from Insurance Committee fund balances.

Surplus:

The Insurance Committee endeavors to complete each policy year with a positive fund balance. The accumulated surplus is used to cover uncollectible premiums, fund cash flow in order to pay insurers timely, pay deductibles, and fund parity relief. Surplus is also potentially needed to offset future rate increases and uninsured/underinsured defense costs and losses as prescribed by the Cabinet.

Important Additional Message:

The Insurance Committee strives to provide affordable, comprehensive property and liability insurance. There are certain types of insurance that are NOT provided by the Conference Program. Three notable examples which require action on the part of the individual churches are:

FLOOD INSURANCE -	The Insurance Committee reminds those churches that are located in a flood zone to obtain the appropriate flood insurance coverage.
NEW YORK (only) DISABILITY INSURANCE	The State of New York requires that each New York church maintain disability insurance for employees. New York will impose fines upon your church for failure to carry the required insurance.
UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANKS	Underground storage tanks, in active use or not, pose a risk for significant financial loss to churches. In some cases, financial responsibility laws require bonding or insurance.

The Insurance Committee has communicated these issues to the individual churches on several occasions. We encourage each church to take advantage of the assistance available through Sovereign Insurance (800-222-4478), the Conference Insurance Program's broker.

William M. Mayo

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Chairperson

Commission on the Status and Role of Women

The Commission (COSROW) was very active in the last quadrennium (2004-2008) during which it held several Forums on Inclusion highlighting women in leadership and empowerment of women, clergy and laity. The last Forum on Inclusion consisted of a Health Symposium providing information and testing in a variety of health areas including diabetes, breast cancer, high blood pressure and hearing loss. The Health Symposium was recognized by the General Commission and was a featured article in its July-September 2008 newsletter, *The Flyer*.

Our target audience continues to be women and men, with our focus remaining on enlightening and broadening their perspectives on inclusion and equitable treatment in all aspects of leadership positions in the church and in the community.

For the new quadrennium (2009-2012) our focus and goals are to increase awareness of the Commission and its purposes of monitoring, inclusion, empowerment of women and enhancing clergy family life through District workshops and local church representation.

One of our goals is to have a COSROW representative designated in every local church in the conference and to train those representatives to monitor inclusion in their respective churches as well as educate their congregations as to the role, purpose and activities of the Commission.

In an effort to carry out our goals of expanding awareness and representation, we intend to promote activities that will address the Four Areas of Focus: Leadership Development, Congregational Development, Elimination of Poverty and Global Health. In so doing, we hope to continue and increase our collaborations with other committees, commissions and agencies.

With the help of God and those committed to equality, fairness and justice, we are hopeful that our tasks in addressing these critical issues, in this new quadrennium, will have a greater affect on the lives of members of the annual conference and society as a whole.

Theresa D. Hoover
Chairperson

Conference Board of Trustees

The Conference Trustees held a re-organization meeting on June 29th following the 2008 session of Annual Conference during which new Board members Darryl Duer, Rupert Hall and Sung Hee Park were welcomed and officers elected. Those elected were:

President:	Mark H. Earl
Vice-President:	Marian B. Munson
Secretary:	Jim Graef

In his role as Conference Administrative Director, John Cardillo serves the Board as Treasurer. District Superintendent Renee McCleary serves as Cabinet liaison to the trustees.
Property liaisons assignments are the following:

Conference Office	John Cardillo, Jim Graef, Lou Strugala
Episcopal Residence	Renee McCleary, Lou Strugala
District Parsonages	

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Capital District	Darryl Duer
Cape Atlantic District	Jim Graef
Delaware Bay Parsonage	Vicki Hahn
Gateway North	Bob Kluthe
Gateway South	Josè Pimentel
Northern Shore	Sung Hee Park
Palisades	Marian Munson
Raritan Valley	Frank Kowar
Skylands	Bob Anderson

Other Properties

St. Phillips Ministry, Patterson	Frank Kowar
Oaklyn Parsonage	Lou Strugala
Mays Landing (lot)	Rupert Hall
Sweedsboro (lot)	Jim Graef

Two properties have been entrusted to the trustees since last Annual Conference: First UMC, Highlands and Wrightstown UMC. The following report from Bob Kluthe reflects the detail and care given to this aspect of our work.

> “On February 4, we finally closed on the Paterson Westside property (3 buildings). The property was sold to the New Horizons Reformed Church (Hispanic).
>
> “About 20 months had elapsed since the discontinuance of Paterson Westside Church. As our legal counsel said, there were "lots of warts" on the property: the need for surveys to establish property lines which differed from the City's, clearing title since portions of the Church and Educational buildings were on City property, contending with testing of three heating oil tanks on the property and a two-month delay in obtaining a permit to remove one underground tank and replacing it with a basement storage tank. I made over 60 trips to the property and legal counsel to get this resolved. I want to acknowledge Bill Sheehy of Norton, Arpert, Sheehy and Higgins for his efforts in resolving the many legal issues.
>
> “Net proceeds from the closing were $773k. This does not reflect at least $70k in costs over the 20 months for utilities, heating oil, repairs/maintenance, legal counsel, surveys, property insurance, and shared ministry arrearages. We were successful in saving $32k through a lower real estate commission of 2%, and having the purchaser pay for most of the tank testing and tank replacement.”

In April, St. Paul’s UMC in Nyack, NY was sold to Iglesia La Misiòn Asambleas De Dios (Assembly of God) for $1,250,000. Proceeds of the sale were deposited to the Harvest Mission Fund.

In addition to the usual “turn-over” work done to the Delaware Bay, Northern Shore and Raritan Valley parsonages where new appointments were made last year, significant restorative work was done on the Gateway South parsonage. The task of maintaining the district parsonages continues to be an area that requires a great deal of time and care to balance financial resources and prioritize needs.

We express our gratitude to Bill Mayo and his committee for their capable leadership for the Property Insurance Committee.

To the congregation of the New Brunswick United Methodist Church, their previous pastor, Sidney Sadio, and current pastor, Greg Young, the Board expresses gratitude for the open door hospitality in welcoming us into their facilities for our committee meetings.

Mark H. Earl
President

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United Methodist Foundation of Greater New Jersey

The United Methodist Foundation of Greater New Jersey (UMF) begins its fourteenth year of continuous operation. The past twelve months have been the most tumultuous of our existence.

About one year ago our long-time investment manager, Morgan Stanley, informed us it planned to close the department handling our account. Subsequent events at Morgan Stanley made clear why that action was taken.

Following proper research, the UMF selected Davidson Trust Company of Devon, Pennsylvania, to take the reins from Morgan Stanley. The change was completed in August of 2008.

Simultaneously, the bottom began to fall out of our national economy. Davidson made prudent moves to protect our funds, but nothing and nobody could totally escape the ensuing carnage. The UMF had negative results for 2008. It is scant relief to note our results were better, or less bad, than most similar investment funds. On the positive side, Davidson has us well-positioned to move forward successfully when the upturn begins.

It has been very pleasing to note the understanding our investors have shown. Not one has chosen to close or terminate its account.

The UMF has a staffed table in the vendor's area outside the meeting hall where we can provide additional information on the UMF and have applications for potential investors.

Clifford F. Evans, President

United Methodist Homes of New Jersey

United Methodist Homes cut the ribbon on April 16, 2009 for its addition to Bristol Glen, UMH's community in Newton. The Charles L. Tice Pavilion includes 15 residential apartments, 15 Assisted Living+ apartments, and the John Ziegler Memorial Memory Support Residence. It also includes the Dorothy and George Watt, Jr. Chapel.

With this opening, the Homes now has two communities – Bristol Glen and The Shores at Wesley Manor in Ocean City – that include a memory support residence for persons with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. These communities, plus Francis Asbury Manor and Collingswood Manor, also include Assisted Living+ residences.

The Homes is among the most comprehensive assisted living programs in the country. We have 6 levels of assisted living care, ensuring two things: (1) that our assisted living program is comprehensive enough that it will delay nursing home placement, allowing one to age in their own apartment; and (2) that a resident pays only for needed services. The Homes regularly receives letters of gratitude from families whose parents received a full spectrum of assisted living services while in a United Methodist home.

Over the last year two organizational initiatives substantially impacted quality of life for residents. The first, a wellness program appropriately named LifeChoices, offers residents choices not previously available. Led by a steering group at each community, it addresses every dimension of wellness: physical, social, spiritual, vocational (often volunteer), emotional, and intellectual. The power of teamwork among residents, front line professionals, families and volunteers continues to drive this program's success in designing fresh and innovative alternatives.

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Our Volunteer Program to complement the work of the Homes' auxiliaries continues to thrive. At the annual conference of the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging (AAHSA), our volunteer program was the subject of a workshop on best practices. For the year, approximately 1,300 volunteers contributed 56,931 hours of service, conservatively estimated to add $1,079,016 worth of uncompensated, but precious time to the Homes. Many volunteers, particularly those from businesses, had no previous association with us and were recruited for one-time projects.

In partnership with the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference, we have initiated a Cooperative Planned Giving Program. Its new director, Joseph K. Pistell, Esq., brings more than a decade of planned giving experience to this work. In the program we will be encouraging United Methodists in our conference to consider gifting through charitable gift annuities, bequests, and various trust arrangements to benefit their local church, conference ministries and the Homes.

Focus groups, held in all United Methodist Homes' communities, yielded essential research data for the development of our 2009-2013 Strategic Plan. The summary report to the Board of Directors observed that "the most common topic discussed was the indescribable sense of community that all the Homes share." Further substantiating this finding, a pervasive welcoming culture was also seen in our annual residential and employee satisfaction studies.

As our second century of mission unfolds, we remember that we stand on the shoulders of those who came before us – individuals and organizations which devoted themselves to the Homes. Today, the Homes is a joint venture of more than 600 churches, 96,479 United Methodists, 8,900 donors, 1,266 residents, 927 employees, and over 1,000 vendors.

It is a privilege to be given this portion of the Lord's work to do. We thank you all for partnering in the good work of the United Methodist Homes.

James C. Batten
President

United Methodist Men

The Greater NJ United Methodist Men, like Peter, are "getting out of the boat" to make disciples and nurture men in the local churches and districts. On that rough sea at night Peter was led to Jesus' calling, got out of the boat, his comfort zone, and followed Jesus. The other disciples did not heed their calling at that time, but each did in their own way and time. How true this is for today. We all need to be still and listen for God's calling in our lives.

As men of the United Methodist Church, we need to be worshiping, praying, reading Scripture, fellowshipping, and sharing together. This can be done in the local church, cluster of churches, at the district level and at the conference level.

Currently there are 600+ churches in our conference. According to the quarterly reports from the General Commission in Nashville 49 have chartered UMM groups. I know many churches have men's gatherings. Praise God for men meeting with men, whether it is in Bible Study, kitchen ministry, retreats, mission trips, work days, etc.

DISTRICT	ACTIVE 2008 CHARTERED	PAST 2007	LAPSED CHARTERED	EMS MEMBERS
Cape Atlantic	4	1	4	6
Capital	13	0	2	7
Delaware Bay	5	1	4	2

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Gateway North	3	0	4	20
Gateway South	6	1	2	2
Northern Shores	9	0	5	14
Palisades	3	0	2	1
Raritan Valley	0	0	1	0
Skylands	6	2	4	2

I am asking each church to notify me via e-mail rwalker@gnjumc.org with the status of your church regarding your men's groups or lack of and what wonderful stories are or can be told. Also, please provide me with a contact name for each church.

The executive committee is hearing that men don't want to travel too far for gatherings. Even though New Jersey is a small state from top to bottom, travel is a real problem. The first couple of years in this new quadrennium the emphasis will be getting into the local churches, which we pray will then create stronger districts, thus a stronger Conference UMM.

Thanks to the dedicated and faithful men for their time and service on the conference, district and local levels. As you know in your local churches there are never enough people to fill all the positions. The UMM is no exception. We have nine districts and a conference executive committee that are in need of men to serve as officers or advocates. If you desire to "get out of the boat" for the UMM, please pray about it and then contact me at rwalker@gnjumc.org.

A great ministry is being done through the leadership of the Northern Shore UMM in the Amachi program, ministry to families of incarcerated parents. Contact Lew Weil (Lew_Weil@comcast.net) or Angel Santos (angelsantos@comcast.net) if you would want to get involved.

I know there are other great ministries being done by men in the local churches and we need to tell the story. In today's world we have great resources to tell the story, e-mail, district newsletters, and the *Conference Digest*.

The UMM are very thankful for the leadership of our Bishop. Thank you, Bishop for your support, suggestions and prayers. Please pray for all of the men in the Greater NJ Conference. Men are struggling due to relationships, the economy, etc. Contact your brothers in Christ and see if you can be of help. You won't have all the answers and won't know all the right words, but being there to listen and pray with them can turn lives around. With the guidance from our Lord and Savior, the UMM will be like our forefathers in bringing men to Christ and leaving our legacy of faith to the next generation.

Rick Walker, President

United Methodist Women

It is with great pleasure and honor that I submit this report as the new president, as of January 2009, of the GNJUMW. As we move forward in this new quadrennium, the women of Greater New Jersey continue to work and live out our **PURPOSE.**

As one of the goals of the United Methodist Women, we seek to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ. To this end, the conference holds various spiritual growth activities. A Communion Breakfast was held in October at the First UMC of Passaic. We were privileged to have Harriet Olson, Deputy General Secretary, Women's Division as the keynote speaker. The 2009 Spring Meeting, will be held in April at the Christ UMC, Piscataway. At this time we will experience our connectional relationship with our Native American sisters and brothers. We will have the opportunity to learn about New Jersey/Delaware Indians using the theme of "Circle of Life, through the Granddaughters' Eyes through Stories and Dance". A chance for discussion and a presentation by CONAM members will also be given. Many districts and local

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units provide for its members' spiritual growth through Communion Breakfasts, Days of Denial and Prayer and other programs. These events are also wonderful occasions to "develop creative and supportive fellowships." The UMW recognizes that women assume office and bring a variety of skills and a range of experiences to their roles. GNJUMW is proud of its efforts to be intentional with the diversity of members on its leadership team. We have active Korean and Hispanic networks with very capable leaders. To help assure that mission team members have a chance to improve their skills and deepen their knowledge as leaders in the United Methodist Women, we provide opportunities for effective leadership development and training at the conference, district and local levels. The Conference was unable to provide its annual training session to District officers this year due to inclement weather. The event was canceled. However, Conference Mission Team members sent materials via USPS or email to their district counterparts, still providing the opportunity for learning. Many districts offered training sessions to their local unit counterpart officers. Over the years, several GNJUMW women have strengthened their skills via such training and have had opportunities opened up for further service in the church, community, the world, as well as in Women's Division and even in the NE Jurisdiction. Currently, there are two members who serve as a Women's Division Director and Alternate Women's Division Director. Additionally, one member serves as Secretary of the new Jurisdiction Leadership Team.

In keeping with part of the UMW PURPOSE, United Methodist Women members give generously to mission projects with women, children and youth around the State, the United States and in countries around the world. Members also seek to "expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church." As our founder, John Wesley instructed, "Gain all you can. Save all you can. Give all you can," United Methodist Women attempt to follow his example. Through Mission Giving, UMW has been able to support a variety of mission projects and persons in mission. GNJUMW is proud to be part of this effort. We were able to contribute more than $200,000 for Mission Giving to Women's Division.

We as United Methodist Women are committed to mission. We have a passion for justice and peace for everyone born and everywhere. We recommit ourselves to answer Christ's commission to be in mission and to spread the Good News far and near and to live our PURPOSE.

Millie A. Grey,
President

United Theological Seminary

What Would Jesus Do with a United Methodist seminary? We think Jesus would recruit faithful disciples and educate them with the best mentors and sources, starting with the Bible, and shape them to lead a life-changing mission that would turn the world upside down! The disciples would learn to embody a renewed Church led by the Spirit and unafraid to live out God's holy purposes!

United has itself been renewed by the Spirit for the mission of Jesus Christ in the world, and we invite your prayers and participation in this renewal and for this purpose! The seminary has been serving Christ and the Church for 138 years, but we have recently taken steps to update our offerings:

- A recently revised 78 hour Master of Divinity curriculum!
- A growing number of online and blended courses!
- New Doctor of Ministry degree focus groups and mentors!
- Deep learning opportunities for clergy and laity!
- Emphases in Church Renewal, African American Ministry Studies, Pastoral Care and Liturgical Ministries!
- Appreciative theological reflection on the central doctrines and beliefs of the Christian faith!
- Spiritual formation in a variety of cultural contexts, including international communities!
- A technologically advanced, fully accessible, state-of-the art campus!
- A youthful, diverse, widely published faculty committed to the Christian faith!

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- Friendly and helpful staff and students!
- Many new scholarship offerings!

Enrollment at United is growing steadily and **we invite you to call, visit or sign up for a class** that meets your needs! For more information, contact admissions@united.edu.

Thank you for your prayers, partnership and service in the ministry of Jesus Christ!

Wendy J. Deichmann Edwards,
President

Wesley Theological Seminary

Seated in the nation's capital, centered in Christian faith, Wesley Theological Seminary prepares over 1,000 students annually, representing more than 25 denominations, to become exemplary teachers, preachers, and leaders in the world.

A Capital Seminary - This year Wesley opens its doors on a new Urban Fellows program at Mount Vernon Place in downtown Washington, DC. Mentored by top urban pastors and leaders, and engaged in dynamic internships, Wesley's Urban Fellows learn to engage the poor and the powerful, to meet the needs of diverse cultures, and to answer the call to applied ministry in the complex social systems of the inner-city. The Urban Fellows program begins in conjunction with the expansion of Wesley's urban ministry and faith and public policy programs to downtown DC. Tap in at www.wesleyseminary.edu/urban.

A Proving Ground for Spiritual Formation and Leadership Development- Wesley's Lewis Center for Church Leadership debuts two strategic tools for ministry this spring: the Lewis Community Initiative, a creative, challenging peer-learning network for hundreds of congregational leaders motivated to grow their church's worship attendance; and the Center's new online leadership assessment instrument, the Lewis Pastoral Leadership Inventory (LPLI), a tool for enhancing effectiveness in ministry by providing clergy with the feedback they need to become truly outstanding leaders. Check out these tools and subscribe to the Center's free electronic newsletter, *Leading Ideas*, at www.churchleadership.com.

Wesley's Masters programs curricula offer specializations in Urban Ministry, Youth Ministry, and Emerging Ministries as well as opportunities in the arts, public policy, intercultural immersion and spiritual formation. These course options are buttressed with a rich array of opportunities via collaboration with the Washington Theological Consortium, a group of 18 partnering academic institutions along the Mid-Atlantic coast. Dual degrees in International Peace and Conflict Resolution are also possible through partnerships with American University's School of International Service. Wesley's Doctor of Ministry program extends these offerings through specialized courses that challenge pastors to grow as leaders in their specific ministry contexts. 2010 tracks include Church Leadership Excellence, Ecumenism and Interreligious Dialogue, and Urban Ministry.

In 2009, Wesley welcomes three new members to its faculty: Joseph Bush as Director of the Practice of Ministry and Mission Program, Deborah Sokolove as Director of the Luce Center for the Arts and Religion, and Carol A. Cook Moore as Assistant Professor of Worship and Preaching. Expanded curriculum vitae and contact information are available online.

A Global Investor - Wesley provides a diverse range of programs for clergy and lay leaders, whether on campus or online. Highlights in 2009 programming include: a new Hispanic Course of Study program commencing summer 2009; two online courses, Leadership and Polity, taught by Lew Parks in fall 2009; and Equipping Lay Ministry coursework in youth ministries and liturgical arts. Notable also - Wesley Ministry

Network has recently released a DVD course, *Religion and Science; Pathways to Truth*, which supports congregations in addressing critical intersections of faith and form (www.wesleyministrynetwork.com).

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Please note that hour requirements for full-time/half-time status have been adjusted such that students may maintain their status with 9/5 hours respectively. Wesley is also pleased to offer a vital program of scholarship support for the next generation of church leaders. Interested persons are encouraged to contact our Office of Financial Aid to find out which options are suitable for their course of study and calling.

Being Part of the Change You Hope to See - Wesley is a teaching seminary and a mission-minded community. As vectors of creative, collaborative and scholarly practice, the members of Wesley's 2009 graduating class alone will minister to more than half a million people in the course of their careers. I welcome you to join them.

***God's call is bold. Your seminary should be too.* Visit us at www.wesleyseminary.edu.**

The Rev. Dr. David McAllister-Wilson,
President

Wiley College

Greetings! I'm pleased to report that Wiley College is one of the finest traditions of higher learning in the world. Indeed, Wiley College is part of a rich legacy of achievement and leadership in arts, civil rights, debate, education and so many other disciplines.

Historically, many of our alumni have gone on to assume diverse positions of leadership in America and around the globe. Currently, alumni are deeply engaged in the process of change and well-armed with their Wiley College education, born from our recognition that our students and alumni are the cornerstone of our existence.

Wiley College provides the students with the most technologically advanced computer labs, science laboratories and facilities available on any college campus in America. We encourage the students to utilize these facilities, as well as embrace a responsibility to maintain the investment and ensure the availability of these rich educational resources for future generations.

Wiley College has a deep commitment to its students. Our professors are highly gifted, conscientious and dedicated to ensuring the College's cutting-edge teaching and research capability. Many of them are actively engaged in exciting research programs and projects. Students in their classes benefit from their rich reservoir of knowledge and the special sense of family for which Wiley is renowned.

As we set our sights on the future, using our rich academic tradition as the compass by which we will charter our course, we are excited by the endless possibilities. Wiley College continues to be grateful to the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church for its support. For many students, college would be an impossible dream were it not for the support of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference. Wiley College is proud of its strong religious ties and has prepared many students to become ministers and other leaders in their churches, as well as to pursue many other career paths. We are deeply thankful to the churches of this conference for their continued support.

Dr. Haywood L. Strickland,
President and CEO

Director's Reports: Women's Division

As Women's Division Director, elected at the United Methodist Women's Quadrennial Annual Meeting last April 2008, I proudly represent the Greater New Jersey Conference (GNJC) and give thanks to God for such a time as this!

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I attended the Women's Division Fall Board meeting last September 2008 where I was apprised that I am serving in the area of Ministries for Women, Youth and Children, a true passion of mine. I am also serving on Christian Social Responsibility and was elected Secretary of the By-laws Committee. As a result of my position as Women's Division Director I am a member of the Ministries Team of our GNJC. I have much to learn but I have a very willing spirit!

As Women's Division Director, I was also asked to serve on the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women. I was unable to attend the organizational meeting of September 2008 due to a transition of employment. However, I just returned from the March Board Meeting where I learned I have been assigned to the Ministries Committee. Among many things, our Ministries Committee set out to create four Ministries task groups which will serve as our area of concentration for this quadrennium. The four task groups are: Sexual ethics (resources, training, and advocacy), Global issues, GCSRW-Religion and Race (monitoring and research) and Leadership/The Women's Congress. While at this meeting, I was elected the Convener of the Task Group on Sexual Ethics and look forward to my work as an advocate at the GCSRW Conference meetings. At the GCSRW March Board meeting, I was renewed by worship led by the Rev. Marcia McFee, I gained new insight on Institutional Sexism by the Episcopal Priest and published author, Eric Law and attended a well-driven workshop on Sexual Ethics by our GCSRW General Secretary Ms. Garlinda Burton. I left this meeting with great new insight and a new found enthusiasm for my work as an advocate for Christ's church!

During this time of scarcity both economically and spiritually, I look forward to my work with an attitude of "abundance thinking". Our God blesses us with a life in abundance; and I take God's promise to heart as I continue to be about God's Ministry within our Greater New Jersey Conference and abroad!

Melissa A. Rivera-Martinez
Women's Division Director

Conference Youth & Young Adults Ministry Team

The Conference Youth and Young Adults Ministry Team (CYYAMT) has been engaged in an active year of ministry within and throughout the church. As a team, we have undertaken many new experiences while preserving some traditions of the team. Throughout all we do, the spiritual growth and development of all youth and young adults are our main focus. Questions that guide our planning include; how can the church effectively reach youth and young adults not currently being ministered to? How can the team better assist and resource our local churches to minister to youth and young adults? And finally, how can the church guide and develop effective servant leaders among youth and young adults?

Ocean City Senior High Youth Weekend 2008 was a huge success once again. Despite the challenges of a tropical storm our youth from across the Conference experienced a weekend of fellowship, faith formation, and fun. Through the experiences encountered during the weekend, 41 youth took their first steps in acknowledging the Call to Ministry.

Through support and initiation from Bishop Devadhar, the team in conjunction with The Advance developed and piloted the fasting program B1. B1 has youth experience the needs of people from around the globe and how we can be in ministry and mission with them. Youth receive pledges and donations for their period of fasting and all of the funds raised are then donated to the United Methodist Advance Project of the youth group's choice. Our youth groups raised just over $10,000 last year to support projects across the global church.

After a successful launch in 2008 across the GNJAC, the B1 program is being expanded to the Northeast Jurisdiction.

Continuing to meet the Four Areas of Focus, the team actively supported the Nothing But Nets campaign. Through the support of churches, individuals, and youth groups from our Conference we are pleased to say that

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our goal of $150,000 was not only reached, but surpassed. It is the belief of the team that simply because our goal was reached our work is not complete. Malaria still remains a medical and health crisis through the world, and until the status of malaria changes, our work will continue to raise funds for the project.

Developing effective ministries and servant leaders within our local churches has always been a key component of the team. To support the further development of outstanding ministries being offered to our youth and young adults the CCYAMT with the help and support of our Children, Youth, and Young Adult Conference Coordinator developed and sponsored FUEL (Faith Unites Every Leader). FUEL focuses on our youth and youth workers and gives them the tools needed to continue to develop effective ministries within the churches. Over 75 youth and leaders, representing the entire Conference, participated in our first FUEL event. The team has also sponsored and planned a training opportunity for youth to become Basic Youth Lay Speakers. We extend a huge thank you to the Conference Lay Speakers' leadership for their participation and support of our young people.

Our involvement in ministry and mission does not stop with the events mentioned previously, but begins there. The CYYAMT has also supported other vital ministry opportunities within our conference and jurisdiction. For the fifth year our Conference will be taking a pilgrimage of youth and young adults to Taize. Since its inception here in the GNJAC a total of 200 youth and young adults have visited Taize. The Taize experience builds a deeper sense of spiritual oneness with Jesus, as well as helps our youth discern direction, purpose, and vocation. This year's pilgrimage consists of over 25 participants and will be traveling to France July 23 through August 3, 2009. Please pray for these participants and their leaders as they embark on a journey that will transform their lives and change the face of our Conference.

As a team, we celebrate with you the accomplishments of your youth as they are confirmed into your churches. It is for this reason that the Bishop's Confirmation Rally is such an important event in the life of this Conference as we come together, celebrate, and lift up the youth who are the now and today of our churches.

Being connectional is an important aspect of who we are as United Methodists. CYYAMT lives up to our connectional call through our involvement with the Northeast Jurisdictional Youth Council. As an active participant with the council, we will be hosting the 2009 Nor'Easter Youth Gathering to be held in Ocean City. This is a great honor for our team as we host youth and their youth workers from all of the 13 Annual Conferences within the Northeast Jurisdiction. The Nor'Easter focuses on leadership development, worship, and fellowship for the youth that serve as leaders within our Jurisdictional Conferences. Other youth and young adult gatherings include young adults attending ELEVATE, a jurisdictional gathering of young adults interested in the development of enhancement of programs and worship designed for young adults. ELEVATE will take place in Pittsburgh, PA during July.

Our CYYAMT feels called to be in mission with those in need around the globe. One way that we can support the efforts of others, their ideas and goals to be in mission with those in need, is through the continual offering of Youth Service Fund (YSF) grants. YSF funds are raised by youth and support mission projects created and planned by youth that support youth. As a team that oversees the distribution of YSF grants, the CYYAMT has approved funds that have supported MOP, the Smolensk Mission Project, and outreach programs that have been developed by youth around the globe. It is our goal to continue to raise awareness of the mission of YSF throughout this Conference, as well as to continue to raise the needed funds to continue to support youth with innovative ideas about ministering to those in need.

The Mission of Peace is another vital part of the ministry supported by the CYYAMT. The purpose of MOP is to experience a journey of discovery and Shalom with others across the globe. MOP is an annual experience supported and organized by the Northeast Jurisdictional Youth Council for the 13 Conferences of the NEJ. It brings to life the idea of a connectional church, linked by God's life. Youth who attend this pilgrimage of mission experience those words first hand. The 2010 Mission of Peace trip will be to India.

As we look forward to what the possibilities include, we are excited about the ministry and partnerships already in existence and the ones yet to be formed. Through the love of Jesus Christ and the support and prayers of this

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Annual Conference I know that our ministry to youth and young adults will only continue to grow in ways that we have not yet imagined. We, as the Conference Youth & Young Adult Team, are ready for the challenge and we pray that you will join us for the ride.

Larry Young
Co-Chairperson

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2008 TREASURER'S REPORTS

Pension Accounts - Greater New Jersey Annual Conference							
	12/31/03	**12/31/04**	**12/31/05**	**12/31/06**	**12/31/07**		**12/31/08**
ASSETS							
1st Union Checking	11,532	0	0	0	0		0
Due to GBOP					477,653		1,009,049
GBOP Deposit Account	3,268,066	2,768,239	2,708,432	2,912,443	2,865,915		1,580,944
Former SNJ - Bk of NY Cornerstone	405,632	446,602	451,193	510,612	536,608		407,421
Accounts Receivable		473,626	462,791	493,706			
Total Assets	**3,685,230**	**3,688,466**	**3,622,416**	**3,916,761**	**3,880,175**		**2,997,414**
LIABILITIES							
Pension							0
Due to Conference		24,429	32,937	67,466	92,418		0
Total Liabilities		**24,429**	**32,937**	**67,466**	**92,418**		**0**
General Fund							
Balance Forward	3,470,691	3,488,168	3,544,350	3,837,607	4,152,529		4,349,982
Receipts							
Investment Income	180	40,970	17,547	18,566	20,424		21,464
GBOP Invest. Gain/(Loss)	36,027	103,604	190,548	340,393	243,848		(634,558)
GBOP Invest. Refund/Adj	0	(36,965)	(127,567)	(3,529)	4,521		266
Refunds					0		0
UM Publishing Income	14,376	12,818	13,162	12,616	12,408		12,290
Chartered Fund Income	0	0	829	387	650		428
Pre-Retirement Seminar Income	470	540		460	625		680
Transfers from Account Close Outs			250,239				
Total Receipts	53,602	120,967	344,758	368,893	282,477		(218,647)
Disbursements							
Global Pension Trust		12,818	13,162	12,616	12,408		12,290
Pension Funding Help	0	0					
Pensions - Moving Expense Reimb			12,913	18,276	22,418		30,965
Grants/Relief	27,736	36,770	16,875	19,322	16,223		16,347
Pre-Retirement Seminar Expense				213	1,009		1,015
Adoption Grant		3,000					
Staff Expense	128	269	692	940	29		44,285
Pension Adjustment Expense					30,815		114,065
Refunds					0		3,335
Operating Expenses	8,262	11,928	7,859	2,604	2,121		8,819
Total Disbursements	36,125	64,785	51,500	53,971	85,024		231,121
General Fund Balance	3,488,168	3,544,350	3,837,607	4,152,529	4,349,982		3,900,214
Receipts - Disbursements	17,477	56,182	293,257	314,922	197,453		(449,768)

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Stabilization Fund							
Balance Forward	200,454	200,454	200,454	0	0		0
Receipts	0	0	0	0	0		0
Balance Forward	59,718	(53,176)	(130,551)	(248,129)	(331,131)		(595,694)
Receipts							
Staff Premiums					179,442		183,444
Conference MPP/CRSP Income	2,121,719	2,269,235	2,257,814	2,324,971	2,859,255		3,016,139
Conference CPP Income	832,030	903,254	902,984	912,871	608,674		574,513
Total Receipts	2,953,749	3,172,488	3,160,798	3,237,842	3,647,371		3,774,096
Disbursements							
Refunds/Adjustments	(4,280)						
Company Pension Expense							
Expense entry							
GBOP Billing	3,070,923	3,249,863	3,278,375	3,320,845	3,911,934		3,964,019
Total Disbursements	3,066,643	3,249,863	3,278,375	3,320,845	3,911,934		3,964,019
Current Service Fund Balance	(53,176)	(130,551)	(248,129)	(331,131)	(595,694)		(785,617)
Receipts - Disbursements	(112,894)	(77,375)	(117,577)	(83,002)	(264,563)		(189,923)
Disability Fund							
Balance Forward	45,807	45,807	45,807	0	0		0
Receipts	0	0	0	0	0		0
Balance Forward	3,977	3,977	3,977	0	0		0
Receipts	0	0	0	0	0		0
Interest Reserve Fund Balance				27,897	33,469		(117,183)
Total Fund Balance	**3,685,230**	**3,664,037**	**3,589,479**	**3,849,296**	**3,787,757**		**2,997,414**

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Health Insurance Accounts - Greater NJ Annual Conference			
	2007		**2008**
	Dec YTD Actual		**Dec YTD Actual**
Actives (Horizon Blue Cr)			
Balance Forward	**469,322**		**310,677**
(Receipts)			
Billing Non-Annuitants	4,528,485		4,427,926
Dist. Supt. & Staff Premiums	258,912		284,062
Staff Family Premiums	16,345		23,434
2% of Sal. Contrib. w/h from Staff & DSs	27,303		29,245
Cornerstone Investment Income	20,077		21,099
Transfer from Aetna (SNJ)			
Total Receipts	**4,851,123**		**4,785,765**
(Disbursements)			
Non- Annuitants Premium	4,650,672		4,664,933
Adoption Support			0
Consulting Fee			
Incapacity Leave			3,745
Other Expense			
Transfer 2% Pastor Salary Contribution	331,792		297,421
Transfer 2% Staff Salary Contribution	27,303		29,245
Total Disbursements	**5,009,768**		**4,995,344**
Receipts less Disbursements	-158,645		-209,578
Balance	**310,677**		**101,098**
ANNUITANTS (Horizon Blue Cr)			
Balance Forward	**0**		**0**
(Receipts)			
Shared Ministries for Annuitants	2,176,065		2,149,666
Billing for Annuitants over 65	64,715		69,716
Billing for Annuitants under 65	50,968		37,507
Centenary Fund Contribution			
Medicare	225,277		219,726
2% Salary Funds Reserve Transfer	30,485		234,803
Total Receipts	**2,547,510**		**2,711,418**
(Disbursements)			

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Blue Cross - Premium Expense	2,513,146		2,652,961
Administration Expense	2,168		4,965
H.I.T. Coordinator	20,533		23,679
Adoption Support			6,000
Consulting Agency Fee	11,663		23,813
Total Disbursements	**2,547,510**		**2,711,418**
Receipts less Disbursements	0		0
Balance	**0**		**0**
Reserve Fund for Retiree Health Ins.			
Balance Forward	**#REF!**		**#REF!**
(Receipts)			
Centenary Fund Additional Contribution	365,000		383,250
Transfer 2% Pastor Salary Contribution	331,792		297,421
Transfer 2% Staff Salary Contribution	27,303		29,245
Misc Income			
Total Receipts	724,095		709,916
(Disbursements)			
Transfer to Annuitants	30,485		234,803
Transfer to Reserve	100,000		100,000
Total Disbursements	130,485		334,803
Receipts - Disbursements	593,610		375,113
DENTAL Balance Forward	**-886**		**5,093**
Billing for Dental Insurance	62,218		80,012
Dental Insurance Premiums	56,239		62,954
Receipts - Disbursements	5,978		17,058
Balance	**5,093**		**22,151**

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Property & Liability Insurance - 12/31/2008

Balance Forward		**898,889**
Receipts:		
Interest Income	339	
Premiums from Churches	2,493,582	
Worker's Compensation	363,136	
Prior Year Receipts	105,823	
	2,962,881	
Disbursements:		
Insurance Premiums	2,314,553	
Auto Insurance	2,336	
Workers Compensation	334,857	
Salary	23,679	
Claim Deductibles	48,358	
Other Expenses	1,061	
	2,724,844	
Change in Operation		238,037
Ending Balance 12/31/08		**1,136,926**

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2008 Receipts Comparison – Greater New Jersey Annual Conference

	Fd #	Funds	2006 Budget	2006 Dec YTD	2006 % Budget	2007 Budget	2007 Dec YTD	2007 % Budget	2008 Budget	2008 Dec YTD	2008 % Budget
Shared Ministry Funds	100	DO,ClergySup.,Admin	4,753,060	4,129,908	86.89	4,895,259	4,325,948	88.37	5,037,103	4,317,036	85.70
	200	Admin.	1,499,681	1,428,985	95.29	1,658,262	1,469,700	88.63	1,877,477	1,640,479	87.38
	300	WorldService/Conf.Ben.	3,702,843	2,988,487	80.71	3,751,385	3,143,352	83.79	3,898,364	3,154,774	80.93
	410	Black College	230,417	192,219	83.42	231,729	198,899	85.83	229,160	197,133	86.02
	420	Africa University	51,606	44,429	86.09	53,560	47,704	89.07	50,662	50,063	98.82
	430	Ministerial Education	577,632	467,374	80.91	580,415	486,825	83.88	575,412	482,718	83.89
		Subtotal	10,815,239	9,251,402	85.54	11,170,610	9,672,429	86.59	11,668,178	9,842,203	84.35
		Prior Yr. Shared Ministry		175,485			68,069			35,727	
Billing Funds		CRSP	2,285,092	2,115,378	92.57	3,022,007	2,778,065	91.93	3,227,429	2,894,683	89.69
		2007 CRSP							261,150	92,122	
		Prior Year MPP	424,799	126,059		457,209	81,190		350,370	29,334	
		Total MPP	2,709,891	2,241,437	82.71	3,479,216	2,859,255	82.18	3,838,949	3,016,139	78.57
		Comp. Protection Plan	895,871	828,359	92.46	626,886	574,374	91.62	617,007	552,216	89.50
		2007 CPP							50,256	13,878	
		Prior Year CPP	144,952	37,194		165,477	34,300		125,813	8,419	
		Total CPP	1,040,823	865,553	83.16	792,363	608,674	76.82	793,077	574,513	72.44
		Property/Liab. Insurance	3,074,251	2,832,519	92.14	2,855,818	2,605,379	91.23	2,796,274	2,493,582	89.18
		2007 P/L							249,515	60,980	
		Prior Year P/L Insurance	601,191	177,984		653,869	126,089		524,372	41,133	
		Total P/L Ins.	3,675,442	3,010,502	81.91	3,509,687	2,731,468	77.83	3,570,161	2,595,695	72.71
		Health Insurance				4,829,715	4,591,559	95.07	4,760,697	4,294,457	90.21
		2007 Health Insurance							346,870	86,445	
		Prior Years Health Ins.				325,094	60,543		319,162	16,417	
		Total Health Ins.	0	0		5,154,809	4,652,103	90.25	5,426,729	4,397,319	81.03
		Workers Comp Insurance				378,056	354,409	93.75	380,209	363,136	95.51
		2007 Workers Comp							12,995	2,983	
		Prior Years Workers Comp				18,741	12,302		5,468	674	
		Total Workers Comp Ins	0	0		396,797	366,711	92.42	398,672	366,794	92.00
Total Shared Min. & Billing			18,241,395	15,544,379	85.21	24,503,482	20,958,708	85.53	25,695,767	20,828,390	81.06
Special Giving			0	798,218		0	758,770		0	913,532	

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