VIII. ANNUAL REPORTS

THAT'S US TOGETHER!

Episcopal Address — Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar
June 1, 2012 — Valley Forge, Pennsylvania

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

I greet you all in the precious name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I truly feel humbled to stand before you. My spirit is full of joy, praising and thanking God, using the words of the Psalmist, "For great is his steadfast love toward us, and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever. Praise the LORD!" (Psalm 117:2).

What a blessing to stand before you, the great people of God, and to say we did it together! Disciples for Jesus Christ are increasing in the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference! For the first time in 45 years we have a net gain of membership! I have no words to say except thank you, thank you, thank you! Shall we together shout "Praise the Lord!" Mark, help us to sing with gusto, "O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing …"

As we continue to praise our Creator God in and through the precious name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, we recognize that we live in a world of great and rapid change. The pace at which change occurs challenges our nation and our Church. In my Episcopal address this evening, I will address some of the issues, challenges, and promises of our Church's place in the world today. While the challenges are great, I believe that in the final analysis there is much good news and hope.

Let us remember the words of Moses as recorded in the book of Deuteronomy: "Remember the days of old; consider the generations long past. Ask your father [ask your mother] and [they] will tell you, your elders, and they will explain to you" (Deut 32:7 NIV).

God was. God continues to be. God will be. In the 'Song of Moses' recorded in the book of Deuteronomy, we hear of the sustaining presence of our creator God. God's design is flawless. It is the people who forget the ways of God and thus abuse the intended design of God's world. And so it is important to remember whose we are and who we are in light of God. God has provided. God provides. God will continue to provide. We are invited to remember God's providential care and embrace the values of living within God's eternal Reign, learning to love and obey God's precepts.

I want to draw upon this theme that is highlighted in a book, *That Used to be Us,* that Thomas Friedman wrote along with Michael Mandelbaum. This unifying theme will serve as a guide for our thoughts tonight. Let's take a look, first of all, at "That Used to Be Us." Then, let us look at "That Continues to Be Us." Finally, I want to lift up some direction for the future as we affirm, "That *Will* Be Us."

That Used To Be Us

It is good to remember whose we are and who we are, for we live in an ever-changing world that brings constant surprises. Thomas Friedman would have us be aware of the changes that are happening in our world and how they affect the life we live in the United States. When we see the energy, creativity, and

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drive exhibited by people in China, India, Brazil, Singapore, and elsewhere, it reminds us of what America used to be: a place on the go; a place on the rise with drive, optimism, and enthusiasm.

Friedman, in another book entitled, *The World Is Flat*, recounts some advice he gave to his teenage daughters as he reflected on the new world we live in: "Girls, when I was growing up, my parents used to say to me, 'Tom, finish your dinner -- people in China and India are starving.' My advice to you is: Girls, finish your **homework** -- people in China and India are starving for your jobs."[1] We live in a world where the competition no longer comes only from across the street or across town. Competition comes from across the globe as we live into an increasingly smaller world.

Friedman and Mandelbaum's recently published book, *That Used to be Us*, picked up on something our president said for its title. In November of 2010, President Obama said, "It makes no sense for China to have better rail systems than us, and Singapore having better airports than us. And we just learned that China now has the fastest supercomputer on earth–that used to be us."[2]

The book, *That Used to Be Us*, is a clarion call for renewal in America. It urges us to remember what made this a great nation. Friedman and Mandelbaum ask: "What world are we living in, and what exactly do we need to do to thrive in this world?"[3] The authors say,

> Our problem is not China, and our solution is not China. Our problem is us–what we are doing and not doing, how our political system is functioning and not functioning, which values we are and are not living by. And our solution is us–the people, the society, and the government that we used to be, and can be again.[4]

I couldn't help but think when reading this book about the parallels with our United Methodist Church. Back when the United States was making an impression on the world with its innovation, technology and advances, the Methodist Church was also making a huge impact in this country and the world. This was illustrated when former President Theodore Roosevelt embarked on a European visit shortly after leaving office. The United States was on the rise and the whole world was taking notice, much like China is on the rise today. The Methodist Church at that time, around 1910, was a powerful voice shaking the foundations of the world with its witness.

When plans were being made for Theodore Roosevelt's visit to Europe and his meetings with various heads of state, everyone wanted to see him. He was surely one of *the* most popular persons in the world. One of the stops on his tour was the Vatican. Edmund Morris writes in his biography of Roosevelt that "The Vatican advised [Roosevelt] that Pope Pius X would grant him an audience on the fifth of April 1910, providing that he did not embarrass his Holiness by associating with any Methodists in Rome."[5]

Methodists? Really?

Who were these Methodists that the Pope, serving in 1910, would caution a former president against meeting? At the time, the Methodists, including the former Methodist Episcopal, South, and the

[1]Thomas L. Friedman, *The World Is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-first Century* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005), p. 277.

[2]Thomas L. Friedman and Michael Mandelbaum, *That Used To Be Us: How America Fell Behind in the World it Invented and How We Can Come Back* (New York: Farrar, Strauss & Giroux, 2011), p. viii.

[3]Ibid, p. [need hard copy of book to determine exact page]

[4]Ibid, p. 12.

[5]Edmund Morris, *Colonel Roosevelt* (New York: Random House, 2010), p. 35.

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Methodist Protestant Church, were starting an average of one new church per day. These Methodists were part of the largest and most influential Protestant denomination in the United States and engaged in mission activities in countries all over the world. These Methodists were characterized by a fervent and deeply rooted spirituality. They gathered in small groups to hold one another accountable for their faith and celebrated together in worship in cities, towns, and rural areas across the United States. In a meeting of District Superintendents not long after this period, at which every single District Superintendent was present, the most remarkable thing was that every possible population area in the United States was represented by those gathered in that room. If someone were to call out the name of the tiniest hamlet in the U.S., one of those Superintendents would have risen and said, "I represent that hamlet. That is in my area." These Methodists were shaking up the world's understanding of what it meant to be Christian and active in the world.

That used to be us. Can you say it with me? *That used to be us.*

Teddy Roosevelt, who was from the Dutch Reform Church, was happy to talk with Methodists or the Pope and said that he and he alone, would decide with whom he would visit.

That used to be us.

When I was growing up in India, all through the 1960s, I dreamed of one day studying in the United States. I looked to the United States as a great beacon of light and wanted nothing more than to be able to come here, to study here. Others from India and other countries looked to the United States as ***the*** place to study and to fulfill their dreams. Little did I know that my dreams would become a beautiful reality. I am so grateful to the seminaries that offered me scholarships to study in this country. And I thank God for the wonderful, warm embrace that the United Methodist Church gave to me paving the way so that I could call this country my home, raise my family here, become a citizen, and serve the United Methodist Church.

That used to be us.

That Continues To Be Us!

Our United Methodist involvement in world-wide missions *continues* to be us. Today our Church, through the activities of individual churches and through our General Board of Global Ministries, works in 136 nations of the world. Recently, churches in our Conference made volunteer-in-mission trips to Haiti, Argentina, Mexico, and Russia. Through programs like "World Communion Scholars," our Church gave leadership study grants to 206 students from 44 different countries.

Our United Methodist Church, through the work of local church teams, and through a broader denomination-wide strategy, continues to work with our partner church in Haiti in the wake of the devastating earthquake of 2010. United Methodists have contributed over $43 million toward Haiti earthquake relief and rehabilitation.[6] UMCOR partnered with Habitat for Humanity to build 3,000 shelters. UMCOR has approved funding of more than $600,000 to work with partner organizations in Haiti to develop community-driven health programs.[7]

[6]"Hope and Tears Mark Haiti Tragedy Memorials," January 12, 2011, http://www.umcmission.org/Learn-About-Us/News-and-Stories/2011/January/Hope-and-Tears-Mark-Haiti-Tragedy-Memorials.

[7]"Global Ministries Strengthens Strategy in Haiti," April 20, 2011, http://www.umcmission.org/Learn-About-Us/News-and-Stories/2011/April/Global-Ministries-Strengthens-Strategy-in-Haiti.

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At home we are picking up the pace of starting new churches for new people groups. We started 60% more new churches across the United States during this quadrennium than we did in the past quadrennium, getting closer to the goal of once again starting one new church a day. 48% of those new church starts happened among ethnic minority groups. Here in the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference, we celebrate "Sharptown North," a second campus of the Sharptown UMC. We celebrate the younger people that the Barnegat Anew/Waretown UMC is reaching. We celebrate the chartering of Cornerstone UMC that grew out of the Korean Community Church in Englewood.

Through the work of Global Ministries, the United Methodist Church has helped start over 400 churches outside of the United States in places like Vietnam, Cameroon, Lithuania, and Mongolia, among others.[8]

That continues to be us! Say it with me: *That continues to be us.*

But, there is another side to our remembering. While our Church may have been large and powerful and growing in 1910, there are aspects that I would not want to revisit. We were an expression of God's Church still tragically divided. We were a Church where racism was systemic. We as a Church did not do enough to grant voting rights to women in the United States though women were the driving force of Christian mission. We were a Church zealously concerned about the social evils of alcohol, joining the bandwagon that led to Prohibition and the many social ills to which this led.

We were not humble in 1910. We were far too triumphant. We may never again be the dominant denomination in our country. We should not worry about that if we remain true to our calling as people of God. The challenge for us, as individuals and together as an expression of the Body of Christ, is to embrace humility.

Here I would like to make reference to another book that has made an impact on me. Stephen Cherry wrote *Barefoot Disciple*, a book that explains what it means to embrace humility today. If we seek humility, we can avoid the errors of triumphalism, which tears away at Christian witness. Cherry talks about humility as the behaviors, attitudes, values, and practices we incorporate into our being that lead us to live more like Jesus. Humble followers of Jesus make God real to others. This embrace of humility, writes Cherry, "is not about being pious; it is about being grounded. It is not concerned with being esoteric but ordinary. It is also honest and, in subtle ways, self-aware."[9]

Of course the irony of 'humility' is that once you claim to have it, you don't have it. It is a most difficult subject to write about or talk about. Cherry writes that while "we cannot make ourselves humble . . . we should ***aspire*** to humility."[10]

Cherry invites us to aspire to humility "not as a form of self-improvement, but as a virtue that befits those who seek the Reign of God."[11] Cherry suggests "that humility is most Christlike when it combines a certain down-to-earth acceptance of reality with a passionate longing for God's Reign of justice, truth, mercy, and peace."[12]

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[8]"New Church Starts Worldwide Featured in Live, Interactive Webcast," March 29, 2011, http://www.umcmission.org/Learn-About-Us/News-and-Stories/2011/March/New-Church-Starts-Worldwide-Featured-in-Live-Interactive-Webcast.

[9]Stephen Cherry, *Barefoot Disciple: Walking the Way of Passionate Humility* (London: Continuum, 2011), p. 39.

[10]Ibid, p. 42.

[11]Ibid, p. 41.

[12]Ibid, p. 43.

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At the end of 2011 I had the privilege of taking a Renewal Leave. I visited the Coorg Region of India close to where I started my ministry nearly thirty-five years ago. I engaged in conversation with poor coffee harvesters from this region. While poor, these people showed a great joy for life. I was touched by their stories where they shared their resources with others in the midst of their poverty. I was also deeply touched by the humility of a Hindu restaurant owner who opened up his restaurant solely for two visiting bishops and a lay person from the Methodist Church in India so that we could enjoy and cherish some of the Coorg delicacy dishes. Though not of my religious faith, this Hindu restaurateur demonstrated the attributes of humility that Stephen Cherry writes about in *Barefoot Disciple*. He went out of his way to provide space for me and my group so that we could engage in conversation.

If anything, the history of our denomination that has taken us from a height of being the dominant Protestant Church in America to one that struggles to find a new identity that can still make disciples and transform the world, should make us humble.

Humility is a far better trait to aspire to as we seek to give witness to our faith in these days. Humility teaches us to rely on God. God provided in days of old. God provides today. God will provide. When we aspire to live our lives in humility, we give witness to our faith. Living our faith in this way is better than we used to be no matter how big or how powerful we once were.

That *Will* Be Us!

As we look to the future we can be confident that God will continue to provide and guide us into the mission and ministry needed for our world today. While we may never again be the dominant denomination we once were, we will be a Church of service and witness. We will be a creative minority, who with humble hearts seek to live out what it means to be the hands and feet of Jesus today.

You and I have walked difficult roads over these past few years. Despite an economic downturn occurring all around us, we in the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference have improved our overall giving and paid our General Church shared ministry apportionments in full. We have the highest average worship attendance ratio in the Northeast. We continue to improve in the quantity and quality of faith formation groups in our congregations. And it bears repeating: This year we recorded the first increase in membership in 45 years.

There is a great spirit in many of our congregations! Attendance at the Bishop's Convocation is up; attendance at leadership training events is up! If approved at this annual conference, we will have raised our minimum equitable salary for clergy from next to last in the Jurisdiction a few years ago, to the highest. All of this is because of the grace of God and the wonderful spirit of partnership at all levels of the Conference.

And we have participated in God's transformation of the world. In the midst of all that we have done together, we celebrate our conference's proactive efforts and leadership that helped abolish the death penalty in the state of New Jersey. I give thanks to God for the spirit of cooperation in the Board of Ordained Ministry, Laity Council, the Cabinet, the Extended Cabinet and Program Staff, the Council on Finance and Administration, the Board of Pensions and Health Benefits, Conference Trustees and so many other manifestations of cooperation, good Christian spirit, and a wholesome working together.

Friedman and Mandelbaum, in their book, *That Used to Be Us*, highlight an important choice that we need to make in this country. If we are to move forward in a positive way as a people, we need to choose sustainable long-term solutions over unsustainable short-term fixes. To do so, we need to draw upon the

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character of what it means to live in this country–something we have done well in the past. We need to choose self-sacrifice for the benefit of the whole over self-gain for the benefit of our individual selves. That's what the "Greatest Generation" did when everyone sacrificed on both the front line and on the home front so that we could prevail in World War II. And that is one clear way to embrace humility in our walk with Christ.

The same lesson and same choice confront our Church. How can we make choices that will benefit the long-term service and witness of our Church so that we *can* partner with God in making disciples for the transformation of the world?

Friedman and Mandelbaum point to the greatest asset our country has: unlike so many other places in the world, in the U.S. people of diverse backgrounds in ethnicity, in religion, in economic status, can and do work together for the common good. Nowhere is this better illustrated than in our military, where black, white, Latino, and Middle Eastern Americans work together as a team for the greater good. In our denomination, nowhere is this better illustrated than in the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference. We are positioned to be the forerunners of a denomination that embraces diversity in all of its fullness. We celebrate the vibrant churches in our Conference where we not only hear English, but also Korean, Spanish, Portuguese, Arabic, Creole, Tagalog, and Chinese.

As I mentioned when I first knew that I was coming here to serve as your Bishop nearly eight years ago, "I envision a Church of the Pentecost in which the Holy Spirit is igniting, gifting, and empowering God's children of all ages, backgrounds, colors, and personalities to glorify their Creator as passionate witnesses for Jesus Christ. Such a Church does not merely serve the poor, the left out, the different, but welcomes them warmly into its hearts, homes, and worship."

We are the Church of the Pentecost and my prayer is that more and more that will be us. Please say it with me: *That will be us.*

Just as our country is challenged to make choices that are sustainable for the long term, I envision a Greater New Jersey Annual Conference that makes decisions that are sustainable and that will carry us forward into the future in service and witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I envision a Conference that reflects the glorious diversity of God bringing us together in community as witnesses to the world that people of diverse background can live and minister together and thrive.

That will be us.

When I look at the many youth who have made pilgrimages to Taize, gatherings at Ocean City, and Bishop's Confirmation events, I am filled with excitement for the future of our Church–a Church where young people play a significant role in service and witness of United Methodists in this area of God's world. These young people are the Church of the present and the Church of the future.

I see this Conference getting younger and younger and younger.

That will be us.

Friends, I don't know if this is the last time I will address you in this way. Only God knows. Let me make this clear: no matter what, we all belong to God and no matter who leads this Conference, with me or without me or in spite of me, you have a great future to embrace that is positive. You will be a shining light of service and witness for Greater New Jersey.

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Kindly watch with me a video clip, of the moments after the Jurisdictional Conference of 2004 . . .

Bishop Neil L. Irons:

The number of valid ballots 274. The number of ballots required to elect 165. There is an election. With 169 votes you have elected to be consecrated Bishop on Friday, Sudarshana Devadhar. Well, we must be listening to the Spirit. I don't ever recall when on the first two ballots we've had two elections. I think now we would like to invite the Bishop-elect to come and bring a word to this jurisdictional conference.

Bishop Devadhar:

Dear Bishops, sisters and brothers in Christ I can only say praise be to God in the name of Jesus Christ. I stand here before you today because people along the journey lifted me up. My Bishops, my District Superintendents, colleague pastors and laity in the conference, my brothers and sisters in the North Central New York Conference, Western New York Conference, colleagues in the National Federation of Asian American United Methodists, all of you have lifted me up. As I have said it before, like Mother Theresa, I don't want to promise you that I will be successful but I will be faithful and I will try my level best to do that and please pray for me and for my wife and daughter.

My words are the same today as they were at those moments of shell shock, quoting Mother Teresa, "God does not call us to be successful, but God calls us to be faithful!" No matter what happens at the Jurisdictional Conference, whether I am sent to the New Jersey area or elsewhere, we know that we all belong to God, and our calling is to serve the present age as faithful disciples of Jesus Christ. Let us not forget that in serving the present age, we need to think constantly outside the box . . . Tonight may I appeal to you to become a strong presence of Jesus Christ, for the glory of God, filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, everywhere in the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference.

In that challenge of continuously thinking outside the box, or perhaps even stronger, beyond the box, tonight will you kindly celebrate with me as we appoint Rev. Dr. Douglas Ruffle and Rev. Erica Munoz as pastors of the Greater New Jersey United Methodist Cyber Church, along with Heather Fullerton as their pastoral assistant? They will be exploring the birth of a Conference-wide Cyber Church. In that appointment, in consultation with our Cabinet, we also authorize them to enlarge this team as the need emerges. They will do this ministry in addition to their present portfolio . . . Clergy and laity, help us, kindly. Do not get concerned if someone says that Erica and Doug were at a shopping mall next to one of our churches celebrating Holy Communion or counseling people … Don't ask who gave them authority to be there … but say "Praise the Lord" because someone has attempted to reach out to the thirty-five percent of the religiously nominal population in the United States.

Tonight will you envision with me every church in this Conference having some kind of ministry, not *for* the poor, but ***with*** the poor? What if every time we have a church supper we have one extra table so that the poor in our communities may come and eat at no cost with us at our church suppers? Will you envision with me the B-1 program being introduced and celebrated in everyone of our local churches and by the end of the next quadrennium having raised at least $250,000 for the ministry with the poor through the B-1 program?

Tonight will you envision with me the word "evangelism" becoming our favorite word? Will you envision us becoming intentional in budgeting at least one third of the amount that we spend on building maintenance being budgeted for children and youth ministries? May we all make a passionate

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commitment to service and witness in our communities, and to talk boldly about what God is doing in our lives? May we stand courageously with any to whom our Church is still not opening its doors so that by the end of the next quadrennium we would have a net gain of 20,000 members? Friends, these are not numbers crafted by me but these are the numbers you anticipated as you worked on preparing your report for the General Conference on Vital Congregations.

Tonight will you envision us clergy truly committing ourselves to empowering our laity, so that they will be a ministry of service and witness everywhere? Will you envision that we become passionate using our gifts and graces? When disciples of Jesus become passionate and truly *barefoot disciples*, the physicians among us in our pews may offer to set up a free clinic once a week or a month in one of our cities. Teachers may say they want to start English as a Second Language classes, or a grandma or grandpa may say to his or her clergy, "Pastor, this Christmas I spent this much on gifts for my grandchildren. May I do the same or part of it for a child who does not get any Christmas gifts?"

Many a time we never know what a simple challenge can do. In my pastoral ministry one time when a person joined the Church he said to me, "Pastor, I am not good at committees but I am a good roast pork cook." I said, "Fine. Will you kindly prepare a dinner for our youth so that we can raise money for a scholarship?" Guess what? He did… and some youths were able to go on a mission journey they would not have gone on otherwise.

A couple of weeks ago I was at a church where a lay person shared with me enthusiastically about their monthly feeding program to the community. As an outgrowth of their roadmap to renewal, this church with the encouragement of their pastor offers a free spaghetti dinner for all people. It has grown into so much more than a monthly meal for the needy. They enjoy Christian fellowship with people inside and outside of the church. The church offers love and friendship. Now people who had come on previous months to enjoy the meal are participating with their food donations—cookies, grated cheese or brownies. The organizer of this ministry would be happy to share what he has learned and help any other church start a similar ministry. You may contact the Bishop's office to find out more.

We never know the hidden talent in our pews … the only thing we need to do is empower the laity to carry out the ministry of service and witness.

That will be us.

We have done so much together and it has been good. Again, it is teamwork. I am thankful to God for blessing me with a wonderful Cabinet, Extended Cabinet and program staff, faithful office staff, and truly, truly loyal and extravagantly selfless Episcopal staff whose professional and vocational companionship has been a Divine blessing! I am grateful to my family for understanding the ministry of episcopacy and for making sacrificial adjustments in their schedules to allow me to fulfill my responsibilities to the best of my ability. I am convinced that this will be a Conference of dedicated brothers and sisters who love and serve God and love and serve others in God's name. The best and brightest days are ahead of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference and I give thanks to God for what God has done, continues to do and will do here.

We started this evening remembering the words of Moses:
"Remember the days of old; consider the generations long past. Ask your father [ask your mother] and [they] will tell you, your elders, and they will explain to you" (Deut 32:7 NIV).

God provided in days past; God continues to provide today; and God will provide in the days to come.

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May God bless you!

DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENTS' REPORT

Friends and Colleagues:

We, the superintendents, greet you in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ. We thank God for you all. We are grateful for your love and support and we celebrate the many ministries carried out in faithfulness to and with sacrifice for Jesus Christ and his Church.

We thank God for Sudarshana Devadhar, our Bishop, and for the privilege of working with him. We thank God also for the Bishop's staff, Charles and Nicola. To all of them we give thanks for their insight, their wisdom, their dedication and hard work – a blessing to the whole church.

As we began the Conference year, we welcomed four new District Superintendents to the Cabinet, and moved one to a new district. This year has been one of change in so many ways. It is part of the landscape in which we live and work. And in the face of change we look forward to working together in the coming year, anticipating that whatever happens, we will be sustained by the Holy Spirit.

Just prior to our arrival here at Annual Conference we celebrated Pentecost. This is often the New Testament story that Christians who hunger and thirst for change often look to for inspiration. We read in the second chapter of Acts of the dramatic coming of the Holy Spirit. This coming, "50 days" after Jesus' passion and resurrection signifies a break with the old way of doing things and opens the possibility of genuinely new life. New Testament scholar C. Kavin Rowe writes that "the newness of life after Pentecost is inseparable from the traditions that precede it, and the sustainability of such new life depends directly on the development of new traditions. To understand the significance of the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, therefore, we must hold innovation and tradition together."

During the Last Supper, Jesus told the disciples that the cup was the new covenant in his blood (Luke 22:20). After his resurrection, he instructed them to wait in Jerusalem until they would receive the Holy Spirit (Luke 24/Acts 1). The gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost is the moment at which the new covenant in Jesus Christ goes public.

The miracle of Pentecost was a miracle of hearing. It still is.

There was a report recently about current linguistic research that began by asking the question: "Where in the world is the largest number of different languages spoken?"

Where do you think? Conventional wisdom, even among experienced linguists, the report went on to say would probably offer New Guinea as the answer. The island has more than 800 distinct languages "scattered around its isolated, jungle-covered valleys." But there is another place in the world that now surpasses the remote island when it comes to diverse languages. "The five boroughs of New York City," according to recent linguistic studies, "are reckoned to be home to speakers of around 800 languages. It is not a stretch to include the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference in the neighborhood.

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The world in all its startling and sometimes indecipherable diversity is no longer on the other side of the globe. The whole wide world is on our doorstep. Isn't this great! What an opportunity. This reality might make some people nervous and unhappy and they may experience diversity as a threat to their way of seeing the world, a threat to their own culture, their faith. Some have even tried to build walls and construct moats to keep out those who are different. But that is exactly opposite the open message of the gospel.

When the church was born, it emerged in a world almost as diverse as our own. The story of the church's birth begins amid a cacophony of different tongues, people chattering away in Aramaic, in Latin, Greek, and in tongues most of us only encounter when we draw the short straw and are asked to read the second chapter of Acts on Pentecost Sunday. People from language groups scattered throughout the ancient world were together on the day the church was born, "Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya around Cyrene," as well as "visitors from Rome," Cretans and Arabs. They were all chattering at once. We are told: "when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were bewildered, because they were each one hearing them speak in his own language" (Acts 2:6).

This was the miracle of Pentecost. And it gave rise to the question: "How is it that we can each hear them in our own language?" Pentecost was a miracle of hearing, of comprehension, of listening.

That should give us pause in these days when so many people strain to shout their views at others, but seldom bother to listen. The church's birth is swaddled in listening to people who speak differently. As any linguist will tell you, to speak a different language means to experience the world differently. A language marks the boundary between different cultures, different ways of understanding the world around us. Christian faith crossed these boundaries not by force of argument, but through the generous act of hearing, listening, entering into the ways others conceive of the world we all inhabit.

The miracle of Pentecost was a miracle of hearing. It still is. So what do we need to be hearing today?

We can start by hearing song: In many of our churches song – music -- has become the vehicle of care and outreach.

- Asbury UMC of Atlantic City partnered with the local Roman Catholic Church for a benefit concert to raise funds for Asbury's building improvement. Asbury also hosts a Jazz Vespers Ministry every third Sunday of the month at 4 pm
- On Friday evenings, several of the Cape Atlantic churches take turns hosting a Gospel Hymn Sing Ministry
- Haddonfield UMC continues to draw hundreds of people for their musical presentations.

The gift of music is a powerful tool for reaching out with the joy in the Lord, and touching those whose hearts are hurting.

Several of our congregations are hearing those whose voices are sometimes unheard by the general population.

- Jackson UMC has a ministry to special needs adults. The ministry meets two times a month for 1.5 hrs and includes a time of worship, a bible study which is done on multiple levels; mentoring on a 1 to 1 basis, prayer and fellowship.

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- Trinity in South Amboy is welcoming those with special needs to their worship services as well as restructuring their nursery school.
- In Annandale, Allerton UMC has integrated special needs adults into the life of the congregation as they lead in worship as well as serve in leadership positions
- Bridgewater UMC has a program for those with mental illnesses.
- Wesley UMC in Philipsburg is offering support with a pain management group.
    - Waretown UMC has an ASL Translator available at every worship service and activity, signing for those folks in the congregation who are deaf.
    - Simpson UMC in Old Bridge offers a service every 4th Wednesday for home bound members of the congregation.
    - These churches are listening to voices that raise unique needs and are responding to them.
    - Some of our churches have new or refurbished look to their facilities to speak a language of welcome and hospitality.
    - In about three weeks First Korean UMC in Cherry Hill will consecrate their new, very large family life center.
    - Emanuel UMC in Union City has recently completed work on the church roof with a brand new "cupola" and leak repair.
    - St. Mark in Hamilton has expanded their facilities.
    - Medford United Methodist Church has a new Family Life Center.
    - Turning Point has a new façade, with glass doors that allow the light to come in and the Word to look inviting.
    - The front of First Filipino American UMC has a new "Facelift" and the renovations inside are on-going. It also has a strong youth ministry going on that is providing a "CHRISTMAS INSTITUTE" with other youths in other UMC congregations.

Some of our churches respond to the call to service and witness with community programs as the voice of concern is sounded.

- Trinity UMC Merchantville is one of the sites that houses children's programs in cooperation with Respond, Inc. Area churches also cooperate with Respond in its Shalom Zone initiative.
- Bethel UMC, Camden has an emphasis on education. Hundreds of people have received their GED certificates with help from the church. They are starting a new youth program at the Neighborhood Center.
- Asbury UMC and Ferry Avenue UMC in Camden are two of the sites of the Camden Urban Initiative summer camp project that reach out into the lives of community children.
- St. Paul's UMC: Brick has their own Christian school for grades kindergarten through eight..
- Hope UMC in Voorhees has recently purchased a former Bank of America and has expanded its community outreach ministry.
- Bridgewater UMC has an ESL program
- Kingston UMC is engaging in ministry with young adults
- Bloomsbury UMC offers a place for young adults to be in community with one another in the Wine Cellar, connecting through internet access, food, fellowship and most importantly, prayer.
- First UMC Glassboro accepted the invitation to join other UMC's in changing the world. The result was a community garden in which donated seeds/plants are sown and tended by church members until they are harvested and taken to Glassboro's local food bank, The Samaritan Center, providing fresh produce for needy

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- Covenant UMC in Plainfield held its second Annual Health and Wellness Fair, with much success in the community.
- Many, many of our churches hold community Vacation Bible Schools each summer reaching countless numbers of children.
- Families are adopted at Christmas and provided with much needed clothing and gifts – gifts by the thousands!
- Our churches participate in Change the World in their communities.
- Many of our churches participate in mission trips, nationally and internationally -

Our congregations and members hear the cry of the hungry and are in mission to feed them.

- John Wesley Church, Bridgeton, has been feeding over 100 families per month for 3 years. The pastor realized they needed more than food to eat, they needed spiritual food as well, and so she started doing mini sermons before they received their food boxes. The people started coming earlier just to hear the parking lot preacher.
- Malaga and Porchtown started Church Mission Outreach Programs this year.
  Porchtown UMC began a Free Lunch Program during the winter months for needy within the community. Malaga prepares dinners monthly to take to the needy – their own version of meals on wheels.
- Grace UMC, Kearny members give out sandwiches to the homeless and poor in the park next to the church and the town hall.
- Turning Point in Trenton continues to grow its ministry with the homeless and poor.
- Parkside UMC in Camden has a Sunday morning service each week in which most of the parishioners are from the immediate neighborhood, including homeless people. After church a chef cooks and the church serves a multi-course breakfast.
- New Beginnings UMC in Camden hosts a weekly Sunday meal that is provided by area churches that prepare the food, bring it into North Camden, serve it, and permit neighborhood persons, many the area homeless, to enjoy a Sunday meal and worship service together.
- Cross Keys UMC has a community outreach breakfast that reaches over 200 persons.
- Finesville UMC reaches 65 people a week with their food pantry. Many of the recipients come for food and stay for prayer or Bible Study.
- Wesley UMC in Philipsburg has a Loaves and Fishes Luncheon
- Churches of the Gateway South District work in cooperation with the Camden Neighborhood Center, which now provides meals 6 days per week. Each week day about 150 persons are fed by volunteers from across the district. The Center will again host the summer camp.
- St. John's UMC in Turnersville is the source of a program called Feed My Sheep that feeds homeless persons in Camden.
- Clonmell UMC in Gibbstown provides dozens of holiday food baskets for people in Western Gloucester County. They are now reaching out to area businesses to partner in the project.
- It's an exciting time in our conference. As District Superintendents we get to visit churches that are listening to their members and communities and are growing in worship attendance and trying new ideas and styles of worship.
- Succasunna has added a second Sunday service and worship attendance is growing rapidly.
- Tranquility UMC has more than doubled its worship attendance
- Delaware Valley UMC celebrated 100 years of ministry - they have increased their worship attendance 5 fold, started a choir, and a new life has sprung forth in this rural Sussex County congregation;

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- Mt. Tabor UMC celebrated its 70th anniversary with a Spiritual Revival in the old Tabernacle that was built by the Camp Meeting Association of the Newark Annual Conference;
- Clair Memorial UMC in Jersey City is now ready to offer a new Contemporary Worship Service on the 4th Sunday of every month beginning June.
- Sharptown North - Celebrated its one year anniversary as a multi-site ministry of Sharptown UMC. They are averaging close to 100 in attendance.
- Central UMC of Linwood, leads worship at the Atlantic City Rescue Mission on the 3rd & 4th Sunday of every month
- Flemington UMC has a Revival Week each May.
- Barryville is engaged in creative ministry with a long-term rehab center for women and their children; they are making the church handicap accessible; worship attendance has grown from about a dozen to 50 to 60 a Sunday in this very rural community along the upper Hudson River in New York;
- Cornerstone Church began as the English-language ministry of the Korean Community Church of New Jersey in Englewood. It has since grown into a dynamic ministry to young adults and young marrieds that reaches across ethnic lines. In December 2011, with the blessing of its parent church, Cornerstone relocated to the First United Methodist Church of Hasbrouck Heights and began a new life as its own independent United Methodist congregation. At its incorporation there were over 150 active members.

These churches are holding innovation and tradition together and as a result we are celebrating their growth and vitality.

These are just some of the missions and outreach programs that the congregations of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference are doing in response to the diverse voices and languages in our neighborhoods. It's a good start.

This is a year of change. The tone of the denomination is one of reaction to trends of declining membership and financial concerns. Other conferences are cutting program staff and leadership positions in order to accommodate cut budgets. However, in this conference, we are meeting our commitment to the general church. Our local churches, while still feeling the pinch of the recent economic setbacks, are faithful in reaching out in mission and ministry. And, as we heard in the Bishop's address we can celebrate the net gain in membership, a sure sign of vitality in the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference.

May we all give thanks and praise to God for this hard working group of people - the appointment cabinet. Each of the District Superintendents has met with the Pastor Parish Relations Committee of each church, inspected each parsonage, met individually with each pastor and held individual church conferences at every church in their respective districts. Each has served on Conference committees. We are appointed to a specific district, but we are conference district superintendents, supporting one another across district lines as needed. The extended cabinet is equally hardworking and effective and we are grateful for the members of the program staff and our lay leader as we work together for the body of Christ. We are so thankful, too, for our district and conference office administrative assistants and staff members who walk this journey with us.

We are also incredibly thankful for the partnership and faithfulness of our churches as we travel together and for the generosity of all churches to our shared ministry, allowing us to once again to make a 100% shared ministry gift to the general church.

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All of this, of course could not happen without the leadership of our Bishop. We are so grateful for his ministry in our midst as brother in Christ. We are also thankful for his inspirational leadership and for his gift of pastoral presence in our lives. Over and over we have experienced the blessing that Bishop Devadhar is to this conference. It is our hope and prayer that we will continue to be blessed for another four years.

We do not know what this summer will bring by way of change. But we do know that our annual conference has come a long way in the last eight years. And for that we are truly grateful.

On the first Pentecost, when the church did utter its first words, they were words that bore witness to the fact that in Jesus Christ God has come into the world to seek out sinners, to forgive us, to redeem us. The church, at its birth, did not attempt to force others into rigid agreement. And the church certainly did not attempt to build walls and construct moats to keep out those who are different. At its birth, the church entered the language worlds of others so that it might articulate the good news of Jesus Christ in terms that could be heard and understood. With the Holy Spirit, we will be the ones to do that. Thanks be to God. Amen.

Submitted by Rev. Barbara A. Rambach for the District Superintendents

CONFERENCE LAY LEADER'S REPORT

Bishop Devadhar, Cabinet members, Brothers and Sisters in Christ, I greet you this afternoon. I am very honored to bring you this report. This has been an amazing year for me. I thank God for all of the support that has been given to me by the Bishop, Cabinet and the Laity Council! My husband often asks me, what does a conference lay leader do or what are you going to do today? Some of you might be wondering also -- what is the role of the conference lay leader? What does she really do? Well, according to *The Book of Discipline*, I chair the Board of Laity, preside over the Laity Session at Annual Conference, foster awareness among laity of their role in the church, find ways to recognize lay ministries, advocate for concerns, seek to provide training and support for local church lay leaders, work in conjunction with the district superintendents, pastors and lay members of the annual conference and also serve on many boards and committees as well as assignments by the Bishop! In America, performance often drives our self-worth and self-image. In business, men and women are constantly being evaluated on their performance. Did they exceed last quarter's sales? Can they operate more efficiently for less money? Military leaders evaluate every soldier's performance and potential. If a soldier does not meet a certain level of expectation, then they do not receive the next level of recognition, whether it is the next highest rank, award, or assignment. This underlying theme of achievement has now spread into our measurement of our vital congregations. We know if we pay attention to things they often improve. We have come to value people based on their accomplishments. I came from such a background, that every quarter I had to evaluate my performance as a leader. When my husband says to me now, "how are you doing?", I often reply, "I really don't know because I am not measuring indicators, I am called to serve and I will do those things that will open me up to receive as I am called". So let me share a little about my year!

My year began last August as I attended the 20th World Methodist Conference in Durban, South Africa from August 4 to 8, 2011. The theme was "For The Healing of the Nations". Members of the World Methodist Council or Methodist/Wesleyan Christians gathered to meet, hosted by the Methodist Church of South Africa. This conference is held every five years.The council met for three days prior to the conference. They adopted a new constitution and by-laws to guide their work and welcomed new

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members to their table. Our own Rev. Jessica Campbell worked on the development of bylaws for this group. Bishop Ivan Abraham, the presiding Bishop of the Methodist Church of South Africa, was elected as its next General Secretary. George Freeman, past General Secretary stated that it is an incredible experience when representatives from the Methodist/Wesleyan family from around the world gather in one place. This was the 130th year of the organization's existence. As the group spoke as one voice and shared together in the " one body and one spirit, just as we are called to the one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and father of us all, who is over all through all and in all."(Ephesians 4:5-6) The goals of this conference were to:

- Improve Methodist unity in witness, particularly in telling the story and not isolated bible verses.
- Encourage Christian education in our churches.
- End world hunger, calling on the Methodist men of the world to lead this effort! Facilitating the world mission on hunger
- Continue ecumenical dialogue with the Orthodox church

In September Bishop Devadhar began his yearly visit to all nine districts. I was grateful that I was also able to attend those sessions. The Greater New Jersey Annual Conference Laity Council focused on laity leadership and education; in November a workshop for leadership was provided to the laity. The power point presentation was translated into Spanish and Korean. A document entitled *Guideline for Local Church Laity Leadership* was developed and distributed to the laity at Annual Conference last year. Laity leadership workshops were held this year with goal of preparing laity leaders to engage in vital congregations. The laity plays an incredible role in the life of every church. God calls all to serve and to help laity prepare for this role to serve effectively.

Laity is encouraged to lead by advocacy, role modeling, celebrating, partnerships, and spiritual growth and through educational opportunities. I am praying that this fall, a small group of laity leaders will be able to attend the Adam Hamilton Institute Leadership training and that we will be able to share this information with our laity.

Laity works with your pastor! It is so important for our church to grow, and that can only happen through partnership with our clergy. We know from our history that the Methodist Church has survived and became strong because of this partnership between the clergy and laity. This partnership has blessed the church. We are to work together, that is what Jesus left us to do. But, the Bible doesn't give us clear and definitive instruction on how to "do church"! We know that we are the church, the body of Christ, but just how do we do it? What do we do as leaders in our church? What's our role? When God gives us an assignment to more than one person, their respective roles are designed to complement one another rather than compete against the other. The role of pastors and laity is complementary. The primary task of both the clergy and the laity is to bring the Gospel out into the secular world and make disciples for Christ. So as partners we are called as laborers to present, promote and proclaim the Good News of salvation in Jesus to all those we meet. Partners gain energy from each other and often are willing to take on greater challenges then either would have taken on by themselves. The synergy resulting from a thriving partnership in a church makes more room for the spirit of God to enter the partnership. Each partner becomes committed to finding and fulfilling the dreams and vision that come from God's spirit. Partnerships take time; it is deliberate and is an act undertaken by both of the partners. You will need constant prayer and planning to support each other.

Last year in the fall, the Bishop appointed a new task force on Poverty to look at poverty in our annual conference and to make recommendations to the Primary Task team. I was appointed as the chairperson along with Ms. Mona Augustin, Rev. Jill Hubbard –Smith, Rev. Sung Hoon Ahn, Mrs. Phyllis May and

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Ms. Kimberly A. Wilson. This task force completed its work and has made recommendations to the executive committee and the Primary Task Team for implementation.

I would like to thank Bishop Devadhar, Rev. Varlyna Wright, Rev. Sung Hoon Ahn, and Dr. Hae Jong Kim and his wife, Wha-Sei Kim, for making the Korean trip possible for the laity. In March of this year, our Annual Conference took a ten-day Journey of Understanding to South Korea. Twenty-six representatives of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference enjoyed the radical hospitality of the Bupyeong Methodist Church. The Bupyeong Methodist Church, located in South Korea, has a unique mission. Each year this congregation, under the leadership of senior pastor, Rev. Eun-Pa Hong invites groups to visit South Korea to learn about its people and culture, to worship with the parishioners and to meet leaders from other churches and educational institutions. To execute this mission, the church has created a Mission Center that houses as many as thirty-five visitors in beautifully appointed, modern rooms. We received the most gracious and loving care from Rev. Hong, his staff of associate pastors and volunteers from his congregation. At every juncture of this journey, the primary focus was directed towards making sure that our group was comfortable, safe and happy. If you have not read the detailed report that was printed in the April issue of the UM Relay, I encourage you to get a copy and read the details of our trip. The order of life at the Mission Church is to begin each day with prayer and praise at the 5 a.m. service. Each morning our group found itself in the company of at least five hundred people who came to the sanctuary to hear a message, encouraging prayer and to sing traditional hymns. I actually missed this time after returning home. Today I would like to focus on the radical hospitality that we received starting at the Korean Community Church in Englewood. Rev. Sungnam Choi and his congregation provided space for us to meet and ensured that we got to and from the airport. Hospitality as presented to us in the Bible is not merely a practice, but a way of life, whether it is Abraham receiving the three angels or Peter, who was welcomed in the home of Simon during his time in Joppa. The Mission Center extended this type of hospitality from the time we arrived in Korea to the time we departed from the airport. Hospitality addresses the physical needs of food, shelter and protection, but it is also a radical affirmation of the high worth and common humanity of the person. It is an act of inviting other people into the Christian family as brothers and sisters in Christ, without barriers. The senior pastor as well as all of the associate pastors, their wives, and some of the leaders of the church spent a major part of their day with us! They gave themselves to us. I have been thinking of ways that we can begin to expand our ways of being radical in hospitality in our local church. The hospitality was so radical that during our trip I did not hear even one complaint. Can you imagine twenty-six people and no complaints? Hosts who are intentional in their acts of hospitality have a good understanding of the difference between Christian hospitality and cultural hospitality. Let our church be a reflection of God's people. The scripture views hospitality as an act of boldness and it is often very challenging. I believe the Mission Center has mastered the art of hospitality because of its radical commitment to the mission of its church. I pray that we re-discover Paul's simple command to practice hospitality! Let us all keep hospitality constantly in view -- you never know when you may be changing a person's status before God, from stranger to a personal relationship with God through the Holy Spirit, or even entertaining an angel!

Prior to the General Conference, I had the opportunity to attend the Conference Lay Leaders Association Annual Meeting in Tampa. The purpose of the Association is to initiate strategies and policies that will strengthen the presence and voice of the laity in the UMC. Their vision statement is: Empowered Laity, Partnering with Clergy, Offering Christ to the World.

Laity Sunday this year is October 21, 2012 and our theme is "Disciples Transforming the World through Service and Witness." I hope that every church will honor their laity in some way on this Sunday.

Our Certified Lay Minister Program is entering its third year and has about forty-five participants. The Lay Speaker graduation ceremony of another large group of lay servants will be held on June 10th. I

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personally want to say thank you. Please make sure that you thank these folks for their willingness to serve and lead in our church.

I do not have a dashboard or any kind of tool to show my productivity therefore I cannot measure that I have accomplished ninety-nine percent of what I should have done this year against any preconceived facts or chart. I am sure one day there will be some type of device to measure the conference lay leader's productivity but until that time, I lead by serving and I thank God for all of you who continue to pray for the work that I do!

As you have heard at General Conference words do make a difference. In fact, words are at the heart of all discussions. And sometimes just one word can make all the difference -- the difference between Lay Speaking and Lay Servant. A significant amount of time was devoted to adding one sentence to the preamble of the Social Principles, and the nexus of the debate centered on two words—"belief" and "practice." The point of the statement was that neither belief nor practice can separate us from the love of God. Some clearly felt that this language might be interpreted in a way that could support improper doctrine or behavior. Then someone else stepped forward and offered up a one-word substitution that a strong majority could support. The only word that we can totally depend upon that does not change is God's Word and God's love for each and every single one of us! I encourage you to read the word and depend on it.

I would like to end with the summons adopted by the World Methodist Council. This invitation summons the family of Methodists around the globe to prayer, that what happened in Jerusalem and Aldersgate through the moving power of the Holy Spirit will happen again in us. We are asked to reflect on what we already believe but do not find easy to express and to open ourselves to the Bible and insights of other Christians across the centuries, so that we may enter into a deeper and more meaningful experience of faith itself and receive a greater motivation to share the good news to others. Then, our vision, our hopes, and our dreams of a new awakening may be fulfilled to make disciples for Christ to transform the world!

Submitted by Rosa Williams, Conference Lay Leader

AFRICA UNIVERSITY

"When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you.
When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned;
the flames will not set you ablaze." – Isaiah 43:2

At its inception, many doubted that the dream could be realized. Yet, in February 2012, Africa University launched a year-long celebration of its 20th anniversary. It has quite a story to tell.

"We serve a faithful God," says Dr. Fanuel Tagwira, vice chancellor. "As we now celebrate 20 years of existence, we can say 'Ebenezer', for this far the Lord has taken us. He will surely take us further because we serve a God who finishes what he starts."

Recalling the challenges the University faced during Zimbabwe's economic crisis in 2008-2009, Tagwira noted that "God was on our side…other universities, primary and secondary schools, and hospitals closed,

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but Africa University students never lost a day of classes." For this, Tagwira offered his thanks to The United Methodist Church for its responsiveness and unwavering support.

In 2011, the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference was one of twenty-seven annual conferences that paid 100 percent of their apportioned share of funding to Africa University. The University is profoundly grateful to the leadership and local congregations of the Greater New Jersey Conference for their generous apportionment contributions to the Africa University Fund.

Enrollment at Africa University is at an all-time high. The current total population of 1634 students is 42% higher than it was for the 2010-11 academic year. There are 23 African countries represented in the student body. At Africa University, male and female students are almost evenly balanced—something that bodes well for increasing the participation of women in decision-making and leadership roles in Africa.

New programs are helping Africa University to grow and remain relevant to community needs across the continent. New academic offerings include undergraduate degree programs in Computer Science and Laboratory Science as well as graduate degree programs in Child and Family Studies, and Public Policy and Governance.

The University is preparing to launch online distance learning. Online training options will focus on areas such as practical theology, health, and business. The initial target countries for Africa University's online distance learning outreach are Angola, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Mozambique, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone.

In June 2011, 349 students from 19 African countries graduated. The graduating class was comprised of 69 graduate students receiving master's degrees, and 280 undergraduate students receiving bachelor's degrees. The Class of 2011 swelled the ranks of Africa University graduates to more than 4,000 since first opening its doors in March 1992.

In their home countries, graduates are addressing critical issues of hunger, poverty, disease, lack of knowledge, and conflict, all of which prevent millions of people in Africa from enjoying God's promise of abundance (*John 10:10; Jeremiah 29:11*).

At 20, Africa University is part of a crucial feeder system for nurturing a new generation of principled leaders in Africa as evidenced by the number of graduates who are evangelists, pastors, lecturers and administrators of schools, seminaries and universities.

"Many believe that Africa University, voted into being by the 1988 General Conference, is the most exciting ministry that The United Methodist Church has ever founded," says Tagwira. "It is a model of connection; shared responsibility; and best of all, it is a tangible witness to how United Methodists live out the Word of God in a chaotic and self-centered world."

This year, encourage your church to give 100 percent of its Africa University Fund apportionment. The Africa University Fund supports day-to-day operations. Your support helps young people acquire the tools and skills to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ, heal communities, enable dignified living, and foster hope. Thank you for believing in and supporting Africa University.

James H. Salley, Associate Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement, Africa University
March 1, 2012

For more on Africa University, visit: www.support-africauniversity.org or like us on Facebook

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ARCHIVES AND HISTORY, COMMISSION ON

Alphonse de Lamartine, 19th century French poet and politician, once wrote, "Providence conceals itself in the details of human affairs, but becomes unveiled in the generalities of history." Many contemporary historians, church historians included, would not agree with Lamartine's concept of history. But those of us who document church history on both regional and local levels would beg to differ. That is not to say we blindly accept all matters related to church history through rosy theological glasses. Rather, we try to objectively document the ongoing creation which God graciously allows us to be part of, namely, from its start in the mists of Genesis until we, who currently carry the torch of history, pass through the shadows of death only to have the torch be taken up by future generations of United Methodist historians yet discovered.

The Commission on Archives and History documents our endless line of Methodist splendor by collecting the records of local churches whether they are closed or only cleaning out inactive files no longer needed for the daily operation of the church. Our mission, however, does not stop here. We also have personal papers of ecclesiastical luminaries of days gone by as well as histories of active churches that see the value of documenting their ministries for present and future congregational members so they may inform and inspire directions in ministry. Records of the annual conference make up the rest of our holdings in order to present an account to the public and historians alike of decisions made by those who are placed in offices of responsibility.

The present commission built upon past programs in order to bring them up to speed to meet the demands of a hyper informational church which rapidly changes through mediums unheard of as little as twenty years ago. One of our most visible programs is the annual call for local church histories. This past year's award went to Frankford Plains UMC. At a recent meeting the commission made three changes to the program: First, though we are perfectly content to receive histories in paper format, the commission feels it is necessary to encourage future histories to be submitted in various electronic formats as described in our published electronic guidelines on the annual conference web site under the heading of Ministries. Second, we are offering another award to the best ethnic church history. Third, though not necessarily last in our list, is the renaming the Local Church History Award to the Robert B. Steelman History Award in order to recognize the life achievement Reverend Steelman has shown in documenting Methodism throughout the greater New Jersey area, especially in its southern region.

Our commission has diversified itself over the past two years as far as racial, professional and age representations are concerned. This diversification will be primarily manifested in directing our ethnic history awards by training of our members to meet the unique needs necessary to create historical accounts within our ethnically diverse congregations that has its own cultural understanding in relation to the congregation's larger historical picture. By having two members from the General Commission on Archives and History, the general secretary and one of its archivists, Drew University's Methodist Librarian, Manager of the Cornelius Lowe House Museum, and three doctoral students, the commission is amply stocked with both scholars and professionals in the field of archives and history previously unknown to our group.

Often times we tend to think that history is pondered only by older adults whose acquired wisdom is the best lens through which to understand the present and past. The commission is currently developing an oral history program focusing on our youth.

The idea of connectionalism within the United Methodist church is as old as Wesley himself. It goes without saying that our commission takes this idea seriously. This report has already talked about one

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avenue of our connectionalism, namely the local church, but we have other connections as well. Our basic involvement with the Northeast Jurisdiction on Archives and History primarily comes in the form of representation at yearly meetings. For the present commission that involvement is not enough. We will be hosting the 2014 NEJCAH meeting at our repository located at the General Commission on Archives and History in Madison, New Jersey.

Speaking of our repository . . . Our holdings in the vaults of GCAH is curated by our capable archivist, Walt Jones. Walt's duties as archivist are legion. Not only does Walt catalog all the Greater New Jersey historical records that arrive on the loading dock, he answers innumerable information requests that range from genealogists to ministers and historians of our churches. His knowledge of the holdings is encyclopedic.

Our web pages are now up and running on the annual conference web site. We offer a number of resources to the local church historian in order to aid their work. Announcements of programs and future events can be found here with the necessary contact information so we can serve all those who are currently connected to Greater New Jersey United Methodism or who want to reconnect with their church roots.

We are proactive when it comes to upcoming General Conference legislation which will affect how we will do our work and finance its mission. In the coming year our focus will be on the 175th anniversary of the first session of the New Jersey Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church which will culminate in a presentation to the 2012 annual conference by Dr. Robert Williams and a historically specific worship service for our May 2012 Aldersgate celebration.

John Wesley sums up our current objectives as a commission as seen in a voluminous 1748 letter to the Reverend Doctor Conyers Middleton,

"It has been objected . . . you say, that you destroy the faith and credit all history. But this objection, you affirm, when seriously considered, will appear to have no sense at all in it.

That we will try. And one passage, home to the point, is as good as a thousand, Now, Sir, be pleased to look back. In your Preface, page 9, I read the words: 'The credibility of facts lies open the trial of our reasons and senses. But the credibility of witnesses depends on a variety of principles wholly concealed from us. And though, in many cases, it may reasonably be presumed, yet in none can it certainly be known.'

If this be your assert, (I repeat it again,) then farewell the credit of all history. Sir, this is not the cant of zealots: You must not escape so: It is plain, sober reason . . . Now let any man of common understanding judge, whether this objection has any sense in it, or no."

Respectively submitted,
Mark Shenise
Vice Chair and Secretary

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BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Dear Colleagues in Ministry,

Greetings from Boston University School of Theology, one of your United Methodist partners in mission! Thank you for your prayerful support through the past year.

A Year to Remember!

- New Faculty: BU School of Theology welcomed six great faculty: *David Jacobsen*, Preaching*; Rady Roldan-Figueroa*, History of Christianity; *Phillis Sheppard*, Pastoral Psychology and Theology; *Pamela Lightsey*, Asso. Dean for Community Life & Lifelong Learning; *Cristian De la Rosa*, Dir. Contextual Education with Community Partners; and *Wanda Stahl*, Dir. Contextual Education with Congregational Partners.
- Church Connections: Bryan Stone and students continue to develop new church starts. Faculty and students are working with local churches and boards and agencies, and our graduates are giving strong leadership throughout the church.
- Global Connections: Students have come to STH from more than 19 countries on 6 continents. Travel seminars have studied this year in Jamaica, Israel and Palestine, and Turkey (Ephesus). One seminar roamed the Boston region, with students from BU and Russia, who visited and worked together in diverse ministries.
- Intentional Living Communities: We have two dynamic intentional living communities – Theology House and Green House – and are working toward a third!
- Contextual Engagement: We continue to build great partnerships with churches and service agencies, both local and global. We welcome others!
- Community Building: Community life is buzzing with dynamic weekly worship, daily Morning Prayer, and afternoon Bible Study. Students have delighted in work days, Saturday reading retreats, a weekend "Beside Still Waters" retreat, and two spring break journeys: Seminary Singers Tour in Florida and a "Vocation Vacation."
- Sustainability: The School stepped up its green offices, composting, and carbon reduction. We were even a BU Challenge winner!
- Reclaiming our Tradition: We dedicated the *Truman D. Collins Chair of Global Christianity and Mission* and honored the Collins Professor Dana Robert. We also honored Distinguished Alums: *Sally Dyck* ('76, '78), UM Bishop, Minnesota; *Philip Wogaman* ('57, '60), ethicist and leader in church and academy; *Janet Yarlott Horton* ('76), pioneer as army chaplain; *Barry Lynn* ('73), public theologian on church and state; and *Jeremy Smith* ('06), young tech-savvy alum and UM pastor in Oklahoma.

- People's History: We had a fabulous lecture and interview with James Lawson, UMC pastor, Civil Rights leader, and prophet!

Still to Come!

- Alumni/ae Connections: Find interesting articles on STHConnect (http://www.bu.edu/sthconnect/). Watch also for regional alumni/ae gatherings (send ideas to Jaclyn Jones, jkjones@bu.edu or 617-353-8972).

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- Matriculation and Alum Weekend: On 19 September 2012, we will welcome an outstanding class of new students, install the new Walter G. Muelder Professor of Social Ethics, and honor the School of Theology Class of 1962.

- Lifelong Learning: **Webinars are unfolding! Stay tuned!**

With gratitude and prayer,
Mary Elizabeth Moore
Dean, Boston University School of Theology

CANDLER SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Candler School of Theology prepares *real* people to make a *real* difference in the *real* world. Our commitment to authentic discipleship and relevant ministry enables us to develop uniquely well-rounded leaders who are challenged academically, encouraged spiritually, and immersed in Christian service from the first day they arrive on campus.

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 seven graduate professional schools of Emory University, Candler provides a rich context for learning and formation supported by the extensive resources of a top-tier research university. As a school located in the major metropolitan area of Atlanta, Candler offers students a learning environment that reflects the highly diverse communities of our 21st century world. There is no better place for ministry preparation that addresses our major denominational priorities: developing leaders, starting and growing churches, ministry with the poor, and improving global health.

Candler's student body continues to reflect the diversity and breadth of the Christian faithful. Our enrollment stands at 479, with 372 seeking the Master of Divinity, 64 the Master of Theological Studies, 19 the Master of Theology, 17 the Doctor of Theology and 7 enrolled as Special, Non-Degree students. The total student population is 22% U.S. ethnic minority, 8% international, and 50% women. Forty-four denominations are represented, with 52% of MDiv students being United Methodist. The median age of our entering class of MDiv students is 26, with 50% of total enrollment under thirty.

An extraordinary gift of $15 million from the O. Wayne Rollins Foundation will make possible the construction of the second phase of the school's new building. In recognition of this gift, the first building—a 65,000-square-foot facility completed in 2008—will be named in memory of the late Rita Anne Rollins, the first grandchild of the foundation's namesake. The new building will house the Pitts Theology Library, additional classrooms and offices, group study areas, and the Wesley Teaching Chapel.

Candler and The General Theological Seminary (GTS) in New York have formed an innovative partnership that includes the sharing of library resources, collaborative educational programs, and the exchange of both students and faculty members. The partnership began this fall with the transfer of 90,000 volumes from GTS to Candler's Pitts Theology Library, and will continue to expand this year via student/faculty exchanges and continuing education programs.

Candler has introduced two new ways to make theological education more accessible. First, we launched a Tuesday-Thursday format for core courses for our incoming students in order to lessen the burden of

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commuting. Second, we began offering certain courses in an online or hybrid format. Two courses were piloted in January term and spring semester. We remain deeply committed to the highest quality education for our clergy and will offer only those hybrid and online courses that meet a gold standard of excellence in teaching and learning outcomes. Faculty members undergo rigorous training in order to translate their courses to an online format.

Candler continues to emphasize preparing our students for leadership in an increasingly global context. We now offer 17 academic exchanges with theology schools across five continents and 15 countries, including many related to The United Methodist Church. In addition to our ongoing summer internship program with the Methodist Church in the Bahamas, this year's travel seminars included the Middle East Travel Seminar in May-June and World Methodist Evangelism Institute evangelism seminars to Colombia, Indonesia, and Israel.

A hallmark of the Candler MDiv experience, the two-year Contextual Education program shapes our students' pastoral identities by interweaving service at ministry sites with academic analysis in the classroom and spiritual reflection in pastor-led small groups. In any given week, Candler deploys more than 250 ConEd students throughout the region to minister to people in congregations, hospitals, and social service agencies. This year we have continued Candler Advantage, a program designed to pay rising third-year MDiv students for summer internships in congregations so they can further hone their pastoral skills beyond the first two years of ConEd.

Candler's Lifelong Learning events strengthen the church by providing opportunities for clergy and lay leaders to learn more about the practice of ministry. Our Fall Conference, "The Art of Preaching in the 21st Century," brought to campus some of the most respected names in preaching, including Otis Moss Jr. and James Howell. The Spring Conference, "The Singing Church," gathered experts to lead an exploration of the best practices and emerging trends of congregational song.

In addition to our Lifelong Learning events, Candler oversees the educational process of more than 900 people each year through the Course of Study regional school and our five extension schools in the Southeast.

Despite today's challenging economic climate, Candler remains steadfastly committed to making theological education financially feasible. Although our operating budget essentially remained flat this year, we dedicated $4.5 million to financial aid. Seventy-seven percent of eligible students received Candler-based financial aid, with the average award covering more than two-thirds of tuition.

Our widely respected faculty continues to distinguish itself, both in academia and in churches and denominational bodies at local, national, and international levels. This year, faculty members garnered prestigious grants and fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Louisville Institute, among others. Dr. Carol Newsom recently completed a term as president of the Society of Biblical Literature. In Fall 2011 we welcomed two new faculty members: Jennifer Ayres in religious education and Anthony Briggman in the history of early Christianity. In Fall 2012 we welcome Neil Alexander, current bishop of the Episcopal Archdiocese of Atlanta, as director of our Anglican Studies Program and Ted Smith as assistant professor of homiletics and ethics. Our UM faculty presence remains strong, with 36 percent of our full-time faculty being United Methodist.

Candler draws considerable strength and inspiration from its relationship with The United Methodist Church. Our ability to fulfill our mission of *educating faithful and creative leaders for the church's ministries in the world* depends upon your support, gifts, and prayers. Thank you for the countless ways

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you advance this vital ministry in the life of our denomination. We invite you to visit us in person in Atlanta or online at www.candler.emory.edu to see firsthand how Candler prepares *real* people to make a *real* difference in the *real* world.

Jan Love
Dean and Professor of Christianity and World Politics
Candler School of Theology

CHRISTIAN UNITY AND INTER-RELIGIOUS CONCERNS, COMMISSION ON

As we come to the close of a quadrennium together, I first give thanks to God for the variety of gifts offered by each of the members of Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns Committee. I next give thanks to each of the churches that, through apportionment dollars, make the Ecumenical and Interreligious work of our Conference possible. Finally, I give thanks to the many leaders, lay and clergy, who share our commitment for Christian Unity and Interreligious dialogue and partnership.

Since the last Annual Conference there are a number of celebrations to report:

We celebrate the Christian Unity/Church and Society Luncheon hosted at the 2011 Annual Conference around the theme of Abrahams Luncheons. For this meal time together we met representatives from the Interfaith Dialogue Center and shared a vision of persons of all faith traditions living as peaceful neighbors. This luncheon prompted a number of churches to engage in Interfaith dialogue in their local congregations!

We celebrate the recipients of the Bishop's Award for Christian Unity, which were given and received at the 2011 Annual Conference. While there were a number of congregations and individuals doing some exciting work in the area of Christian Unity, we were pleased to present the awards to Rev. Beverly Jones with the Freehold Clergy Association, Chef Jerome Turner of St. Luke's Community Church and Morristown United Methodist Church. It is our hope and prayer that these awards will not only inspire the recipients to continue their ecumenical work but also to inspire a new generation to remain faithfully committed to the work of fulfilling Jesus' prayer "that we may all be one".

We celebrate the Ecumenical work done each quinquennium at the World Methodist Conference. It was a joy that over 15 Greater New Jersey Annual Conference clergy and laity attended the Conference in Durban, South Africa under the theme "Jesus Christ - for the Healing of the Nations". Our delegates for this Conference were: Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar, Resident Bishop of GNJAC and Rev. Jessica Campbell, Chair of Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns. It was at this Conference that a variety of Wesleyans gathered together, not only to build stronger relationships with one another but also to bear witness to the world that the Church is yet alive!

We celebrate that at our fall meeting in September we dedicated ourselves once again to continue the workshops at the District Days of Learning, to create a brochure helping explain why the UMC is committed to Ecumenism and what we as a Conference committee can do to help resource local churches, and to try new venues to advertise and encourage applications for the Christian Unity Award.

We celebrate the number of ways that our committee members have been present in CUIC work. Whether it is attending an Interfaith Dialogue dinner, hosting a luncheon, working with NJ Council of Churches, or just partnering with area congregations, it all adds up to further our mission and ministry.

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We celebrate that we have now been on every District Day of Learning offering a workshop on how to have Interfaith Dialogue in our local congregations! As a result, we have heard a number of congregations who have grown through this work. We rejoice to hear that our Conference work is being taken back and making a difference in creating disciples of Jesus Christ! We hope that in 2013 we will be on the Districts with a NEW workshop around the theme of Christian Unity and ecumenical organizations!

We celebrate that in April not one, but two CUIC members attended the National Workshop on Christian Unity which includes a United Methodist Ecumenical and Interreligious Training (UMEIT)! This workshop was held in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Each participant attended different workshops and Rev. Jessica Campbell is now working on the national planning team for UMEIT.

Finally we celebrate our local, National and International work through organizations like the NJ Council of Churches which has been a partner in making legislative changes, the National Council of Churches and the World Methodist Council. From our very beginning as a denomination we have understood that alone, we can only do so much. When we join with others we can really make a difference in the lives of the people we are called to serve. As a committee we give thanks that these organizations act as a link to partner not only United Methodist Churches but a number of mainline denominations so that the world can be transformed in the name of Jesus Christ.

On a personal note, I would like to share that four years ago I had never served on a Conference committee at all. When I was asked to chair a committee I very nervously agreed. In the course of the four years I have been able to meet so many people in our Conference, to step foot in Churches from almost every part of our Conference and I have been so deeply touched by the opportunity to see the variety of ways God is working throughout the connection. I am so grateful for the opportunities that have been given to me, for the fabulous team that often leads me more than I can lead them and the ways that grace and encouragement have been offered by many. If elected for a second quadrennium, it would be my pleasure to serve in this role again.

What a blessing it is to be in ministry for such a time as this.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the entire Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns Committee,

Rev. Jessica M. Campbell

CHURCH AND SOCIETY, BOARD OF

The purpose of the Board is to inform and educate individuals and local churches of social justice issues. We are aware there are many more issues than we can adequately address; so, we as a Board, work on two or three. We also encourage individuals and the churches to work on issues that are relevant or important in their communities or realm of interest.

We continue to invest a good deal of time and energy on immigration. In the past year, with the assistance of FIRST FRIENDS, we worked on issues related to detainees. Since New Jersey has facilities that hold detainees in our state, our involvement is very important. We also encouraged churches to have a Dream Sabbath Sunday along with Human Relations Day.

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Our educational endeavors have helped churches learn where the UMC stands on social justice issues. We have held workshops on the Social Principles at the District Days of Learning. A quadrennial goal was to have workshops in all the Districts; so far we have provided training in six (6) Districts,

A major Board task is to award grants out of the Peace with Justice Grant funds. This past year, we gave out three grants for youth in leadership development and peaceful reconciliation ministries.

Luncheons at Annual Conference are the best time to share the issue that we are working on for that year with local churches. Last year, we wanted to support another committee, so we co-sponsored, with GCCUIC, an Abraham Luncheon. An Abraham Luncheon is an opportunity to discuss an important contemporary issue from the perspective of Muslim, Jewish and Christian traditions. In addition to the discussion, the homemade Turkish food creates an atmosphere that invites relationships and sense of community to develop among people that would otherwise remain strangers.

The anniversary of 9/11 fell on a Sunday in 2011 and the Board wanted this day observed as a day of peace as well as a remembrance of pain and sorrow. We shared a resolution at Annual Conference and asked that no church meetings be held that day and that churches be present in their respective communities. If entities of the Conference were holding an event on that weekend, we encouraged them to include a component on peace building.

Workshops, events and programs that educate and equip individuals and churches for social justice advocacy is important, therefore, the Board helps defray attendance costs at such events. In this past year, we financed people to attend a poverty-related event and a restorative justice event. We also sent two clergy to the Young Clergy Seminar held annually in Washington, D.C.

Cynthia Kent, Chairperson

CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM

We give thanks and praise to God for the many blessings poured upon our Annual Conference. During the past year we saw two new church plant initiatives make significant progress in reaching new disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. "Sharptown North," a second campus of the Sharptown UMC (Rev. Jerry Ruff, planter) continues to grow after their successful launch of regular worship on March 27, 2011. They are currently outgrowing their current venue, which is the Municipal Township building in Woolwich Township, New Jersey. "Barnegat Anew" (Rev. Erik Hall, planter), which forged a partnership with the Waretown United Methodist Church has exceeded benchmark expectations in terms of active and consistent participation of new persons.

We celebrate that the Cornerstone UMC, Hasbrouck Heights, New Jersey, will charter as an official United Methodist Church at this year's annual conference. Cornerstone was launched out of the Korean Community Church in Englewood, New Jersey.

An initiative mentioned in the 2011 report, to reach Indian Asian people for Christ based out of the Park Ridge United Methodist Church in Bergen County, NJ. , has discontinued as a new church plant. We give thanks to the Rev. Sudhama Anadana who strove valiantly to reach this constituency.

Churches engaged in the Natural Church Development (NCD) process show an increase in quantitative and qualitative measurements. 85% of churches who complete a full cycle of the process and take a second survey have grown numerically.

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Other churches in the conference have used the GBGM resource, *Roadmap to Renewal* (RTR), to put together a "Ministry Action Plan" for their future. In the past year we have received news that the following churches have completed the RTR process: Old First UMC, West Long Branch, NJ; Emmanuel UMC, Oaklyn, NJ; Central UMC, Linwood, NJ; Asbury UMC, Atlantic City, NJ; Pemberton UMC, Pemberton, NJ.

As stewards of Harvest Mission Funds in the area of New Church Development, Revitalization and Urban Ministry, the Congregational Development Team authorized funding for the Sharptown North second campus; the Barnegat Anew New Church initiative; Turning Point UMC (urban); CUMI in Camden (Urban) for a Youth Ministry initiative.

The Congregational Development Team continues to give leadership to the Conference by encouraging use of "Mission Insite," which provides up-to-date demographic information available to every church. Any clergy or layperson from a local church in our conference is able to access the "Mission Insite" resource at no charge to the local church. One can register by following the instructions on our conference website: http://www.gnjumc.org/688/.

The Office of Congregational Development sends out a monthly electronic newsletter, "Church Health Newsletter" and contributes a column, "Vital Congregations" to each edition of THE RELAY.

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

COSROW (COMMISSION ON THE STATUS AND ROLE OF WOMEN)

As we come to the close of another quadrennial, COSROW continues to be involved with the empowerment of women and their roles of leadership in the Church.

COSROW has held forums on inclusion to give women an opportunity to voice their concerns as well as to hear the stories of women who have overcome challenges in leadership positions.

COSROW also held a major health fair that provided free screenings and medical advice from health care professionals.

We held a training workshop to familiarize participants with the areas that COSROW is mandated to cover in our role as an advocacy and monitoring agency. We have monitored the annual conference as a way of measuring its inclusion of women in various activities. The outcomes have been good.

We participated in District Days of Learning as well as local church activities highlighting women's achievement.

We have initiated a circle of Friends of COSROW to include participation of people who are interested in our mission of inclusion and empowerment and who can expand the resources of the Commission.

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Going forward, COSROW will continue to work with other conference committees and agencies to promote respect of all persons and inclusion of women as they pursue roles of leadership and development.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all of the members, past and present, who have helped to make a difference in the lives of people affected by COSROW's programs and activities. I would especially like to thank Mary Bland, Anne Hamilton, Suzanne Conklin and Bert Morris for their tireless dedication and commitment. They, as well as I, will be completing our terms on the Commission after eight (8) years.

Thank you all for the opportunity to be of service. To God be the Glory.

Rev. Theresa D. Hoover, Outgoing Chairperson

CUMAC (CENTER FOR UNITED METHODIST AID TO COMMUNITIES)

CUMAC sprang into 2012 amidst quite a bustle, with more clients coming for food in January than in any other January to date. Hunger and poverty levels remain high and we continue to perfect the balancing act required to feed record numbers with limited resources. We've come through a year fraught with challenges: Hurricane Irene displacing thousands of already insecure households, an unexpected October storm further compounding food insecurity, and serious roof damage impeding our work to name a few! As we transition from one busy year into another, we do so with gratitude for the support that makes our work possible and with a few tricks up our sleeves to ensure this coming year is one of strength and growth.

Preparing food for pantry clients

Throughout 2011, CUMAC's pantry provided the equivalent of 466,395 meals to just over 31,000 people. Participation in our depot reached an all time high, with 55 feeding programs utilizing our storage space, transportation assistance and shared resources. While 2011 saw slightly less people coming in need of food, January's record high tells us we won't see food insecurity abating in the near future. Fortunately, we've begun the new year with enough to provide for all who come and with plans to refurbish our cramped pantry to better house staff, volunteers, clients and food.

During August 2011, CUMAC completed badly needed building renovations. Newly created space allowed us to house and prepare just under 1,000 holiday gifts for area children this past December. Reorganization has allowed us to better house items for disaster victims and low-income shoppers, as well as improve the flow of food through our warehouse. As CUMAC's programs see substantial growth, it's imperative we use our limited space as efficiently as possible. Special thanks to all of the churches who helped us purchase supplies, paint walls and reorganize!

Construction ended just days before Hurricane Irene displaced thousands of households and sent CUMAC into full disaster relief mode. When area residents had to evacuate, our disaster program was at the forefront of aid efforts: dispensing clothing, food, water, linens and household items to victims and helping to coordinate city-wide efforts.

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When Hurricane Irene was closely followed by an unexpected October Nor'easter, CUMAC was ready to help people meet this second crisis, dispensing thousands of pounds of food and clothing donated by area churches. As we look toward the very real potential for spring flooding, we are blessed to know that, if need be, we can call on you again to see our city's most vulnerable through.

Homework help at TLC

Unfortunately, our own afterschool program, the Tutoring and Literacy Center, was rendered uninhabitable by hurricane damage. After a wonderful summer of field trips, tutoring sessions, and even a week at Aldersgate Camp, TLC students spent two *long* marking periods making the best of it in a cramped church lounge. Despite working with limited room and resources, we're proud to report that over half of our participants made the honor roll these past two marking periods!

2011 In Review

- ***Our pantry provided 446,395 meals to 31,093 clients***
- ***Our depot processed 2,324,057 pounds of food***
- ***TLC gave comprehensive academic help to 30 students***
- ***978 holiday gifts, 171 Easter baskets & 171 backpacks went to area children in need***
- ***Pathways to Work trained 66 for gainful employment***
- ***Community Closet offered disaster relief and affordable shopping to hundreds***
- ***20 staff and 2,297 volunteers made it all happen***

Thanks to the incredible effort put in by Bridgewater UMC, our students have finally moved back into their newly refinished home and love it. TLC began 2012 with plans to install an oven and provide hot meals to participants; we are actively recruiting volunteer cooks.
CUMAC began 2012 with celebration after learning the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation awarded our agency a prestigious two-year grant focused on strengthening our capacity for growth and ensuring long-term sustainability. To further fortify our work, we've filled two badly needed positions through the AmeriCorps program: one providing support to warehouse staff as they process 2 million pounds of food annually and the second taking charge of our job training program.

Volunteers packing bags *courtesy of Mitsu Yasukawa/The Bergen Record*

Whether manning phones after the hurricane, sorting through 42,000+ pounds of food at the Action Against Hunger Food Drive, sending groups to prepare bags for clients or fundraising for a new roof, our friends in the NJ Greater Annual Conference were instrumental to our success feeding people and changing lives. We are so grateful for the countless ways in which you have ensured our clients have all they need to live secure, *hunger-free* lives. CUMAC looks toward the traditionally hectic summer months with confidence, knowing that we've powered through many challenges and –with your support- continually come out stronger than before.

For our friends old and new, there are many ways you can help CUMAC minister to the poor and hungry. Summer collections and donations will be critical to ensuring children don't go hungry while not

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receiving in-school meals. Volunteers will be needed year-round to pack bags and prepare household items. Your work to organize speaking events and educate others about hunger will be imperative to keeping hunger awareness alive. You, more generally, will be instrumental to making sure that, in this age of plenty, none among us go hungry. We simply couldn't help so many without your creativity and generosity, truly we are blessed to count you among our fold. Thank you and keep up the great work in the fight against hunger!

Can't make it down? Here are 3 easy ways to help from home!

Earn money for CUMAC by searching the web!
www.goodsearch.com

Earn money for CUMAC by taking surveys!
www.op4g.com

Host a virtual food drive!
www.yougivegoods.com

Call us at 973-742-5518, e-mail us at info@cumacecho.org, visit us on the web at www.cumacecho.org or www.facebook.com/cumacfeedspeople. We'd love to tell you more about our feeding efforts!

Scan with your smartphone to access CUMAC on the web!

Submitter: Rev. Patricia Bruger Date: March 2, 2012

Ph: 973-742-5518 Fax: 973-742-5118
info@cumacecho.org

DISASTER RESPONSE, CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON

The Conference Disaster Response Committee (CDRC) exists to provide leadership within the our annual conference for disaster readiness, relief, and recovery to fulfill the mission of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference. We accomplish this through various trainings, resources, and 'people power' that can be offered to assist local churches in their own disaster response ministry. We are in partnership with the local, county, and state Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD), The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), and many other disaster response type organizations. The CDRC has had a busy year continuing to organize, prepare and learn to respond to an impending disaster that may impact our area. In the past year we have certainly been able to see how our work has met or fallen short and how we can continue to meet the needs of our conference, local churches and communities.

When hurricanes Irene and Lee impacted our area we were able to respond by helping to do over one hundred home assessments. We welcomed Emergency Response Teams from Ohio to help with relief in preventing further damage. They were joined by the first deployment of our own ERT. We were able to coordinate the movement of several hundred cleaning/flood buckets and place them in the hands of those most affected. Our committees also aided in disseminating information so people could navigate the FEMA system and get much needed assistance. We want to thank the United Methodist Church in Wayne, NJ and the Rev. Jeff Campbell for their assistance in coordinating and facilitating much of the relief effort. As we shift into the recovery phase, we are working to see how we and our UMVIM teams can coordinate with the other agencies to help the several thousands of homeowners that still need assistance.

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In the past year we have trained over one hundred twenty people to be ERT's with training events continuing throughout the conference. Our goal is to have at least two hundred individuals trained and available to respond wherever needed within our conference and beyond. This includes having the supplies and equipment needed to support the response.

Each district now has a District Disaster Coordinator who will be able to help prepare, evaluate and respond to a disaster in their district. Further, they have been trained to bring UMCOR's Connecting Neighbors training to our local churches. This program will guide each local church to develop their own plan for their church families. We hope to develop a certification program for churches that develop and implement their own disaster response plan.

The CDRC has a seat on NJVOAD which is the agency that helps coordinate the efforts of various volunteer organizations. They will be looking to our conference to be major players when the next disaster hits especially with our ERT capability. It is a partnership that we will nurture.

We want to thank the Bishop, the cabinet, John Cardillo, and Sung Ahn for their support and cooperation as we develop and institute a conference disaster plan. Also, we thank Cathy Earl of UMCOR for her many hours of training and advice. UMCOR has helped us create a vital organization that is equipped to meet the next disaster to our region.

We invite you to our webpage on the GNJAC website under "Ministries". There you will find the conference disaster plan which includes information for pastors and the local church. Future training opportunities are also listed. For more information or questions please email DisasterResponse@gnjumc.org.

Please remember it is not if the next disaster is coming but when. Working together we can all be ready.

DREW UNIVERSITY THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL

Drew Theological School, deeply rooted in its United Methodist heritage, is a place that empowers its students to conceive and implement dynamic ministries. Drew offers the MDiv, MA, MAM, STM, DMin, and PhD degrees, as well as certifications in Camp and Retreat Ministry, and Spiritual Formation. Academically rigorous and spiritually revealing, Drew develops religious leadership prepared for these ever-changing times. Drew offers one hundred percent tuition scholarships to all United Methodists who meet all admissions requirements and have a 3.5 undergraduate GPA or higher.

In the fall semester, I had the honor of welcoming a new class of students to Drew. This new class is composed of seventy-three Masters and thirteen PhD students. In addition, we also admitted fifty-eight DMin students who started the program in the various cohorts around the country. We also welcomed another nineteen students in the spring semester. We began the new academic year with a new Associate Dean for Academic Affairs in Dr. Morris Davis, Associate Professor of the History of Christianity and Wesleyan/Methodist Studies and welcomed two new faculty members and a post-doctoral fellow. Dr. Kate Ott joined us as Assistant Professor of Christian Social Ethics, Dr. Elías Ortega-Aponte as Assistant Professor in Afro-Latino/a Religions and Cultural Studies, and Dr. David Evans as a post-doctoral fellow position and Lecturer in the History of Christianity.

As we began a new academic year, I was reminded of Drew's impact and contribution in the global

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context. I had the privilege of visiting Drew alumni in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Malaysia, Singapore and South Korea. Our alumni spoke with great appreciation of the education they received at Drew and the professors who taught them. Drew's influence in Korea, in particular, is historic. Henry G. Appenzeller, a graduate of Drew in 1885, brought Methodism to Korea. Appenzeller's connection with Drew has brought hundreds of students from Korea to Drew. Today, we have alumni teaching in seminaries and universities and serving churches in Korea.

I have enjoyed teaching a course on the General Conference and will be taking the class to Tampa. We were honored to have leaders such as Jim Winkler, General Secretary of GBCS, Harriett Olson, Deputy General Secretary of the Women's Division, and Erin Hawkins, General Secretary of GCORR, come and speak to the class. Three members of the Drew community are serving as delegates to the General Conference: Mark Miller, Tanya Bennett and I.

We are living into a "majority minority" faculty, staff and student body at Drew that trains leaders for the church that will be soon serving in a "majority minority" world. Forty-five percent of our faculty is African/African Americans, Asian/Asian Americans, and Latino/a. We have almost an equal number of women and men on the faculty.

We are thrilled to have received a grant of $75,600 from the GCORR Action Fund for the purpose of widening the ethos of multi-ethnic theological education. The grant will assist us in a thorough curriculum review with the hopes of enhancing every aspect of the multi-lingual, multi-ethnic, and multi-cultural reality at Drew.

Creative, cutting-edge, inclusive, multi-cultural, social justice ministry is part of the legacy of Drew, and I am proud to be associated with it! Below are just a few other ministries that make me proud to be associated with Drew.

Bishops in Residence at Drew

I have enjoyed meeting Bishops and many Boards of Ordained Ministry to convey our desire at Drew to be a resource to the entire denomination. I am particularly pleased that Drew is hosting a January Term class taught by UM Bishops. This past January, Bishop Alfred Johnson taught a class in urban ministry. He recently shared with me some reflections about his experience teaching here at Drew: "I am deeply impressed with the quality, depth and reflective experience of the students in my class. Both their reflection, inquiry and contribution to the field of urban ministry greatly deepened my own theological reflection and praxis."

In January 2013, Bishop Peggy Johnson of the Eastern PA and Peninsula Delaware Conferences will teach a class on Ministry with People with Disabilities. In January of 2014, Bishop Jane Middleton of the Central PA Conference will teach a class on Ministry and Health.

United Methodist Liaison at Drew

The Rev. Jeff Markay continues to work with our UM students by introducing them to the leaders and resources within our denomination. He helps them navigate the process toward commissioning and ordination as well as with issues of discernment. We have monthly UM Lunches to meet with bishops, and leaders of the general agencies, conferences and connection. We are grateful for every opportunity to build a UM ethos here at Drew so that the connectionalism is strong when our students graduate to become leaders in their settings of ministry. We are also grateful to have the Rev. Susan Worrell as the Deacon Liaison on campus who shares resources and wisdom with those hearing a call to the Ministry of the Deacon in the UMC.

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Center for Clergy and Congregational Health and Wholeness

In the fall of 2012 representatives from GBOPHB of the UMC came to Drew to meet with Dean Samuel and me. The purpose of the visit was to explore developing a partnership between the two institutions to address issues of clergy health. This cooperative partnership will lead to two things in 2012, namely, the launching of a longitudinal study on the health habits of seminary students while in seminary and for five years upon graduation and a conference, bringing together deans and presidents and staff members from the 13 UM seminaries, to be held in June on Clergy Health and Theological Education.

Taking seriously our shared lot in a global community, theological education is not just interested in "small talk"— we strive for hard talk, demanding friendships and challenges. We at Drew look forward to working with the good and faithful people of the UMC as we forge deeper friendships in the shared ministry of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Kah-Jin Jeffrey Kuan
Dean, Drew University Theological School

EPISCOPACY, COMMITTEE ON

The Episcopacy Committee has met regularly with Bishop Devadhar and sought to be a source of support and encouragement to him, as well as dealing with matters such as the Episcopal residence, the Episcopal staff and related matters. Of significance in the past year was the charge to the GNJEC from the Northeastern Jurisdictional Episcopacy Committee to complete a detailed evaluation of our Bishop's ministry. This is done every four years in anticipation of the Jurisdictional Conference.

The GNJAC Episcopacy Committee took this responsibility most seriously and conducted an evaluation over a several month period of time. Approximately one hundred twenty-five persons gave input…both written and verbal…into the evaluation, encompassing eighteen annual conference groups. The evaluation was submitted to the NEJEC on time.

It has been a joy and privilege for our committee to work closely with Bishop Devadhar in supporting and praying for his ministry among us.

Respectfully submitted,

Frank L. Fowler III
Chairperson

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION, CONFERENCE COUNCIL ON (CFA)

The economy of New Jersey was improving in 2011 with record personal incomes and retail sales reported by the media. However, that did not translate into improved giving with the result that our conference collections declined about two percent. Still, three hundred sixty-seven of our local churches paid one hundred percent of their shared ministry allocation. We are grateful to the churches of the conference for their stewardship under difficult circumstances.

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As in prior years, committees, boards and agencies were prudent in their spending and the income from conference investments continued their recovery with the result that we ended the year with a total surplus of $1.8M. Since the minimum surplus the conference is required to maintain is a little over $1M, the Council felt that the use of $428,745 from the conference surplus to pay our full general church apportionments was appropriate.

For the fifth year in a row, our conference paid one hundred percent of their general church apportionments. We were one of only eighteen conferences out of fifty-nine that paid one hundred percent. After this disbursement, our surplus remains at about $1.4M. We note that the 2011 Annual Conference voted, with our support, to use $300K from surplus for mission and conference development purposes.

We thank the Bishop, Cabinet and Program Staff for their leadership and we thank our local churches for their faithful stewardship and hard work, all of which make these results possible.

Other items of note from our activities this year:

1. Recognition of those churches that paid one hundred percent of their Shared Ministry asking was made via listing in the Relay. In 2012, we also recognized the 106 churches that have paid one hundred percent of their Shared Ministry asking for the entire decade since merger.

2. The new Shared Ministry asking formula eliminating membership as a factor by which to apportion the Shared Ministry budget was approved by the 2010 Annual Conference and implemented. The full implementation is progressing and churches thus far seem to be able to handle the change in their individual asking well.

3. In accord with conference legislation, and with the leadership of the Bishop and Cabinet, all but four of the churches receiving equitable or supplemental compensation paid one hundred percent of their Disciplinary Obligations. Sadly, those four churches were removed from eligibility for Supplemental or Equitable Compensation assistance for 2012.

4. Financial training has again been provided at the District Days of Learning. Emphasis was on the housing allowance as well as other matters of broad interest.

5. Conference investments performed about as well as the market in general for 2011. At this point, our investments have recovered all losses from the 2008-2009 market dive. Our portfolio is well diversified and we continue to provide four percent annual cash flow to all funds and investors. We will continue the four percent payout in 2012.

6. Online collection of the data for statistical reports continues to go well. Errors have been much reduced with the new system and local churches have been much better able to meet reporting timetables. We thank the local churches for being willing to work with the new system.

7. We have sent information to all local church treasurers about credits available from the Federal Government for health insurance expenditures. Churches who have reported their results indicate they are receiving cash credits of $3,000 to $6,000. The CFA felt that many churches did not apply for the credit to which they were entitled in 2010 so we authorized the Conference Treasurer and his staff to assist any local church by preparing the application for the credit when requested based upon the data provided by the local church. We believe this has resulted in additional credits being received by the local churches of our conference.

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8. CFA Members who have served two quadrenniums and will be leaving the CFA include Franck Aguilh, Ed Barber, Brian Greco, Joe Monahan, Dorothy Oliver, Jim Rixon, Ron Watts, and Millard Wilkinson. They have given liberally of their time and talents and their leadership will be missed.

The Conference Council on Finance and Administration wants to thank Bishop Devadhar, the Cabinet and the Program Staff 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 (GCFA)

The Financial Services Committee reviewed all General Church board and agency spending plans for 2012 and approved same. The primary elements of the review are to determine that the spending plans conform to the budget approved by the 2008 General Conference, are within the forecasted receipts and that unreasonable reserves are not being accumulated.

The Audit Committee received, and extensively discussed with the external auditor, the report of the audits of all general church boards and agencies. In general, most boards and agency audits did not disclose any unusual problems or major weaknesses in internal control.

The Committee on Legal Responsibilities has the Disciplinary responsibility to protect the UMC and its mark, the Cross and Flame. In this connection, it has a fund to be used in related proceedings of annual conferences or local churches. This support is to be limited to matters of denominational significance. A definition of denominational significance was recommended by a separate task force, recommended by the Committee and adopted by the GCFA.

During the year we reviewed several requests and did provide some funding for issues involving the defense of the trust clause and also of the rights of local churches to conduct religious services in non-traditional settings. We also denied several requests for funding.

The Committee on Legal Responsibilities participated in a number of legal briefs supporting the trust clause or its equivalent in other denominations. Many denominations are having issues with breakaway congregations that want to take their building and endowments with them as they leave the mother denomination. They mount all sorts of legal theories in support of their perceived ‘right’ to do so. They claim their deeds don’t give the mother denomination control, they change their documents and deeds to delete all references to the mother church, etc. None of these steps have been successful. All decisions thus far have supported the mother denomination. Basically, the courts have held that if has looked like a duck and quacked like a duck, it was and still is a duck and must conform to the rules of ducks.

This committee also reviewed the entire structure of GCFA and recommended a reorganization that would reduce the number of subcommittees from eighteen to six and the number of GCFA members from forty to twenty-one. The Board of GCFA approved this proposal and enabling legislation has been sent to the General Conference for its consideration.

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I continue to be a member of a small task force to assess GCFA's reserve requirements and to recommend uses for those reserves. There is an obvious tension between the desire to hold adequate reserves to meet emergencies and the need for money to do God's work.

In 2012, GCFA prepared the proposed budget for the 2012 General Conference to consider. General church revenues are forecasted to decline six to seven percent using an econometric model which has been very accurate in the past. Therefore, the proposed budget will be $603.1M for the next quadrennium. All the general boards and agencies carefully reviewed their individual spending plans in order to be able to live within the proposed total budget. Many of the general agencies reduced staff during 2011 and 2012 in order to do this.

John Bishop, Member
General Council on Finance and Administration

FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC TASK FORCE

In November 2011, Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar convened a Special Five-year Strategic Taskforce. The Taskforce, composed of both clergy and lay members, commenced meeting in January of 2012 and has met on a monthly basis since that time. These meetings included two with Bishop Devadhar. The members of the Taskforce are Reverend Sung H. Ahn, Reverend Ellen Bechtold, Ms. Tammy Bormann, Reverend Shawn Callender Hogan, Reverend Bobbie Rambach (Co-chair), Reverend James Ryoo, Reverend Manuel Sardiñas, and Dr. Vanessa M. Wilson (Co-chair).

After discussion, prayer and reflection, the Taskforce constructed the following statement of purpose:

> *"We are a team of clergy and laity appointed by the Bishop. Our mission is to hear and discern the hopes, dreams, ideas, values and concerns of the people in our church communities. Our prayer-filled task is to engage the Holy Spirit who will guide us to discern both aspirational and inspirational ministry priorities—pillars of ministry—for the future of the local congregations within the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference. As a team, we are committed to creating a useful print resource that will assist local congregations in finding creative ways to pursue these pillars of ministry."*

The initial activity in this process, A Listening Tour, is designed to engage members of the local church and gather data. The data will be recorded and aggregated to be used as a foundation for the remainder of the process. The proposed theme of the Listening Tour is "*What do you see in your world that needs attention? What might God do through the church to respond?"*

The Taskforce is currently developing the action items necessary for the remainder of the process. The data gathered from the Listening Tour along with data from Vital Congregations and other resources will provide valuable information to be used to design a detailed action plan for the remainder of the Strategic Planning Process.

Write a vision, and make it plain upon a tablet so that a runner can read it .[f] There is still a vision for the appointed time; it testifies to the end; it does not deceive .[g] If it delays, wait for it; for it is surely coming; it will not be late. Habakkuk 2:2-3

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HIGHER EDUCATION AND MINISTRY, BOARD OF

How wonderful it is to report that many lay and clergy of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference have had a profound impact upon the lives of one another, especially our youth and young adults. This awesome experience has operated on spiritual, social and financial levels. As we mature in our walk and in our relationship with God, we are able to see areas of our personal-being blossom in such a manner that the fruits of our maturity spill over onto the lives of others.

For the last several years, The Board of Higher Education and Ministry has heard the aforementioned from our recipients receiving financial assistance. At the 2011 Annual Scholarship Dinner, held at the Francis Asbury Manor in Ocean Grove, those receiving scholarships were asked to share with the Board, their family and friends what affect the United Methodist Church has had on their lives. All who sat in the audience listened intently as one recipient after another spoke about the work he/she was doing in their local church and/or at the district level. They also shared about their personal spiritual growth and how a deeper relationship with Christ had developed. What wonderful testimonies!

Now, because of the generosity of our local churches on United Methodist Student Day Sunday, and you who have established scholarships and memorials, the Board has been able to continue giving the Merit Scholarship Award and other financial assistance. We continue urging you to consider setting up a scholarship, grant, endowment, or memorial in honor of a loved one so that our conference might be able to financially support future deserving students who are driven toward the goal of higher education.

Many of the responsibilities of the Conference and General Boards run parallel and extend beyond the scope of scholarships for college/university bound individuals. For example, both entities support persons who serve as campus ministers or chaplains on the grounds of institutes of higher learning. These persons connect back to the Conference Board via written or face-to-face reports. This keeps the Board up-to-date on the impact the United Methodist presence has upon students and campus life. The General and Conference Boards continue to encourage churches near campuses to make their existence felt so that students away from home are able to maintain a relationship with the UMC.

The Board of Higher Education and Ministry continues the support for institutes of higher learning in the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference. They are the Wesley Foundation at Princeton, Rockland Community College, Drew University and Rutgers University.

I am truly grateful to all the Board members for their support over the past eight years. Additionally, I extend my thanks to members of the Cabinet and Bishop Devadhar for their support of the Annual Recipient's Scholarship Dinner by their presence and participation. A special thanks goes to Rev. Erica Munoz for her counsel to the Board.

Carolyn Pendleton,
Chairperson

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TEAM

This quadrennium has been a challenging one for the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church in general, and the Conference Leadership Development Team, in particular. Needless to say, we have had changes in various levels of leadership which are too many to mention.

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In the midst, we remain faithfully committed to the tasks the Lord gives us, knowing that with the year 2012 and beyond comes new opportunities for the people of God to practice servant leadership and long standing fruit-bearing services of our fellow disciples.

Without hesitation, I believe that God is working to bring things into reality that were once just a dream or vision. Although we are still struggling to make perfect the Organizational Structure of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, we shall continue to carry on the mandated responsibilities on all levels of leadership development, in order to support, train and nurture effective lay and clergy leaders to strengthen local congregations for ministries in the world.

The office of the Director of Connectional Ministries under the leadership of the Rev. Sung H. Ahn, and the Media Specialist, Heather Fullerton, respectively, is well in place. Thanks be to God!

As spiritual leaders representing the various committees, boards, teams and agencies of our Conference, we have a moral obligation to stand and bond together to fulfill the responsibilities bestowed upon us, for the glory of God.

And, having said that:

- Let us continue to (a)provide training resources, (b) research, support and possibly fund to some extent, training activities in and for local congregations, districts and conference;
- Let us continue to work with the Conference Board of Discipleship and Board of Higher Education and Ministry;
- Let us continue to partner with the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, Lay Speaking Ministries, Laity Council, Ministries with Young People, Congregational Development, Stewardship Education and Development, and the Ministries Team;
- Let us continue to support 'Sexual Ethics Training' and 'Compassionate Advocates Training' for the annual conference;
- In consultation with the Bishop, the Cabinet, and the Board of Ordained Ministry (BOOM), let us continue to support or resource in training pastors and congregations in cross cultural/cross racial environment;
- As necessary, hire consultants to work with congregations and pastors;
- Last but not least, let us continue to support laity and pastors for additional training/resources with available funds to help them attend the congregational development, local pastors, coach, leadership and disciple making trainings.

There are other new leadership training projects available. There are other old projects not yet completed. The point is that, in the midst of our collective work, God is doing through the various levels of "servant leaderships" what needs to be done in our conference. This calls for all of us to imagine new ministries; new people doing them, new resources coming that enable us to realize His goals.

I am taking this opportunity to invite all conference-wide leaders to gather for a "Conference Day of Learning" slated for June 9, 2012 at Calvary Korean United Methodist Church in East Brunswick, New Jersey. Our celebration of God's call to serve includes worship with an "installation" of all newly elected annual conference committee members.

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There will be panel discussion with representatives from various General Boards and Agencies, and group workshops. Come and join our celebration to be effectively equipped and prepared to serve the people of God.

In closing, I am truly mindful of the privilege given me to serve as Chair of the Conference Leadership Development Team this quadrennium. I am also very grateful to all the team members for their faithfulness and willingness to work in God's vineyard. As Jesus said, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few." (Mt 9:37)

Additionally, my sincere thanks to the members of the Cabinet and Bishop Devadhar for their support in all levels of leadership development in the Annual Conference. Special thanks to Rev. Sung H. Ahn, Director of Connectional Ministry and Rev. Richard Nichols, District Superintendent for their wise counsel to the Team. Thanks be to God!

Grace and Blessings,
Emmanuel S. De La Paz, Chair
Conference Leadership Development Team - 2008-2012

ORDAINED MINISTRY, BOARD OF

Throughout the year, the clergy and lay members of the Board of Ordained Ministry work prayerfully and diligently to provide care for candidates for ministry. Through an active Residence-In-Ministry program, the support of clergy mentors, continuing education assistance, and review of persons seeking commissioning or full membership, the candidacy journey is certainly the Board‘s most easily-identifiable task.

In addition to this responsibility, the Board seeks to assist clergypersons undergoing changes in conference relationship, guides persons in times of transition, and endeavors to strengthen the effectiveness of all clergy in every season of ministry.

We note, with joy, that our shared ministry takes place in a conference which is exceptionally intercultural in its makeup. In an effort to deepen and enrich our level of competency as a Board, and to equip those coming into ministry with such tools, last November we engaged in a formal training event on matters of interculturalism. The training was led by leaders from “I-Relate” who were highly recommended and referred to us by the United Methodist General Commission on Religion and Race (GCORR).

In preparation for this event, all Board members were asked to engage in an online assessment instrument called the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI). A group profile was developed for the training event. Additionally, all Board members received information about how to follow up and learn from their individual profile results. The training event assisted us in exploring culture and generalizations, growing in self-awareness, learning about effective intercultural interaction, and seeking to move beyond sensitivity to competency.

Furthermore, a number of our Board members also participated in other training opportunities related to intercultural dynamics, among them “Facing the Future“ (GCORR), “Diversity Training Conference”, and GCORR’s consultation among theological schools and Board leadership. It is our conviction that intercultural awareness and competency are vital keys to living out vibrant ministry in today’s world, and

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we affirm that growth in this area is a lifelong task.

On an administrative front, this spring we approved a program called "Pathways to Ministry", a secure, web-based instrument aimed at facilitating our work as an Annual Conference and Board. Brick River Technologies, the company that designed the new GNJ website, has developed this product for Boards of Ordained Ministry in an effort to more faithfully and efficiently manage the records involved in the candidacy process.

The multifaceted nature of our denomination's candidacy process lends itself to cumbersome and sometimes confusing record-keeping. Pathways to Ministry will allow us to use a higher level method for tracking and maintaining records and unifying processes.

This application, which is based on the Book of Discipline and can be customized to our conference's needs, is currently being used by nineteen other annual conferences. We look forward to using it at the Board level, and then eventually expanding its use to the districts. It is our expectation that our candidates will be better cared for along the way, and the process itself will be clearer for persons to navigate.

At the time of this writing, General Conference is on the horizon, and the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry has several significant legislative items for consideration. The Study of Ministry Report (which can be found on the GBHEM website) will ask the General Conference to consider such things as security of appointment, and the elimination of commissioning. Depending upon the will of the General Conference, there may be substantive changes in the nature of the Board's work as it relates to persons in candidacy and under appointment.

As this quadrennium comes to an end, I would offer a word of deep thanks to all the persons who serve on the Board, for their countless hours attending to matters of call and community, their willingness to wrestle with complex issues, their commitment to care for the persons responding to God's call, and above all their openness to the movement of the Spirit.

I offer my thanks to William Cook, Vice Chair; Douglas Baitinger, Secretary; and Gina Hendrickson, Treasurer; as well as the registrars and committee leaders, all of whom have offered their rich insights and endless energy to this shared ministry. We also thank Veronika Varga for her indispensable administrative wisdom and care; her grace and diligence have been integral to our work. It has been a privilege and joy to serve among such faithful servant leaders.

Faithfully,

Shawn Callender Hogan, Chairperson,
Board of Ordained Ministry Greater New Jersey Annual Conference

ORDER OF ELDERS' REPORT ON THE SURVEY

Conducted on February 21, 2012

Presented to the Clergy Session, Annual Conference 2012

The Order of Elders annual gathering was held on February 21, 2012, following the Bishop's Pre-Lenten

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Gathering in East Brunswick, NJ. At this gathering, The Order of Elders presented and then conducted a survey on clergy Continuing Education (although the survey was sent via email to the members of the Order prior to the meeting). The completed surveys were returned—most of them at the conclusion of the meeting, some by email and others by "snail-mail"—and the results were tabulated. The following document provides a summary of the survey results.

The survey has two parts—quantitative and qualitative aspects—and should give you some idea as to the needs of the elders. There were 110 responses, representing 30% of the 361 active elders (Conference Journal and Yearbook 2011, p. 403; 297 Elders in Full Connection whose primary appointment is to a Local Church and 64 Elders whose appointments to Extension Ministries). The results of the survey follow.

In addition to those who participated by submitting surveys, The Order of Elders Team would like to express our sincere thanks to: Prof. Giselle Esquivel (lay member of the Annual Conference) and her graduate assistant, Ms. Rukmini Bhalla (Fordham University) for their contribution to the quantitative-qualitative analyses of results; Rev. Dr. Rich Knox and Rev. Vivian Rodefferher valuable assistance in the development of survey document and report.

Respectfully submitted by
Heasun Kim, Chair

INTRODUCTION

The Order of Elders Team developed a survey on Continuing Education (CE) as it relates to the Elders of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference in order to obtain information on the CE experiences of Elders and their suggestions on how our group can be supportive in enhancing this important endeavor. The items on the survey were intended to ascertain the extent of time engaged in CE activities; the nature and setting of learning experiences and financial support obtained; perceptions of value of CE in specific areas of ministry; and suggestions for improving its quality and effectiveness. There was also an opportunity for sharing brief stories of valuable CE experiences. The survey was distributed to the Elders of the GNJAC on February 8th, two weeks prior to the Pre-Lenten gathering, as an email attachment to be submitted by respondents online. Hard copies were available at the Pre-Lenten gathering for those who wished to fill out the survey on site. The Order of Elders Team received the completed survey forms through March 31, 2012.

The items were developed and organized for quantitative or qualitative analysis and report according to categories that follow:

I. Demographic data (i.e., gender, age, ethnicity, and number of years of service)

II. Time, schedule, setting, and method of learning

III. Financial support from Staff/Parish Relations, and Annual Conference

IV. Value of Resource Days

V. Continuing Education Programs

VI. Reported Helpful Events of Continuing Education

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VII. Barriers to effective Continuing Education programs

VIII. Expected support from The Order of Elders

IX. Summary of main themes

X. Appendix: Our Stories

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I. DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

The total number of respondents was 110. There were 72 males and 38 females. This reflects a lower percentage of female respondents relative to the population of Elders. The age groups most represented were in their 50s and 60s by both males and females. The race-ethnicity was predominantly Caucasian of European descent, followed in order by Asians (e.g., Indian, Koreans), African descent, Hispanics, mixed ethnicity, and Native Americans. This sample had low representation of culturally diverse groups in comparison to the actual composition of Elders. According to expectations based on the composition of the population of Elders there were few respondents with low years of service; a higher uniform number of respondents across the middle range years of service; and very few after 40 years of service.

TABLE 1

1a.

GENDER		AGE					ETHNICITY					YEARS OF SERVICE								
M-F		30s	40s	50s	60s	70s	C	AS	AA	H	NA	1+	5+	10+	15+	20+	25+	30+	35+	40+
M	72	3	18	24	26	1	59	9	2	1		5	12	5	10	7	10	9	11	3
F	38	3	7	11	17	0	28	4	5	1	(1)	2	9	5	7	3	4	4	4	0
	110	6	25	35	43	1	87	13	7	2		7	21	10	17	10	14	13	15	3

1b.

GENDER		AGE					ETHNICITY				
M-F		30s	40s	50s	60s	70s	C	AS	AA	H	NA
M	65.5%	2.7%	16.4%	21.8%	23.6%	0.9%	53.6%	8.2%	1.8%	0.9%	0.0%
F	34.5%	2.7%	6.3%	10.0%	15.4%	0.0%	25.5%	3.6%	4.5%	0.9%	0.9%
	100.0%	5.5%	22.7%	31.8%	39.1%	0.9%	79.1%	11.8%	6.4%	1.8%	0.9%

GENDER		YEARS OF SERVICE								
M-F		1+	5+	10+	15+	20+	25+	30+	35+	40+
M	65.5%	4.5%	10.9%	4.5%	9.1%	6.4%	9.1%	8.2%	10.0%	2.7%
F	34.5%	1.8%	8.2%	4.5%	6.4%	2.7%	3.6%	3.6%	3.6%	0.0%
	100.0%	6.3%	19.1%	9.1%	15.5%	9.1%	12.7%	11.8%	13.6%	2.7%

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II. TIME, SETTING, AND METHODS

The survey assessed the number of hours and days/weeks engaged in CE activities. Table 2 reflects that Elders on the average spend a significant amount of time in CE learning experiences. Among 50 respondents there was a mean of 42 hours and a range between 3 to 150 hours devoted to CE learning. These hours tended to be spread out across the year. Among 50 respondents the time was spent as clustered days and weeks. The analysis converted weeks into days for purpose of comparison and reflects a range between 3 to 30 days and an average of 10 days spent in CE learning experiences.

The setting for CE activities varied but mainly took place in other churches, theological seminaries, and events provided by the Conference and Districts, and less so at national levels. Community resources and retreat centers were used to a lesser extent. Table 2 provides estimated percentages of settings used.

Methods and modalities of learning also varied with an emphasis on a combination of book readings, lectures, seminars, Days of Learning or conferences. On-line resources were used on a very limited basis suggesting under-utilization of technological resources. Table 2 provides estimated percentages of methods used.

TABLE 2

TIME			**SETTING**				**METHOD**			
Hours	Days		Seminary	Church	Community		Seminars	On-Line	Books	Classes
N=50 Range 3-150 hrs Mean 42 hrs	N=50 Range 3-30 days Mean 10 days		70%	90%	20%		90%	5%	90%	90%

*Individual respondents may have participated in more than one setting and overlapped in use of methods

III. FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM STAFF/PARISH RELATIONS AND ANNUAL CONFERENCE

In general, there are two funding sources for clergy CE; local church and conference. All respondents (100%) described their respective Staff/Parish Relations Committee as very responsive in providing funds for CE purposes. The amount of funding ranged between $300 and $5,000 with an average of $1,800 per year. Wide differences were related to the financial status of individual churches.

There are $300 available from the GNJ Annual Conference for every clergy person specifically and solely for the purpose of CE activities. These funds were viewed as helpful yet insufficient for some respondents. Out of 110 respondents 70 (64%) were aware and 40 (36%) were unaware of these funds. Out of 70 respondents who were aware, 39 (56%) used the funds for CE purposes; 5 (7%) indicated that they used funds that they believed to be CE funds which are in fact scholarship funds for the Bishop's Convocation event. The Bishop's Convocation scholarship fund is not a part of the Board of Ordained Ministry's continuing education fund. And finally 26 (37%) did not use the funds for any purpose, including 4 who thought the funds were contingent upon a church's Fair Share "apportionment" status. Overall, out of 110 respondents 39 (35%) used the $300 for CE purposes correctly.

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The Book of Discipline states in Paragraph 351 that "Throughout their careers, clergy shall engage in continuing education for ministry, professional development, and spiritual formation and growth." Our Conference's Board of Ordained Ministry through its sub-committee on Continuing Education may grant up to $300 annually to clergy members of the conference who need assistance in meeting these goals and expectations regardless of a church's Fair Share contribution.

The newly designed Conference website has the application form and a page of guidelines will be posted before the appointment year begins. The source of these funds comes from the Ministerial Education Fund.

The left side of Table 3 indicates that 100% of those polled reported that their local church funded continuing education ranging from $300 - $5,000. The right side of Table 3 indicates that 64% of the respondents were aware and 36% were unaware that there was funding available through BoOM CE funds. The survey shows that only 35% used the CE funds.

TABLE 3

SOURCE	SUPPORT	FUNDING	
Staff – Parish	100%	Range: 300 - 5,000	Mean: 1,800

SOURCE	AWARE	FUNDING
Annual Conference	Out of 110, 64% aware 36% unaware	Out of 110,35% used $300 for CE purposes

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V. VALUE OF RESOURCE DAYS

The survey provided an opportunity for respondents to describe the value of Resource Days as part of CE experiences and make suggestions for improvement. Among respondents, 80% found these resource days to be of value, 15% as having some value, and 5% as having very limited value. Table 4 provides a list of ways to improve the value of Resource Days.

TABLE 4

Topic Issues

1. The value depends on the presenter and the topic
- Many of them have been so repetitive that it frustrates me: I spent time/money going for same thing. Often bombarded with several different programs or ways to run the church that you would set our church on a roller coaster ride trying them all.
- They should ask the clergy what topics they feel are needed
- Tired of church growth seminars/talks by those who built up churches & go around talking about them
2. More practical topics :
- Need ethnic church related topics
- More youth and young adult ministry topics
3. It is suggested that the District clergy be surveyed regarding topics of the District Resource Days
4. Multi-day events so that we can go more in-depth into the topic

Time/Schedule Issues

1. Allow us to attend less sessions – perhaps 2 or 3
- There are too many sessions
2. Better scheduling: The events should not be scheduled during the high demand seasons of the local church. It should be taken into account if a conference event is being held within a two week period of it
- More time should be spent with speaker/presenter and less time in worship
- Spread out the sessions during the year

Presenters and Clergy Participation Issues

- More participation (presentations) by our colleagues
- Use local talent rather than bringing in speakers who are unfamiliar with our needs

Other Issues

- Need more fellowship time
- Need Laity sessions

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V. CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAMS SHARED

The respondents were asked to share the best continuing education program that you have participated in over the past 3 or so. Table 5 is a summary of their responses.

TABLE 5

Offered by Greater New Jersey Annual Conference

Bishop's Convocation; Convocation on Ministry; leadership training events;
Marcia McFee Workshop on Worship; Radical Hospitality (District Resource Day);
Transition workshop for retiring pastors; Multi-Cultural Academy; Walk to Emmaus;
General Conference information meeting

Offered by UMC Agencies

Samuel Dewitt Proctor Conference
Worship & Song Hymnal Workshop
Congress on Evangelism
World Methodist Conference

Offered by Seminaries

Creative worship & art; Engle Preaching Institute;
Leveraging the Strength of the Small Church; Multicultural Institute;
Spiritual Formation Class; Summer Music Institute.

Offered by Institutions

21st Century Leadership Academy; Alban Institute; Catalyst Conference;
Church of Resurrection; Church Planter's School; Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE);
Communications, and Making Disciples; Contemplative Practice; D. Min. Programs; Diana Butler Bass; Expository Preaching workshop; Family Systems Theory; Festival of Homiletics (Good lectures on the craft of preaching);
First Responder Training (also applicable to the ministry); Hospitality (Larry Kominsky);
Hobert's training; Intercultural Communication; Leadership Summit (Willow Creek); MARCHA;
Moody Bible Institute; National Pastor's Conference (San Diego);
Network of Bible Storytellers; Ocean Grove summer; Pastor's Conference;
Re-think Church (Ginghamsburg); Spiritual Director; Suicide Intervention Skills; Worship (Marcia McFee); Writer's Conference

Trips

Holy Land Trips
Mission trip to Uganda

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VI. REPORTED HELPFUL EVENTS OF CONTINUING EDUCATION

The respondents were asked to describe the nature and value of their CE as it relates to various areas. A collection of events that respondents found helpful follows:

TABLE 6

Stewardship:
Drew University has good Stewardship classes; Rick Hendrickson Stewardship classes are generally good. Appreciate sharing best practices in Stewardship by colleagues; Self-taught (personal reading).

Preaching:
Cultural diversity in leading congregations;
Hamilton & Slaughter books or preaching; Lectionary clergy group; Self-taught (personal reading);
Seminary Classes (Drew, Princeton, Wesley);
Need more continuing education experiences in this area;
Need more preaching ideas from colleagues.

Technology:
Drew Summer Music Institute helpful in use of visual technology;
Need Facebook class and Power point class *(hands-on classes);*
Need more hands-on classes; Not very much is done in this area;
Self-taught in this area / personal reading.

Teaching:
Contextual Bible study; Webinars and Online courses; Personal reading
Would like a "How to be a Better Teacher" type experience.

Mission:
Meeting with missionaries; Ministry with the poor; Mission trips; Prison ministry; Received value in UWM School of Mission; UMVIM, ERT trainings.

Other: *(Suggested topics or those that were helpful in the past)*
Alban Institute; Conflict Management; Culture issues; Family Systems;
Family Therapy systems; Festival of Homiletics; Fund Raising; Holy Land Trip;
Leadership Institute (Church of the Resurrection; Leadership strategies;
Logos Bible Software; Pastoral care; Personal Spiritual Growth;
Preventing compassion Workers Fatigue; Radical Hospitality *(District Resource Day);* Walk to Emmaus; Worship and hymnology; Youth counseling

VII. BARRIERS

Of the respondents, 66% respondents expressed no major barriers to effective Continuing Education activities. However, 34% identified barriers that included time scheduling and financial costs. Many respondents asked for clear guidelines from the Conference as to what types of activities qualify for CE. Some would like to have resources and information from the Conference regarding CE on the Conference Website. Those who are in Extension Ministry expressed irrelevance of CE.

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VIII. EXPECTED SUPPORT FROM THE ORDER OF ELDERS

The Order of Elders Team asked the respondents for their suggestions. Their responses are as follows:

TABLE 7

Desired Topics:

- CPE programs: Can you advocate for programs in southern part of the State?
- Self-care (body and soul & educate church to understand this matter)
- HIV
- Leadership training for new pastors (More hands-on help and needed topics)
- Emphasis on prophetic witness
- SPRC training (District Learning Day)
- Technology
- Work more with Bishop and cabinet to expand the pool of people and ideas we bring: Providing available resources beyond typical church growth, focusing on the spiritual life of Elders, real theological growth, exploring in depth some issues of justice
- Sadly, the best CE programs I've found have all been non denominational
- Encourage the pastors to attend Bishop's convocation to be spiritually fed

Fellowship and Sharing:

- Clergy fellowship
- Sharing stories through newsletter or Facebook
- Support group for stress reduction
- Ministry to ministers retreats
- Spiritual Formation opportunities such as retreats
- Gatherings in a reasonable space (Hazlet to be too small)
- Bi-District events? Not too small or big
- Regional gathering rather than one big gathering

Finance:

- More money for Continuing Education
- Some opportunities with group rate?

Schedule:

- Ask Bishop to plan the events not just before Ash Wednesday
- Make available CE events sponsored through local seminaries
- NO MORE – The Order of Elders simply tries to duplicate the efforts of others without notable success
- Continuing doing what you (Order of Elders) are doing.

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IX. SUMMARY OF MAIN THEMES

Based on the survey results, Elders need and are asking for guidance in identifying and selecting appropriate types of CE activities. This would be further enhanced in a partnership between Elders and Conference leadership. This can be accomplished by a plan of action that incorporates the following:

Inclusive topic selection for Resource Days;
Scheduling Conference events with a sensitivity to time constraints of the local church;
Providing direction to available denominational and outside resources—both in substance and in finances.

The Order of Elders Team greatly appreciates this opportunity to explore the needs and thoughts of the Elders of our Annual Conference in the area of Continuing Education.

X APPENDIX: OUR STORIES

We asked the elders to share their best CE stories with other elders. Twenty-eight individuals shared their stories which we listed in the following section. We hope you enjoy reading these stories while finding some valuable information.

1. Much of Doug Ruffle's work on Changing Communities, Discovery Church, etc., has kept me reading and using his material for several years. It helped me to build a church for the future and most recently in our restoration process for the next church that needed a full renovation due to flood. It gave us a Food Pantry, Soup Kitchen, Bridges program, Starting Jersey Shore Work Camp every two years, Hunt for the Hungry, Crop Walk, Outreach, ESL, and etc.

2. My experience with the 21st Century Leadership Academy through the Annual Conference has been very helpful to me in my current appointment. I am sure that the tools I've been given through that experience will go forward with me in my ministry in the future.

3. Logos is a Bible and library software. I have 3000 books that are all on my cellphone and computer.
I attended 2 two-day workshops on getting the most out of Logos. I use it every day.

4. Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training T4T (Training for Trainers) because it has allowed me to be certified in teaching these skills to others. It has allowed me to interact with my community and to be prepared to intervene with someone who is actively thinking of suicide as an option for them.

5. Trip to the Holy Land—enough said with that!

6. One of the things that has come across in doing surveys throughout Hudson County with regard to HIV is that many of those infected have said that the religious community needs to be responsible to the spread of the disease and continue to educate their community – I believe that unfortunately, many pastors continue to be unaware of the reality of the disease even today. Just because it is no longer in the headlines does not mean that it has gone away.

7. Sure, I have several. One involves membership assimilation from the Alban Institute and one involves the GBOD in Nashville when we all sang the new variation on Amazing Grace. We were singing on the

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airplane heading home because the flight was packed with United Methodists!

8. Maybe after March 2012 attending Family Systems in Wesley Seminary with other Elders we have a group going and hope to learn much.

9. The Multi-Cultural Academy exposed me to people and events that I might otherwise not have had. We went to Middle Church in NYC, a training event in Florida to experience Visions Training. I was exposed to a new and deeper understanding of things like contemporary racism, and the beauty of a truly multi-cultural, multi-racial community.

10. I heard more lectures and discussions on the Post-modern shift than I can remember through Continuing Ed. programs I attended (mostly the National Pastor's conferences). As a result, I have read numerous books (at least 10) which have greatly helped me start to understand the culture that we now live in and serve as churches and pastors. This knowledge and experience has dramatically altered the way I preach, talk, relate to, lead and develop leadership in my congregation. This cultural change, which has been sweeping through our world for well over 20 years, seems to have completely bypassed the UMC leadership, judging from the complete silence and lack of awareness that I see and hear at District Functions and Annual Conferences (where we still seem to function as if it is still 1955). I was once asked by a DS who was responding to my Pastor's Report 'What is this Post-modern thing?' That question made me very sad... We have a surprisingly limited vision in the UMC, so I look outside for Continuing Education and new ideas... On the other hand, the recent interaction with the Church of the Resurrection (Adam Hamilton) and Mike Slaughter's books have been a step in the right direction.

11. No stories, but if I can help as a resource person (Ph.D. in clinical psychology in addition to M.Div.), I'd be happy to contribute to the GNJAC's Continuing Education with workshops in areas related to my work (mindfulness and mental health; making appropriate referrals, neuroscience & the practice of ministry).

12. Mike Slaughter's Bible Studies at the 2010 Bishop's convocation, his experiences and his book, From Members to Disciples pushed me to begin a new experience with the church I serve, sharing with them what I received through a Bible Study every week and now we have 10 new leaders preaching, leading services, visiting hospitals, opening new missions, praying at the altar, praying at homes...and they are challenging others to attend the same Bible Study. In only one year the Holy Spirit moved with power over a group of United Methodist Christians, that today we have more disciples doing something for the Kingdom of God than in the past. To God be the glory!

13. Working in East Africa has been life changing for me. Some of the most courageous leaders I've ever met are the most impoverished and have the least access to ongoing education.

14. Yes—encourage people to apply for Lilly Endowment Grant. I had a 3 month leave in 2009 funded by a grant and it really renewed my ministry, provided time and resources for developing ministry and allowed me to step back in a way that provided space to view ministry, the congregation and my calling in deeper ways. I modified my approach to ministry with good results and sacred pace*(?)* following this key season of renewal.

15. My D. Min. program helped equip me especially for my work in cross-cultural mission in Taiwan where I worked in a predominately Buddhist and Taoist culture. The issues the D. Min. covered gave me interpretive tools and skills in assessing my context of ministry and helped me become a better 'theological ethnographer.'

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16. Making music together is an incarnational activity when the leader is a coach in encouraging, an increasing capacity to enter into the music more fully. The growth inspirited resonance within and among the singers/players becomes a gift to inspire and invite others into risking participation. Even short of such participating, experiencing the performance dedicated to god's glory is nurturing to the spirit.

17. A one day class at Princeton Theological Seminary called 'Leveraging the Strengths of Small Churches' presented by Brandon J. O'Brien. He is a 'gem' and a thoughtful presenter. This class looks at the strengths of small churches, Biblically and culturally. Some goal setting exercises. Looks to develop strengths in local churches, planning with existing resources looking up, not top down (what we are missing, lacking—the 'if'onlys we were like the big church we could...). I sent a copy of his book to Wayne Plumstead with my recommendation. I think he is engaging and energetic, for some minister studying for a Ph.D. in church history. His book, the Strategically Small Church looks helpful to us in smaller than average churches, and there are tens of thousands of us in the US. Oh, I forgot to mention he is a Presbyterian via a Baptist background. He also discussed, with insight from the class, the bi-vocational ministry as a resource for small churches. I think when I was in seminary it was called 'Tent-Making.'

18. The Joe R. Engle Preaching Institute at Princeton was helpful and affordable. Given that they give priority to clergy in their early years of ministry, it is a great program for Provisional Members and/or those recently ordained.

19. Without a doubt, traveling to the Holy Land with Bishop Devadhar on two occasions over the past 3 years has been the most rewarding educational experience of my life. The first time I went with primarily newly-ordained clergy. The second time (returned just a few weeks ago) included a handful of the same clergy, additional newly-ordained clergy, and several laity from my own congregation. The first time around I was a 'student.' The second time I was more of a teacher/leader. It was very encouraging and beneficial to my ordained ministry as well as my personal spiritual journey. Thank you for the question. (That's about the best story I have to offer at this time.) *(NOTE: I greatly appreciate both this survey and the attention that it has been given by The Order of Elders. Again, thank you.)*

20. I went to a pastor's conference at Sandy Cove (NE-MD) at which H.B. London was speaking based on his book Refresh, Renew, Restore. He is Focus on The Family's 'Pastor-to Pastor' Ministries Coordinator. That teaching set the tone for my month-long renewal leave (sabbatical) a year later which essentially saved my ministry and reinforced the need for regular renewal and revival.

21. Must confess that major obstacle in more productive Continuing Education is my inability to plan ahead/schedule and follow through with Continuing Education plans.

22. Two I'd recommend: Engle Institute of Preaching at Princeton which is a week-long (affordable!) program focused only on preaching. Leadership Institute at the UMC of the Resurrection where you learn multitude of ideas for doing ministry better.

23. The one event that I have wanted to participate in for a while now is retreats that are provided by UMEA for their endorsed members in chaplaincy. These are wonderful opportunities, and help to provide not only valuable content and skill information, but also connection with colleagues. I have not been able to attend one of these events yet, but plan to do so in 2013.

24. I went to the summer Music Institute at Drew in July 2011, with 8 members of my congregation. We were able to 'divide and conquer' attending multiple workshops and then sharing the information after we

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returned home. The event was well organized with proper time for each worship service, plenary speaker, and workshops. I left with renewed energy and enthusiasm for worship, as well as many new ideas. Creativity was everywhere. But the best part was I shared it with congregation members. I saw THEM become excited and inspired. That was the very best thing about it. Awesome... to go deeper ... it was the first time I was at Drew as an Ordained Elder. I was bringing members of my congregation ... and they were as inspired by the learning as I was as a student. My heart was warmed by the grace of God in that experience.

25. Continuing Education always gave me a fresh idea and new insight. Then I tried to reflect and meditate what I learned from the courses. It was of great help in carrying out our ministry, which had been assigned by God and our Bishop and the Cabinet. More than anything else, our church applied this new insight and vision to our context, our world in which we are living and reach out to those who are hurting and desperately in need of God's grace and healing. This is how we do ministry here in Belvidere and God took care of the rest of it. Thank God! *(NOTE: I am so pleased with the way you are working for the conference and the district on behalf of the elders and the churches. It is my hope and prayer that you will bear lots of fruits in your ministry as well as the entire church.)*

26. While a few laity will shake our nerve and distract out attention from the focus of our main work, 'Family Systems' Theory' lowers my anxiety and keeps me steady during tense moments. I had an Administrative council meeting where a small group spoke for 90 minutes wanting to change our polity to create a 'Board of Elders.' In the back of my head, I kept quietly repeating 'be non-anxious'—a phrase from Edwin Friedman's book Generation to Generation. I initially learned it from Peter Steinke while attending a conference he led. When they were finished, I calmly and slowly stated, 'We are a United Methodist Church with a book of Discipline that describes that I am the Elder. We will not allow the creation of a Board of Elders.' It took the steam out of their argument and lowered the anxiety in the room. I have continued to spend significant time learning 'Family Systems Theory' that helps me realize the systemic nature of this problem as not my personal problem but one that relies in the DNA of the church history. This way, I can begin to more maturely handle myself and help the congregation learn who God has called us to be.

27. Rather than trying to retrieve my lost survey, I feel that the best way I can help this effort is to forward to you a website which represents the most intensive Continuing Education study I have been pursuing in the last 18 months. It is headed up by a minister (Baptist) named Nelson Searcy and is quite excellent, applicable across denominational lines. The advantage of his system is that it is all (or mostly) computer, internet, and webinar based; as opposed to something you've got to travel to. Many of the resources are free, and they are really good. Some of the resources are pricey, especially the coaching network. However, they are really good - very practical, very results oriented, and aimed at Church growth and pastoral development. Here is the link.<http://www.churchleaderinsights.com/>
Do browse the podcasts and free stuff. I have worked with him, and can contact him about providing special resources to our Elders.

28. This past Saturday, I attended the 'mandatory' Palisades District Day of Learning. It is a particularly busy season in my ministry. While I try intentionally and prayerfully to be thankful for all that God gives and does through me and to avoid complaining or getting into the mental rut of feeling over-taxed, I was facing the loss of a tenant and a key staff person at our church as well as the start of a major small groups program, a church-wide vision process, completion of the 'mandatory' Vital congregations report, and hosting a district Resource Day the following week. I was losing the spiritual and emotional battle. I was slipping into depression, dreading, and self-pity. These were most expressed through a reluctance to attend the District Day of Learning. And that reluctance was compounded by my anger at mission

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'family day'—Saturday, the only day my family has to spend together and focused on one another—because of a church event. Nonetheless, I got out of bed on time and to the DDL on time. I enjoyed seeing some friends/colleagues there during breakfast. But, it was the time of worship which truly changed my heart. I am so thankful for the varied forms of worship that I am privileged to experience at our conference's events. This day, worship was led by a group from Cornerstone in Hasbrouk Heights. The songs were culturally relevant to me personally and drew me in. Some were songs that were already personally meaningful to me. As I sang and prayed, I could feel the Holy Spirit begin to work in me and raise me from the funk I had slipped into.

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Then, Rev. Jin Oh took the platform to preach. He began with an illustration from his own life. Since Jin and I are friends of the same age and place in life, these illustrations were highly relevant to me. He explained how he had adopted a dog and how his children had transformed this dog from a cowering mess to a loving pet that was anxious to engage everyone the moment they came home. They did this through consistent and unconditional love. Then, Jin brought the message home when he spoke about the great love that God has for me. It is a love that he spared no expense to shower upon me—even the loss of his only son. It is a love that he consistently pours out upon me simply because I am... not because of what I do or how I am liked or what I achieve. Jin wrapped things up by driving home the importance of the calling to which we have all been called in Christ—being vehicles for the love of God. I found that my heart was stirred and transformed and lifted. I moved on to workshops with a new desire to learn and grew my ability to communicate God's love and create communities where God's love is shared and environments where God's love is experienced. The very District Day of Learning that I was loathing had transformed me and changed my life. Of course, in my life, I find that it takes just about 24 hours before my heart, soul, and mind become derailed again. That is why I revisited my notes from Jin's message each morning since the DDL. And, that is why I try to learn something new from the Lord each day. Even if that effort does nothing more than cause me to return to contemplate the love God has for me, it is worth the effort.

PENSIONS AND HEALTH BENEFITS, CONFERENCE BOARD OF

The Greater New Jersey Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits (the Board) 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.

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

Pensions

Pre-1982 Pension Plan

The 2012 Past Service Annuity Rate for pre-1982 annuitant payment is $595 per year of pre-1982 service. The 2013 Past Service Annuity Rate for pre-1982 annuitant payment will be $607. The pre-1982 pension program continues to be fully funded and in a strong position.

CRSP/MPP and CPP

The General Conference's pension plan, Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) is a hybrid of defined benefit and defined contribution approaches which took effect in 2007. For 2012, churches pay

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CRSP at 15.5% of clergy plan compensation and for the Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP) at 3% of full time 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 4.4% of DAC for optional coverage (1/4 time and leave status).

The rates of remittance for the Clergy Retirement Security Program / Ministerial Pension Plan (CRSP/MPP) and Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP) remained approximately equal to last year's rates – continuing to remain significantly short of the 2003 remittance rate of 94% and 95%. Twenty-three percent of churches were unable to pay these bills on time.

Below is a summary of 2011 remittances:

Type	**Remittance Rate**	**2011 Shortfall**	**# of Churches Paying < 100%**	**% of Churches Paying < 100%**
CRSP	88.2%	$387,045	103	23%
CPP	88.2%	$ 72,649		

To maintain clergypersons' participation in CRSP and CPP, the Greater New Jersey Conference fully pays delinquent church accounts using funds from the Reserve Account at the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits. We remain concerned that some churches are not fully meeting their obligations and with the resulting decrease in the Reserve Account.

By 2011 year end the cumulative delinquent amount was $1,572,000 on CRSP/MPP and $354,000 on CPP – a total of $1,926,000, an increase of $326,000 - twenty percent over the cumulative shortfall at the end of 2010.

We thank those churches that maintained faithful stewardship, paying 100% of their obligation. We also appreciate the continuing efforts of our district superintendents, Alexa Taylor, Pension Coordinator, and Betty LaSalla, Local Church Financial Liaison to collect past due balances. More than $127, 000 of 2002-2010 shortfall was collected in 2011.

Because the balances owed had grown so large, in 2008 the Cabinet started a trial program with five churches to create self-development plans for reaching self-sufficiency over a four to five year period. If predetermined goals are met during the period, a portion of payments for health insurance, disability, pastor's pension and building insurance will be permanently waived. Currently there are four churches remaining in the plan; each has met their specified goals through December 31, 2011.

Retirement Seminars

As in years past, the Board sponsored two retirement education sessions held at St. Mark United Methodist Church in Hamilton on March 1 and 2, 2012. The first day was a pre-retirement seminar for those anticipating retirement within five years, and the second a seminar focusing on financial planning for younger pastors. Fifty-five persons attended. Presentations by Peter Hang of the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits and by a Social Security representative provided valuable guidance to assist retirement planning. Special thanks to Donna Hough for organizing these events and to St. Mark UMC for their gracious hospitality. Thanks also to Rev. Linda Ross, Rev. Dave Delaney, Alexa Taylor, Pension Coordinator, and Barbara Gruezke, Insurance Coordinator, for their support.

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Health Insurance

For 2011, the Board continued health insurance under Healthflex, the health insurance plan sponsored by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits. Health insurance again presented significant challenges to the Board of Pension and Health Benefits. The benefits the Board chose are the richest plan Healthflex provides, and the physician network is Blue Cross/Blue Shield PPO. With the change from Cigna, HealthFlex rates represented a 40% increase over the 2009 rates (as opposed to the 80% increase in rates initially proposed by Cigna) and were locked in until 2012. The Board of Pensions is completing the plan developed in conjunction with the Cabinet and Conference Council on Finance and Administration (CF&A) to phase in the 40% premium increase over 2010, 2011, and 2012, using reserve funds to subsidize the amount billed to the local churches.

Premiums and Remittances

The following chart shows church premium rates in effect for 2012. These rates reflect a gradual move by the Board to achieve one blended rate for all categories so that health insurance premiums are not a factor in determining clergy appointments.

Healthcare Insurance Premiums for 2012	
Employee	$12,263
Employee & Child(ren)	$19,494
Employee & Spouse	$19,494
Employee & family	$19,494

The Board thanks all churches that fully paid their health insurance premiums in 2011. Overall, churches paid 87% of the total $5,502,389 health insurance billings, a decrease from the 2010 remittance rate of 88 %. The 2011 shortfall was approximately $696,392. By 2011 year end, the amount owed from years prior to 2010 had been reduced by $178,750; however, the cumulative unpaid health insurance bills had increased to $1,670,746 owed for years prior to 2011.

Churches failing to fully pay their premiums burden all churches and result in higher health insurance premiums for all. Thanks go to Conference/BOPHB Treasurer John Cardillo, Health Insurance Coordinator Barbara Gruezke, and the Cabinet for their continued efforts to collect health insurance arrearages.

Changes Required by HealthFlex

The Board and Conference staffs have continued their efforts to ease the transition to HealthFlex. The Health Insurance Guidelines included in these 2012 Conference Reports and Recommendations have been updated. Two particular changes, effective in 2010, are highlighted in the next two paragraphs.

- The contract with HealthFlex requires all clergy under full-time appointment to a local church to participate in the HealthFlex plan. Therefore, the Opt-Out provision was rescinded effective January 1, 2010, and churches with full-time clergy are required to pay a minimum of the Employee Only premium for each full-time appointed clergyperson plus any additional premium required for dependents covered.

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- To be eligible for HealthFlex coverage at retirement, clergy must be continuously enrolled in HealthFlex for the five years immediately prior to retirement (or the period from the start of HealthFlex as the Conference Plan to retirement if less than five years). Dependents must also have been continuously insured under the Conference Plan or another employer plan for the five years preceding the clergy member's retirement to be eligible for dependent coverage when the clergy person retires.

Annuitant Health Care Liability

As of the end of 2011 the Financial Accounting Standards Board FAS 158 liability for annuitant healthcare costs in the amount of $62.9 million was posted to the Conference balance sheet. This liability is the estimated present value of the future costs of annuitant healthcare. The Annuitant Health Insurance Contingency Fund described below has been set up to address this large liability over time.

Annuitant Health Insurance Contingency Fund

In 2002-2003 the Board, recognizing the growing magnitude of annuitant healthcare costs, together with the Centenary Fund, representatives of CFA, the Cabinet and the Association of Retired Ministers and Spouses (ARMS), developed a plan for a long term Annuitant Health Insurance Contingency Fund that begins to offset the liability and ensure that retirees continue to enjoy conference-paid health insurance. The Fund was initiated by the 2003 GNJ Annual Conference and earmarked exclusively for healthcare costs for annuitants to cover higher premium costs expected in future years. The plan for the Fund involves a multi- 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.

As of December 31, 2011, the Annuitant Health Insurance Contingency Fund held a balance of $4,938,992 after transferring $257,357 to the Annuitant Health Insurance Account to avoid a negative balance in that account at year-end. In 2011 approximately $2,002,947 came into the Contingency Fund (representing the 2% clergy and staff salary contributions toward the cost of health insurance) plus the Centenary Fund's annual contribution (in excess of $300,000, separate from their $100,000 contribution directly to the Annuitant Health Insurance Account). Also in 2011, the Conference received and deposited into this fund $270,000 for Medicare Part D subsidies from the Center for Medicare Services.

Clergy Wellness Initiative

In January 2008 a Clergy Wellness Task Force was formed in response to the GBOPHB report on Denominational Health. United Methodist clergy nationwide have been found to be significantly less healthy 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 Wellness Task Force is comprised of representatives from each district, as well as other interested experts and the chair is Rev. Linda Ross. The Board would like to encourage clergy to cooperate with the Task Force and to take part in the wellness programs available through the HeathFlex plan, particularly the Virgin Health Miles walking program which, in addition to health benefits, offers financial incentives directly to participants.

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The Board Itself

The Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits endeavors to serve the Conference and the needs of those in ministry. There continues to 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.

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

Eleanor Hartley
Chair, GNJAC Board of Pension and Health Benefits

POVERTY TASK FORCE

The Greater New Jersey Annual Conference will develop strategies and collect data for the next five years to reduce poverty in its conference by "Ministry With the Poor", creating programs that address root causes, educating its members to facilitate understanding of poverty and its debilitating effects on families and persons, and coordinating sustainable ministries that change lifestyles and transform by:

- Developing conference wide educational programs and expertise to address poverty for each District.
- Develop a databank of essential resources of all agencies, interfaith programs related to "Working With the Poor." Programs that provide health care, education and shelter, that will be accessible and shared throughout the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference based on the principle of sharing and cooperation.
- Coordinating current ministries with the poor in ways that not only provide a meal, clothing and places to sleep for a person marginalized by poverty, but seeks to provide recovery and resources to move persons to a means of self-support.
- Develop partnerships and relationships with other agencies such as affordable housing, health care, local businesses, and educational institutions as a vocational resource to move homeless persons into the workforce.
- Develop and coordinate a program for post-incarcerated young offenders to assist and support re-assimilation into society in a positive way (Restorative Justice)

Definition of Poverty: Poverty is the state of human beings who have little or no material means of surviving (food, shelter, clothes, healthcare, education, and other physical means of living to sustain or improve one's life to wholeness.

Poverty Reduction Measures: Those measures or strategies that raise the material level of living for the poor, decrease the sense of powerlessness, and provide spiritual support of that person. Strategies that provide an increased accessibility to jobs, food security, shelter, clothing, education and health care. Strategies that will provide an opportunity for an individual to move from a state of poverty to meeting basic needs; especially benefitting children who are the largest number of poor people in our conference.

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- According to data released by the US Census Bureau September 2011, New Jersey's poverty rate reached 10% in 2009-2010, the highest it has been since 1994-1995. Dr. Melville D. Miller, president of Legal Services of New Jersey states "It is clear from today's poverty data that the recession has not ended for many, and it continues to have a devastating effect for many children, families and individual adults." Camden's poverty rate is 35.5% and has the highest percentage of poverty in our cities. The unemployment rate is nearly twice the national average. According to the report produced annually by the non-profit Advocates for Children of New Jersey, the poverty rate among children in Camden exploded between 2009 and 2010, increasing by 53.6% as compared to the state of New Jersey average of 13.2%. Critical Poverty areas in New Jersey –US Census report as edited by David Boston in 2008 identify the worst poverty areas:
    - Atlantic City (23.6%)
    - Camden (35.5%)
    - East Orange (19.2%)
    - Elizabeth (17.8%)
    - Jersey City (18.6%)
    - Long Beach (16.7%)
    - Millville (15.2%)
    - New Brunswick (27.0%)
    - Newark (28.4%)
    - Passaic (21.2%)
    - Paterson (22.2%)
    - Perth Amboy (17.6%)
    - Plainfield (15.9%)
    - Trenton (21.1%)
    - Union City (21.4%)

The Board of Global Ministries area of Focus: "Ministry With the Poor" states we are a church of the poor and those in ministry with the poor follow Jesus' example of servant leadership. Ministry with the poor involves ministries of love and justice, where appropriate action is defined and taken in right relationship with and among, and by those who are impoverished; guided by love and grace. It is fundamental to our Wesleyan and pietistic roots and integral to the church mission "to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world by proclaiming the good news of God's grace and by exemplifying Jesus' command to love God and neighbor, thus seeking the fulfillment of God's reign and realm in this world." (*The United Methodist Book of Discipline 2008*, par.121) We as a conference must also work to understand and alleviate the root causes of poverty through socio-political and economic research, poverty expertise, advocacy and action. "Poverty is complex, multi-faceted, multi-dimensional and highly contextual; "Ministry With the Poor" is more than a handout, more than an anti-poverty program, and more than a problem to be fixed," as stated by Board of Global Ministries. The Greater New Jersey Annual Conference must seek to be intentional in reducing poverty, creating coordinated church communities that nurture every person as loved by God so they may reach their potential.

Submitted by:

Rosa Williams, Chairperson
Rev. Sung Ahn, Mona Augustin, Rev. Jill Hubbard-Smith, Phyllis May

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PRIMARY TASK TEAM

The Primary Task Team met on September 27, 2011 and April 14, 2012.

The Executive Committee of the PTT met each month. Those 7 to 9 persons were chosen by the Bishop in consultation with the Conference Lay Leader from the PTT. We continue to do balcony thinking. The Executive Committee was established to recommend goals for the conference to the PTT(for approval at the Annual Conference).

The PTT's purpose was redefined as a place to communicate and affirm goals, educate leadership of changing trends, communicate clear and measurable short term goals around the resources of staff, programs, training, dollars and prayer, and accountability for the Executive Committee and conference leadership.

In the past year we have welcomed Heather Fullerton as our new Media Specialist. Her role is to help us continue to share our stories with one another.

We received reports from Conference Program Staff asking them what they have done and are doing to fulfill our purpose to make disciples of Jesus Christ.

The Poverty Task Force established at the 2011 Annual Conference brought their report and the PTT discussed what we are to do next in response to this report. Their report will be presented at this Annual Conference.

Because of monies available in Harvest Mission Fund and Strategic Disciple Making Initiative, Leadership Development has 25 clergy who have graduated as 21st Century Leaders.

We have also affirmed the founding of Greater New Jersey Cyber United Methodist Church.

We also invited Gil Rendel to assess how our new structure is working.

We continue to look at our goals as we move into the next quadrennium. Looking at what changes will come upon us from actions of the General Conference.

We continue to review Conference board and agencies responsibilities and accountability as well as setting conference goals based on the four areas of focus established by the General Conference here within our Annual Conference.

1. Developing principled Christian leaders for the church and the world.
2. Creating new places for new people and renewing existing congregations.
3. Engaging in ministry with the poor.
4. Stamping out killer diseases of poverty by improving health globally.

John DiGiamberardino
Convener Executive Committee of Primary Task Team

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PROPERTY AND LIABILITY INSURANCE COMMITTEE

2012 Insurance Renewal:

The 2012 insurance renewal process resulted in a $279,022 premium increase, or 9.7%, versus the expiring policies. The increase is largely attributable to workers compensation cost increases that result from a further deterioration in the claims experience. There was also an increase in the property and liability insurance attributable to an increase in property values. 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. 2012 premiums are 20% lower than 2005 premiums.

Property insurance levels have increased 25% or $250 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, most at no additional cost to GNJAC. For 2012, Mercer agreed to increase property insurance limits from 125% to 150% of the reported values for each church.

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 the $8.5 million fire loss in 2004, the $1.6 million fire loss in 2011, and the $1 million in Hurricane Irene losses.

Workers Compensation:

Workers Compensation premiums were increased from $302,513 to $352,991 due to an increase in payroll and a further deterioration in the claims experience. GNJAC loss experience is 17% 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 2% higher than in 2010. Each church has access to this insurance facility and pays the premium cost for any vehicle insured.

Claims Experience:

Since the inception of the GNJAC Insurance Program in March, 2002 the ratio of losses to premiums is about 73%, up from 67% reported last year During the last seven years with Mercer Insurance, the ratio of losses to premiums is less than 56%, up from 37% reported last year.

Parity Implementation:

The Parity Implementation Plan approved at the 2007 Annual Session continues to be implemented according to the original plan. In 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and again for 2012, the Insurance Committee has funded parity relief from Insurance Committee fund balances.

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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.

Summary:

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
Chair, Insurance Committee

SESSIONS TEAM

We want to thank those on the team who have served so faithfully over the last two quadrennium: Mary Bode, Glenn Ferguson, and Garey Hope. And we would also especially like to give thanks to Jean McMullan and Ed Rusk for their over 20 years of service to our Annual Conference Sessions Team. With the leadership and gifts of all these folks and the rest of the team, Annual Conference was able to do the business we are called to do together with ease ~ running smoothly with registration, transportation, housing, medical care, room assignments, technology, hospitality, meal planning and a myriad of other details, large and minute! It is this dedication that we find ourselves humbled by the time and energy each one gives to this event.

We are contracted for May 30 – June 1, 2013 here at Valley Forge Casino Resort. We are working with Travelink, our consultants, who are researching now for our next venues for 2014-2015. This year we began again to continue to look at the structure, schedule and location of Annual Conference, but with a larger community involved in the visioning.

Report on the Structure, Schedule and Location of Annual Conference

The broader team of Conference leaders and Sessions representatives have met and together talked about the purpose of Annual Conference, our hot button topics and our hopes for what it could be in a perfect world. With this visioning process facilitated by Rev. Richard Hendrickson, we realized that with the number of variables and transitions that will affect Annual Conference after General Conference 2012 (for example – The effect on attendance should something change with the eligibility of retired clergy to vote at Annual Conference and the possible Bishop appointment change), it was decided that now is not the time for too much far-reaching change. The process does not stop with this visioning event but once the dust settles, we will continue on looking at structure, schedule and location.

Action Steps and Recommendations:

1- A Directive for giving Reports in a concise manner – no reading, especially conference and district nominations were noted as time-consumers.

2- Guidance be given for worship services in regards to time sensitivity.

3- Create time for meaningful conversations.

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4- Improve childcare communications.

5- Mission Moments throughout Annual Conference

6- Direct nominations to add a representative from Disability Inclusion to Sessions.

7- Large Print Resources

8- Multi-Language Resources

9- Investigate 'other ways' of doing Annual Conference in keeping with our purpose

10- Consult with Bishop during transition

11- Implement Electronic Voting with consideration to our Rules of Order

12- Report to Annual Conference

13- Begin working with Travelink about '14-'15 future venues and dates being mindful of requirements for accessibility, housing and dining needs, transportation and breakout room availability.

These steps have been presented to the Primary Task Team. Some are underway and some will be implemented or adapted over future Annual Conferences.

Respectfully submitted by Reggie Albert, Chair

SHARED FACILITIES TASK FORCE

Several years ago, the GNJAC adopted a resolution to have Bishop Devadhar appoint a task force to study issues related to Shared Facilities in the local churches of GNJAC.

The first significant issue the Task Force addressed was the meaning of "Shared Facilities". The Task Force determined that there were two (2) very different definitions:

#1 – Two (2) or more United Methodist Churches sharing one facility, but each retaining its individual identity; and

#2 – One (1) local church (a non-profit corporation) allowing other programs or entities to use its facilities.

It was immediately clear to the Task Force that a consideration of each definition would result in entirely different responses. Task Force members then accepted responsibility to research each area and they determined the following.

As to Definition #1, the Task Force noted that this applies only to United Methodist congregations sharing facilities. A church of another denomination would be included in Definition #2.

The Task Force determined that there were existing comprehensive guides and manuals dealing with two (2) or more United Methodist congregations sharing one (1) physical facility. The former Northern New Jersey Annual Conference (NNJAC) adopted "Guidelines for the Ministry of Shared Facilities" in 1990

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and then subsequently made its Task Force an official NNJAC permanent committee. In 1996, the General Board of Global Ministries produced a "Manual of Shared Facilities" which the Task Force believes is quite comprehensive.

Therefore, without further direction that more work was needed concerning Definition #1 of Shared Facilities, the Task Force moved on to Definition #2.

Premise: Use by another entity of a local United Methodist Church's facilities, whether another denomination church, a pre-school, or a community seniors' program, among many other possibilities, has great missional potential, as well as pitfalls for the local church. The Task Force determined the following:

a) There is no such thing as a quasi – or semi-church related program. A program can be either one of two types: 1) fully a church program with employees hired and under the authority of the local church's SPRC, subject to the local church finance people and included in the annual audit, and amenable to the local church's Board of Trustees; or 2) a fully separate entity which, because of tax issues discussed below, should hold IRS tax-exempt status. It was this latter category which the Task Force considered in depth.

b) Opening the church facilities to other uses allows for the church to connect with non-church members, and provides a Christ witness in the community. Both are opportunities to make disciples for Jesus Christ.

c) Any entity or group using local church facilities should have a written "Lease" whether any rent is paid or whether use is one time for a few hours or on a daily basis.

Task Force members discovered many local churches have use agreements and policies. Sample Leases are also available.

d) In leasing facilities, many Disciplinary requirements must be met. Among them:

1) Uses must be in conformity with the Social Principles;

2) Uses must be in conformity with GNJAC policies;

3) The District Board of Church Location and Building may need to give approval;

4) Safe Sanctuary policy may be required, depending on the program, to insure insurance coverage if needed.

e) Secular considerations include:

1) Property tax-exemption issue if user is not IRS tax-exempt;

2) Failure of the user to properly file all necessary forms, employee taxes, etc. could result in a lien against the user and could ultimately impact the local church;

3) Need for municipal approvals for use.

f) Lease Agreement should include <u>many</u> issues, including but not limited to:

1) Continuous proof of insurance by user;

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2) Term of Lease and renewal options;

3) Exact area(s) being used and when;

4) Clean-up and storage of user's items;

5) Modifications required for use;

6) Maintenance requirements inside and outside facilities.

g) Local church considerations:

1) Need for continuous oversight;

2) Continuous review of financial situation and impact on local church stewardship of all its related resources;

3) Increase in repair and maintenance;

4) Being a landlord is a 24/7 responsibility.

The Task Force respectfully submits this report for review and possible further action by the Annual Conference.

STUDY RELATIONSHIPS WITH SUBORDINATES, AFFILIATED ORGANIZATIONS, COMMITTEE ON

The Committee met via e-mail and developed one of two covenant relations documents and is perfecting the second one.

The first document is titled "Statement of Relationship" and details the connection between Greater New Jersey Annual Conference and its affiliated organizations. By GNJAC rules, "an affiliated organization is one that wishes to maintain a connectional relationship with The United Methodist Church through GNJAC". The Committee developed a sample "Statement of Relationship" for all affiliated organizations which had not already adopted one, and are in the process of confirming that the bylaws of each affiliated organization are in conformity with the Statement of Relationship.

The second relationship statement which the Committee is now perfecting is for those non-conference entities to which the Bishop appoints a representative to their Board of Trustees and which do not have the Annual Conference involved in electing any of its other Trustees. The bylaws of these connected entities are also being reviewed to be sure the connection is in place.

Our work will continue during the coming year.

Respectfully submitted,
Harriett Olson, Chair
Evelyn Caterson, Esq. , Legal Counsel

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TRUSTEES, BOARD OF

During this Conference Year in which there have been, and continue to be, many economic challenges, the members of the Conference Board of Trustees have been conscientious stewards in making sound and considered financial decisions regarding the assets of the Conference that have been entrusted to their care. The Officers of the Board are: Chairman - The Rev. Mark Earl; Vice-Chairperson – Marian Munson; Secretary – Victoria Hahn. The following Trustees serve as liaisons to the properties for which the Board is responsible: The Rev. Darryl Duer, James Graef, Rupert Hall, Jr., The Rev. Hee Duk Lee, Fred Neske, Jose Pimentel, The Rev. James Ryoo, The Rev. Douglas Strickland and The Rev. Louis Strugala, Jr., as well as The Rev. Mark Earl, Victoria Hahn and Marian Munson.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance/care of the following properties: the Episcopal Residence, nine District Parsonages, the previous Palisades District parsonage situated in Harrington Park, NJ, the building in Paterson, NJ from which St. Philip's Ministry serves, as well as the Conference Office building. Additionally, they oversee the actions needed to be taken in reference to churches and parsonages that have been "closed", representative of formal action taken at prior Annual Conferences. Currently, the following churches are available for sale: Carney's Point UMC in Carney's Point, NJ; First UMC located in Highlands, NJ; Mount Hermon UMC in Blairstown, NJ; Solomon Wesley UMC in Blackwood, NJ and Wrightstown UMC in Wrightstown, NJ. Two of these churches are currently being leased by worshiping congregations, with one of the two having an option to buy. Six cemeteries are also under the care of the Trustees, as are two lots: the first in Mays Landing, NJ and the second in Swedesboro, NJ.

Some items of note as a result of Trustee action taken during the 2012 Conference Year:

- The sale of the Monroeville UMC, as well as the Chickory Chapel Cemetery, to Harvest Bible Fellowship, Inc. for the amount of $145,000.
- The completion of the purchase of a house in River Vale, NJ, to serve as the new Palisades District Parsonage, in the amount of $741,129.41.
- The approval for the Director of Connectional Ministries and his family to have the option to continue to reside in the previous Palisades District parsonage in Harrington Park, NJ until January 15, 2013, after which time the property is scheduled to be sold.
- Major repairs were undertaken at St. Philip's Ministry in Paterson as a result of the devastating damage which occurred from "Hurricane Irene". Approximately $64,000 was appropriated to address the specific needs of this building in the hope that future weather events would not disrupt this very important ministry, which addresses the needs of so many in its community.
- A motion was approved to transfer the Old Orchards parsonage in Cherry Hill to the First Korean UMC in Cherry Hill for a sum to be determined at a later date.
- Upon the recommendation of the Property Insurance Sub-Committee, the Trustees voted to establish the insurance "surplus" at 50% of the premium costs. The current excess will be returned to each insured in the form of a credit against future billings. The credit will be determined on a pro-rata basis, based on the reported insured values of each physical plant.
- In response to action taken at the 2011 Annual Conference, the Trustees have chaired the Conference Office Facilities Ad-hoc Committee as it has deliberated on the future of the Conference Office building and viable realty options.

The Trustees are privileged to work with and receive the cooperation of many individuals/groups throughout the Conference. We are grateful to Bill Mayo and the members of the Property Insurance

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Sub-Committee of the Board of Trustees for their leadership and assistance in controlling insurance costs. The counsel which is offered to the Board from Conference Chancellor Lynn Caterson, Esq. and William Sheehy, Esq. of "Norton, Sheehy, Higgins & Rosa, P.C." is invaluable. John Cardillo, Conference Treasurer and Director of Administrative Services, serves as Treasurer of the Board. As a result of his guidance and expertise in reference to the overall financial resources of the GNJAC and specifically the Funds which the Board oversees, the Trustees are better equipped to prioritize and responsibly address the needs of the various properties. Likewise, the work of the Board has been enhanced this Conference Year with the presence, as Cabinet liaison, of The Rev. Wayne Plumstead. His dedication – his leadership – his interest in the matters of the Trustees, and particularly as they interface with the Conference in general, is very much appreciated. The Conference Trustees also are grateful for the opportunity to work more closely with Bishop Devadhar and the Cabinet during the course of this Conference Year.

The Conference Board of Trustees expresses its appreciation to those members and friends of The United Methodist Church in New Brunswick for, yet again, graciously hosting its meetings during the 2012 Conference Year. They certainly practice "radical hospitality".

It has been a real privilege, throughout my years as a Conference Trustee, to work with countless numbers who serve God and His people through the GNJAC. I shall be forever grateful – and deeply humbled – for the assistance and cooperation so generously extended to me. Billy Graham has said: "There is no joy like the joy of sharing". While serving as Acting Chairperson since January 1, 2012, at which time Board Chairman Mark Earl stepped aside, I have continued to witness the gifts of time and talent that my fellow Trustees have shared so unselfishly throughout the Conference Year. Together – Clergy and Lay members – we worked to address the responsibilities that had been placed before us as Trustees. It is through such giving of self that, I believe, the symbolism of the cross – of Christ reaching down to us so that we, filled with His love, may reach out to others - becomes alive.

Respectfully submitted,
Marian B. Munson
Acting Chairperson

UNITED METHODIST HOMES OF NJ

The most significant event at United Methodist Homes of New Jersey was the transition of leadership in the Office of the President. James C. Batten retired as of September 6, 2011 after 20 years of service and I joined the organization that same day as President and CEO. The Board of Directors, residents and staff of the Homes honored Mr. Batten with celebrations honoring his dedicated and selfless service to the Homes.

In late August, the East Coast felt the impact of Hurricane Irene. Evacuations at The Shores at Wesley Manor, Wesley by the Bay, Francis Asbury Manor and Wesleyan Arms affected three receiving communities: Collingswood Manor, Pitman Manor and Bristol Glen. While it did not become necessary, Covenant Manor was staged to house Wesleyan Arms' residents. Overall, over 1,000 residents and associates were affected. Many family members praised the Homes for taking such good care of their loved ones during a time of crisis.

The board adopted a five-year capital plan for the replacement, redecorating or overhaul of many systems and living spaces when necessary. In 2011, nurse call systems at The Shores and Collingswood were

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replaced. Apartments on two floors at Francis Asbury Manor received air conditioning; this project continues into 2012. Roof and masonry repairs began at FAM.

The Homes received many bequests this year—accounting for over 30% of our donations. This support makes resources available for improving our buildings and grounds, and the funding for the Fellowship Fund – the promise to never ask a resident to leave due to the inability to pay the total cost of care. Please consider leaving a portion of your estate for the vital work of the Homes.

Three publications won awards from the Jersey Shore Public Relations & Advertising Association that honors excellence in communications. The UMH general brochure won a gold award; the 2010 annual report, *A Life Out of Focus*, won a silver; and another silver was awarded for a direct mail campaign, *Summer Celebrations*.

Leadership at each full service and affordable housing community were asked to prepare a comprehensive business plan that contained goals and objectives for the coming year of operations. These plans will help them prepare for the next fiscal year that begins on July 1, 2012.

I am looking forward to many years of service with the United Methodist Homes of New Jersey, and I thank the Board of Directors and all UMH associates for welcoming me and my family to New Jersey and this wonderful organization.

Lawrence D. Carlson, President and CEO

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

The women of Greater New Jersey United Methodist Women (UMW) continue to live the PURPOSE. Being organized to be in mission with women, children and youth, UMW has been involved in many mission activities around the Conference, from Delaware Bay District to the Skylands District. Because we believe in following the commandment to love your neighbor and the edict written in Matthew 25, the UMW works to support food banks, visit and bring the Good News through prison ministries, provide health and school kits to Haiti, baby layette items to women and children in homes for homeless women, and clean up buckets to disaster areas. The Neighborhood Center of Camden, the only national mission institution in NJ is given support from all of the districts in the Conference.

United Methodist Women is poised to make some major structural changes. Women's Division, the national policy making body of the UMW, has requested approval to separate from its relationship with the General Board of Global Ministries. The request, to be brought before the General Conference in May, will ask to change the structure, however, they will still be connected to GBOGM missionally. This will allow the organization to put *"Faith, Hope and Love in Action"* for another one hundred forty-five years and more.

As we move forward, we are proud that many new local units have been added to both the Hispanic and Korean Networks. Moving into the next quadrennial, one of the major goals is to involve younger women in the organization. To that end, we have again given scholarships this year to four young women to make the pilgrimage to Taize, France. We are also supporting four young women to attend a Young Women's Event, "Limitless: Redefine Tomorrow" sponsored by Women's Division at the Duke Divinity School, Durham, NC. The vision of this event is to equip young women to transcend barriers and to do justice in their communities by putting faith, hope and love in action.

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United Methodist Women are finding ways to redefine themselves in the context of the new, more flexible structure. Greater New Jersey United Methodist Women look forward to moving forward to continue living out its PURPOSE:

> "The organized unit of United Methodist Women shall be a community of women whose PURPOSE is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church."

Millie Grey, President

UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Is God calling you or someone you know to the ministry of Jesus Christ? If so, we invite you to explore how United can assist you in fulfilling God's purposes for your life and how you can help others in this journey. Come and check us out in person or online at www.united.edu!

United is one of the fastest growing, accredited seminaries in North America. Why are Christian disciples and leaders signing up for our traditional and online programs? They do so because United is committed to teaching the Bible and the historic Christian faith, cultivating spiritual formation for personal and social holiness, and renewing the Church for the mission of Jesus Christ in the world. What could be more important or exciting?

In addition to expanding our service in the Midwestern US, United will continue to enhance its use of technology to deliver theological education in underserved regions in North America and beyond. United's hybrid/online UMC FLEX Master of Divinity degree was designed specifically to meet the requirements of the UMC for ordination and it is accessible anywhere with good Internet service.

Three new professors will join our excellent team of faculty in 2012. Additionally, United's doctoral program will add new mentors and focus groups around the ministries of renewal, mission, preaching, healing and Christian education. United's hybrid/online UM Course of Study is expanding each semester, along with UM Certification offerings.

Please let us know if you have questions about how we can best assist you or, if you would like to help make it possible for an American or international student to study at United.

Enrollment at United is growing steadily and we invite you to call or visit soon! For more information, please contact admissions@united.edu.

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

By Wendy J. Deichmann, President

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THE WESLEY FOUNDATION AT PRINCETON

This is currently my twentieth year as Chaplain of the Wesley Foundation at Princeton University where I am also a Fellow of Mathey College and a Lecturer in both the Department of Religion and the University Center for HumanValues.

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. I am 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 on Friday for graduate students on Fridays. Service projects and social activities are also regular activities of the Graduate Christian Fellowship.

The Undergraduate Fellowship 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 seventeen 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.

B. Keith Brewer, Ph.D.

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Property & Liability Insurance - 12/31/2011

Balance Forward		**1,924,116**
Receipts:		
Interest Income	2,071	
Premiums from Churches	2,370,041	
Worker's Compensation	396,510	
Prior Year Receipts	117,163	
	2,885,785	
Disbursements:		
Insurance Premiums	2,373,289	
Auto Insurance	3,015	
Worker's Compensation	317,684	
Salary	75,414	
Claim Deductibles	69,404	
Other Expenses	1,659	
	2,840,465	
Change in Operation		45,320
Ending Balance 12/31/11		**1,969,436**

Ending Balance as of 12/31/11 is for Reserves for Uncollectible Premiums.

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Pension Accounts - Greater New Jersey Annual Conference

	12/31/10	12/31/11	Variance
ASSETS			
A/R-GNJAC	1,427,335	1,972,544	545,209
GBOP Deposit Account	2,196,316	1,794,567	(401,749)
Pension Investments BOA	1,306,507	0	(1,306,507)
Accounts Receivable			0
Total Assets	**4,930,158**	**3,767,111**	**(1,163,047)**
LIABILITIES			
Pension	0	0	0
Due to Conference	337,886	0	(337,886)
Total Liabilities	**337,886**	**0**	**(337,886)**
General Fund			
Balance Forward	3,753,578	4,554,208	800,630
Receipts			
Investment Income	45,422	(30,044)	(75,466)
GBOP Invest. Gain/(Loss)	204,251	(57,162)	(261,413)
GBOP Invest. Refund/Adj	757	2,469	1,712
GBOP CPP Premium Holiday	657,262	654,678	(2,584)
UM Publishing Income			0
Annual Conference Offering			0
Memorial Donations			0
Chartered Fund Income		529	529
Pre-Retirement Seminar Income	770	810	40
Total Receipts	908,462	571,281	(337,181)
Disbursements			
Global Pension Trust			
Pensions - Moving Expense Reimb	7,692	26,824	19,132
Grants/Relief	5,593	5,659	67
Pre-Retirement Seminar Expense			0
Adoption Grant			0
Offering	0		0
Staff Expense	65,147	106,937	41,790
CBO Salary Expense	22,942	22,782	(159)
Pension Adjustment Expense		2,843	2,843
Refunds			0
Operating Expenses	6,458	19,103	12,645
Total Disbursements	107,832	184,148	76,316
General Fund Balance	4,554,208	4,941,340	387,133
Receipts - Disbursements	800,630	387,133	(413,497)

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Pension Accounts - Greater New Jersey Annual Conference

	12/31/10	12/31/11	Variance
Current Service Fund			
Balance Forward	0	0	0
Receipts			
General Board of Pension Income	2,783,229	1,305,135	(1,478,094)
Staff Premiums			0
Conference CRSP/ MPP Income	3,091,285	2,923,525	(167,760)
Conference CPP Income	580,318	533,666	(46,652)
Total Receipts	6,454,832	4,762,325	(1,692,506)
Disbursements			
Transfer to Fund 127 Retiree	2,553,101	1,305,135	(1,247,966)
Expense entry	2,561,706	3,341,120	779,414
GBOP Billing	1,340,025	1,328,364	(11,661)
Total Disbursements	6,454,832	5,974,619	(480,213)
Current Service Fund Balance	0	(1,212,293)	(1,212,293)
Receipts - Disbursements	0	(1,212,293)	(1,212,293)

Interest Reserve Fund			
Interest Reserve Fund Balance	38,064	38,064	0

Total Fund Balance	**4,592,272**	**3,767,111**	**(825,161)**

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Health Insurance Accounts - Greater NJ Annual Conference

	12/31/2010	12/31/2011	Variance
Assets			
Health Insurance Investments BOA	3,782,945	4,914,045	1,131,100
A/R-GNJAC	1,456,248	184,502	-1,271,746
Total Assets	**5,239,193**	**5,098,547**	**-140,646**
Liabilities			
Post Retirement Benefits	63,855,000	62,978,900	-876,100
Total Liabilites	**63,855,000**	**62,978,900**	**-876,100**
Actives Fund			
Balance Forward	**-137,539**	**432**	**137,971**
(Receipts)			
Billing Non-Annuitants	4,591,827	5,091,154	499,326
Dist. Supt. & Staff Premiums	329,212	397,959	68,747
Staff Family Premiums	29,407	31,614	2,208
2% of Sal. Contrib.W/H fr Staff&DS's	32,781	30,984	-1,797
Incapacity from 127		404,397	404,397
Transfer from 127 Subsidy	2,453,468	1,000,000	-1,453,468
Total Receipts	**7,436,695**	**6,956,109**	**-480,586**
(Disbursements)			
Non- Annuitants Premium	6,910,670	6,402,923	-507,747
Consulting Fee	25,000	30,000	5,000
Other Expense			0
Transfer 2% Pastor Salary Contribution	330,868	322,468	-8,400
Transfer 2% Staff Salary Contribution	32,185	30,984	-1,201
Total Disbursements	**7,298,724**	**6,786,375**	**-512,348**
Receipts less Disbursements	137,971	169,733	31,763
Balance	**432**	**170,165**	**169,733**
ANNUITANTS Fund			
Balance Forward	**0**	**0**	**0**
(Receipts)			
Shared Ministries for Annuitants	2,083,243	1,932,121	-151,122
Billing for Annuitants over 65	68,307	65,077	-3,230
Billing for Annuitants under 65	71,425	86,410	14,985
Medicare	358,518	270,048	-88,470
2% Salary Funds Reserve Transfer	132,786	257,357	124,571
Transfer from 127 Subsidy	683,476	631,833	-51,643
Total Receipts	**3,397,755**	**3,242,846**	**-154,909**
(Disbursements)			
Blue Cross - Premium Expense	3,289,651	3,084,705	-204,946
Administration Expense	8,515	12,266	3,751
Staff Expense	36,762	75,742	38,980
CBO - Salary	22,942	22,782	-159
Adoption Support			0
Consulting Agency Fee	39,885	47,350	7,465
Total Disbursements	**3,397,755**	**3,242,846**	**-154,909**
Receipts less Disbursements	0	0	0
Balance	**0**	**0**	**0**

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Health Insurance Accounts - Greater NJ Annual Conference

	12/31/2010	12/31/2011	Variance
Reserve Fund for Retiree Health Ins.			
Balance Forward	**5,069,874**	**5,179,583**	**109,710**
(Receipts)			
Centenary Fund Additional Contribution	422,534	**443,660**	**21,126**
Transfer 2% Pastor Salary Contribution	330,868	**322,468**	**-8,400**
Transfer 2% Staff Salary Contribution	32,185	**30,984**	**-1,201**
Investment Income	140,751	50,748	-90,003
Misc Income	2,553,101	**1,305,135**	**-1,247,966**
Total Receipts	3,479,440	2,152,995	-1,326,444
(Disbursements)			
Transfer to Annuitants	816,262	889,190	72,928
Transfer to Non Annuitants	2,453,468	1,000,000	-1,453,468
Transfer to Annuitants Incapacity		404,397	404,397
Transfer to Reserve	100,000	100,000	0
Total Disbursements	3,369,730	2,393,588	-976,142
Receipts - Disbusements	109,710	-240,592	-350,302
Balance	**5,179,583**	**4,938,991**	**-240,592**
DENTAL Fund Balance Forward	**26,577**	**21,761**	**-4,816**
Billing for Dental Insurance	61,984	65,473	3,489
Dental Insurance Premiums	66,800	67,371	571
Receipts - Disbusements	-4,816	-1,898	2,918
Balance	**21,761**	**19,863**	**(1,898)**
Post Retirement Fund Balance Forward	**-55,020,400**	**-63,855,000**	**-8,834,600**
Current Year Transactions	-8,834,600	876,100	**9,710,700**
Balance	**-63,855,000**	**-62,978,900**	**876,100**
Interest Reserve Fund Balance Forward	**-10,590**	**37,417**	**48,007**
Current Year Transactions	48,007	-67,889	**-115,896**
Balance	**37,417**	**-30,472**	**-67,889**
Total Fund Balance	**-58,615,807**	**-57,880,353**	**735,454**

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2011 Receipts Comparison

Greater New Jersey Annual Conference

	Fd #	Funds	2009 Budget	2009 Dec YTD	2009 %Budget	2010 Budget	2010 Dec YTD	2010 %Budget	2011 Budget	2011 Dec YTD	2011 %Budget
Shared Ministry Funds	100	DO,ClergySup.,Admin	5,120,996	4,293,724	83.85%	5,120,996	4,322,711	84.41%	5,336,968	4,293,997	80.46%
	200	Admin. (Beginning 2005)	2,239,792	1,904,581	85.03%	2,383,075	2,141,337	89.86%	2,490,485	2,180,357	87.55%
	300	WorldService/Conf.Ben.	3,775,917	3,081,815	81.62%	3,775,917	3,119,919	82.63%	3,460,210	2,818,731	81.46%
	410	Black College	226,054	182,030	80.53%	226,055	186,471	82.49%	219,216	172,319	78.61%
	420	Africa University	50,593	44,197	87.36%	50,592	45,242	89.43%	49,062	43,073	87.79%
	430	Ministerial Education	566,640	442,989	78.18%	566,640	456,062	80.49%	549,557	419,286	76.30%
		Subtotal	**11,979,992**	**9,949,335**	**83.05%**	**12,123,275**	**10,271,742**	**84.73%**	**12,105,498**	**9,927,763**	**82.01%**
		Prior Yr. Shared Ministry		**878**			**35,626**			**6,498**	
Billing Funds		CRSP	3,307,015	2,937,371	88.82%	3,338,853	2,962,064	88.71%	3,283,859	2,896,814	88.21%
		2010 CRSP							375,572	72,523	
		Prior Years CRSP	812,675	132,707		1,054,865	129,222		920,899	39,187	
		Total CRSP	**4,119,691**	**3,070,078**	**74.52%**	**4,393,718**	**3,091,285**	**70.36%**	**4,580,330**	**3,008,524**	**65.68%**
		Comp. Protection Plan	614,871	544,839	88.61%	620,436	550,802	88.78%	615,613	542,964	88.20%
		2010 CPP							68,031	12,362	
		Prior Year CPP	217,648	29,371		258,167	29,516		228,651	3,339	
		Total CPP	**832,519**	**574,210**	**68.97%**	**878,603**	**580,318**	**66.05%**	**912,295**	**558,666**	**61.24%**
		Property/Liab. Insurance	2,851,317	2,516,886	88.27%	2,838,112	2,507,088	88.34%	2,833,167	2,480,041	87.54%
		2010 P/L							330,026	79,461	
		Prior Year P/L Insurance	964,658	92,804		1,206,293	146,040		1,031,066	29,555	
		Total P/L Ins.	**3,815,975**	**2,609,689**	**68.39%**	**4,044,405**	**2,653,127**	**65.60%**	**4,194,260**	**2,589,056**	**61.73%**
		Health Insurance	4,571,737	4,048,263	88.55%	4,994,435	4,408,241	88.26%	5,502,389	4,805,997	87.34%
		2010 Health Insurance	459,457	98,044					577,840	112,428	
		Prior Years Health Insurance	530,314	40,327		1,368,251	96,020		1,271,656	66,322	
		Total Health Ins.	**5,561,508**	**4,186,635**	**75.28%**	**6,362,686**	**4,504,260**	**70.79%**	**7,351,885**	**4,984,747**	**67.80%**
		Workers Comp Insurance	392,399	368,129	93.81%	399,432	372,403	93.23%	421,200	396,510	94.14%
		2010 Workers Comp							27,029	5,449	
		Prior Years Workers Comp	29,036	4,850		48,326	5,491		42,665	2,700	
		Total Workers Comp Ins	**421,435**	**372,979**	**88.50%**	**447,758**	**377,894**	**84.40%**	**490,894**	**404,658**	**82.43%**
Total Shared Min. & Billing			**26,731,119**	**20,763,805**	**77.68%**	**28,250,446**	**21,514,252**	**76.16%**	**29,635,163**	**21,479,912**	**72.48%**
Special Giving			**0**	**654,774**		**0**	**1,081,265**		**0**	**1,002,852**	
GRAND TOTAL			**26,731,119**	**21,418,579**		**28,250,446**	**22,595,518**		**29,635,163**	**22,482,763**	

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