EPISCOPAL ADDRESS
presented Thursday, May 28, 2015

Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee and he saw two brothers fishing, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake. Jesus said, "Come, follow me," At once they left their nets and followed him. – Matthew 4:18-20

To FISH as a disciple of Jesus Christ is to love others so deeply that you want them to experience God's grace.

My name is John Schol, you know me as bishop, as spiritual leader, but Schol in Dutch means FISH. You see, I come from a fishing family. My grandfather loved to fish, my father loved to fish, I fish and my children enjoy fishing, although I am not too sure about my son Mark.

Today, God has called us to pick up new fishing poles and fishing nets and FISH for new generations of believers. To FISH in new mission fields where we seek justice, love kindness and walk humbly with God (Micah 6:8).

I have already begun to see and experience our clergy and congregations engaging in the new mission field. Ridgefield Park is reaching new Latino immigrants, Leonia opens its doors after school to children from the nearby school, the churches in Atlantic City are preparing to be a community of hope, and the churches in Millville are working together to serve the community.

When you FISH you need fishing gear – rods, reels, hooks, bait, lures, a tackle box. One piece of our new fishing gear is IGNITE, the new youth event that had more than 700 people participate. This high energy, high impact event with top Christian bands and speakers inspired everyone in attendance. At IGNITE more than 50 percent of the youth came forward to make a first time commitment to Christ and another 25 percent came forward to rededicate their life to God. I committed to our clergy that if they would come along and involve their youth in IGNITE, that their young people and their congregation would be blessed. Sixty-eight pastors engaged their youth in IGNITE and they have shared that their youth continue to talk about IGNITE and look forward to the next IGNITE this October. I have a vision that we will have thousands of young people being transformed in the future. Why, because we love young people so much that we want them to experience God's grace. I know God wants to touch the hearts of students in our congregations and in our communities. God is ready to do even greater things in Greater New Jersey. I invite 68 additional pastors and congregations to send their young people this October to IGNITE. I call upon you to invite youth from the community, friends from local schools, your children and your grandchildren. Get out your fishing pole and bait your hooks with grace, radical hospitality and high impact bands and come fish with IGNITE.

Congregational Vitality

I asked you to come FISH with me to grow the vitality of our congregations and you wasted no time in casting your net. You began to work on the five markers of vitality and to think creatively about how to 1) grow inspiring worship, 2) grow disciples in small groups, 3) engage disciples in mission, 4) make new disciples, and 5) invite disciples to give generously. You are turning churches into vital congregations and it shows.

In 2014 we grew in professions and reaffirmations of faith. We grew in the number of disciples in small groups including young adult participation. We grew the number of disciples engaging in community mission and giving to mission. You not only came to FISH with me but you are teaching me new ways to FISH. And you have not only been fishing on the surface, but you have been casting your lines to deeper depths of meaning and purpose.

Vitality

I am seeing congregations like Jesus Christ - radical spirit and humble, teaching and healing, soul saving and soul tending, leader and servant, unbound and outbound. These congregations are also Wesleyan – connectional and risk taking, thoughtful and inspirational, small groups and large vision, welcoming all and nurturing individuals. We are well on our way to reaching our 2018 strategic plan goals. Thank you for coming along and growing vitality.

Giving

When I was 14 years old, my father took me deep sea fishing. We would leave on a boat from Barnegat Light and sail out through the inlet into the deep ocean. On one occasion, my father thought it would be interesting to go at night - leaving on a fishing boat after dark and coming in at dawn. To a 14 year old it sounded cool. The only challenge, it had been stormy all day and the waves were high. We went to the boat dock and the captain said, "We are not going out tonight. It's too dangerous." We had just driven from Philadelphia to the Jersey Shore to go fishing, and the Schols are fishermen. So my father asked, "Is anyone going out tonight?" The captain said, "Several blocks up the road is a captain, he's crazy and he will go out in any kind of weather." The operative words were, *he's crazy*. My father said, "Come on, John let's go catch that boat before it sets sail." We caught that boat and set sail. There wasn't a star in the sky. We went up one wave and came down the other side of the wave and lost all sight of land. We held on to anything that was battened down. The captain was crazy. At one point I said, "Jesus if you are on this boat, wake up!" We did catch a few fish that night – just a few, and, I learned that the most dedicated men and women who fish, are fishing in all kinds of waters and all types of conditions.

Today, the church has set sail in some pretty rough seas, fewer people are interested in organized religion and these are tough financial times for the church. You have set sail into the deep and stormy waters and you are proving that the most dedicated are always fishing for new ways to be faithful and generous. Shared ministry giving is up. Apportionment collections have gone from 78.7 percent in 2011 to 82.7 percent in 2014. We are also seeing increases in our billing collection. Our CPP collection rose from 88 percent in 2012 to 95 percent in 2014. Health insurance rose from 88 percent in to 98 percent. Property insurance rose from 90 percent to 96 percent. Because of your generosity we will continue to hold our shared ministry budget flat and with your support we believe we can even decrease the apportionments.

Our mission fund has raised more than $5 million dollars in two years. We set a goal of $12 million. Yes you have a crazy captain. No one thought we could raise $5 million in two years toward our Superstorm Sandy relief ministry and ending malaria in Africa, yet, in the midst of rough seas and challenging times, you said, let's FISH in the deeper waters. You demonstrate that we are disciples for all seasons and are ready to give your best for God. I am convinced that as we work together we will meet our financial goals by 2018. Thank you for your generous giving. Thank you for coming and fishing with me.

A Future With Hope

When Superstorm Sandy blew ashore, people were not thinking about fishing but the United Methodists of Greater New Jersey sprang into action to restore homes and to care for families and their future. We found out what it meant to cast our nets *on the other side*. We continued the good ministry and mission we were already doing in our communities and we found a way to grow our capacity for a new mission and ministry for Sandy survivors. We started a nonprofit organization, A Future With Hope that in the last two years deployed more than 9,000 volunteers from 37 states giving more than 213,000 volunteer hours. We host our volunteers in 15 host sites set up in our churches. So far we have repaired 150 homes and we are currently working on another 55 homes. Let's hear from some of our volunteers and homeowners. (A Future With Hope staff read quotes from volunteers and a video of homeowners was presented to the audience.) On October 28, 2012, one day before the storm, we never dreamed we would have achieved this in two years' time, but when Jesus said, come FISH with me, we found new nets, and new people to FISH, and we launched new boats.

We have much to celebrate, IGNITE, congregational vitality, shared ministry giving, the Mission Fund and A Future With Hope. It is all been done for the Glory of God. God has blessed our ministry.

I invite you to go to the mics and share how your congregation has been throwing your net into the community to connect with new generations of believers God has blessed our ministry.

We are seeing growth in vitality within GNJ and progress toward our strategic plan.

Challenges and Opportunities

(Bishop Schol invited key leaders on stage to discuss challenges and opportunities in our conference.)

John Bishop, Chair of Council on Finance and Administration
Rosa Williams, Conference Lay Leader
Vicki Brendler, Chair of the Connectional Table

Cultural Competency

The church is also called to face the challenges within the larger world. As United Methodists we are bringing an end to deaths by malaria. We are rebuilding after recent typhoons in the Philippians and after the earthquake in Nepal. We are drilling wells for clean water in Haiti and last year GNJ United Methodists packed more than 100,000 food packets for hungry people in developing countries. We have been engaged following the deaths of black men in Ferguson, Staten Island, North Charleston, and Baltimore. Black lives matter. I am grateful for GNJ leadership who have been praying, leading and working toward change. I am particularly grateful for Vanessa Wilson, chairperson of Religion and Race who has led conversations and work toward a 10 year journey of cultural competence. (Conversation with Vanessa Wilson about cultural competency)

(Bishop Schol invited the audience to share how their congregations are connecting with the community.)

Resourcing

(Hector Burgos, Director of Connectional Ministries took the stage.)

My name is Hector Burgos, and it is my honor to serve you as Director of Connectional Ministries.

I celebrate with all of you the many ways in which you are all sharing the good news of love, hope and justice of Jesus Christ. We just heard about our conference's vision for racial justice and inclusivity and our 10 year commitment to cultural competence. I want to share some of the ways we are coming along side you, our spiritual leaders and our congregations, to equip and support you for vital and world-changing ministry.

We are realigning all of our resources to empower you and your fellow disciples to be agents of transformation. We are developing and rolling out resources to equip you, to lead your congregations to connect with the people in the community and make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world!

Team Vital

Team Vital helps leaders create and implement a strategic ministry plan that addresses five key markers of vitality: worship, making disciples, small groups, mission and giving.

Team Vital churches:

- assess their community and ministry assets,
- become equipped for effective and fruitful ministry,
- plan future ministry, and
- receive support to put their plans into action and grow in their vitality.

Over the next three years, we want 300 churches participating in Team Vital.

Coaching

Coaches come alongside our clergy to help them seize opportunities and address challenges in their leadership and ministry. Currently, 100 clergy are being coached by District Superintendents and the Connectional Ministries Team. Our goal is that by the end of 2017, more than 300 hundred clergy will experience a season of coaching.

PaCE groups.

PaCE stands for Pursuing Clergy Excellence and is a resource that brings clergy together in peer learning groups to go deeper in learning about the five key markers of vitality and leadership development. PaCE groups also provide a unique opportunity for participants to support and encourage each other as they lead their congregations into vitality. Our goal is to have 25% of our clergy participate in a PaCE group this year, and 50% by 2017.

Laity

In collaboration with our Lay Leader, Rosa Williams and the Laity Board, we are working on a resourcing program of Laity Pursuing Excellence that will build on what we are already doing to support our lay leadership with additional leadership development: the lay leadership academy, lay servant ministries and lay certified ministers

The UMC of Greater New Jersey is committed to resource our spiritual leaders for vital ministry through Team Vital, Coaching, PaCE groups and laity programs, but that's not all. We are also going to leverage the relationships and infrastructure we have developed with A Future with Hope, to create a community economic development force for our neighborhoods in need.

Communities of Hope

Communities of Hope will use the model of the Communities of Shalom to create beacons of hope, sustainable change and community development. This summer, we will start working with four communities and their local congregations to start this program. Initially we are focusing on Sandy-impacted areas, however we will use our resources for all communities facing challenges.

Smaller Congregations

We will continue to expand our small church initiative – Mosaic, which allows small churches to use and share their resources in creative ways and collaborate in ministry to have a greater impact in the community.

Church, these are exciting times, God is doing something new in Greater New Jersey. We have heard the Lord say "cast your nets", and we are responding boldly, with faith and determination. Led by the Holy Spirit, we are resourcing and equipping spiritual leaders that are making new disciples of Jesus Christ, growing vital congregations, and transforming the world, all to the glory of God.

Young People

(Bishop Schol invited two young people to join him on stage in a discussion on youth ministries.)

Matthew Clayton
Lindsey Oster

Celebrate

Today we rejoice for how God is making new disciples through IGNITE, for how God has increased vitality in our congregations, for the renewed giving to mission and ministry by congregations, for our part in reducing the number of people dying of malaria, and for how we are renewing lives and communities through our Sandy relief and recovery ministry. Thank you for being faithful and thank you for giving your best. You are a sign of hope as you sail into deeper waters with a Gospel that is relevant and fresh for our time.

Challenges

As we celebrate, we also have challenges that will require our gifts and commitments. Growing our small congregations is important for our future. It will require congregations to desire a different future and conference leadership to develop unique resourcing to engage smaller congregations in their community. We will need to continue to face into the stiff winds of prejudice and racism in the church and in the world with renewed commitment and dedication. We will continue to grow congregational vitality, moving to greater engagement through Communities of Hope, and starting new faith communities. Yes, we have challenges and we have creative, resourceful and whole laity and clergy to FISH in challenging and choppy waters.

The Path Forward

Our path forward could not be clearer – new disciples, vital congregations and transforming the world. We are setting sail with Holy Spirit winds to FISH together. We will come along side you and support you with coaching, PaCE groups, Laity

Excellence Training, Team Vital, Communities of Hope and Mosaic Ministries. Together we will equip spiritual leaders to make disciples and grow vital congregations for the transformation of the world.

Thank you God for the great work you have begun among us. Thank you laity and clergy of Greater New Jersey, you have embarked on an ambitious mission, you are working together and facing into the head winds and you are FISHing in deep waters for the Gospel's sake.

Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee and he saw two brothers fishing, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake. Jesus said, "Come, follow me," At once they left their nets and followed him. – Matthew 4:18-20

Come, let's continue to FISH together! In the name of the one who is creator, redeemer and sustainer. AMEN.

CONFERENCE LAY LEADER'S REPORT

We know that every Sunday those sitting in the church pews are ordinary people much like Jesus' disciples Peter and John. What is amazing is that God's plan to carry out history's greatest mission, the redemption of humanity, is entrusted to ordinary people like you and me. The church is God's plan. Too many of us do not fulfill our God-given destiny to rise above the concerns of daily living and to find our purpose in exercising gifts in ministry. All of us is gifted by the Holy Spirit and called to ministry. Each one of us has been placed in the Body to use this gift in concert with others. Gifts vary, but all are essential. People serve in different ways, but all are needed. Jesus gathered the Twelve around Him and poured himself into them. The Twelve in turn poured themselves into others, and the multiplication factor took place. Pretty soon there was a whole army of people doing the work of the Kingdom, doing the work of ministry. We as laity can create a culture of lifelong learning so that we can be effective to meet challenges of the new church age. We are called to be engaged, equipped, and empowered laity; we must partner with each other and with our pastors to live out God's call for a church transforming the world.

We need the whole Body of Christ as we seek to become more vital congregations! The work of ministry is more than just preaching, but includes praying, teaching, giving, helping. Many pastors are carrying their burdens alone; do not let that happen in your church, be intentional in partnering with your pastor. You are an eyewitness to the works of Jesus Christ in your life time. Has Christ done a work in your life? Then tell someone! It may be just exactly what they need to hear, to give them faith that God can work in their life, too!

I encourage you to be more intentional in sharing your ministries with other churches and let them know what you are doing, it might be the encouragement that they need to get started. We encourage disciples to be more willing to share their faith and this must be part of our daily lifestyle. We all start off with a measure of faith, it only increases when you mediate on the Word and put it into action. Faith without action is ineffective. Your faith should be reflected in your actions.

The opportunities for lay ministries are innumerable; assess the needs in your church and community. Everyone has something to contribute. There are those who have undergone specialized training such as the Laity Leadership Academy. One of the group that attended our Laity leadership Academy last fall, received a small grant, but had no small groups in their church at the time, reported in April that they now have 20 functioning small group and there is so much excitement in the church as a result. The Lay Servant program trained 241 people this year who are now able to lead ministries such as small groups, CLM and Leadership Development programs that are intended to equip laity to engage in ministry. We will start a new program in 2016 called "Laity Pursuing Excellence" (LPE). This is a basic education program for local church administrative leaders who are newly elected as chairpersons of Administrative Council, Board of Trustees, Financial and Pastor Parish Relations Committees. The purpose of the LPE program is to assist and support new leaders with basic concepts and structure of the UMC and their committee. I have personally seen people come alive in their faith because they have undertaken a serious study or leadership program and thereby confirmed what their faith means to them and how they can put it into action. I believe that one of the most essential tasks for the Church is training and empowering laity for ministry.

We the Laity Board believes that the church that leaves the building in faith for action is a church that is following the footsteps of Christ, and their community will be glad they did. Faith in Action is a ministry that encourages Christians to mobilize and "Be the Churc h," practicing their faith by serving critical needs within their community. We can create a culture of "yes" in all congregations. Expecting people to have good ideas for ministry, and new ideas come from anywhere or anyone, allows our churches to eliminate obstacles, and practice the ministry of encouragement. In the book by Bishop Schnase ,"Just Say Yes", he states that Ideas should not always come from the center or the leaders or the inner circle, but from the margins or outer edges; that is how the church fulfills its mission. The role of the leaders of the church is to direct the attention of the church toward that margin and therefore toward mission.

I would like you to imagine the unlimited and surprising ways God can use a congregation composed of people who are equipped and unleashed to do ministry anywhere, anytime. Imagine a church where people take the words attributed to John Wesley to heart: Do all the good you can. By all the means you can. In all the ways you can. In all the places you can. At all the times you can. To all the people you can. As long as you can!

Imagine all of our churches with clear robust mission, reinforced through preaching, teaching, mentoring, leadership training and witnessing, in small groups and ministry teams. Our Conference has developed a strategic plan and resources to support the local church in strengthening these areas of ministry. Imagine your church going to places Christ would go and engage people he would engage!

Rosa Williams
Conference Lay Leader

AFRICA UNIVERSITY

Africa University is deeply grateful to the Greater New Jersey Conference for a 100% investment in the Africa University Fund (AUF) apportionment in 2014.

The Greater New Jersey Conference is one of 31 annual conferences—the highest number in recent years—to invest 100% of their asking in the AUF. Once again, your leadership and local churches have demonstrated their commitment to Africa University as a connectional ministry that is delivering on its mandate to make disciples who change the world.

Thank you, Greater New Jersey, for your prayers and for affirming the worth of this ministry by being consistent, faithful, and generous with your resources.

Strategic Priorities: Professor Munashe Furusa took the helm in July 2014 as the fourth vice chancellor in the Africa University's 23-year history. He was formally installed in March 2015 and has put fiscal accountability, student quality of life, and support for academics, at the top of his agenda. The university is now engaged in a vigorous review of its academic programs and service delivery aimed at enhancing the students' potential for life-long success.

Student Enrollment: Full-time student enrollment at Africa University held steady in 2014 with 1,478 young men and women from 25 African countries. Female students were a record 53.4% of the total enrollment in a context where women lag behind men in access to higher education.

Graduation: In June 2014, 480 young people were awarded degrees from Africa University at the 20th graduation ceremony, bringing to total number of alumni to just under 5,300. Without your support, a college education would have been unattainable for the majority of these students.

Training and Research: Africa University remains a sought-after partner in addressing critical skills and capacity gaps in sub-Saharan Africa. A collaboration with the Raoul Wallenberg Institute in Sweden supports a new master's degree program in Human Rights, Peace, and Development. Africa University is also preparing to launch its first PhD program, which links issues of Peace, Leadership, Governance, and Development, and targets policymakers.

Leadership and Service: Africa University graduates are answering the call to serve, heal, and uplift communities. Currently, more than a dozen graduates are helping 'the least of these' to experience God's love through service as Global Mission Fellows and missionaries in Africa, Europe, and Latin America.

You, the members of the Greater New Jersey Conference, have helped to launch a good work and nurtured it with your second mile gifts for scholarships, community outreach, and other important work. We thank you and celebrate this

Ebenezer moment (*1 Samuel 7:12*), but the work is not yet finished. For every individual who has been touched by the ministry that is Africa University, there are many others—tens of thousands, in fact—who are awaiting the miracle of an answered prayer.

As you gather for the 2015 Greater New Jersey Annual Conference, we pray you will remain steadfast in your efforts to invest 100% of the asking in the Africa University Fund, and other shared ministries, this year and in years to come.

Please continue to pray for Africa University.

Encourage your local church to become an annual scholarship donor.

Bring fellow leaders in your church or district together to explore the possibility of investing in an endowed scholarship which can support one student a year in perpetuity.

Remember to include Africa University in your will as you make your personal estate plans.

Thank you. God bless and keep you always in abundance.

ARCHIVES AND HISTORY COMMISSION ON

Thomas Carlyle, eminent 19th century English historian and philosopher, is quoted to say, "History is the first distinct product of humankind's spiritual nature, the earliest expression of what can be called thought." History, and the archive by which history draws its memory, are essential to the spiritual well-being of the church. The Commission on Archives and History is active and focused to do its part for the spiritual well-being of Greater New Jersey Annual Conference congregations.

There were two major events which consumed the combined resources and time of our commission members. The first event dealt with history, namely, hosting the Northeast Jurisdiction Commission on Archives and History's annual meeting last May in Madison, NJ. The three day event celebrated colonial Methodism in the North Jersey area. Part of the celebration included Dr. Robert Williams' keynote address on the two hundredth anniversary of Thomas Coke's death. Other presentations included Frank Greenagle's presentation on colonial era Methodist Church architecture s evidence by the buildings still standing today. Reverend John Callanan, our conference historian, presented a talk about Francis Asbury in North Jersey with an emphasis on the Newton area. Other items of note include tours of Washington's Headquarters in Morristown, former Newton Episcopal Church rectory where Asbury stayed which is now the home of United Methodist Homes trustee Charles Tice, and dinner and a program on Southern New Jersey hymn writers hosted by Bristol Glen. A first-rate historical program guide conceived, written and published by Callanan was handed out to the participants. Almost everyone who attended agreed it was one of the finest meetings in recent memory.

If the first event dealt with history, the second event is pure archives. After negotiating with Ancestry.com for two years to digitize the vital church records in our holdings, we can report that the project is near completion. Perhaps it is best that we let our archivist, Walt Jones, tell the story in his own words:

"It was a formidable task but with the assistance of Don DeGroat, we managed to collect thirty-eight boxes containing four hundred and twelve vital records which include membership, baptisms, marriages, deaths and burials weighing a total 1,302 lbs. The project will reduce the time currently being used to research the many requests for such information. The archivist has received numerous requests since the records were shipped to Utah for digitization. For now the archivist replies to such requests that we will not have the records returned to us until April 2015. The patron will either wait till late spring for a reply or go to Ancestry.com. It goes without saying the having the information on the Internet will be a big help to someone researching their family."

There were a total of forty-three information requests for the archivist to answer. A statistical breakdown shows the range of these requests:

Genealogical Searches - 5
Baptismal Records – 8
Marriage Records – 10

Referrals to Local Churches and Other Repositories – 7
Miscellaneous Inquiries – 13

During the past year the archives received eleven acquisitions ranging from closed churches to transfers from other archival repositories.

Carmine Tilghman donation of a State Street Methodist Church, Camden, church plate
Bridgeton Central United Methodist Church records
Conovertown United Methodist Church records
Elizabeth: Calvary-Holy Trinity United Methodist Church records
Elizabeth: St. James United Methodist Church records
Finesville United Methodist Church records
Gloucester: Highland Park United Methodist Church records
Goshen United Methodist Church records
Richwood United Methodist Church
Mount Pleasant Methodist Episcopal Church records and Gloucester Circuit Stewards Book acquired from the New Jersey State Archives

Another responsibility assigned to the archivist is to compile a yearly list of significant local church anniversaries. In 2015, there are twenty-five such anniversaries which are listed on one of our web pages.

In our October 2014 meeting we decided to direct the work to reflective the five areas of vital congregations. Five commission members will submit articles to the *Relay* on each of the vital areas as they pertain to archives and history. The commission's work to the church and general public this past year reflects four of the vital areas with the exception being Dollars for Mission. Worship attendance is boosted by helping churches celebrate their anniversaries and Heritage Sunday services. Profession of faith is manifested in the theme "Remembering Who We Will Be" which connects congregations with their United Methodist past in order ground each United Methodist in their powerful spiritual Methodist DNA. This, in turn, gives the individual assured confidence in faith that produces inspiration for bold initiatives in the future. For effective small group ministry, Archives and History teaches groups that to be effective for the larger congregation's ministry is to have each small group member understand and ingest the primary role expected of them by revisiting early Methodist class meeting dynamics. Spiritual accountability to each other on a weekly basis creates covenantal faith with God and each other. The writing or updating a local church history permits members to find their gifts for individual and congregational mission.

Archives and History is actively involved with celebrating and informing the annual conference on its history through direct participation with churches, advocating and interpreting relevant topics through various outlets, identifying historic spaces and promoting a local churches contribution to the larger memory of the annual conference.

One such instance involved both John Callanan and Mark Shenise by helping the Flanders United Methodist Church celebrate their two-hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary last fall. Dignitaries ranging from local, state and federal politicians sent their greetings ranging from Mount Olive's mayor to congratulatory letters from Governor Chris Christie and President Barak Obama.

The South Seaville Camp Meeting became the latest historic site designated by the annual conference. Don DeGroat registered the site with the General Commission on Archives and History. Reverend Bill Wilson presented a historic site plaque to the South Seaville Camp Meeting Association.

Florence United Methodist Church history is the 2015 Robert B. Steelman Methodist History Award winner. The judges decided on Florence after reviewing other submissions. Each year the winning history is converted into a digital format and resides on one of our web page for public reading.

Archives and History took part in last May's Act of Repentance service. This was done by giving a short lesson on why we need to have an act of repentance through the lenses of United Methodist mission history. We are in the process of following up our contribution to the Act by working with St. John's church in Fordville to tell their story via oral histories with key members. The commission is also in the process of purchasing equipment to aid in the project which will be later used for other oral histories around the annual conference.

Finally, Archives and History reminded local churches and their members to place American flags on the graves of United Methodists veterans for Memorial Day as well as to purchase clergy grave markers for our deceased ministers.

As we look to the final year in the present quadrennium, Archives and History will continue to find ways to contribute to the spiritual well-being of churches and their members through archiving records, celebrating significant milestones, advocating for groups that need help to tell their storied past and help each church to look forward to making a difference as vital congregations in the Kingdom of God.

CAMPS, CONFERENCES AND RETREATS, INC., COMMISSION ON (CCCR)

GOAL: GNJ Camping will become a year-round center of Christian community that, through effective use of our resources and connectionalism, better serves all contingents in our shared mission of developing disciples and leaders for the future.

The Greater NJ Camping Ministries has been struggling financially for many years. In order to preserve the financial integrity of the ministry and plan for the future effectively, the decision was made in 2014 to rest the summer camps at both the Aldersgate Center and the Pinelands Center at Mt. Misery. The Pinelands Center remained open for retreats and youth events year-round.

During 2014 Jestie Higgins, the Executive Director of CCCR, Inc., worked closely with GNJ Conference staff to evaluate the financial situation. A strategic plan was presented and approved by the Board of Directors which aligns CCCR, Inc., with the strategic plan adopted by GNJAC. Working closely with the vision of the GNJ Conference has allowed CCCR, Inc., to reach out in ministry to diverse communities and re-imagine camping and retreat ministries in the 21st century.

In 2015 the financial situation has stabilized and improved enough for the Board to consider offering three weeks of summer camp at the Pinelands Center. We continue to work closely with Conference staff and leaders to provide opportunities for groups and individuals to connect to God through nature and to fulfill our mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

CHRISTIAN UNITY AND INTERFAITH RELATIONS (CUIR)

Since the 2014 session of Annual Conference the Commission on Christian Unity and Interfaith Relations has continued to be successful in their work. Committee members have met in October and November 2014 and February and April 2015.

Some of the highlights of our work includes:

- A Methodist/Episcopal Theology Day held at Drew Seminary on March 5, 2015. The event was well attended and included Methodist representatives Dr. Fred Day, Rev. Dr. Robert Williams, Dr. Terry Todd and Bishop Ernest Lyght.
- Sending four persons (2 clergy and 2 laity) to the National Workshop on Christian Unity in April of 2015. This event was a great opportunity to train ecumenical leaders and provide leadership to the denominational event.
- Members serving on the NJ Council of Churches in their Policy and Theology groups as well as one representative serving as a Board of Directors member.
- Serving the National Council of Churches by having a member on their Intergenerational Think Tank. Working with Cynthia Kent who is serving the World Council of Churches.
- Presenting 2 Bishop's Award for Christian Unity and Interfaith Relations awards at the 2015 session of Annual Conference. The congregation award was given to Manasquan UMC for their Interfaith walk with the Boy Scouts of America. The individual award was given to Rev. Jacqueline Burgess for her work with the New Jersey Council of Churches and previous work as the chair of Christian Unity and Interfaith Concerns.
- Co-hosting an event for the 2015 Annual Conference with the Board of Church and Society and Religion and Race.
- Planning an Interfaith Bus Tour for the Annual Conference in 2015/2016 as well as a new class to offer for the District Days of Learning.

CHURCH AND SOCIETY, BOARD OF

Last year our motto was PLAN….PLAN….PLAN, this year it is ACTION…ACTION...ACTION. We continue to work on three primary issues, which are: Immigration, Prison Reform and Poverty. We also work on peace, environmental and housing issues.

Rev. Neal Christie, Assistant General Secretary for Education & Leadership Formation at the General Board of Church and Society was our keynote speaker at our Dinner at the 2014 Annual Conference. He shared with us that if we plan as a conference, than take ACTION, change will come. We gave one Peace with Justice Grant to First UMC of Avalon for their program to build bridges of Hope, Healing and Recovery within the community.

Resources from the General Board of Church and Society and other places are shared with the Public Theology Advocates (PTA's), this enables them to keep the local churches informed on what is happening in the nation and globally on justice issues. A gathering of the PTA's will be scheduled to share with them on how to continue to INFORM, PLAN and put into ACTION programs/events that benefit their community. We sent two individuals to the GBCS Young Clergy Leadership Forum to learn how to include and be aware of advocacy, bring justice and further peace in their ministries.

It is important to work with ecumenical and secular groups to see action. The Board has become a member of the Anti-Poverty Network of New Jersey. In this way, our churches can be informed of what is happening in the state of New Jersey. We wanted to hold a poverty summit, but instead we linked up with this organization's poverty summit. Sixteen from our Conference attended the December 2014 Poverty Summit. At the last Annual Conference, the District Poverty Reduction Committees were added to our portfolio. We will work with them, if needed, to become organized, help with planning, encourage them in the work they are already doing and work on a conference strategy plan.

A network of over 150 UM have been engaged in educational events, including 6 District Days of Learning, Mission U and presentations at local congregations. Members of the Prison Reform subcommittee have attended the Christian Unity Gathering of the National Council of Churches (NCC) where Prison Reform was one of the issues discussed. The Board will be looking at the NJ Interfaith Statement Against Torture, restrictions on isolated confinement in correctional facilities, and the Smarter Sentencing Act.

Immigration is a strong concern for our conference. As laws come into effect, how will it affect our members, churches and conference? We are looking at ways for our churches to be advocates and a voice for those that are unable to be heard. One way is our work with First Friends, an ecumenical group that works with people that are being detained.

In the past couple of months, there has been dissension, especially between police officers and the black community. As we look toward peace, we must step back and see what can be done to get there. Our board supported the Conference Committee on Religion and Race and Black Methodists for Church Renewal (BMCR) on beginning that dialogue. More opportunities are being planned where our conference begins to deal with peace and justice. We look forward to working

THE CONNECTIONAL TABLE

This year has been a busy one of moving into alignment with our Strategic Plan for Ministry! We are encouraged to see signs of life and statistical and spiritual turning around in our churches as we live into the plan (as you will learn in the Leadership Report). We are thankful for the vision of Bishop John Schol and the work of the Connectional Ministry Team. This team, along with our District Superintendents, has really been working hard to be trained and ready to deliver promised strategies to help our churches grow more vitally alive in Christ, more connected to the needs of our communities, and be more intentional in our work as we continue to be whole and holy organizationally.

Over the past year we were saddened at the resignation of Bruce Hartman as Director of Connectional Ministries; but we welcome Rev. Hector Burgos to that role. Hector has been part of the Connectional Ministries Team and so is able to hit the ground running to accomplish the mission of Christ among us.

As a Connectional Table we have functioned as balcony thinkers in our strategic work but we have also worked together to bring the budget into alignment with our Strategic Plan. We continue to oversee the process of transformation of the conference as we focus on refocusing our boards and agencies from a model of program to a model of governance.

CUMAC (Center of United Methodist Aid to the Community)

This year CUMAC –the Center of United Methodist Aid to the Community- is celebrating a major milestone, a 30th birthday! From humble origins in a borrowed Methodist Church closet, we have grown considerably over the past three decades. CUMAC now operates a multilayered response to hunger and poverty and acts as a leader in securing a more equitable world for all of God's children. We are so appreciative of all our United Methodist sisters and brothers who played a part in making CUMAC's ministry possible.

CUMAC began when a local Paterson school teacher and member of Totowa United Methodist Church, Hugh Dunlop, noticed that his students were coming to class hungry and started a small class pantry to help address their need. Hugh quickly saw a bigger need for food and nourishment within Paterson and worked tirelessly to grow his feeding efforts. Throughout the late '70s and '80s, Hugh would share his work far and wide, visiting churches throughout the region to talk about hunger and to unite people of all walks of life in work to address it. He would often share M&M candies with the message, "As you enjoy this small treat, think about the hunger being experienced by others. Think about how you can help make a difference." Ultimately he brought together an eclectic group from churches all over, uniting individuals from some of New Jersey's most affluent zip codes to serve the least among us and create change for all involved.

Today CUMAC runs multiple programs dedicated to addressing the root causes of hunger and poverty in Paterson, Passaic County and beyond. Efforts to feed the hungry have expanded and include a large-scale pantry as well as an additional mobile and satellite pantry that collectively feed over 3,400 people every month. Its warehouse processes over 2 million pounds of food a year and it operates the only depot in the area that has the capacity to store, truck and share resources with a network 35+ other feeding programs. In 2015, CUMAC became the administrator of the Community Food Coalition, an association of feeding programs working together to address hunger in Passaic County. CUMAC's Executive Director, Rev. Patricia Bruger, recently played a large role in securing "breakfast after the bell", ensuring that Paterson's students have access to the food they need to succeed in school. CUMAC continues to advocate and educate about the damaging effects of hunger.

Over thirty years, CUMAC's services have grown to include a number of programs dedicated to addressing and ameliorating the root causes of hunger and poverty. In 2014, close to 200 individuals came to CUMAC's Community Closet for help recovering after fire, flood and other disasters as well as domestic violence and homelessness. Community collections brought just under 1,000 holiday gifts to youngsters living in shelters or with serious illness. Easter baskets brought similar cheer to children in need and close to 500 backpacks full of school supplies helped returning students feel prepared to learn and grow. One of our newest programs, Place of Promise, has provided permanent, supportive housing to an incredible group of men and women, allowing them to transition out of chronic homelessness and focus on getting back on their feet. Pathways to Work, a job training program, helped countless individuals develop the skills needed to move on to gainful employment.

It takes a small army to make CUMAC's mission possible and ensure all who come to us can be greeted with open arms and open doors. In 2014 over 2,800 volunteers logged over 46,300 hours of service. An incredible 43% of those volunteers came to us through churches in the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference. We are grateful for all your support. They've come as youth groups, eager to beat their bag-packing records from previous years, seminary students hoping to discover their calling on the path to ordination, bible studies and lay groups working together to grow spiritually and emotionally through commitment to service. Some come for a one day learning opportunity; some for mission weeks; still others make a weekly commitment to sharing their gifts with their brothers and sisters in need. It would be impossible to acknowledge all of the churches and districts who work to ensure that CUMAC can feed the hungry and minister to the poor, but please know that our gratitude knows no bounds.

One such church, Arcola United Methodist of Paramus, began volunteering with their small bible study close to two years ago. After study, they would share a small meal together and then come to CUMAC to lend their time and talent filling a variety of roles. Over the years they've engaged friends, neighbors and new congregants in their work to feed the hungry. It has been amazing to watch the group grow and blossom during their time packing bags of food, sorting household items and working together to help others.

As recounted by Rev. Griffith, "Volunteering at CUMAC with my church has meant that we come face to face with how poverty affects people, it helps to break down barriers of misperception, and gives us a chance to see Christ in the faces of his other children. Brown Bag to CUMAC has opened that for people who are not church members, but attend the bible

study." Lay leader Nancy adds, "Our Monday morning Bible study group at Arcola United Methodist Church has been blessed in many ways helping to serve those in need by volunteering time at CUMAC. We have a simple mantra: Let's be bold for Christ and put the Word of God that we study into action!"

This past summer, a large summer camp run through Marrow Memorial Church in Maplewood came for a learning day with 70 incredible, eager young people from many different religious backgrounds. They had designated CUMAC as the recipient of proceeds from their summer production of Peter Pan and wanted to know more about the ministry they would be supporting. Together they participated in educational activities to learn more about hunger and poverty, partook in a prayer walk for those served by CUMAC's mission, and shared a meal reflecting a typical Food Stamps (now SNAP) diet. The enthusiasm of the young students and their thought-provoking questions about hunger and poverty were beyond uplifting.

In addition to offering those in need a shoulder to lean on during difficult times, CUMAC often plays a less obvious, but equally important role connecting groups and individuals with the opportunities they need to grow in faith and discipleship. CUMAC has born witness to business professionals making the decision to pursue a call to ministry after witnessing God's goodness in action through pantry work. We've watched UMC youth groups grow into dedicated young disciples for Christ. We've seen groups of all ages and backgrounds expand in numbers and develop in their commitment to service. All share a common passion to act as the hands of God, a call awoken and encouraged by the smallest of tasks to help the least among us. A calling that brings so many together in our common desire to build up the Kingdom of God.

As CUMAC continues in a yearlong celebration of our 30 year history feeding people and changing lives, we invite you to join us. Come take a tour and see God's love in action. Send your vacation bible school for a mission trip, invite a speaker to share with your congregations or groups. Call, email or visit our website and learn about the many opportunities we offer to partner in mission and grow together in discipleship. Be sure to stop by our table at Annual Conference, grab a handful of complimentary M&Ms, and share in our story. Become a part of our growing army of disciples, and help us ensure none among us suffer when together we are called to love one another.

EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY

The Educational Society has been assisting men and women of New Jersey, called by God to full time Christian service, in their pursuit of a theological education. By providing scholarships and loans for more than one hundred and fifty years to persons preparing to serve in Christian ministry, our Annual Conference has invested in the future of the Church of Jesus Christ.

Scholarships are awarded to candidates for ordained ministry who are matriculated in an accredited theological seminary or graduate school approved by the United Methodist Church University Senate (UMCUS) and who are members of a United Methodist Church within the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference (GNJAC), or who are clergy of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference engaged in continuing education at an accredited graduate or theological school approved by UMCUS who are not eligible for Ministerial Education Funds..

Interest free loans are available to men and women preparing for full time Christian service, matriculated full or half time in an accredited college, seminary, or graduate school, including Course of Study, approved by UMCUS. Applicants must be a member of a United Methodist Church within the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference.

The distribution of scholarships and loans is determined annually by the Board of Directors of the Educational Society. $7,000.00 in loans were granted in 2014. In this same year, four scholarships totaling $13,000.00 were awarded to Onay Lopez-Diaz, Joshua J. Mularski, Tae Youl "Leo" Park, and William Wilson, Jr.

The Educational Society is supported by the repayment of loans, interest earned on early endowments, the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference, and contributions from local churches and individuals. Contributions may be made through the Conference Advance # 622. It is an opportunity for the local church to affirm the ministry of pastors who have benefited from Educational Society assistance by "paying it forward" through contributions to Conference Advance #622.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION, COUNCIL ON (CFA)

The economy of New Jersey continued improving in 2014. The Shared Ministry collection rate was up 2%. 391 of our local churches paid 100% of their shared ministry allocation and 485 paid 100% of their billables, both high water marks for recent years.. We are grateful to the churches of the conference for their stewardship.

As in prior years, committees, boards and agencies were prudent in their spending and the income from conference investments continued their recovery. In addition, in 2013 CFA received about $1,000,000 from the Board of Pensions and Health Benefits for services CFA performed for it since merger in accord with merger legislation. The result is that we ended 2014 with a total surplus of $2,785,000.

CFA feels that a surplus reserve of 10% of the expected budget is more than adequate for emergency needs and is 2% over the minimum required by conference legislation. As a result, CFA will be proposing legislation to allow the use of surplus in excess of the 10% to reduce the mortgage on the new building.

For the eighth year in a row, our conference paid 100% of its general church apportionments. GNJAC was one of the 25 out of 57 conferences that paid 100%. 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: 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. The full implementation is nearly complete and we will be proposing in legislation that beginning in 2016, there will be no further caps and all Shared Ministry askings will be as determined solely by the new formula.

1. In accord with conference legislation, and with the leadership of the Bishop and Cabinet, all of the churches receiving equitable or supplemental compensation grants paid 100% of their Disciplinary Obligations.
2. Financial training has again been provided at the District Days of Learning. Emphasis was on the various matters of interest to local churches.
3. Conference investments again performed well in 2014, matching the benchmarks. Our portfolio is well diversified and as a result of our investment gain trends over the last several years, the CFA increased the payout to all funds and investors to 5% per year beginning in 2014.
4. On line 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 meeting reporting timetables. We thank the local churches for being willing to work with the new system.
5. Several years ago, the CFA felt that many churches did not apply for the credit to which they were entitled for health care costs incurred. We authorized the Conference Treasurer and his staff to assist any local church by preparing the application for the credit. We believe this has resulted in credits being received by the local churches of our conference in an amount in excess of $1,300,000. Unfortunately, this federal program ended in 2014 for the year 2013.

The Conference Council on Finance and Administration wants to thank Bishop Schol, 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.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION, GENERAL COUNCIL ON (GCFA)

The Financial Services Committee reviewed all General Church board and agency spending plans for 2015 and approved same. The primary elements of the review are to determine that the spending plans conform to the budget approved by the 2012 General Conference, are within the forecasted receipts and that unreasonable reserves are not being accumulated.

The full GCFA Board is working with the Connectional Table to establish the proposed budget for the 2016-2020 quadrennium. Initial numbers indicate an increase of about 1% in the budgets of the general church agencies. The Audit Committee received and extensively discussed with the external auditor the report of the audits of all general church boards and agencies. The reports on UMC General Boards and agencies 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. It also has a fund to be used in related proceedings regarding annual conferences or local churches. This support is to be limited to matters of denominational significance.

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.

The Episcopal Church is having particular difficulty with this issue, primarily because prior to the 1970's, they had no trust clause and all the churches were locally owned. The United Methodist Church has had very few attempts by local churches to break away and retain their assets, none successful to this point.

Members of the GNJAC may be aware that GCFA and GBGM have halted all payments to the East Africa Annual Conference over which Bishop Wandabula presides. Salary and office expenses were also reduced. This is a result of long term inability to get Bishop Wandabula to provide documentation to show that his uses of the funds were appropriate. This matter has been submitted to the Judicial Council.

GCFA has continued adjusting to a new and smaller Board (21 vs. 41 previously). It is going well and most Board members prefer the new arrangement.

Among those who retired in 2013-2014 was the GCFA General Counsel. We have hired Steve Lambert to fill that position. Steve was a very senior member of a prestigious national law firm and was ready to retire from that position and give something back to the church. He is a life-long United Methodist and has been active on various United Methodist boards. Sandy Brown, one of Greater New Jersey's chancellors, participated in the interviewing process.

I am personally involved with an effort to have administrative services provided on a shared basis among the general boards. Payroll and benefit services have been integrated into a shared service among the general agencies and shared meeting planning and registration services are also up and running. The thrust is to assure good stewardship of general church funds.

Submitted by John Bishop, Member

GARRETT-EVANGELICAL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Early in the calendar year, I met with various constituencies of Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, including alums, faculty, staff, trustees, and students regarding their hopes and concerns for the school. As a result, we began the 2014-2015 academic year with the following priorities:

- To prepare and equip our graduates as public theologians,
- To nurture a more diverse community at Garrett-Evangelical so that the entire community develops cultural competency,
- To value and promote inclusivity at Garrett-Evangelical, and
- To construct a sustainable model for theological education.

Public Theology

This year we launched a Public Theology Lecture Series to help the Garrett-Evangelical community understand more about the intersection of theological perspectives and shared values held in the public arena as persons in ministry work with others toward the common good and the wellbeing of all persons and creation. The lecture series included:

- October 15, 2014: Rev. Janet Wolf, Director of Haley Farm and Nonviolent Organizing for the Children's Defense Fund, lectured on various Children's Defense Fund programs including restorative justice, mass incarceration, cradle to prison pipeline, and freedom schools.
- December 3, 2014: Dr. Mark Lewis Taylor, Maxwell M. Upton Professor of Theology and Culture at Princeton Theological Seminary considered structures of the global orders and everyday living which public theologians may claim to engage and where "the powers and principalities" are always in contestation in "public" life.

In the fall, we will offer a course, "Public Theology in the City," taught by Dr. David Frenchak, former president of Seminary Consortium for Urban Pastoral Education (SCUPE). The class will collaborate with the mayor's office in Evanston on an anti-violence initiative. Dr. Frenchak will also provide a Public Theology lecture this spring.

Cultural Competency & Inclusivity

As part of the commitment to nurturing a more diverse community, we welcomed a new Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Luis R. Rivera, our first Latino Academic Dean. Our current ethnic/racial profile is:

- 20% black; 6% Asian; 3% Hispanic/Latino; and 54% White; 14% International
- More than 33 religious traditions, four continents, 15 countries and 36 states are represented in the student body
- 232 students are United Methodist with 25 additional students from other Pan-Methodist denominations
- 94 new students began their studies at Garrett-Evangelical this fall, raising total fall enrollment to 365 (FTE of 305)
- The average age of the entering Master of Divinity student is 31
- 52% of the study body is women

Consistent attention to issues of inclusivity, justice, and grace within the seminary setting are critical for preparing future leaders to enter an increasingly diverse world. To respond to these concerns, Garrett-Evangelical will offer a number of Circle of Trust conversations this spring for trustees, faculty, staff, and students. Our goals are: 1) to provide safe space to discuss difficult topics, 2) to reduce any gap between stated values and actual behavior, both personally for participants and institutionally; and 3) to update our 1997 statements of inclusivity.

Sustainable Theological Education

Garrett-Evangelical is beginning work on a Sustainable Theological Education Model for the school. We are guided by a commitment to generational stewardship of our resources and to maintaining a thriving seminary for the future. We will attend to the areas of business, academics programs, and external programs.

Our priority continues to be making seminary education affordable. To this end we award more than $2.5 million in scholarship aid to students each year and we lead all United Methodist seminaries in the Dollars for Scholars program with 45 recipients. In October, the seminary publicly launched The Final Lap of its $100 million Forging Our Future campaign, and announced that $88 million has been received to date. Much has already been accomplished, but more remains to be done (expanding the number of new leadership scholarships from 80 to 100, renovating Sherman apartments, endowing several more faculty positions, continuing to grow the unrestricted endowment), gifts for any of these goals are always welcome.

Thank you for your continued interest in our work. We are dedicated to serving The United Methodist Church and the church at large. For more information about Garrett-Evangelical and our work, I encourage you to visit our website, www.garrett.edu, and to visit us on campus.

About Us

Garrett-Evangelical is the result of the interweaving of three institutions:

- Garrett Biblical Institute, the first Methodist seminary in the Midwest, was established in 1853 by largely the same church people who founded Northwestern University.
- Chicago Training School, established in 1885, was an important force for women in ministry and for developing service agencies throughout Chicago. Chicago Training School merged with Garrett Biblical Institute in 1934.
- Evangelical Theological Seminary, located in Naperville and founded as a seminary of the Evangelical Church

(later the Evangelical United Brethren) in 1873, joined with Garrett Theological Seminary in 1974 to form Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary.

GLOBAL MINISTRIES, CONFERENCE BOARD OF (CBGM)

The Conference Board of Global Ministries works with missionaries, Advance Specials, agencies and Conference staff and aligns with the strategic goals of the Conference.

ADVANCE SPECIALS:

During 2014 each Advance Special (Advanced) was assigned to a CBGM member who was in touch with them to make sure that they were still in ministry, had an operating Board of Directors orTrustees, and visited their site. Although two of the Advances were found to be non-functional, their District Superintendents have requested that they be allowed to continue on the list and given time to reorganize. CBGM has granted the requests and is recommending that all the Advances from 2014 be continued through 2015-2016. The list can be found among the resolutions.
Although Conference does not fund Advance Specials directly, they are encouraged to apply directly to churches and the churches are encouraged to support them by sending funds to them through the Conference treasurer. One of the future measures of an Advances viability will be the support it receives.

PARTNERSHIPS:

CBGM is looking at evaluating areas of partnerships for Greater New Jersey. Some areas under consideration are Argentina, Haiti, Liberia, Nepal, North Katanga, Philippines, South Korea, Tanzania, Thailand, and Ukraine. Each area has been assigned to a member of CBGM who is researching the work being done in those areas. CGBM will make recommendations to Bishop Schol regarding different types of partnerships that could be made. The Bishop will make selections based on discussions with the corresponding area's bishop. Recommendations for the next quadrennium should be made at the 2016 Annual Conference.

MISSION FAIRS:

In order to help local churches become more active in missions, CBGM hopes to have a mission fair each year in one of the three geographic areas of the Conference.

The purpose of a mission fair is to provide a platform/venue for churches/individuals to share their experiences, to learn what others are doing in mission, to learn that size does not matter, to network, to provide resources, to know what resources the greater church can provide, to think outside the box, recognize/seize mission opportunities, to be intentional.

CBGM also wants to recognize and lift up the mission being done by many of our churches, and show that, by working with others, great things can be done. The first fair is planned for the central region (Raritan Valley, Northern Shore and Capital Districts) on Saturday, September 19, 2015 at Christ Church in Piscataway. The time is 8:30 am to 1:00 pm.

GLOBAL MISSIONS, CONFERENCE SECRETARY OF (CSGM)

In Greater New Jersey, the position of CSGM is also held by the Chair of the Board of Global Ministries. The CSGM works with the General Board of Global Ministries in accommodating missionaries who will be itinerating in our Conference. During 2014, Princess Jusu, from Sierra Leone and working in Liberia, visited churches in Mendham, Red Bank, and Sussex during October. George Miller, from Texas and serving in Germany, preached in Hillsdale at the end of October. Mutwale and Kabaka, a husband and wife team from North Katanga and serving in Tanzania, were in New Jersey in November. They spoke at the United Methodist Women's training event, preached in Cherry Hill, Red Bank and Nutley, and visited both CUMAC and CAMP.

The CSGM also attended the four day annual meeting of CSGMs of the Jurisdiction in Aston, Pennsylvania.

HISPANIC/LATINO MINISTRY, NATIONAL PLAN FOR

Vision

A diverse and inclusive church that is transforming the community and expanding God's Kingdom.

Mission

To empower Hispanic/Latino leaders to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

For more than 20 years, The National Plan for Hispanic/Latino Ministry has helped plant churches and revitalize existing congregations. It has also trained leaders and created contextualized training resources. It has been our commitment to work with the Hispanic-Latino communities in the Greater New Jersey Conference to continue developing a strong laity and clergy with resources in their own language and cultural context. With the support and guidance of The National Committee of the National Plan for Hispanic/Latino Ministry we have designed and developed a plan that will fulfill our vision and mission with the goal of developing more vital Hispanic- Latino congregations. As a result of the evaluation at our strategic planning session at the beginning of 2014, we identified new areas that need support in order to develop more vital congregations. These areas are Leadership Development, Spiritual Growth, Social Concerns, Developing New Churches and Small Groups.

Our strategic plan starts by identifying active leaders within our churches and communities of faith that are committed to learn, work in teams with their pastors and other leaders, and have a genuine desire to grow in the Wesleyan theology.

Programs that we developed:

- The HNP Module trainings offered in 2014 empowered laity from 6 Hispanic Latino congregations to be more involved in the ministry of their local community, including 3 young adults. As a result of this training we have 13 new Lay Missioners of the National Hispanic/Latino Plan who are working in their local churches. 23 people completed the NHP Module 1 training. As a result, several churches have reported new small group ministries (communities of faith), and community outreach programs/initiatives that are being led by those who participated in the modules.
- We continue supporting The Walk to Emmaus in Spanish (second). It is proving to be a highly effective resource to develop lay leadership and spiritual growth. The 72 hour experience is informative, highly inspirational and transformational for those who participate. Pastors are reporting an increased level of participation and commitment to the local church in those who have experienced Emmaus. We're also seeing an increased understanding of the concept of servant-leadership among Hispanic/Latino laity. This year we had 26 new pilgrims who participated in the Walk to Emmaus Retreat.
- Our yearly Hispanic Leadership Award event not only celebrates lay leadership in our Hispanic congregations but also strengthens our sense of community, fellowship and networking. More Hispanic/Latino from our local churches are participating every year, enhancing their understanding and appreciation for the connectional nature of our church.
- We supported the IGNITE program in which more than 40 Hispanic youth participated. As a result, they are doing rallies among our churches, engaging and organizing on a Conference level, and worshipping God in their own way using their gifts and talents.
- After several years of designing and praying, we developed a Laity Biblical Theological Academy in Spanish (SELAH) that provides enhanced/contextualized theological education for lay leaders from a Wesleyan perspective. The 2 year program covers topics such as Church History, Systematic Theology, UMC doctrine and polity, Worship/Preaching, Evangelism, and more. This program is making theological education available to lay leaders that otherwise would not be able to have it, due to lack of affordability, immigration status, and/or family/job responsibilities. The academy started in September 2014 with 19 lay students, and is being facilitated by experienced clergy with a strong theological and ministry background in our denomination.
- Two annual gatherings for the clergy families (summer and winter).
- After the Annual Conference, we celebrate the new appointments and ordinations of our Hispanic clergy.

We have a lot of challenges, but we also are very excited and optimistic with what God is doing among our churches and in our Conference. We look forward to keep on providing support, unity, and resources to our pastors and laity to become a

Vital Church, and resourcing and developing workshop and training in our own language and culture context. We also look forward to empowering our children and providing space to our children and youth because they are the present and the future of the church. We will continue to give grants to new projects that are in accordance with our mission and vision and encourage our Hispanic churches and ministries to find their gifts and new ways to make disciples for the transformation of the world.

NATIVE AMERICAN MINISTRIES, COMMITTEE ON (CONAM)

At the 2012 General Conference, an Act of Repentance Service with the Indigenous People was held. It was asked of all the conferences to do the same. At the 2014 Annual Conference, we had our Act of Repentance Service. From that came the next steps that CoNAM would take to be a resource and advocate for all Indigenous People in the Greater New Jersey Conference, and nationally and globally.

We continue to support the Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape Tribe in their Christmas, Elders and Youth programs. We are working on a meeting with the other Tribes in the conference. We sent six youth to the Peg Legged Flamingo event, which is a Native American Youth Leadership program sponsored by the Native American International Caucus (NAIC).

It is important for Native people to be involved in the life of the church. Many of the members have attended events to learn more about the roles and responsibilities of the CoNAM. One of these events shared how to develop a youth ministry from a native concept. We are working with St. John UMC the only Native ministry in the conference to revamp their children/youth/young adult ministry.

We must have Native American Ministry Sunday (NAMS) representatives in the local churches. The first training was done in the Delaware Bay District. These trainings will be held in all the districts. In this way, churches will be informed about NAMS, be aware of the Native people in their communities, and learn to advocate for issues that relate to Native people.

ORDAINED MINISTRY, BOARD OF (BOOM)

We rejoice in this truth: God continues to move mightily in our midst!

We witness this movement as individuals quietly and eagerly respond to God's call upon their lives, as congregations listen to the whispers of the Spirit in their encouragement of such calls, and as committees at every level guide and nurture the gifts God has provided. The Board of Ordained Ministry seeks to provide support to each of these dimensions of the journey.

Along the way, we are blessed to celebrate the ways that God's grace is reaching beyond the local church, as we receive word from those in extension ministry, actively sharing the good news in diverse places. Their witness reminds us of the great power and the broad reach of the ministry we all share.

In January, the full Board, along with all Chairs of District Committees on Ministry, Cabinet members, and Extended Cabinet members, gathered for a day of strategic conversation and planning. In a lively process of group discernment, we lifted up the gifts needed for ministry in our time and place, the importance of nurturing a culture of call at all levels (starting with the local setting), and the complex nature of recruitment. It was a day of shared enthusiasm and thoughtful commitment. We look forward to additional opportunities for such collaborative exploration of the meaningful and timely issues for which we all bear responsibility.

Our Residence in Ministry program continues to provide stellar guidance and support to all of our commissioned candidates. The monthly gatherings offer training, connection, and reflection, and are a powerful illustration of the importance of covenantal community. This is truly a residency program, as knowledge and skills are integrated with experience and discovery. We are indebted to Tanya Linn Bennett and Myung Sun Han for their creative and thoughtful leadership of the program.

Beyond our work on the Conference level, the Jurisdictional Board of Ordained Ministry (made up of Board Chairs and seminary representatives), has been seeking to be better equipped to navigate the current denominational discussion of human sexuality. Last fall, jurisdictional leaders attended an event that explored the matter from the perspectives of Biblical

interpretation, language, psychology, sociology, etc. In the course of this experience, we were offered a vibrant presentation regarding the role that *empathy* plays, as persons of diverse perspectives seek to understand one another. This research-based presentation was of such value that it is our intention to bring similar training to our conference. As of this writing, plans are in process.

Our work as a Board is in some ways absolutely monumental: for we know the weight of authentic discernment and the lives that it impacts. In other ways our work is most simple: as we seek to joyfully and humbly serve as each day requires.

I continue to be deeply grateful for the Members of the Board and for Lida DeNardo, our Administrative Assistant, for the care, wisdom, and time each gives so that our work may be faithful in all ways.

PARISH AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The members of the Parish and Community Development Committee met on February 9 and April 20 of 2015. We discussed the areas of Relevancy, Congregations and Mission within the Five Areas to Address according to our Strategic Plan. We also consulted the 2013 annual conference report from the Board of Discipleship and began conversations with the Board of Global Ministries to make sure we are all working towards shared goals that will align with and support the goals, strategies and objectives of our Strategic Plan.

Following these conversations, we suggest the following two goals for our Conference.

1. Find out how many of our churches would be considered local-community-churches versus mostly-commuter-churches. This statistic would encourage conversations that would help us to define the very terms parish and community as they present themselves within our conference, and would be beneficial in the planning of effective clergy and laity peer group conversations and inter-congregational relationships.

2. Our committee will begin to work on setting up a Connectional Data Base projected to be functional by 2017. The information inputted into the data base would show anonymously and would be reviewed prior to posting, ideally by a lay person within our conference who has experience with statistics. The data would be sent by laity and clergy and would include categories such as personal experiences, gifts and graces, areas of expertise, work experience, success stories, and failures. Care would be given to designing a system that allows contact with persons for additional sharing without making their personal information public. Such data would serve as a connectional tool to assist our UM family throughout the conference with references and ministry needs.

It is our hope and prayer that we will seek God's guidance as we set the foundation of the work of this committee.

PENSION AND HEALTH BENEFITS, 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.

PENSION

Pre-1982 Pension Plan

The 2015 Past Service Annuity Rate for pre-1982 annuitant payment is $632 per year of pre-1982 service. The 2016 Past Service Annuity Rate for pre-1982 annuitant payment will be $646. 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 2015 churches pay CRSP at 12.5% of clergy plan compensation and

for the Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP) at 3% of full time clergy's plan compensation, totaling 15.5% of plan compensation. For less than full time clergy, the CPP rate is 3.4% of Denominational Average Compensation (DAC) for 3/4 time and 1/2 time, and 4.4% of DAC for optional coverage (1/4 time and leave status).

The 2012 General Conference enacted changes to the Clergy Retirement Security Program. Effective 1/1/2014 for all contributions going forward, the CRSP Defined Benefit component will be reduced from the current 1.25% of DAC to 1.0% of DAC. Under the CRSP Defined Contribution component, contributions will be reduced from 3% to 2% of clergy plan compensation and, in addition, match up to 1% of compensation if clergy contributes 1% to UMPIP. Contributions previously made will not be affected by this change and benefits paid upon retirement will be based on the previous formula for all benefits accrued prior to 1/1/2014. Any benefits accrued from that date forward will be based on the new formula.

Additionally, the General Conference changed the participation requirements from all clergy under appointment to only clergy under full time appointment. Clergy appointed to less-than-full-time (3/4 and 1/2-time) are eligible based on the decision of the Annual Conference after approval of the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits. The Board has voted to include those clergy appointed to less-than-full-time (3/4 and 1/2 time) appointments in CRSP. For clergy appointed to 1/4 time appointments, a vote of the Board has made UMPIP available as a pension option for those clergy. Please contact Alexa Taylor, Benefits Services Manager, for more information on this option. These changes require Annual Conference approval.

The rates of remittance for the Clergy Retirement Security Program/Ministerial Pension Plan (CRSP/MPP) and Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP) increased from last year's rates to 92.33% and 94.60% respectively – continuing to remain short of the 2003 remittance rate of 94% and 95%. Twenty percent of churches were unable to pay these bills on time. Below is a summary of 2014 remittances:

Type	Remittances Rate	2014 Shortfall	# of Churches Paying < 100%	% of Churches Paying < 100%
CRSP	92.33%	$201,014	118	20
CPP	94.60%	$31,922		

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 are concerned that some churches are not fully meeting their obligations with the resulting decrease in the Reserve Account.

By 2014 year-end the cumulative delinquent amount for years prior to 2014 was $1,774,000 for CRSP/MPP and $373,000 for CPP - a total of $2,147,000, an increase of $128,000.

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, Benefits Services Manager, to collect the past due balances. More than $107,000 of the 2002-2013 shortfalls was collected in 2014.

Pre-Retirement Seminars

As in years past, the Board sponsored a retirement education session held at St. Mark United Methodist Church in Hamilton on March 5, 2015. The pre-retirement seminar focuses on those anticipating retirement within five years. Thirty-Five persons were scheduled to attend. Presentations by Peter Hang of the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits, a Social Security representative, and Barbara Gruezke, Insurance Coordinator, provided valuable guidance to assist retirement planning. Special thanks go to Donna Hough for organizing these events and to St. Mark UMC for their gracious hospitality. Thanks also to Alexa Taylor, Benefits Services Manager, and Barbara Gruezke, Insurance Coordinator for their support.

HEALTH INSURANCE

For 2015, the Board continued Active health insurance under HealthFlex, the health insurance plan sponsored by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits. The medical and prescription benefits are the same as 2014, the richest plan HealthFlex provides. The medical provider network is Blue Cross/Blue Shield PPO; the pharmacy benefits are provided through Catamaran. Beginning in 2015, the General Board no longer offers retiree health insurance. The Board

implemented United HealthCare's National Medicare Advantage PPO Plan which combines the participants' Medicare A & B, supplemental coverage and Part D prescription plan.

The Board has again provided a contribution to participants' Health Reimbursement Accounts for 2015 of $750 for single and $1500 for all other plan types which can be used for qualifying medical expenses (such as co-pays and deductibles). These funds do not expire and are accessed through a MasterCard branded debit card, or via a reimbursement form.

Premiums and Remittances

The following chart shows church premium rates in effect for 2015. These rates reflect a Cabinet- requested blended rate for all categories, which the Board has been moving toward for several years, so that health insurance premiums are not a factor in determining clergy appointments.

Health Insurance Premiums for 2015	
Employee	$15,000
Employee & Child(ren)	$15,000
Employee & Spouse	$15,000
Employee & Family	$15,000

The Board thanks all churches that fully paid their health insurance premiums in 2014. Overall, churches paid 98% of the total $4,658,072 health insurance billings, an increase from the 2013 remittance rate of 93%. The 2014 shortfall was approximately $59,000. By 2014 year end, the amount owed from years prior to 2014 had been reduced by $119,817 and the cumulative unpaid health insurance bills had increased to $2,742,188 owed for years prior to 2014.

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

The Board and the Conference staff have continued their efforts to ease the continued transitions in healthcare. The Health Insurance Guidelines included in these 2015 Conference Reports and Recommendations have been updated.

Annuitant Health Care Liability

As of the end of 2013, the Financial Accounting Standards Board FAS 158 liability for annuitant healthcare costs in the amount of $59.9 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, 2014, the Annuitant Health Insurance Contingency Fund held a balance of $8,929,812 after transferring $273,128 to the Annuitant Health Insurance Account to avoid a negative balance in that account at year-end. In 2014 approximately $1,578,155 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 2014, the Conference received and deposited into this fund $177,000 for Medicare Part D subsidies through HealthFlex from the Center for Medicare Services.

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 Rev. Paul Zorn, Chair; Rev. Carlton Bodine, Vice-Chair; Donna Hough, Secretary.

PROPERTY AND LIABILITY SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

2015 Insurance Renewal:
The 2015 insurance renewal process resulted in a $448,346 premium increase or 13% versus the 2014 costs. This includes a re-inspection of 50% of all conference properties with the remaining 50% to be completed by 12/31/15. In 2011, Hurricane Irene damages, and a total fire loss, contributed to a 189% loss ratio for the property insurance. There were also adverse claim developments for the workers' compensation coverage resulting in a 110% loss ratio for that line of business. In 2012, Super Storm Sandy damages resulted in a Conference loss ratio of 129%. In addition, there were several significant workers' compensation claims for the 2012 - 2013 policy term resulting in an 882% loss ratio. The Conference has been with Mercer Insurance Company for most of its coverage since 2004, and has an overall loss ratio of 68.5%. The Board of Trustees believes the long term relationship with Mercer, and Sovereign's negotiations on our behalf, allowed the Conference to avoid a steep premium increase or an outright non-renewal of insurance. In 2013, the wind damage deductible was increased from $1,000 to $5,000 for 98 churches that fall into the insurers wind hazard zone. Most carriers are now imposing percentage deductibles for wind zones, such as 3% of insured values, so the deductible increase is the better option for the Conference. In the event of a wind loss, the Board of Trustees intends to cover the increased wind damage deductible for affected churches from its surplus funds. The insurer continues to cover up to 50% more than the declared property value of any church, providing a level of protection from unexpectedly high damage reconstruction costs. Mercer has also begun to re-inspect and re-appraise all Conference owned properties. This is an ongoing process to be completed by the end of 2015.

Workers' Compensation:
The Workers' Compensation coverage was moved from Mercer Insurance Company to Church Mutual Insurance Company effective December 1, 2013. Church Mutual offered a premium that was $20,000 lower than Mercer's offer, and also offers the potential for a dividend if the loss experience for the year is favorable. Workers' Compensation premiums were increased from $405,948 to $418,052 due to a statewide rate increase in New Jersey, adverse claims development, and an experience modification factor increase. The GNJAC Workers' Compensation insurance program saves more than $200,000 annually versus the cost of churches insuring individually.

Automobile Insurance:
The Board of Trustees continues to make available a voluntary automobile insurance program for church-owned vehicles. The 2015 premium cost is 3% higher than in 2014. Each church has access to this insurance program and pays the premium cost for any vehicle insured.

Claims Experience:
As previously noted, the Conference loss ratio was very unfavorable for the 2011, 2012 and 2013 policy years due to several large loss events. The Board of Trustees believes Mercer Insurance understands well the nature of the GNJAC loss exposures and reacted in good faith with the 2015 renewal after three consecutive unprofitable years. However, if losses continue in this fashion they could negatively impact the overall cost of insurance; our current three year loss ratio with Mercer is 122.7%.

Large Losses:
The unfavorable loss experience of the past three years was driven by large losses each year. In 2011 the Conference sustained nearly $900,000 in Hurricane Irene claims from 66 churches and a fire loss totaling over $2 million. Super storm Sandy losses in 2012 totaled $1.8 million from damages to 134 churches. In 2013 $2.4 million in losses from two workers' compensation claims were sustained.

Parity Implementation:
The Parity Implementation Plan approved at the 2007 Annual Conference session continues to be implemented according to the original plan. In 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, and again for 2015, the Board of Trustees has funded parity relief from Board of Trustee's fund balances.

Surplus:
The Board of Trustees 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 deductible differentials, 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.

The Board of Trustees believes that it is crucial to maintain the surplus position given the adverse claim experience of the past three years. The Board anticipates no addition to the surplus position in 2014.

Summary:
The Board of Trustees encourages each church to take advantage of the assistance available through Sovereign Insurance (800-222-4478), the Conference insurance program's broker. The Conference insurance program does not include flood insurance. We remind churches, particularly those located in a flood zone, of the need to purchase flood insurance; Sovereign Insurance is prepared to help with that process. The Board of Trustees would like to thank Mr. William Mayo for his tireless efforts, dedication, assistance and guidance in leading the Property Insurance Committee.

RELIGION AND RACE, COMMISSION ON (CORR)

"Conduct yourselves with all humility, gentleness, and patience. Accept each other with love, and make an effort to preserve the unity of the Spirit with the peace that ties you together. You are one body and one spirit, just as God also called you in one hope". Ephesians 4:2-4 (CEB)

The Greater New Jersey Commission of Religion and Race [GNJ CORR] is called to engage in activities consistent with role of the General Commission on Religion and Race [GCORR]. "GCORR is the core agency within the United Methodist Church tasked with empowering the Church to pursue racial equity and cultural competency to build a stronger, more vibrant UMC." Similarly, GNJ CORR is charged with this same task in the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference [GNJAC]. By promoting full and equal participation of the racial and ethnic constituency in the total life and mission of the church, GNJ CORR seeks to empower clergy and laity to develop vital congregations in very diverse state.

2014 was a year of action for the nation, and the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference. In 2014, GNJ CORR focused in the following areas: 1. providing resources and training; and 2. supporting and providing programs of cultural competency, racial justice and reconciliation. Specifically, the activities were as follows:

<u>Resources and training</u>

- Mr. Giovanni Arroyo, GCORR Team Leader, Monitoring and Advocacy, trained the GNJ CORR team and monitors about the GCORR monitoring process. The training incorporated the evolution of GCORR's "monitoring practices to be more relevant and relational, with the key monitoring objective centered on building the beloved community of God". At the 2014 Annual Conference the GNJ CORR team had an opportunity to use the new monitoring skills.
- The Conversation about Race, for clergy and laity, continued in 2014. The facilitators were Sarah M. Sterns, Ph.D. and John E. Colon, consultants from VISIONS, Inc. Two sessions were held as a part of the regularly scheduled series. GNJ CORR also developed the "Just in Time" Conversation as a response to current issues. The "Just in Time" forum is a setting in which participants gain relevant information and tools for immediate use in their ministries and communities. The first "Just in Time" Conversation was held in response to the shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Mo. The second "Just in Time" Conversation was held in response to the failure of the grand jury to indict in the Michael Brown and Eric Garner matters. The "Just in Time" Conversations included a host of experts, speakers and clergy: Rhinold Ponder, Esq. Kenzoe Brian Selassie, Ph.D., DeTravius Bethea, Esq., Reverend Nadira Keaton, L.P.C. and Reverend Carla Gunning. Reverend Gilbert Caldwell was the keynote speaker at the December Conversation. Other participants included Reverend Brian Joyce, Ms. Cynthia Kent, Reverend Annie

Allen, Reverend Rupert Hall, J.D., Reverend Sandra Jenkins and Reverend Vanessa M. Wilson, J.D. Reverend Dr. Willis Johnson of Wellspring UMC in Ferguson, Mo. provided a video conversation. Collaborating agencies include: The Board of Church and Society, Black Methodists for Church Renewal and Strengthening the Black Church for the 21st Century. Host churches were Trinity UMC in Ewing, and Turning Point UMC in Trenton.

- The Conversation about Race had good response from the participants, however, GNJ CORR is pleased at the response of Bishop Schol who spoke at the December 7, 2014 Conversation. At that time, he spoke of the importance of reconciliation as well as a GNJAC Act of Repentance for the African Americans who remained in the United Methodist Church. He also made a commitment to "develop a 10-year plan to create a conference with a culture that is vigilant to end racism, always growing in cultural competence and respectful and welcoming of all people." The Bishop said, "We believe understanding and change begins with leadership." [J. Wolfe, "This is an American Story", 2014].

Supporting and providing programs of cultural competency, racial justice and reconciliation

- GNJ CORR works collaboratively with the General Board of Church and Society (GBCS) in the area of fighting mass incarceration. GBCS sponsored Healing Communities training. The Reverend Drs. Sonia King and Brian Jackson from the Baltimore-Washington Conference conducted the training. The training equipped members of congregations to work with "returning citizens" - those people who are returning from incarceration. The second training in the series was postponed because GBCS was no longer able to fund the project. GNJ CORR also sponsored a film screening and discussion related to mass incarceration. Our host churches for these events were Church of the Good Shepherd and St. Paul both in Willingboro. GNJ CORR continues to engage in legislative advocacy along with other agencies and organizations in this area.
- GNJ CORR remembers Mr. Willie Solomon, Jr. who went home to be with the Lord on January 2, 2015. Mr. Solomon was a supporter of GNJ CORR, engaged in ministry with the incarcerated and committed to developing Healing Communities. He will be missed.

During the 2014, over 300 people participated in GNJ CORR ministry. Everyone is invited to stay in touch with GNJ CORR through the Facebook Group https://www.facebook.com/groups/563218957096807/ and on the web at http://www.gnjumc.org/pages/detail/852.

GNJ CORR looks forward to continuing to serve GNJAC through training, consultation, research and advocacy to empower clergy and laity to be able to be an effective witness for Christ in a diverse world.

STATUS AND ROLE OF WOMEN, COMMISSION ON (COSROW)

The Greater New Jersey COSROW endeavors to support the mission of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women, which is to challenge The United Methodist Church at all levels to work for the full and equal participation of women in the total life of the denomination, including ordination of women, equal access to policy-making and recognition that Jesus Christ calls men and women alike to salvation, liberation, discipleship and service in church and society.

COSROW has developed a new award in honor of the life and service of Helenor Alter Davisson - the little known first woman ordained to ministry in the United Methodist tradition. She was ordained fourteen years before Anna Howard Shaw (www.gcah.org/history/helenor-davisson). Our prayer is that this award will serve to recognize and affirm the courageous and outstanding women leaders in our conference.

This year at our 2015 Annual Conference we are pleased to honor as our first recipient, Jisun Kwak, the first Asian woman to be named District Superintendent in the Northeastern Jurisdiction, in celebration of her ethnic minority contribution.

COSROW has a vital role to play in our conference: to enable gifted women to be equipped as dynamic leaders. We sent one young clergywoman to attend The United Methodist Clergywomen Leadership Seminar: "Where Grace Meets Power" in Palm Beach Gardens, FL. She made this statement about her learning experience. "During these days I was empowered, energized, renewed, and felt proud of what women in ministry have accomplished and was glad to be part of planning, promising goals, and expectations of what is to come with the leadership of women in ministry. The women in ministry do

not boast because we are women. We boast in the Lord in that we heed our call to ministry as women of grace, power, and courage and succeed despite the challenges, obstacles and limitations we still face today."

COSROW will once again be presenting COSROW stoles to the new ordinands in order to include them as part of the ministry of COSROW.

COSROW will continue to work to increase the vitality of our congregations by recognizing and affirming many women - clergy and laity - throughout the Greater New Jersey Conference who are serving God in a wide range of ministries.

TRUSTEES, BOARD OF

The Officers of the Board are: Chairperson – Rev. Louis Strugala; Vice-Chairperson – Rev. Clifford Still; Secretary – MaryBeth Scherer. The following Trustees serve as liaisons to the properties for which the Board is responsible: The Rev. Rupert Hall, Jr., Fred Neske, The Rev. James Ryoo, The Rev. Clifford Still, The Rev. Amarylis Gonzalez-Lopez, MaryBeth Scherer, The Rev. Robyne Mayer, The Rev. Hosuk Chung, The Rev. James Ryoo, Judy Hopkins, Ed Bowen, and Victoria Hahn.

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, 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 prior Annual Conferences. Six cemeteries are also under the care of Trustees.

Some items of note as a result of Trustee action taken during the 2015 Conference Year:

- In response to action taken at the 2013 Annual Conference, the Trustees have begun construction of the new Conference office building on the two acre lot in Neptune, NJ. Expected date of occupancy is fall of 2015. The present Conference office is listed for sale.

The Trustees are privileged to work with, and receive the cooperation of, many individuals and groups throughout the Conference. We are grateful to those on the property insurance 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 Chancellors Lynn Caterson, Esq. and Sanford Brown, Esq. 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 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 year with the presence of The Rev. Wayne Plumstead as Cabinet liaison. His dedication, leadership and interest in the matters of the Trustees, particularly as they interface with the Conference in general, is very much appreciated. The Conference Trustees are also grateful for the opportunity to work more closely with Bishop Schol and the Cabinet during the course of this Conference year.

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

UNITED METHODIST FOUNDATION

Vision: "We see congregations and Conference mission organizations experiencing the joy of generosity and the excitement of increased financial resources to make new disciples, provide inspiring worship, grow faith groups and engage disciples in community mission".

Mission: "The Foundation increases disciple making, congregational vitality and community mission engagement by assisting congregations and mission organizations to grow financial assets through stewardship education and investment management".

Officers of the Board: President – Edward N. Bowen, Jr., Vice President – Sue Goodman, Secretary – William Markert, Treasurer – John Cardillo

Board Members: Rev. Robert Costello, Rev. Richard Hendrickson, Rev. David Mertz, Rev. Bruce Quigley

Brief History:

- Created in 1992 by action of the 135th Session of the Northern NJ Annual Conference
- First Investment was made by the Northern NJ Annual Conference
- In 2000, became the UMF of Greater NJ after the merger of the Southern NJ and Northern NJ Conferences
- Currently Invested: $6.7 million (3.2% of other assets that reside at the church level per the 2013 church statistics); 51 Churches (9.1% of the total number of churches in the Conference)

Current status: The United Methodist Foundation is currently in the process of reorganizing to better serve the churches of the Greater NJ Conference. A permanent full-time Executive Director position is being created to manage the daily activities of the Foundation. At the end of 2014, $6.7 million was invested in the foundation. The return on investment for 2014 was greater than 9%.

Plans & Goals for 2015: In addition to the creation of an Executive Director position, the Board is seeking new membership to strengthen the leadership and management of the Foundation. The Foundation will be developing a marketing and communication plan to educate the churches of the Conference about the resources and capabilities of the Foundation. The expectation is that the Foundation will be soon recognized as the "go to" source for all stewardship education and investment management needs of the Conference.

UNITED METHODIST HOMES OF NEW JERSEY

Since its adoption and during fiscal year 2014, the United Methodist Homes' (UMHNJ/the Homes) Strategic Plan 2013-2017 has been at the forefront. Abundant life through culture change, the organization-wide four-step journey toward creating environments where residents can live fulfilling, meaningful and self-directed lives, continues to occur at different rates among our 10 communities. With the architectural firm Perkins Eastman, a Master Plan was developed and divided into a series of small projects to be implemented over a decade, beginning at The Shores at Wesley Manor (Ocean City). They are developing three neighborhoods of approximately 20 residents each with increased communal space and centralized core services. Research shows that residents are much happier and involved when they possess greater control over their daily routines.

To improve resident function, quality-of-life and independence, two new partners Alliance Rehabilitation and Accelerated Care Plus (ACP), have joined established partner COMS Interactive (Clinical Outcomes Management Systems). These innovative and multi-dimensional clinical programs allow us to treat a wider range of prevalent conditions. They include pain management, wound healing, joint replacement, stroke recovery, neuromuscular disease, urinary incontinence, contractures, fall prevention, arthritis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, neuromuscular re-education, and speech, occupational and physical therapies.

Also with the goal of effectively treating a wider range of prevalent geriatric health conditions, UMHNJ has established short-term rehabilitation specialty clinical programs at each of the five full-service communities. These proven modalities are supported by clinical protocols developed specifically for the medical complexities of the frail elderly. Hospitals refer people who would be better served by our short-term rehabilitation. Each community has developed a specialty niche to meet the documented needs in their area.

As part of our commitment to aging-in-place and to help slow residents' transitions to higher care levels, Bristol Glen (Newton) has been granted a Health Services license from the State of New Jersey. This significant milestone toward Service Expansion and Enrichment in the Strategic Plan, now allows us to provide health services directly into the independent living apartments.

Also in harmony with Service Expansion, The Shores at Wesley Manor and Holy Redeemer have partnered with the goal to open six hospice-dedicated apartments. Holy Redeemer was chosen for their compatible faith based orientation, values, unsurpassed experience, and successful record offering both traditional advanced and alternative therapies. As a multi-disciplinary care team representing two Christian organizations, we will compassionately care for people with life-limiting illness helping them to live out their last days with dignity and comfort.

During the last two years, we have been engaged at all levels in an in-depth exploration of our mission. We invested considerable time and energy to identify our core values and to redefine our mission as a servant ministry providing opportunities for people to remain vital and enjoy fullness of life for as long as they live, while giving us meaningful avenues for compassionate service. Our new mission, vision and values statements speak directly to our Wesleyan-Christian identity and guide and inspire us as we move forward:

Following in the Footsteps of Christ

Our Mission

Compassionately serving in community so that all are free to choose abundant life

Our Vision

Growing through creativity, innovations and gracious hospitality

Our Values

Compassion Demonstrating love in our daily interactions

Respect Seeing and valuing sacred worth

Stewardship Faithfully managing the resources entrusted to us

Service Finding joy in caring

Consistent with this identity, we held services of Commissioning and Blessing for five senior housing administrators and five executive directors. Commissioning places our leaders in service and charges them with the authority to carry out their duties in ways that move our mission forward. We entrust them to uphold our covenantal values of compassion, respect, stewardship and service, to inspire our vision of growing our shared ministry through creativity, innovation and gracious hospitality, and to lead.

One major initiative of the Strategic Plan is the expansion of home and community based services to increase services "beyond our walls." Every Wednesday, PineRidge of Montclair joins forces with the Montclair Public Library and AngelaCARES to offer a vibrant resource center and meeting place called Senior Space. The three partners promote living and learning for older adults, and provide support where needed. The successful grand opening featured community business partners, lunch, poetic entertainment, and prizes.

Residents and their families' choice of UMHNJ, reveals their high level of trust and expectations. Utilizing technology, another component of the Strategic Plan, is essential in today's healthcare environment. To improve our efficiencies we have adopted two technologies. HealthMEDX, a new robust electronic medical records platform, automates work flow and electronically connects critical stakeholders. It facilitates better care, productivity, informed decision making and enhances relationship building with referral sources. While Pitman Manor successfully piloted and implemented it, the other four full-service communities will follow one at a time.

The second, Senior LIFEsteps, better assists with level-of-care transitions. It examines the tasks an individual needs to do, then compares their current living arrangement with a service model proven to support those needs. The data assesses if, how, and when residents need to transition. Its instructive recommendations maximize the independence and well-being of older adults.

Nonprofit organizations have an obligation to demonstrate both their charitable nature and value to their local neighborhoods. Many UMHNJ communities are the largest employers in their respective towns and likewise, operate the largest physical plants, bolstering economies locally and beyond.

During fiscal year 2014, the Homes incurred $12,741,624 in uncompensated support, including $11,646,000 for the cost of care. The first largest area, Medicaid, representing a $6,746,000 shortfall, resulted from a program which does not fully reimburse us for the cost of services we provide to residents. The second largest share, Charitable Care, widely known as

the Fellowship Fund, covered $4,900,000 for independent and assisted living residents who have outlived their resources, allowing them to remain in their apartment homes.

Further, UMHNJ assists the broader community through internships, job training, school projects, research, health fairs, flu shots, pharmacy reviews, guest speakers, health screenings, the use of community spaces, education, recycling, in-kind donations, and associates' volunteerism. These areas totaled $1,095,624 in uncompensated value to the greater community.

Our greatest financial challenge for the present and near future is addressing our operational costs in an ever-changing and heavily regulated environment regarding health care, reimbursements, insurance and other related policies. UMHNJ is committed to keeping our costs affordable for all our residents. No one has ever been asked to leave due to the inability to pay the total cost of care, however, there is a growing gap between what the UMHNJ Foundation contributes annually toward charitable care, presently, $1.2 million of the $4.9 million charitable care expense. We can only accomplish that compassionate promise with the financial commitment of our faithful donors — individuals, churches, business and community partners — who provide annual support to the Homes.

We graciously thank our donors and all our stakeholders: volunteers, auxiliaries, associates, the United Methodist Church and most especially, our residents and families, who provide innumerable forms of support to our mission and ministry.

UNITED METHODIST MEN

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU

for
being men of God,
sharing your faith with others,
desiring to serve GOD,
supporting your Pastor,
feeding the homeless,
supporting the local men's group,
supporting your local church,
clothing the needy,
visiting the shut in or ill,
supporting your district,
supporting our conference,
supporting our Bishop and cabinet,
loving our Lord & Savior,
listening with non-judgmental ears,
working with missions local and far away,
sharing with one another,
praying for one another,
working with scouts,
working with VBS,
facilitating bible studies,
singing praises with your church music programs.

Jesus said "Go and make disciples". The men of our conference are doing just that and also planting seeds for the future of our church.

We are now in a technical world. It would be great to share each other's stories of what your church and the men are doing. Please send your stories to Rick Walker at walkerrn@comcast.net , and they will be shared on the conference web site under UMM.

Lord, continue to use us to be disciples for your kingdom.

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

The Greater New Jersey United Methodist Women continue to be on the front lines to bring awareness to social justice issues that affect the lives of women, children and the family. 1 Thessalonians 1:3 *We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our lord Jesus Christ*. As United Methodist Women we place faith, hope and love in action. This is seen by supporting actions against human trafficking and domestic violence and for immigration rights, racial justice, environmental justice and maternal-child health issues.

We began last year by freezing together in the cold to protest the Super Bowl at the Meadow Lands in NJ to continue our fight against human trafficking. Soap bars with safety messages were left in hotel bathrooms. Hotels employees were trained to look for human traffickers and young women slaves. Our results were successful as some young women were rescued and their slave owners arrested. This year we continued to "huddle" against human trafficking for this year's Super Bowl. The UMW keeps the pressure on about the evils of human trafficking.

This past spring we addressed the issues of domestic violence. Our program, "In Her Shoes" had Elmira Nazombe give a biblical perspective on the issues of domestic violence with readings from scripture on King Xerxes and Queen Vashti. Rev. Susan Victors, a United Methodist Deacon assigned to Womanspace in Trenton, shared her experiences with combating domestic violence and ways we could assist. We participated in real case scenarios of being "In Her Shoes" with various outcomes depending upon choices made. Some results were good choices and others continued with cycles of abuse. Our spring initiatives for 2015 will be two environmental justice topics. The southern districts will be planning an event called, "Save the Bees and Backyard Habitats". The central and northern regions will be hosting an event called, "Cleaning Green."

The United Methodist Women's Assembly was held In Louisville, KY. The theme was "Make It Happen." Bishop Violet Fisher was our worship leader. Some of us participated in Ubuntu Day of Service throughout various sites around Louisville, MO. Many of us participated in tasks varied by sites: yard work and planting flowers at various school locations, cleaning and organizing, working in day care centers, serving in soup kitchens and stocking shelves or assembling sewing and health kits for UMCOR. Many work shops were held throughout the weekend. Hillary Rodham Clinton, a United Methodist woman, encouraged the women to "wake up our world." She addressed the challenges facing many women and girls. This included growing inequality, human trafficking and lack of access to maternal-child health services. Over 3,000 women and community activists marched with our Chief CEO Harriet Jane Olson and rallied for economic justice in Baxter Square Park in Louisville, KY. Twenty-six women from 18 conferences were consecrated as United Methodist Deaconesses. 5,100 handmade prayer shawls and baby blankets were brought to the Assembly to be distributed to United Methodist Women national mission institutions, hospitals and individuals in need.

This summer the CSOCM/Mission "U" addressed the following topics: "How is It With Your Soul", "The Roma of Europe", "The Church and People with Disabilities" and "The New Jim Crow." This was presented in both School of Mission locations at Georgian Court University in Lakewood, NJ and the one-day school at Calvary Korean UMC. Studies were offered in Korean and Spanish with translation equipment provided for both our Korean and Hispanic sisters.

This fall we addressed the issues of racial justice and The Charter for Racial Justice. This happened to occur just after the events at Ferguson, MO. Our theme was "Shout Out for Justice." Sabrina White from the Baltimore-Washington Conference was our keynote speaker. We had guest panelist, Rev. Dr. Vanessa Wilson, who spoke on racial injustices. Cyndi Kent spoke on immigration injustices and Rev. Heidi Kugler, a prison chaplain from Washington, DC spoke on prison ministry and the mass incarceration of our young black men and youth. DS Rev. Varlyna Wright and Elmira Nazombe also participated. Mark Miller, song writer and musician, and his band lead the women in songs of justice. We supported the local food bank with our ingathering of canned goods. Missionary Princess Jusu was introduced. She was in the U.S. from Liberia due to the Ebola crisis.

In November we sent some of our new GNJ UMW leaders to St Louis, MO for Leadership Development Days. Training was provided to give us tools for nurturing UMW members to take action for women, youth and children. We then followed up with leadership training for our district leaders. We were blessed to have missionaries Rev. Mutwale wa Mushidi and his wife Kabaka Ndala Alphonsine. They have been serving the North Katanga Conference in Tanzania, Africa since 1992. A Love offering was presented to help with their missions through GBGM Advance Program.

A new initiative was introduced this year, The 150th Legacy Fund. Donations are being sought for the next five years when the United Methodist women celebrate 150 years of being in mission for women, children and youth. These sustainable contributions will be held in trust to support the UMW in missions for the next generations to come.

As United Methodist Women we continue to support the Camden Neighborhood Center. Our donations make a difference. The new gym floor is in place. We helped to raise money for a new bus to replace the one that was destroyed by fire. New athletic fields have replaced the old parking lot at the school. The children's afterschool programs are growing. The good news is that they have outgrown their space. Plans to expand are being explored.

We also created our own updated web page, www.gnjumw.org. Come and visit our web site to learn of the upcoming events and social actions of the United Methodist Women.

The structure of the new UMW has us meeting in smaller group sessions. Challenges continue in our world of injustices. We are encouraging more interactive projects to involve our younger women. Our mission giving still remains generous despite our struggling units. We met our GNJUMW pledge of $165,000 for 2014. We have been forced to recognize struggling units within our districts. Our pledge for 2015 is $160,000. This reflects the financial contributions from the membership of our local units.

WESLEY SEMINARY

At Wesley, we are a church-based seminary committed to **multiplying the number of people who love God and love their neighbor** locally, nationally and globally. Our degrees and programs – traditional and new alike – reflect our dedication to the Great Commandment and Great Commission. We ask you to pray for us, hold us accountable, and join us in this Kingdom work.

Equipping Faith Leaders through Degree Programs

In fall 2015, our new master of divinity curriculum launches. We thoroughly **redesigned the M.Div. to prepare leaders for both church and society**. This 81-hour degree offers flexibility and an excellent core curriculum focused on empowering passionate, mission-focused leaders.

Wesley also offers a 36-hour Master of Arts and a 60-hour Master of Theological Studies to **equip those called to ordained deacon ministries or a wide range of ministries**.

In our doctor of ministry program, we continue to offer **the most practical and spiritually renewing tracks** in theological education. These include leadership excellence, pastoral counseling, arts, and new mission-focused tracks. Wesley is accepting applications to two tracks based in Cambridge, England. These tracks, *Transformative Leadership in Wesleyan Perspective* and *Creative Ministry for Church Renewal in a Changing World*, are each limited to 20 students.

Wesley provides **more than $2 million dollars annually in scholarships** to our students thanks to the consistent support of graduates, congregations and friends of the seminary.

Talk to someone at (202) 885-8659 or admissions@wesleyseminary.edu about how Wesley's degree programs equip people to lead others to loving God and neighbor.

Providing Resources to Faith Communities and Leaders

Wesley's **Lewis Center for Church Leadership** continues to be the go-to resource for actionable best-practices for clergy and laity. The center's free *Leading Ideas* e-newsletter provides well-researched, discipleship-growing ideas to more than 15,000 people. Visit www.churchleadership.com for resources in: Taking Church to the Community, Doing Good Well, Funding Your Congregation's Vision, and Reaching New Disciples. Also, learn about the newest book by the Rev. Tom Berlin and the Rev. Dr. Lovett Weems Jr., *High Yield: Seven Disciplines of the Fruitful Leader*.

In early 2015, we developed the **Institute for Community Engagement at Wesley Downtown** to help the church turn itself inside-out. The institute encompasses the existing Urban Ministry Program and the Missional Church Program, which includes Heal the Sick, an initiative to congregations for public health work in their parishes.

The third component of the Institute for Community Engagement is Wesley's emerging **Center for Public Theology**. Under the leadership of Distinguished Professor of Public Theology, Mike McCurry, we are developing this center to provide churches and their leaders, and seminary students tools to help navigate the connection between faith and public policy.

The **Luce Center for Arts and Religion** remains the only seminary-based program uniting arts and theology. The center celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Dadian Gallery in late 2014.

Wesley faculty members are continually development resources to the faithful, including **books by Drs. Carla Works, Deborah Sokolove, F. Douglas Powe Jr., Cedric Johnson, and Lovett H. Weems Jr.**

Throughout the academic year, Wesley hosts Second Mondays – a series of lectures on campus and streaming live. This year we explored "Living Matthew 25 – Focusing on the Big Things." In this chapter of Matthew's Gospel, Jesus challenges us to heal the sick, feed the hungry, and welcome the stranger. In their lectures, **Wesley's faculty unlocked the Holy Scriptures and the church's history, traditions and theology to clarify these Gospel imperatives.** These presentations are available at www.youtube.com/c/wesleyseminaryedu and via live stream at www.ustream.tv/channel/wesley-seminary. Sign up for the monthly electronic newsletter *eCalling* at www.wesleyseminary.edu/ecalling to be reminded of this opportunity.

Learn more at www.wesleyseminary.edu about the exciting ways Wesley's resources are equipping people to spread the love of God and love of neighbor.

Property & Liability Insurance - 12/31/20

Balance Forward		**1,478,375**
Receipts:		
Interest Income	1,074	
Premiums from Churches	2,728,927	
Worker's Compensation	507,380	
Prior Year Receipts	109,512	
	3,346,893	
Disbursements:		
Insurance Premiums	2,849,998	
Auto Insurance	6,090	
Claim Deductibles	53,406	
Strategic Transformation Grants	50,624	
Worker's Compensation	408,487	
Salary	38,365	
Local Church Projects	246,306	
Other Expenses	88,608	
	3,741,884	
Change in Operation		(394,991)
Ending Balance 12/31/14		**1,083,384**

Ending Balance as of 12/31/14 is for Reserves for Uncollectible Premiums.

Health Insurance Accounts - Greater NJ Annual Conference

	12/31/2013	12/31/2014	Variance
Assets			
Health Insurance Investments-BOA	6,021,296	7,072,845	1,051,549
A/R-GNJAC	1,971,564	1,894,273	(77,291)
Total Assets	**7,992,860**	**8,967,118**	974,258
Liabilities			
Post Retirement Benefits	61,906,385	59,970,551	(1,935,834)
Total Liabilites	**61,906,385**	**59,970,551**	**(1,935,834)**
Actives Fund			
Balance Forward	**149,884**	**11,675**	(138,209)
(Receipts)			
Billing Non-Annuitants	4,865,639	4,782,382	(83,257)
Dist. Supt. & Staff Premiums	553,235	543,542	(9,693)
Staff Family Premiums	0	0	0
2% of Sal. Contrib.W/H fr Staff&DS's	39,486	39,509	23
Incapacity from 127	755,471	902,649	147,178
Transfer from 127 Subsidy	408,000	483,000	75,000
Total Receipts	**6,621,831**	**6,751,082**	129,251
(Disbursements)			
Non- Annuitants Premium	6,411,567	6,429,138	17,571
Consulting Fee	30,000	0	(30,000)
Other Expense	2,112	0	(2,112)
Transfer 2% Pastor Salary Contribution	276,875	277,889	1,014
Transfer 2% Staff Salary Contribution	39,486	39,210	(276)
Total Disbursements	**6,760,040**	**6,746,237**	(13,803)
Receipts less Disbursements	(138,209)	4,845	143,054
Balance	**11,675**	**16,520**	4,845
ANNUITANTS Fund			
Balance Forward	**0**	**0**	0
(Receipts)			
Shared Ministries for Annuitants	2,265,477	2,365,025	99,548
Billing for Annuitants over 65	59,001	68,138	9,137
Billing for Annuitants under 65	101,601	56,380	(45,221)
Medicare	232,056	177,627	(54,429)
2% Salary Funds Reserve Transfer	229,621	273,128	43,507
Transfer from 127 Subsidy	252,000	252,000	0
Total Receipts	**3,139,756**	**3,192,298**	52,542
(Disbursements)			
Blue Cross - Premium Expense	2,949,319	2,969,137	19,818
Administration Expense	21,723	19,667	(2,056)
Staff Expense	101,194	104,054	2,860
CBO - Salary	23,840	25,220	1,380
Adoption Support/ Refunds		0	0
Consulting Agency Fee	43,680	74,220	30,540
Total Disbursements	**3,139,756**	**3,192,298**	52,542
Receipts less Disbursements	0	0	0

Balance	**0**	**0**	0
Health Accounts continued:			
Reserve Fund for Retiree Health Ins.			
Balance Forward	**6,807,493**	**7,792,802**	985,309
(Receipts)			
Centenary Fund Additional Contribution	489,135	513,591	24,456
Transfer 2% Pastor Salary Contribution	276,875	277,889	1,014
Transfer 2% Staff Salary Contribution	39,485	39,210	(275)
Investment Income	76,337	90,366	14,029
Misc Income	2,542,653	2,867,876	325,223
Total Receipts	**3,424,485**	**3,788,932**	364,447
(Disbursements)			
Transfer to Annuitants	481,621	525,128	43,507
Transfer to Non Annuitants	408,000	483,000	75,000
GNJAC-Settlement	428,097	0	(428,097)
Strategic Transformation Grants	115,720	116,280	560
CBOPHB Subsidy '013 &'014	150,268	324,865	174,597
Transfer to Annuitants Incapacity	755,470	902,649	147,179
Transfer to Reserve	100,000	300,000	200,000
Total Disbursements	**2,439,176**	**2,651,922**	212,746
Receipts - Disbusements	985,309	1,137,010	151,701
Balance	**7,792,802**	**8,929,812**	1,137,010

Notes: $212,000 Centenary Fund Contribution in 2005 is for 2004. $250,000 for 2005 transferred in 2006. 0

			0
AETNA (SNJ) HEALTH INS.			0
Receipts - Disbusements	(4,330)	6,344	10,674
Balance	**14,441**	**20,785**	6,344
Post Retirement Fund Balance Forward	**(61,906,385)**	**(61,906,385)**	0
Current Year Transactions	0	1,935,834	1,935,834
Balance	**(61,906,385)**	**(59,970,551)**	1,935,834
Interest Reserve Fund Balance Forward	**48,892**	**0**	(48,892)
Current Year Transactions	125,049	0	(125,049)
Balance	**173,941**	**0**	(173,941)
			0
Total Fund Balance	**(53,913,526)**	**(51,003,434)**	2,910,092

Pension Accounts - Greater New Jersey Annual Conference

	12/31/13	12/31/14	Variance
ASSETS			
A/R-GNJAC	1,169,305	1,012,807	(156,498)
GBOP Deposit Account	1,741,785	1,246,811	(494,974)
Pension Investments-BOA	898,780	936,490	37,710
Accounts Receivable -GBOPHB	0	0	0
Total Assets	**3,809,870**	**3,196,108**	**(613,762)**
LIABILITIES			
Pension	0	0	0
Due to Conference	0	0	0
Total Liabilities	**0**	**0**	**0**
General Fund			
Balance Forward	4,452,141	3,629,895	(822,246)
Receipts			
Investment Income	32,356	37,710	5,354
GBOP Invest. Gain/(Loss)	48,894	12,200	(36,694)
GBOP Invest. Refund/Adj	1,374	0	(1,374)
GBOP CPP Premium Holiday	65	0	(65)
UM Publishing Income			0
Annual Conference Offering			0
Chartered Fund Income	1,092	1,322	230
Pre-Retirement Seminar Income	720	470	(250)
Total Receipts	84,501	51,702	(32,799)
Disbursements			
Global Pension Trust			
Pensions - Moving Expense Reimb	40,847	34,877	(5,970)
Grants/Relief	5,199	2,734	(2,465)
Pre-Retirement Seminar Expense			0
GNJAC -Settlement & CBOPHB '014 Subsidy	572,171	148,808	(423,363)
Strategic Transformation Grants	79,223	55,137	(24,086)
Staff Expense	135,615	173,092	37,477
CBO Salary Expense	23,840	25,220	1,380
Pension Adjustment Expense	0	0	0
Refunds	0	7,229	7,229
Operating Expenses	49,852	38,392	(11,460)
Total Disbursements	906,747	485,489	(421,258)
General Fund Balance	3,629,895	3,196,108	(433,787)
Receipts - Disbursements	(822,246)	(433,787)	388,459
Current Service Fund			
Balance Forward	0	0	0
Receipts			
General Board of Pension Income	2,666,542	1,967,861	(698,681)
Staff Premiums			0
Conference CRSP/ MPP Income	3,059,951	2,509,748	(550,203)
Conference CPP Income	569,506	577,556	8,050
Total Receipts	6,295,999	5,055,165	(1,240,834)
Disbursements			
Refunds/Adjustments			
Transfer to Fund 127 Retiree Health	2,542,653	1,989,332	(553,321)
Expense entry	2,451,640	1,784,928	(666,712)
GBOP Billing	1,301,706	1,280,905	(20,801)
Total Disbursements	6,295,999	5,055,165	(1,240,834)
Current Service Fund Balance	0	0	0
Receipts - Disbursements	0	0	0
Interest Reserve Fund		0	
Interest Reserve Fund Balance	179,975	0	(179,975)
		0	
Total Fund Balance	**3,809,870**	**3,196,108**	**(613,762)**

2014 Receipts Comparison											
	Fd		2012			2013			2014		
	#	Funds	Budget	Dec YTD	%Budget	Budget	Dec YTD	%Budget	Budget	Dec YTD	%Budget
Shared Ministry Funds	100	DO,Clergy Sup.,Admin	5,518,306	4,598,112	83.32%	5,582,156	4,646,793	83.24%	5,890,456	4,989,578	84.71%
	200	Admin. (Beginning 2005)	2,622,060	2,318,995	88.44%	2,636,082	2,416,812	91.68%	3,077,536	2,806,347	91.19%
	300	WorldService/Conf.Ben.	3,435,585	2,881,203	83.86%	3,475,707	2,750,933	79.15%	3,498,839	2,909,309	83.15%
	410	Black College	210,809	167,975	79.68%	216,407	172,432	79.68%	216,512	179,375	82.85%
	420	Africa University	47,185	38,986	82.62%	48,420	40,858	84.38%	48,443	42,417	87.56%
	430	Ministerial Education	528,473	415,505	78.62%	542,572	423,998	78.15%	542,782	443,338	81.68%
		Subtotal	**12,362,418**	**10,420,777**	**84.29%**	**12,501,344**	**10,451,826**	**83.61%**	**13,274,568**	**11,370,365**	**85.66%**
		Prior Yr. Shared Ministry		**21,441**			**20,586**			**8,425**	
Billing Funds		CRSP	3,256,923	2,881,183	88.46%	3,198,781	2,953,946	92.35%	2,621,770	2,420,756	92.33%
		2013 CRSP	370,435	85,695		362,504	89,927		289,011	64,059	
		Prior Years CRSP	1,145,226	23,911		1,404,029	16,078		1,574,166	24,932	
		Total CRSP	**4,772,584**	**2,990,789**	**62.67%**	**4,965,315**	**3,059,951**	**61.63%**	**4,484,946**	**2,509,748**	**55.96%**
		Comp. Protection Plan	606,831	537,052	88.50%	585,485	544,865	93.06%	590,639	558,717	94.60%
		2013 CPP	67,900	15,723		67,153	17,797		53,203	14,530	
		Prior Years CPP	275,329	10,629		317,390	6,844		339,013	4,310	
		Total CPP	**950,060**	**563,404**	**59.30%**	**970,027**	**569,506**	**58.71%**	**982,855**	**577,556**	**58.76%**
		Property/Liab. Insurance	2,838,761	2,560,076	90.18%	2,834,348	2,590,636	91.40%	2,825,531	2,728,927	96.58%
		2013 P/L	341,244	82,193		268,856	59,632		246,307	54,670	
		Prior Years P/L Insurance	1,198,417	18,991		1,439,129	31,921		1,610,905	47,822	
		Total P/L Ins.	**4,378,422**	**2,661,261**	**60.78%**	**4,542,333**	**2,682,189**	**59.05%**	**4,682,743**	**2,831,419**	**60.46%**
		Health Insurance	5,375,273	4,693,667	87.32%	4,861,555	4,559,691	93.79%	4,658,072	4,598,335	98.72%
		2013 Health Insurance	694,872	136,820		669,850	152,293		436,619	91,886	
		P/Ys Health Insurance	1,670,746	97,169		2,130,073	49,844		2,425,383	27,931	
		Total Health Ins.	**7,740,891**	**4,927,656**	**63.66%**	**7,661,479**	**4,761,827**	**62.15%**	**7,520,075**	**4,718,151**	**62.74%**
		Workers Comp Ins	422,640	401,475	94.99%	475,275	455,400	95.82%	518,808	507,381	97.80%
		2013 Workers Comp	22,877	1,428		20,707	5,891		19,650	6,030	
		Prior Years Workers Comp	59,156	1,701		78,906	2,227		90,746	1,514	
		Total Workers Comp Ins	**504,674**	**404,603**	**80.17%**	**574,888**	**463,518**	**80.63%**	**629,204**	**514,924**	**81.84%**
Total Shared Min. & Billing			**30,709,049**	**21,989,930**	**71.61%**	**31,215,386**	**22,009,403**	**70.51%**	**31,574,391**	**22,530,588**	**71.36%**
Special Giving			**0**	**1,346,258**		**0**	**1,627,581**		**0**	**1,436,805**	
GRAND TOTAL			**30,709,049**	**23,336,189**		**31,215,386**	**23,636,983**		**31,574,391**	**23,967,393**	