2019 ACTIONS

RS – 19 – 101 – NEW ENGLAND CONFERENCE MINIMUM CASH SALARY RESOLUTION
(Submitted by the Commission on Equitable Compensation)
(Adopted Saturday Morning, June 15, 2019)

Equitable Compensation Salary Grants serve the mission of the Annual Conference by assuring pastors are paid in accordance with the Discipline (2016 ¶ 625). In addition to assuring that no pastor receives less than Minimum Base Compensation, our grants have historically assisted the Cabinet in Strategic appointment-making and in serving Missional church situations under Sustaining Grants when there is no expectation that a church will be able to serve the needs of their special mission community and pay a pastor fully on their own. The Commission on Equitable Compensation (CEC), through the grant process, has included analysis of a congregation’s financial history as well as a narrative assessment of current missional programming in the local church. The Commission will continue to expect clear financial management and total reporting of all assets from any local church applying for a Minimum Compensation Grant. This process has assured a careful examination of the use of Conference funds as CEC performs due diligence in their fiscal responsibility to both churches and the Annual Conference.

The Disciplinary Responsibility of CEC is to assure that all “full-time clergy serving as pastors in the charges of the annual conference” receive at least the minimum salary as set by the Annual Conference (2016 BOD ¶625.2). It has been the pattern for the CEC in the New England Conference to provide grants for all clergy serving churches, regardless of appointment time, in three grant categories: Minimum Salary, Strategic Salary, and Sustaining Salary Grants. In these latter categories, the pastoral salary has often been above the minimum salary, although the amount of the grant covers a good portion of the minimum salary amount for that pastor as well as the strategic additional amount.

Going forward, CEC’s primary focus will be on assuring that all clergy serving full-time charges in the New England Conference receive at least the minimum salary, by providing where needed a sufficient grant to cover the Minimum salary as approved by the Annual Conference, according to our Disciplinary mandate. It will be the responsibility of the Commission, through the process of application, monitoring, and dialogue with DS, pastor and laity, to provide a Grant which will assist the church to meet the Minimum salary for their pastor. In situations where a higher salary is warranted for Strategic or Missional purposes, additional funds for that particular appointment will be made available using a process involving Cabinet, Congregational Development, and CEC in collaboration. For the current time, these additional funds will be included in the CEC budget as Strategic and Missional salary grants.

Since churches have historically been eligible for CEC Minimum and Strategic grants for a period of 4-5 years, as we move into this new way of processing and distributing grants, CEC will continue to ensure that those full-time appointments which are currently in process will be supported as needed. The continued eligibility that such churches have for the remaining number of years of their current grant will be grandparented to them. For 2020, we will also continue to include grants for the part-time appointments under our care.

The basis for the work of CEC is the disciplinary mandate that each pastor appointed full time to a pastoral charge must receive base cash compensation equal to the Minimum Base Compensation schedule that is voted on by the Annual Conference. Each pastor who is appointed less than full time to a pastoral charge is eligible to receive cash compensation at least in proportion to that schedule in one quarter increments (2016 Discipline, ¶ 342). The Minimum compensation amount and guidelines shall be recommended by the Annual Conference Commission on Equitable Compensation and set by the Annual Conference. When a pastoral charge is unable to pay the Minimum Compensation, and paying
the appropriate compensation is a demonstrable financial hardship, clergy under full-time local church appointment are eligible to receive a grant through their church from the Equitable Compensation Fund, which will guarantee that they receive at least the Minimum compensation as set by the Annual Conference. In the case of a strategic or missional appointment, in which the compensation as set by the local Church Conference is above the Minimum, additional funds may be granted to the church through the Strategic and Missional Salary grant funds, which will be administered by CEC in collaboration with the Cabinet and Congregational Development.

Following are the proposed minimum cash salaries for the year 2020 which represent a cost of living increase of $1,000, based upon the 2.4% increase in the CPI for 2018-19.

Given the increasing prevalence of Licensed Local Pastors among New England Conference clergy, and desiring to provide support for those who have both provided length of service and pursued professional education, we are recommending additional compensation for Licensed Local Pastors upon completion of the Course of Study or equivalent (see ¶ 324.6c of the 2016 Discipline), and additional compensation upon completion of the Advanced Course of Study or equivalent (see ¶ 324.6d of the 2016 Discipline).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EQUITABLE COMPENSATION PROPOSED MINIMUM SALARY SCHEDULE FOR 2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salary increases are $1,000 above 2019, based upon a 2018-19 CPI of 2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019 Salary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FE/PE/FD/PD/AM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 15 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LP M.Div / Adv COS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 15 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LP COS or Equiv.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 15 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOCAL PASTOR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 15 Years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Vacation, Sabbath, Continuing Education, Spiritual Renewal, and other Leave or Time Away from the Parish

Every pastor in the Annual Conference shall be entitled to and shall be granted at least 4 weeks of working time (including 4 Sundays) of Vacation regardless of appointment status, time, or years of service;

Every pastor in the Annual Conference shall be entitled to at least one day off from vocational ministry during a normal work week, regardless of appointment status, time, or years of service. The Annual Conference strongly urges clergy to do all in their power to keep at least one day of Sabbath apart from their Pastoral work in any given week as an example of practicing spiritual renewal, spiritual self-care, and Christian devotion. Clergy and congregations should feel empowered to support time away from vocational ministry which reflects the secular weekend model of at least two days away from one’s vocation in any given week;

Every pastor in the Annual Conference shall be entitled to at least 1 week per year of Continuing Education, but in accordance with their plan for Continuing Education may negotiate more, including that it may include at least one month during one year of every quadrennium, in accordance with ¶ 350 of the 2016 Book of Discipline;

Every pastor in the Annual Conference shall be entitled to at least 1 week per year of Spiritual Renewal in addition to Continuing Education and Vacation;

Every pastor in the Annual Conference shall be entitled to at least 1 week per year of Camp and/or Retreat Ministries service as part of their connectional ministry, which shall not be deducted from their Continuing Education, Spiritual Renewal or Vacation;

As made clear by ¶ 602.8 of the 2016 Discipline, “It is the duty of every member and all provisional members and local pastors of the annual conference to attend its sessions and furnish such reports in such form as the Discipline may require. Any such person unable to attend shall report by letter to the conference secretary, setting forth the reason for the absence.” Time away from vocational ministry for Annual Conference shall not be deducted from their Continuing Education, Spiritual Renewal or Vacation and costs, to be paid by the church or churches served, shall be budgeted separately from the pastor’s professional reimbursable account;

For short term illness, rehabilitation, or bereavement, Pastors and S/PPRC, in conversation with the District Superintendent as needed, shall negotiate time off that shall not impact vacation time. Extended illness, incapacity or other absence from vocational ministry shall be handled according to the policies of the Board of Ordained Ministry and the current Book of Discipline;

Sabbatical and Other Leaves defined by the Discipline shall be determined according to the policies of the Board of Ordained Ministry and the current Book of Discipline.

Reimbursable Accounts
The Commission on Equitable Compensation in an effort to remain current with prevailing trends across the denomination, and in keeping with IRS regulations, proposes the following minimum amounts for Reimbursable Expenses (comprising Professional Expenses, Continuing Education and Travel) for Full Time Pastors in 2020 of at least $3,200. The Commission recognizes that United Methodist Clergy
participate in a variety of connectional ministries as part of their appointments, and urges congregations to consider the cost of these activities when setting Reimbursable packages. The Commission recommends that part-time clergy be entitled to at least a proportional professional expense account based on appointive time. As stated above, the cost of Annual Conference attendance for the Pastor and Lay Members should be budgeted by local congregations and shall not be included in or deducted from the Pastor’s Reimbursable Expenses.

Elders, Provisional Members or Associate Members appointed less than full-time, in accordance with ¶ 338 of the 2016 Discipline and appointed to a pastoral charge at ¼, ½ or ¾ time, shall receive at least ¾, ½ or ¼ of the Conference established Full Time salary and at least ¾ ½ or ¼ of the Conference established reimbursable package as established by the Annual Conference. Local Pastors appointed to a pastoral charge ¼, ½ or ¾ time shall receive at least ¾, ½ or ¼ of the Conference established Full Time salary and at least ¾ ½ or ¼ of the Conference established reimbursable package as established by the Annual Conference. Licensed Local Pastors appointed less than ¼ time shall negotiate contracts with the District Superintendent directly, and shall have no claim on Equitable Compensation funds. Retired clergy serving under appointment, regardless of appointive time, shall have no claim on Equitable Compensation funds. The primary responsibility for paying the pastor remains with the local Church/Charge—for this reason, the responsibility to apply for Equitable Compensation assistance lies with the local Church/Charge. If the local Church/Charge encounters difficulties or fails to pay a pastor in a timely manner at any time throughout the appointment year, after the church has initiated the process of the NEAC Arrearage Policy (adopted in 2014), the pastor should immediately contact her/his District Superintendent for assistance and, if necessary, begin the process of applying for emergency Equitable Salary assistance.

COMPENSATION PACKAGE SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS

In some instances and for very particular reasons, pastors and congregations make arrangements for compensation and benefits that are outside of the requirements outlined in this resolution. The Commission appreciates that such arrangements are warranted on occasion, and are in the best interest of the parties involved “provided that no member in good standing who is appointed to a pastoral charge is denied the minimum base compensation (2016 Discipline ¶ 625.9).” To maintain the integrity of the compensation and benefits system, the Commission recommends:

- The specifics of such arrangements, including explaining how the arrangement provides for at least minimum base compensation as approved by the Annual Conference, may be spelled out in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that limits the conditions to one year. This may be as an addendum to the salary forms signed at Charge Conference, or as a separate letter included in the pastor’s and SPRC’s files.
  - The MOU shall be signed by the Pastor, the District Superintendent, and the SPRC Chair.
  - The MOU shall be reviewed and renewed annually.
  - It is provided in the MOU that such arrangements have no impact on compensation and benefits packages to be negotiated for future appointments.
- In the case where a salary package includes special arrangements regarding salary or reimbursable funds, review of clearly defined documentation either as a component of the Clergy Compensation Report Form (CCR), Appointment Form, or MOU, will be required for consideration for any Equitable Compensation funds.
- In cases where part-time churches do not provide a parsonage, and housing is structured as salary reduced by housing allowance, documentation (either on the CCR or Appointment Form)
explaining how a salary that appears to be either above (including the allowance) or below (with the allowance subtracted) minimum salary is in fact Minimum Base Compensation with agreed upon housing allowance shall be treated by the Commission on Equitable Compensation as sufficient evidence to qualify a Pastor for Minimum Salary Grant assistance.

Compensation Grants

Compensation Grants provide support for the pastoral appointment; they fulfill the requirements of ¶ 625 of the 2016 Discipline. Except for Ministry Grants to Mission Churches, the goal is to bring this funding to zero by having each church become self-sufficient over time. While our United Methodist connectionalism requires this support, which is embodied in our Conference’s Mission statement, the Commission strives to have each charge independently support its pastor.

Churches wishing to apply for a Minimum Salary grant must pay exactly Conference set minimum salary plus any years of appointment addition (except in the case of churches eligible for an additional Strategic or Missional Salary Grant*). However, at any time during the appointment year, any pastor whose charge is unable to meet its compensation obligation has a right to an Emergency Minimum Salary Grant based on ¶ 625.9 of the 2016 Discipline. In these cases, after the church has initiated the process of the NEAC Arrearage Policy (adopted in 2014), the Pastor should immediately contact her/his District Superintendent, who shall immediately contact the Commission on Equitable Compensation. Working with both the local Church and the Commission, the Superintendent will work to assure the Pastor is paid for the remainder of the appointive year. If the Cabinet determines a need for the appointment to continue beyond the appointive year, the District Superintendent shall instruct the Church/Charge to apply for an Equitable Compensation grant, in consultation with the Commission on Equitable Compensation.

Based on the Annual Conference approved Minimum compensation, the maximum grant amounts would be permitted in accordance with ¶ 625.9 of the 2016 Discipline. Please note, grants will be determined based on eligibility and need as determined by the Commission on Equitable Compensation after consultation with the Pastor, the Charge and the District Superintendent. Half-year grants beginning July 1 shall be counted as Year 0 for determining continued eligibility and will be eligible for up to 50% of the grant.

Minimum Compensation Grants

Equitable Compensation Grants will begin at a maximum of 30% of Minimum Base Compensation according to the Cash Salary Resolution, declining 5% over a 5-year term. Some of the rationales of need for the Minimum Grant may include: minor or temporary disruptions in Church life; when transitioning appointments from LP to Elder (e.g., at Commissioning) or from part-time to full-time.

*Strategic and Missional Compensation Grants

Additional Compensation Grants in Strategic and Missional situations will be initiated by the Cabinet and will be administered by the Commission on Equitable Compensation based on the recommendation and request from the Cabinet, with input from the Director of Congregational Development. These additional grants may be used for Strategic Appointment initiatives and for appointments to Missional churches which provide vital ministry to an underserved community, in order to provide the additional funding needed for salaries above the Minimum Base. These grants may be in addition to a Minimum Compensation Grant or may be stand-alone grants.

In consultation with the Cabinet and Director of Congregational Development, the Commission will expect clear financial management and total reporting of all assets from the local church for Strategic and Missional grants received in conjunction with Minimum Compensation Grants. Whether in conjunction with a Minimum grant or as a stand-alone grant, in the case of Strategic Compensation
grants, the church(es) and/or District Superintendent shall report the strategic plans for ongoing mission
and ministry in this appointment. In the case of Missional Compensation Grants, the church(es) and/or
District Superintendent shall have developed a ministry plan detailing how the congregation provides
vital ministry to an underserved community, and/or the church shall have been designated a Mission
Church by the Annual Conference.

RS - 19– 102 – BUDGET BUILDING DATES - BUDGET
(Submitted by - Conference Council on Finance & Administration)
(Adopted on Consent Calendar Friday Afternoon, June 14, 2019)

The following budget building preparation and dates are for the 2021 budget, subject to any change
mutually agreed upon by the CF&A and the New England Connectional Table. All 2021 budgets for all
divisions, commissions, boards, task forces, committees, agencies and councils will be considered at
the same time and place called to discuss and vote upon the total conference budget. All boards, divisions,
agencies and councils submit requests and complete all applicable questions on authorized budget letter
sent by the CF&A and the New England Connectional Table.

a. CF&A and/or Treasurer distributes a budget request letter to Conference Boards,
Committees and Agencies for budget building requests by December 31, 2019.
b. All 2021 budget requests must be submitted to the Treasurer by March 1, 2020.
c. The CF&A approves final 2021 budget for recommendation to Annual Conference by May 1,
2020.
d. The CF&A distributes the proposed 2021 budget through the Pre-Conference packet
distributed to all Annual Conference members, via the Conference web site by May 15,
2020.

RS - 19– 103 – APPORTIONMENT FORMULA
(Submitted by Conference Council on Finance and Administration)
(Adopted on Consent Calendar Friday Afternoon, June 14, 2019)

The 2020 Mission Shares be calculated by multiplying the total amount of the apportioned budget by
the APPORTIONMENT FACTOR for each UM church.

The APPORTIONMENT FACTOR shall be calculated by:
Averaging the following three amounts:
• The amount reported on the 2018 Statistical Tables, Lines 46a, 47a, 48 – 57 less the amount of the
cost of “outside groups use of building” reported on the Chart A data gathering form, of the local
church divided by the total amount reported by the UM churches of the Conference on the lines as
above.
• The amount reported on the 2017 Statistical Tables, Lines 46a, 47a, 48 – 57 less the amount of the
cost of “outside groups use of building” reported on the Chart A data gathering form, of the local
church divided by the total amount reported by the UM churches of the Conference on the lines as
above.
• The amount reported on the 2016 Statistical Tables, Lines 46a, 47a, 48 – 57 less the amount of the
cost of “outside groups use of building” reported on the Chart A data gathering form, of the local
church divided by the total amount reported by the UM churches of the Conference on the lines as
above.
CF&A, at the request of the Cabinet, may make adjustments to individual church mission share amounts based on factors not considered within the aforementioned statistical tables.

**RS - 19– 104 – 2020 BUDGET RESOLUTIONS**  
(Submitted by Conference Council on Finance & Administration)  
(Adopted Friday Evening, June 14, 2019)

a). The Council on Finance and Administration recommends a 2020 Mission Share spending limit of $6,995,262 (actual spending limit) and a 2020 Mission Share apportioned to local churches of $8,101,161 (includes “connectional mission share” for churches unable to pay 100% of apportioned amounts).

b). The Council on Finance and Administration recommends the 2020 conference budget as presented.

**RS – 19 – 105 – RELATING TO RENTAL/HOUSING ALLOWANCES FOR RETIRED OR DISABLED MINISTERS OF THE CONFERENCE**  
(Submitted by the Conference Board of Pensions)  
(Adopted on Consent Calendar Friday Afternoon, June 14, 2019)

The New England Annual Conference (the “Conference”) adopts the following resolutions relating to the rental/housing allowance for active, retired, or disabled clergypersons of the Conference:

WHEREAS, the religious denomination known as The United Methodist Church (the “Church”), of which this Conference is a part, has in the past functioned and continues to function through ministers of the gospel (within the meaning of the Internal Revenue Code section 107) who were or are duly ordained, commissioned, or licensed ministers of the Church (“Clergypersons”);

WHEREAS, the practice of the Church and of this Conference was and is to provide active Clergypersons with a parsonage or a rental/housing allowance as part of their gross compensation;

WHEREAS, pensions or other amounts paid to active, retired, and disabled Clergypersons are considered to be deferred compensation and are paid to active, retired, and disabled Clergypersons in consideration of previous active service; and

WHEREAS, the Internal Revenue Service has recognized the Conference (or its predecessors) as the appropriate organization to designate a rental/housing allowance for Clergypersons who are or were members of this Conference and are eligible to receive such deferred compensation;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: THAT an amount equal to 100% of the pension or disability payments received from plans authorized under The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church (the “Discipline”) which included all such payments from the General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits (“GBOPHB”), during the year 2020 by each active, retired, or disabled Clergyperson who is or was a member of the Conference, or its predecessors, be and hereby is designated as a rental/housing allowance for each such Clergyperson; and
THAT the pension or disability payments to which this rental/housing allowance applies will be any pension or disability payments from plans, annuities, or funds authorized under the Discipline, including such payments from the GBOPHB and from a commercial annuity company that provides an annuity arising from benefits accrued under a GBOPHB plan, annuity, or fund authorized under the Discipline, that result from any service a Clergy person rendered to this Conference or that an active, a retired, or a disabled Clergy person of this Conference rendered to any local church, annual conference of the Church, general agency of the Church, other institution of the Church, former denomination that is now a part of the Church, or any other employer that employed the Clergy person to perform services related to the ministry of the Church, or its predecessors, and that elected to make contributions to, or accrue a benefit under, such a plan, annuity, or fund for such active, retired, or disabled Clergy person’s pension or disability as part of his or her gross compensation.

[NOTE: The rental/housing allowance that may be excluded from a Clergy person’s gross income in any year for federal income tax purposes is limited under Internal Revenue Code section 107(2) and the regulations there under to the least of: (1) the amount of the rental/housing allowance designated by the Clergy person’s employer or other appropriate body of the Church (such as this Conference in the foregoing resolutions) for such year; (2) the amount actually expended by the Clergy person to rent or provide a home in such year; or (3) the fair rental value of the home, including furnishing and appurtenances (such as a garage), plus the cost of utilities in such year.]

RS – 19 – 106 – PAST SERVICE FUNDING RATE
(Submitted by the Conference Board of Pensions)
(Adopted on Consent Calendar Friday Afternoon, June 14, 2019)

RESOLVED, that the Past Service Funding Rate for 2020 be set at $668 per year of service and 85% as the survivor’s rate.

RS – 19 – 107 – RETIREE HEALTH BENEFIT CREDIT
(Submitted by the Conference Board of Pensions)
(Adopted on Consent Calendar Friday Afternoon, June 14, 2019)

RESOLVED, that all participants in the Conference Health Insurance program in 2020 will be given one year of credit toward the retiree health benefit subsidy in retirement.

RS – 19 – 108 – SPECIAL GRANTS
(Submitted by the Conference Board of Pensions)
(Adopted Friday Afternoon June 14, 2019)

RESOLVED, that the following Special Grants be continued for 2020 on the same basis as 2019:
   a) Barbara Boyd be given a special grant to cover 30% of her monthly health insurance premium.

RS – 19 – 109 – PASTOR’S/PARTICIPANT’S HEALTH INSURANCE CO-PAY PREMIUM
(Submitted by the Conference Council on Finance and Administration & the Conference Board of Pensions)
(Adopted on Consent Calendar Friday Afternoon, June 14, 2019)
The 2020 pastor’s/participant’s health insurance monthly co-pay premium will be $250 per month or $3,000 for the year of which the Benefit Stabilization Fund contribution is $55 per month.

RS – 19 – 110 – HEALTH INSURANCE BILLING RATE CALCULATION
(Submitted by the Conference Council on Finance and Administration & the Conference Board of Pensions)
(Adopted on Consent Calendar Friday Afternoon, June 14, 2019)

The 2020 Health Insurance “blended” rate shall be calculated by dividing the total projected 2020 premium billed the Conference by the General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits for clergy (and family) under appointment to local churches, staff, and disabled, an appropriate amount to cover unpaid premiums by local churches, and related administrative costs, by the number of “salary paying” units for the aforementioned categories. A 10% surcharge of the resulting rate will be added in accordance to the Retiree Health Benefit Legislation of 2001. A final adjustment shall be made, if necessary, to have the annual yearly rates divisible by 12. This base “blended” rate may be modified by Annual Conference action to include participant payment of premium.

RS – 19 – 111 – AUTHORIZE PARTICIPATION OF CLERGY WHO ARE LESS THAN FULL-TIME BUT HALF TIME OR GREATER TO PARTICIPATE IN CRSP
(Submitted by the Conference Board of Pensions)
(Adopted on Consent Calendar Friday Afternoon, June 14, 2019)

WHEREAS, it has been the practice in the past of the New England Annual Conference to enroll all clergy, including those who serve less than full-time, in the Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) or its predecessor pension programs and;
WHEREAS, legislative changes at the 2012 Quadrennial General Conference no longer will allow clergy who serve less than 50% time to participate in the CRSP program, and those who serve less than full time but 50% or greater may participate only at the option of the this annual conference;
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the New England Annual Conference authorized the Conference Board of Pensions to enroll Clergy that serve less than full time but 50% or greater in the 2020 CRSP program and;
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Conference Board of Pensions strongly encourages local churches with Clergy who serve less than 50% to support these clergy pensions with an amount equal to at least ten percent (10%) of these pastor’s salary through the United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP).

RS – 19 – 112 – PENSION/DEATH AND DISABILITY BILLING RATE CALCULATION
(Submitted by the Conference Council on Finance and Administration & the Conference Board of Pensions)
(Adopted on Consent Calendar Friday Afternoon, June 14, 2019)

The 2020 Pension/Benefit rate shall be determined by calculating the total projected 2020 CRSP and CPP premiums billed the Conference by the General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits for active clergy under appointment to local churches, staff, and disabled, an appropriate amount to cover unpaid premiums by local churches, and related administrative costs. Each local church with eligible clergy will be billed the proportional cost of their pastor’s pension/benefit costs based on a formula of $5,680 per
full-time appointment (prorated in ¼ time increments) plus 7% of participants plan compensation for those churches whose clergy are eligible for CPP or UMLifeOptions and 3% of participants plan compensation for those churches whose clergy are not eligible for CPP or UMLifeOptions.

NOTE: (This represents no change in the formula in the pension/benefit billing rate calculation from 2019.)

RS – 19 – 113 – RETIREE HEALTH BENEFIT CONTRIBUTION
(Submitted by the Conference Board of Pensions)
(Adopted on Consent Calendar Friday Afternoon, June 14, 2019)

The maximum retiree contribution to the Retiree Health Benefit Stabilization Fund for 2020 shall be $60.00 per month for each participant and participating spouse pro-rated for the percentage of retiree health insurance premium paid by the Annual Conference.

RS – 19 – 114 – APPROVAL OF COMPREHENSIVE BENEFIT FUNDING PLAN
(Submitted by the Conference Board of Pensions)
(Adopted on Consent Calendar Friday Afternoon, June 14, 2019)

WHEREAS, John Wesley’s statement “Having, First, gained all you can, and, Secondly saved all you can, Then give all you can” teaches us that fiduciary responsibility can help us further God’s work here on Earth; and
WHEREAS, the General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits is now required to have and approve a Comprehensive Benefits Funding Plan from all Annual Conferences for its Pension, Health Insurance, Disability, and Other Benefits liabilities; and
WHEREAS, approval of a sound Comprehensive Benefits Funding Plan will aide in providing long term fiscal soundness for the New England Conference;
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the New England Annual Conference approve the 2020 Comprehensive Benefits Funding Plan, as detailed below:

INTRODUCTION

The 2016 Book of Discipline ¶ 1506.6 requires that each annual conference develop, adopt and implement a formal comprehensive funding plan for funding all of its benefit obligations. The funding plan shall be submitted annually to Wespath Benefits and Investments (Wespath) for review and be approved annually by the annual conference, following the receipt and inclusion of a favorable written opinion from Wespath. This document is only a summary of the information contained in the actual signed funding plan and does not contain all the information required for a comprehensive view of the conference’s benefit obligations. You may request the full contents of the 2020 comprehensive benefit funding plan from your conference benefit office.

CLERGY RETIREMENT SECURITY PROGRAM (CRSP)

Defined Benefit (DB) and Defined Contribution (DC)

Program overview:
The Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) is an Internal Revenue Code section 403(b) retirement program providing lifetime income and account flexibility designed for those who serve as clergy of The United Methodist Church. The program is designed to provide participants with one portion of their overall retirement benefits. CRSP replaced the Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP) effective January 1, 2007, which had previously replaced the Pre-82 Plan for service rendered prior to January 1, 1982.

CRSP consists of both a defined benefit (DB) plan, which provides a monthly benefit at retirement based upon years of credited service to The United Methodist Church, and a defined contribution (DC) plan, which provides a retirement account balance established and funded by the annual conferences.

Current funding plan information:

The Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP DB) annuities total liability as of January 1, 2018, is $1,740,019,798, while total plan assets are $1,904,387,237, resulting in a current plan funded ratio of 109%. The New England Conference portion of the liability is 1.5459% and the 2020 contribution is $1,376,273. The conference anticipates that the amount will be funded by Direct Billing. Additionally, General Conference 2012 approved a change to CRSP that provides each annual conference the discretion to determine whether to cover three-quarter and/or half-time clergy. The New England Conference has elected to cover clergy serving 50%+ under CRSP effective January 1, 2020.

Effective January 1, 2014, the CRSP DC plan was reduced from a 3% to a 2% of plan compensation non-matching contribution. Clergy can earn up to an additional 1% CRSP DC contribution by contributing at least 1% of their plan compensation to UMPIP; therefore, if a participant contributes at least 1% of plan compensation to UMPIP, the individual will receive a contribution of 3% to CRSP DC. The 2020 CRSP DC contribution is anticipated to be $492,439 and will be funded by Direct Billing.

MINISTERIAL PENSION PLAN (MPP)

Plan overview:
Supplement Three to the Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP), also known as the Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP), provides clergy with a pension benefit for their years of ministry with The United Methodist Church from 1982 through 2006. MPP is an Internal Revenue Code section 403(b) retirement plan. MPP requires that exactly 65% of the account balance must be annuitized when the funds are to be distributed. The remainder may be rolled over to UMPIP, another qualified plan or an IRA, or it may be paid in a lump sum.

Current funding plan information:
The Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP) annuities’ total liability as of January 1, 2018 is $3,606,807,509, while total plan assets are $3,885,277,143, resulting in a current plan funded ratio of 108%. The required contribution for 2020 is $0. The New England Conference's percentage of the total liability is 2.1960%. Future MPP annuitants have a total account balance of $3,803,548,721 and the New England Conference's portion of that balance is $54,942,715 or 1.44% of the total.

PRE-82 PLAN

Plan overview:
Supplement One to the Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP), also known as the Pre-82 Plan,
provides clergy with a pension benefit for their years of ministry with The United Methodist Church prior to 1982. The Pre-82 Plan was replaced by MPP effective January 1, 1982. If a clergyperson retires within the Conference (and does not terminate), the minimum benefit payable is based on two factors:

1) Years of service with pension credit-approved by each conference on the recommendation of the Conference Board of Pensions (CBOP) in accordance with plan provisions and The Book of Discipline.
2) The conference pension rate (past service rate) - the dollar amount chosen by the conference as the amount payable for each approved year of service with pension credit (may change from year to year).

The number of years of service with pension credit is multiplied by the pension rate, and the product is the minimum annual benefit payable to those clergy eligible for Pre-82 Plan benefits. In certain situations, the benefit received from the Pre-82 plan may vary based on the applicability of what is referred to as Defined Benefit Service Money (DBSM), which is the defined contribution feature of the Pre-82 Plan. At the time that a participant retires, the DBSM account is converted to a life-based benefit and, at that point, the clergy’s benefit is the greater of the PSR or DBSM benefit. If the conference increases the PSR, the clergy’s benefit is recalculated; but the DBSM-based benefit does not change.

Current funding plan information:

The 2020 PSR recommended to the New England Conference will be 668, representing a 2% increase from the 2019 rate. The conference expects future annual increases to be based on the increase in the Conference Average Compensation (CAC). We are using 3.0% as a conservative estimate of future CAC increases realizing that the actual increase may be less.

The contingent annuitant percentage is recommended to remain at the 85% level.

ACTIVE HEALTH BENEFIT PROGRAM

Program Overview

The New England Conference offers the following active health benefit to its active eligible participants: Self-Funded - HealthFlex.

Current funding plan information:

The total cost of the program for 2020 is anticipated to be $4,096,233 and will be funded by Direct Billing. It is anticipated that increases for future years will average 5.00%.

Additional Conference-Sponsored Coverage

The New England Conference has elected to provide health benefits coverage to the following groups during periods where without plan sponsor--funded premiums--the participants would not be provided coverage or benefits (all figures as of 12/31/2018):

1. Clergy or lay on disability (including pending disability): 8 participants at an estimated cost of $313,344
2. Surviving spouses or children of deceased active participants: 3 participants at an estimated cost of $180,600.
The projected annual cost as of 12/31/2020 for additional plan sponsor funded coverage is $143,440.

**POST-RETIREMENT MEDICAL BENEFIT PROGRAM (PRM)**

**Program Overview:**
The New England Conference currently offers Insurance for Post-Retirement Medical coverage.

**Current funding plan information:**
The plan sponsor’s intention for 2020 is to retain current plan benefit. PRM benefits provided are as follows: Subsidy based upon number of years’ service.

Based on the most recent PRM valuation dated 12/31/2018, the following is the funded position of the PRM benefits:

1. Expected Post-Retirement Obligation (EPBO) net plan sponsor cost $31,650,549
2. Accumulated Post-Retirement Obligation (APBO) net plan sponsor cost $27,759,130
3. Assets (in-plan and outside) designated for PRM $31,436,809
4. Service cost (SC) net plan sponsor cost $535,334
6. Number of annual payments 20
7. Portion of unfunded APBO, [5. / 6.] $0
8. Ongoing funding contribution, [4. + 7.] $535,334

Future increases/decreases to the assets or APBO will be funded over the duration of the program as calculated in the PRM valuation report, or five years if not available.

These values are based on a 4.10% long-term discount rate, and a valuation year medical trend (inflation rate) of 7.00% with an ultimate medical trend (inflation rate) of 5.00%, beginning in 2027.

In addition to the PRM funding contribution listed above, the projected annual plan benefit cost for 2020 (subsidies, HRAs, claims or premiums) is $2,345,678.

**COMPREHENSIVE PROTECTION PLAN (CPP)**

**Plan Overview:**
The Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP) provides death, long-term disability and other welfare benefits for eligible clergy of The United Methodist Church and their families. It is an Internal Revenue Code 414(e) “church plan” funded by plan sponsor insurance premiums. Generally, clergy are eligible to participate in CPP if they satisfy the eligibility requirements, including full-time appointment with plan compensation of at least 25% of the Denominational Average Compensation (DAC). Plan sponsors may elect to cover participants with three-quarter time appointments and/or to continue to cover clergy who, due to certain leaves or appointments, are not otherwise eligible to continue coverage.

The CPP adoption agreement executed by the New England Conference contains its elections to cover or not to cover categories mentioned above.
Current funding plan information:
For 2020, the New England Conference has an expected required contribution to the Comprehensive Protection Plan of $400,000, which is anticipated to be funded by Direct Billing. The anticipated average increase in future years is expected to be 3.00% per year based on historical trends.

UNITED METHODIST PERSONAL INVESTMENT PLAN (UMPIP) FOR LAY AND CLERGY

Plan Overview:
The United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP) is an Internal Revenue Code section 403(b) defined contribution retirement savings plan for clergy and lay employees of The United Methodist Church and affiliated organizations. Participants may make before-tax, Roth and/or after-tax contributions through payroll deductions. Participant contributions, various optional plan sponsor contributions and investment earnings comprise the individual’s retirement account balance.

Current funding plan information:
Conference office lay employees working an average of 20 hours per week or more are eligible for a plan sponsor-funded pension contribution of 12% of salary. Lay employees are encouraged to make contributions toward their retirement through payroll deductions to the UMPIP. The conference’s estimated contribution for 2020 is $144,311.

OTHER DEFINED CONTRIBUTION (DC) OBLIGATIONS

Plan Overview:
The New England currently offers 2 special grants which is anticipated to be $770 for 2020. Additionally, The Conference currently offers retirees, with over 20 years’ service, partial moving expenses. The estimated contribution for 2020 is $6,000.

CONCLUSION

The 2020 Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan and this summary document incorporates, to the best of our understanding, the New England’s obligations and funding requirements of the benefits provided to the clergy and laity of the New England Conference.

RS – 19 – 115 – AFFIRMATION OF PREACHERS’ AID SOCIETY
(Submitted by the Conference Board of Pensions)
(Adopted on Consent Calendar Friday Afternoon, June 14, 2019)

WHEREAS the Preachers’ Aid Society has been in continuous service to United Methodist clergy and their families since 1832; and
WHEREAS the Society’s programs complement the official pension programs of the United Methodist Church immeasurably, through emergency financial assistance, its program of visitation to retired clergy and their families, its development of retiree housing, sponsoring planning seminars, supporting retiree Health Insurance, among many other initiatives;
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Conference Board of Pensions enthusiastically affirms the ministry of the Preachers’ Aid Society, and encourages the Annual Conference and its churches to support the mission of that organization.
RS – 19 – 116 – UNITED METHODIST WOMEN
(Submitted by Betty Shippee for the United Methodist Women)
(Adopted on Consent Calendar Friday Afternoon, June 14, 2019)

WHEREAS, The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church 2012, 256.5 states “United Methodist Women – In every local church there shall be an organized unit of the United Methodist Women”, and
WHEREAS, The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church 2012, 256.5 also states the purpose of United Methodist Women in Article 3 as “The organized unit of United Methodist Women shall be a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the Church”; and
WHEREAS, United Methodist Women in the New England Conference contribute significantly to the mission work of the United Methodist Church locally and through the National Organization of United Methodist Women;
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:
A. The churches of the New England Conference shall be encouraged to support and lift up the work of United Methodist Women.
B. The churches of the New England Conference shall be encouraged to celebrate the work of United Methodist Women during a Sunday worship service.

RS – 19 – 117 – A COVENANT WITH THE HATTIE B. COOPER COMMUNITY CENTER
(Submitted by Betty Shippee for the United Methodist Women)
(Adopted on Consent Calendar Friday Afternoon, June 14, 2019)

WHEREAS, the Hattie B. Cooper Community Center (hereinafter, “Cooper”), located at 1891 Washington Street, Boston, Massachusetts, is the only United Methodist National Mission Institution in the six state area of the New England Annual Conference; and
WHEREAS, Cooper was established by Methodist Women over 100 years ago; and
WHEREAS, Cooper has successfully served children and families in the Roxbury neighborhood of Boston during those years; and
WHEREAS, Cooper provides vital educational services that facilitate growth, development, and the creative groundwork for the future success of many underserved children and their families through such programs as Infant-Toddler program, Pre-School program, After-School program, All-Day Summer Care for Children and Youth, and Elderly Services Program,
THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the New England Annual Conference shall enter into a covenant with Cooper to promote support for its programs so that Cooper may continue to be a place for children to play, learn, grow, and socialize in a loving environment; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that such promotion shall include encouraging the congregations within the Conference to recognize the missional work of Cooper by specifying one month of the calendar year as “Celebrate Cooper Community Center Month” during which they might invite a Cooper representative to speak in order to learn more about its services, plan fundraisers to financially support Cooper’s programs, and/or volunteer at Cooper; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that New England Conference churches shall honor the history and ongoing excellent services which Cooper provides by supporting it through their prayers, their gifts, and their service.
The New England Annual Conference continue in a Unit Insurance Plan to provide comprehensive property, liability, crime and Worker's Compensation insurance coverage for all New England Conference local church owned/operated locations, including church sponsored Day Care programs, and for all Conference owned/operated locations.

Including the following provisions that:

1. All New England Conference churches participate.
   a. Special coverage to include flood for zones other than B&C and other unique insurance risks will be purchased at additional cost to the local church where such insurance is applicable.

2. Insurance coverage will be as documented in the comprehensive policy, a copy of which is located in the Office of Administrative Services (OAS). Copies of this policy can be obtained by request for a fee to cover printing and mailing costs.

3. The agent of record is Fred C. Church Inc. of Lowell, MA.

4. The renewal date will be August 1, 2019.

5. The insurance billing for this plan (August 1, 2019 - July 31, 2020) will be at the actual value-based billing assessed to each local church and the Conference, based on property values, square footage and pastoral appointment.

6. Insurance billings for all churches that are on the Unit Insurance Plan as of August 1, 2019 will be handled as follows:
   a. Churches will be billed through the office of the OAS on an annual basis.
   b. The first payment will be due September 15, 2019.
   c. A special discount will be given to churches that pay the total amount or enroll in the Automated Clearinghouse Account by October 15, 2019.
   d. Churches that use the installment plan shall pay 20% of the annual billing by September 15, 2019 and eight monthly installments of 10% of the amount due on the fifteenth of the month (Oct - May).
   e. The Conference Treasurer shall use Conference funds, as necessary, to pay the premium until funds come in from local churches.

7. Property claims payments will be issued in the name of the New England Conference and the local church, sent to the New England Conference Office of Administrative Services and will be endorsed and sent to the local church when all insurance premiums are paid to date.

8. The New England Conference Insurance Committee shall be amenable to the Conference Board of Trustees.
   a. This Committee shall consist of eleven (11) members. The chairperson or co-chairperson of the committee shall be a member of the New England Conference Board of Trustees. The Trustees shall appoint five (5) additional members and the
Council on Finance and Administration shall appoint five (5) members. The committee members do not need to be members of either the Board of Trustees or CF&A, with the exception of the chair or co-chair.

b. This committee shall:
   1. Receive and respond to questions and concerns of local churches regarding the insurance plan.
   2. Review loss trends and suggest remedies.
   3. Review property appraisals.
   4. Review the policy for any needed changes.
   5. Provide for risk management materials/workshops for districts and/or clusters as requested.
   6. Annually review the premium, determine the method of distributing the premium among local churches and, if necessary, re-bid the contract.

8. A common, comprehensive worker’s compensation program will be included with a renewal date of January 1, 2019. Insurance will continue to be billed through the OAS office.
9. The following policy on the issuing of ”replacement cost” insurance be in effect.
   a. Any church, at their option, can apply for a waiver of blanket full replacement cost coverage, and substitution with a stated value for Functional Replacement Cost, by making such a request to the Insurance Committee of the Conference Board of Trustees. The District Superintendent and the District Committee on Church and Building Location shall endorse the application prior to consideration by the Insurance Committee. Application forms are available on the conference web site.
   b. The Superintendent and the District Committee on Church and Building Location shall evaluate the request for less than full replacement cost coverage and establishment of a stated value, on the amount of resources necessary to invest in rebuilding, consistent with the ministry and mission possibilities and goals of the local church, cluster and district.
   c. Future changes of stated values established under this policy shall be handled in the same fashion as original applications.
   d. A rider will be added to the existing Conference policy listing the specific properties as being carried at a stated value, not full replacement coverage. The stated value also shall be listed. There is no co-insurance due to the lack of full replacement coverage. Any partial loss will be paid in full up to the stated value limit.
   e. Waivers of blanket full replacement will be effective only on the annual renewal date of the insurance plan; August 1st. Completed applications must be received by the Chairperson of the Insurance Committee by June 1st of the current policy year to be considered for the next policy year that begins August 1st.

10. Because the Conference Unit Insurance Program is a "connectional" program under which the Conference is the primary policy holder and individual churches are "additional insureds" thereunder, the Conference believes that it is in the best interest of the insurance program to maximize the recovery to entities experiencing a loss, while at the same time, minimizing the total amount of claims under the insurance policy (currently a dividend is available if loss ratios are minimized). Toward that end, the following procedure shall govern losses under the insurance program:
a. For a period of ninety (90) days following the report of a loss (or potential loss) under the insurance program, no commercial "public adjusters" may be engaged, and any attempted engagements during such period shall be null and void.
b. Upon request directed to the Insurance Committee, and for good and sufficient reasons, the Committee may "waive" this "waiting period" and approve retention of an insurance adjuster for a given loss claim.
c. During this 90-day period (or shorter if waived), the insured will work in good faith with the Insurance Program's selected Agent to settle the claim to the satisfaction of both the local entity suffering the loss, and the insurance underwriter.
d. If, after such 90-day period, good faith discussions have not resulted in a resolution of the claim to the satisfaction of the entity suffering the loss, then, if deemed necessary, a local entity may vote to engage a public adjuster. Said vote shall be taken by the Trustees or other governing body only after notice of the intent to do so is provided to the Insurance Committee (through the Conference Treasurer's office) seven (7) days before such vote.

11. The current program insurance carrier; Church Mutual has a program available to the New England Conference to provide churches with Temperature Sensor and Water Detection Monitoring equipment at no charge to the church. Due to the continued large number of frozen pipes and water related property damage claims and the preventable loss dollars which have been paid, the Insurance Committee believes it is in the best interest of all to require participation in this program.

a. To encourage individual churches to take advantage of this loss prevention tool, the Insurance Committee will pay each church $100 upon the installation and activation of this equipment in the church building.
b. Individual churches shall be expected to enroll in this program and install the specified equipment in their churches by December 15, 2019.
c. Individual churches which have had this program offered to them, and have not participated by August 1, 2020, will be assessed a $250 surcharge to their annual insurance premium.
d. Upon request to the Insurance Committee, and for good and sufficient reasons, including but not limited to, lack of cell service communication technology to implement the sensors, no water service in the building, or other comparable alert system in place, the Committee may waive the installation requirement for an individual church.
e. Participation of a church in this program after August 1, 2020 will enable a prorated return of the surcharge based on the date of activation of the equipment.

RS – 19 – 201 – TO CLOSE THE FIRST UMC, PEABODY, MA
(Submitted by We Hyun Chang, District Superintendent, Metro Boston Hope District)
(Adopted by cabinet: 4/10/19)
When a few new Methodists wanted to gather in their own Harmony Village, now South Peabody, as a Sunday School meeting in 1830, a seed for a new Methodist society and a new Methodist congregation was planted. In 1839 the Methodist Episcopal Chapel Society was formed with 23 members. Since then, the First Methodist Church has served God and the people and community of Peabody and nearby area with all their hearts, all their souls, and all their strength. During its 179 years of history, the church not only survived but also thrived through two alarm fires with humble yet unyielding zeal for the gospel of Christ and for the mission of God. On Sunday, October 14, 2018 at a properly called Church Conference, the members of the Congregation gave thanks to God for their life together, celebrated their history and journey and prayerfully discerned and voted unanimously to close their church effective October 14, 2018.

Therefore, Be It Resolved, that the First United Methodist Church, Peabody MA, be declared closed effective of June 30, 2019.

Be It Further Resolved that the First UMC in Peabody MA directs (with the affirmation of the District Superintendent, the Director of Congregational Development, The District Board of Building and Location, and the support of the Cabinet) that the NEAC trustees dedicate all real, personal, tangible and intangible property assets (including assets from the sale of any property) minus any outstanding financial obligations be held in trust in the Hebrews 11 Fund earmarked for grants for new church starts and/or local church transformation within the Metro Boston Hope District, according to Hebrews 11 policy. If no such plan is developed within 5 years, those funds become available to the conference at large, following Hebrews 11 granting policy.

RS – 19 – 202 – RESOLUTION TO CLOSE MOODUS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
MOODUS, CONNECTICUT
(Submitted by David V. Calhoun, District Superintendent, CTWMA District)  
(Adopted by cabinet: 2/12/19)  
(Adopted Friday Afternoon, June 14, 2019)  
Adopted by the local church: 1/1/19

WHEREAS, the Moodus United Methodist Church located in Moodus, Connecticut, has existed with a distinguished and fruitful ministry, mission and service; and
WHEREAS for the past one hundred and forty five years, they have faithfully partnered with their pastor, members, and community leaders to make a difference in the community of Moodus; and
WHEREAS in their ongoing efforts to be faithful to God and responsible to their obligations, they have had a maintained a pastoral appointment and have paid their mission shares.
WHEREAS the membership of Moodus has significantly decreased; and
WHEREAS on June 9, 2018 at 10:00am at a regular Church Conference with 19 members present, voted to close the church. The vote was unanimous and had the support of the members who were not present.
WHEREAS the closing of the Moodus United Methodist Church has received consent from the presiding Bishop, a majority of the District Superintendents, and all proper Disciplinary requirements have been complied with,

THerefore, BE IT RESOLVED that the Moodus United Methodist Church, Moodus, Connecticut be declared closed effective January 1, 2019.
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED The Conference Board of Trustees be authorized to take possession of the real and personal, tangible and intangible property of the Moodus United Methodist Church and that proceeds from the liquidation of the real and personal, tangible and intangible property.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any other assets and property belonging to Moodus United Methodist Church which were not otherwise designated prior to the date of closure, shall become the property of the Trustees of the New England Conference, and that assets shall be deployed as directed by the Book of Discipline and the New England Conference (Hebrews 11). Should any assets be discovered in future years, such assets shall be transferred to the New England Conference in accordance with the Discipline and the New England Annual Conference policies.

RS – 19 – 203 – TO CLOSE GREENE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, GREENE (COVENTRY), RHODE ISLAND
(Submitted by Andrew L. Foster, III., District Superintendent, RISEM District)
(Adopted by cabinet: 1/12/19)
(Adopted Friday Afternoon, June 14, 2019)

WHEREAS the Greene United Methodist Church located at 188 Hopkins Hollow Road in Greene, (Coventry) Rhode Island 02827 continued a long history of mission and faithful ministry since 1873; and
WHEREAS the membership of Greene United Methodist Church cannot support their building and ministries; and
WHEREAS on December 9, 2018, at a Church Conference led by the District Superintendent, it was voted to close Greene United Methodist Church on December 31, 2018, with a vote of 7 Yes, 1 No, and 1 Abstention; and
WHEREAS the District Superintendent, has recommended the closing of GREENE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, and has received consent from the presiding Bishop, a majority of the District Superintendents, and all proper Disciplinary requirements have been complied with;
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED with deep sadness and deep appreciation for their faithfulness for 145 years in particular, that Greene United Methodist Church, Greene (Coventry), Rhode Island be declared closed effective December 31, 2018, and the funds they have on hand will be designated to the Greene Library and Open Table of Christ (OTC).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED The Conference Board of Trustees be authorized to take possession of the real and personal, tangible and intangible property of the Greene United Methodist Church and proceeds from the liquidation of the real and personal, tangible and intangible property.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any other assets and property belonging to Greene United Methodist Church which were not otherwise designated prior to the date of closure, shall become the property of the Trustees of the New England Conference, and that assets shall be deployed as directed by the Book of Discipline and the New England Conference (Hebrews 11). Should any assets be discovered in future years, such assets shall be transferred to the New England Conference in accordance with the Discipline and the New England Annual Conference policies.

RS – 19 – 204 – TO CLOSE THE DAMARISCOTTA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH DAMARISCOTTA, ME
(Submitted by Rev. Dr. Karen L. Munson and the Damariscotta UMC Trustees and Church Council)
(Adopted by cabinet: 4/10/19)
(Adopted Friday Afternoon, June 14, 2019)
WHEREAS the remaining members of Damariscotta United Methodist Church have recognized with prayerful discernment that they are unable to maintain ministry, the needs of the building having exceeded the capacity of its current stewards. And

WHEREAS the same members of Damariscotta UMC, after a year of studying options for ministry, voted unanimously on April 14, 2019 to close the congregation and on the same day celebrated a legacy of service since Methodist itinerant preaching in 1800. And

WHEREAS the Mid Maine Superintendent recommends the closing of Damariscotta United Methodist Church and has received the consent of the Presiding Bishop, the District Superintendents; and all proper Disciplinary procedures have been complied with,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Damariscotta United Methodist Church be declared closed as of May 1, 2019 and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,

1. that remaining members of the Damariscotta United Methodist Church be encouraged to transfer their memberships to other United Methodist Churches of their choosing, and that all remaining memberships shall be transferred to the membership rolls of New Harbor UMC.
2. that the Conference Trustees dispose of the remaining assets of the Damariscotta United Methodist Church in the following manner, that all remaining Funds, operating or invested, and assets from sale of the building, after payment of all debts, be transferred to the New England Annual Conference for addition to the Hebrews 11 fund for use under said program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that should any assets be discovered in future years, such assets shall be transferred to the New England Annual Conference to be used as directed by the Discipline, the intent of this resolution, and the New England Annual Conference Policies.

RS - 19 - 205 - TO CLOSE THE EAST HAVERHILL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, LIME KILN ROAD, PIKE, NEW HAMPSHIRE

(Submitted by Taesung Kang, District Superintendent, NH District)
(Adopted by cabinet: 4/10/19)
(Adopted Friday Afternoon, June 14, 2019)

WHEREAS despite opposition from the established pastorate in the area, Methodism began to gain adherents in the Haverhill, NH area in the 1820’s with a class organized in East Haverhill in 1822; and

WHEREAS, the corner stone for the brick Methodist Church in Haverhill was laid on June 4, 1827 with Rev. Bryan Morse as one of the first local Methodist preachers, but financial difficulties resulted in the church being sold to the Congregationalists in 1829; and

WHEREAS on January 14, 1834, Nathaniel Aspinwall sold to Caleb Morse, Levi Stafford, Joseph Niles and Noah Elliot for the sum of one dollar a tract of land in East Haverhill that had been deeded to him on October 19, 1832, by Isaac Pike for the sum of twenty dollars to be used as a place of worship by the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church; and

WHEREAS this East Haverhill church, built of wood in 1834 and remodeled several times, was destroyed by fire on December 14, 1902, and a new building erected and dedicated on May 24, 1905, with a
comfortable parsonage conveniently located nearby and by 1919 had a membership of 56; and

WHEREAS membership fluctuated throughout the 20th century and the E. Haverhill church was yoked with the Haverhill and N. Haverhill churches and then with the Warren and Glencliff churches, and by 1959 the church reported 14 professing members and by 1994 membership in the church was at 16; and

WHEREAS in 2003 a petition signed by 23 individuals on behalf of the church was submitted to Bishop Susan Hassinger and Rev. Steven Seminerio, retired, volunteered to re-establish Summer services at the church for no compensation and the first Sunday evening service in July was attended by 60 people; and

WHEREAS by the Summer of 2015 there were no active members still regularly attending services, the pastor and his wife attended along with seasonal residents, members of other local churches, and personal acquaintances, and the last services were held at the church in the Summer of 2015 and Rev. Seminerio, then 91 years old, asked to go back to retirement as of July 1, 2017; and

WHEREAS the District Superintendent has recommended the closure of the East Haverhill United Methodist Church, and has received consent from the presiding Bishop, the District Superintendents, and all proper Disciplinary requirements have been complied with.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED with deep sadness and sincere appreciation for their faithfulness these past 185 years that the East Haverhill United Methodist Church be declared closed effective June 30, 2019;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the property of the East Haverhill United Methodist Church shall become the property of the Trustees of the New England Annual Conference, and that those assets shall be deployed as directed by the Book of Discipline and the New England Annual Conference (Hebrews 11).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that should any more assets be discovered in future years, such assets shall be transferred to the New England Conference in accordance with the Book of Discipline and the New England Annual Conference policies.

RS – 19 – 206 - TO CLOSE THE EAST MONKTON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
CHURCH ROAD, MONKTON, VT
(Submitted by Jill Colley Robinson, District Superintendent, VT District)
(Adopted by cabinet: 4/10/19)
(Adopted Friday Afternoon, June 14, 2019)

WHEREAS historical records indicate that Lorenzo Dow, early evangelist, introduced Methodism to the Monkton area in 1797-1798 resulting in the first Class organizing as part of the Brandon Circuit in 1799; and

WHEREAS the growing local Society began construction of the current church building on August 27, 1866 on land sold by John A. Beers for one dollar, and then dedicated the completed building on February 21, 1867 with a double wedding; and

WHEREAS sometime after 1867 the Monkton and East Monkton churches were named as a two-point charge with a pastor regularly appointed through 1937, then as part of the Hinesburg charge after 1945, and later in covenant with the now Monkton Friends Methodist Church being served jointly by UMC
clergy from the Bristol Federated Church; and

WHEREAS the membership records for and financial assets from East Monkton have been joined with Monkton’s most probably since 1937 or earlier; and liturgical items such as the chalice and paten from East Monkton have been transferred to Monkton; and

WHEREAS six interested local town residents formed the East Monkton Church Association, Inc. in 2005 and have been acting as an independent, non-profit since 2007 to restore and oversee the use of the building and property by the community up to the present; and

WHEREAS the property is on the Vermont State Register of Historic Places; and

WHEREAS despite limitations imposed by the absence of heating, modern insulation, plumbing, and parking, the property is currently used as an interfaith chapel and meeting place for community events and as a worship space for the Monkton Friends UMC congregation one month per year; and

WHEREAS the Vermont District Superintendent has recommended the closure of the East Monkton United Methodist Church and has received consent from the presiding Bishop, the District Superintendents; and all proper Disciplinary requirements have been complied with...

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that with sincere appreciation for 152 years of faithful witness the East Monkton United Methodist Church be declared closed as of June 30, 2019; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Trustees of the New England Annual Conference, who shall assume responsibility for the property formerly owned by the East Monkton United Methodist Church pursuant to Section 2549 (2)(b) of the Discipline, be authorized and directed to convey the building and property to the East Monkton Church Association, Inc. for nominal consideration and such other terms as the Trustees shall deem appropriate; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that should any assets be discovered in future years, such assets shall be transferred to the New England Annual Conference to be used as directed by the Discipline, the intent of this resolution, and the New England Annual Conference Policies (Hebrews 11).

RS – 19 – 207 – TO CLOSE THE BANGOR, ME: GRACE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
(Submitted by Rev. Dr. Jacquelyn Brannen, District Superintendent, Northern Maine District)
(Adopted by cabinet: 5/ 22/19)
(Adopted Friday Afternoon, June 14, 2019)

Grace United Methodist Church has been located in downtown Bangor, Maine since its incorporation in 1846. From the very beginning Grace UMC identified as a mission church, called to serve others. Planted in the heart of the city, in the place of greatest need, this faithful community accepted God’s invitation to be agents of God’s love and grace to their neighbors, to offer Christian hospitality and community, and to share the good news of Jesus Christ. For 173 years Grace UMC has sought to live into their vision of “being the face of Christ to all and seeing the face of Christ in all”. After careful prayer, study, and discernment, on Sunday, May 12, 2019 at a properly called Church Conference, members of the congregation gave thanks to God for their life together and voted to close their church effective June 30, 2019.
Therefore, Be It Resolved, that the Bangor Grace United Methodist Church in Bangor, Maine, be declared closed effective of June 30, 2019.

Be It Further Resolved that the Bangor Grace United Methodist Church in Bangor, Maine directs (with the affirmation of the District Superintendent, the Director of Congregational Development, The District Board of Building and Location, and the support of the Cabinet) that the NEAC trustees dedicate all real, personal, tangible and intangible property assets (including assets from the sale of any property) minus any outstanding financial obligations be held in trust in the Hebrews 11 Fund earmarked for grants for new church starts and/or local church transformation within the Bangor, Maine area in the Northern Maine District, according to Hebrews 11 policy. If no such plan is developed within 5 years, those funds become available to the conference at large, following Hebrews 11 granting policy.

RS – 19 – 208 – INCREASING TRANSPARENCY REGARDING HATE CRIMES
(Submitted by: Effie McAvoy, chair, Conference Commission on Religion and Race, Leigh Goodrich, chair, Conference Committee on Church and Society and Sara Girard, Commission on the Status and Role of Women) 
(Adopted Saturday Afternoon June 15, 2019)

We might not want to think about it. We might not want to admit it. We might even brush off the instances as silly, or baseless, or evidence that “we’re doing something right.” But unfortunately, many clergy find themselves the targets of hate crimes, threats to their safety, and extreme harassment. Often these threats also impact the communities and congregations surrounding the targeted individuals.

These actions disproportionately target women of color. Persons who are not white, who are women, and who are LGBTQ+ are also at high risk, especially those who live at the intersections of multiple identities.

The insidious impacts of race-, gender-, and/or sexuality- based violence and harassment reach all across our conference, and cause harm to clergy persons and congregations alike. Since these incidents are so sensitive in nature, often the details are never revealed, even to other members of the community or ministry setting. Meanwhile, the targets of these incidents suffer for lack of support, and often the clergy people leave their churches—who in turn need support through the crisis—if not the ministry entirely.

Therefore, we call for greater transparency surrounding hate crimes, threats, and harassment based on race, gender, and sexuality, while at the same time protecting the confidentiality of those involved.

We request that the New England Annual Conference Cabinet and Board of Ordained Ministry report annually to the clergy session of the Annual Conference the number of hate crimes, threats, or major instances of harassment reported since the previous Annual Conference session.

We request that the Annual Conference publicize the name and contact information of a person who will stand ready to convene an Ad-Hoc response team in the case of hate crime, threat, and/or extreme harassment, so that the targets of such incidents know where to turn to initiate support. We ask that the Conference establish a clear process for convening this team, and have it in place before the 2020 Annual Conference.

We call upon the Annual Conference as a whole to commit in prayer and action to supporting those who
have been targets of hate crimes and threats, and to dismantle the forces of racism, sexism, and hatred, which lead to these deplorable actions.

**RS – 19 – 209 - DESIGNATION OF NUMBER OF DISTRICTS**
(Submitted by CCFA)
(Adopted Friday Evening, June 14, 2019)

Whereas, in his 2018 Episcopal Address, Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar called on the Conference Commission on Finance and Administration (CCFA) to commission the General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA) to “take a thorough look at our financial and physical resources, investments, and staff structure, and to advise us on steps we can take now to help ensure our long-term sustainability as a Conference...and look at our district structure and advise us whether we should continue with nine districts or reduce that number in order to do our ministry and mission effectively in the next decade” and to bring the findings before the Annual Conference in 2019; and

Whereas the General Council of Finance and Administration has reviewed the number of districts in this Annual Conference and compared them to those in other annual conferences in our jurisdiction and in the larger connection, and recommended that the number be reduced from 9 to 7 districts, and

Whereas, the Annual Conference sets the number of districts for the Conference, and the Bishop establishes their boundaries and appoints Superintendents pursuant to Book of Discipline paragraph 415.4, therefore

Be it resolved that

1. The New England Annual Conference shall reduce the number of its Districts from 9 to 7 to take effect July 1, 2020.
2. The bishop is requested, together with the Council on Finance & Administration, Personnel Committee, District Superintendency and Ministry Committees, and other stakeholders to solicit responses to possible changes resulting from this reduction in number of districts.

**RS – 19 – 210 - UNITED METHODISTS OF NEW ENGLAND OPEN TO THE SPIRIT’S LEADING: COMMISSIONING THE OPEN SPIRIT TASK FORCE**
(Adopted Thursday Afternoon, June 13, 2019)

Because we in the New England Annual Conference find and model that “while we may not all think alike, we can love alike,” seeing that we hold in common more than would drive us apart; Because we find that our mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ as we mutually strive for sanctification through grace, and our ministries seeking transformation in and with God’s world, are stronger because of— not in spite of— our diversity of identity, theology, and practice; Because the New England Annual Conference has historically championed the fully-inclusive United
Methodist movement, which can be surmised from Wesley’s understanding of the catholic spirit, and has been expressed through our ancestors in faith who were leaders in Abolition, the Free Pew movement, Labor Rights, Women’s Rights, and our own 2016 Action of Non-Conformity;

Because the 2019 Called Session of the General Conference enacted legislation that is foreign to the meaning and purpose of the Methodist movement, was deemed largely unconstitutional, widely unconscionable, and in our context practically untenable; and

Because the United Methodist Constitution states that the annual conference is the fundamental or basic body in the Church (see ¶11 and ¶33), and the Discipline states that The UMC “as a denominational whole is not an entity, nor does it possess legal capacities and attributes. It does not and cannot hold title to property, nor does it have any officer, agent, employee, office, or location” (141), and that tangible and intangible property is held in trust by the incorporated (annual) conferences of the denomination (see ¶2501.1);

Therefore, we resolve that the New England Annual Conference commissions and empowers an immediate Open Spirit Task Force to examine whether and how United Methodists of New England might align with, create, or form a new church body in the Methodist tradition (independently or in collaboration with others);

The Task Force will be encouraged to reach out to similar individuals and groups in other Annual Conferences or regions who are undertaking similar processes of discernment.

The Task Force will be transparent in their work, adopting a format that includes open meetings, and making regular reports of the activities and outcomes of their discernment.

The Open Spirit Task Force will be made up of no more than 25 people, identified by the Conference Committee on Leadership and Nominations before the close of the 2019 NEAC session, and will include those who express gifts and interests in the areas of:

- creative openness to the Spirit,
- intersectional justice,
- collective organizing,
- Wesleyan theology,
- church and civic polity,
- finance, and
- constitutionality.

The Task Force shall include multiple perspectives and identities, and strive for beyond-token representation of persons with respect to:

- Racial and/or ethnic identities
- Genders
- Sexualities
- Ages and/or longevity in the church
- Status as laity
- Types of clergy
- Urban, suburban, and rural ministry settings
- Ministry contexts beyond traditional local church models
- Theological perspectives
The Task Force is encouraged to consult with and receive input from people beyond their own membership, to include as many perspectives and draw upon as many areas of expertise as possible.

Those wanting to serve on the Task Force, or to nominate someone else to serve on the Task Force, will fill out a form describing the perspectives, skills, and experience that the person would bring to the team. Members of the Task Force must be willing to devote a significant amount of time and energy to this endeavor for at least the next 12 months.

Understanding that not everyone is in a position to do this (particularly those whose work is other than full time local church pastoring, or are part of under-represented groups who are called on to provide leadership on large numbers of bodies), the nomination sheet for the Task Force will include an invitation for those who are willing to provide support for others to participate on the Task Force. This might include a willingness to fill in for the member of the Task Force or to provide other services that will free up that person’s time and energy.

The Committee on Leadership and Nominations will identify a person to convene the first gathering of the Open Spirit Task Force. At that first gathering, the Task Force will select a chairperson and any other officers they deem necessary to complete their work.

The Task force will be invited to be in further conversation with the NEAC delegation to the 2020 General and Jurisdictional Conferences prior to February 1, 2020.

The Task Force may recommend to the Bishop consideration for a Called Session of the New England Annual Conference, should there be Conference-wide action required before the start of the 2020 General Conference.

The Task Force and the NEAC Delegation will give a joint report to the 2020 Annual Conference Session with recommendation for further action in the Annual (and if applicable, upcoming Jurisdictional) Conference.

The Annual Conference Session in 2020 will determine whether to continue this Task Force and if so, what changes would be made to its mandate.

RS – 19 – 211 - NEW ENGLAND ANNUAL CONFERENCE PROCEDURE FOR LOCAL CHURCH/MINISTRY SETTING DISENCRMENT ABOUT DISAFFILIATION FROM THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
(Adopted Thursday Afternoon, June 13, 2019)

Because the 2019 Called Session of the General Conference approved the minority report for petition 90066, “Minority Report on Disaffiliation,” and the Judicial Council ruled in decision 1379 (April 25, 2019) that the petition is constitutional as amended, and
Because this new paragraph in the *Discipline*, 2553, allows for a local church to disaffiliate from the denomination “over issues related to human sexuality,” and states that “annual conferences may develop additional standard terms that are not inconsistent with the standard form of this paragraph,” and

Because such a decision has significant impact on the local church or ministry setting, the community in which the ministry is located, the Annual Conference, and the strategy and witness of the Church of Jesus Christ in contexts local and regional, and therefore must be undertaken with the greatest sensitivity to matters both spiritual and temporal,

Therefore, the New England Annual Conference approves the following procedure to be included in our Conference Policies and Procedures, governing the process and conditions for churches and ministry settings within New England in discernment about disaffiliation from The United Methodist Church:

1. Before a District Superintendent may call for a church conference for disaffiliation, the local church or ministry setting shall undergo a discernment period of no shorter than eight months.

2. During this discernment period, the local church/ministry setting shall seek assessments of the impact of this action upon the church, community, and Conference from at least the NEAC Trustees, Cabinet, Treasurer, Council on Finance and Administration, Chancellor, Benefits Officer, and the Conference Board of Congregational and Community Development evaluating the strategic missional impact of the church/ministry setting. These conference entities must make an initial response to the request within 30 days or will be deemed to not impede the discernment process of the local church. The church/ministry setting shall also develop a statement articulating their theological and missional foundations in seeking disaffiliation for reasons of conscience “related to human sexuality.”

3. The local church or ministry setting shall hold a minimum of four listening sessions, advertised to and open to the full professing membership, at least two of which are also advertised to and open to those beyond professing membership, who participate in the ministries of the church/ministry setting. These sessions shall solicit the input of these constituents, and shall report the findings of the assessments named in (2.) above. The sessions shall be facilitated by the District Superintendent or their designee, and may not be facilitated by the pastor, the hired or appointed staff, or any member or constituent of the church/ministry setting.

4. After the discernment period, the church conference, and an affirmative 2/3 vote of the professing members present, the Disaffiliation Agreement may be formulated in accordance with ¶2553, and shall include the recommendations and assessment from the Conference bodies named in (2.) above. It shall also include provision for how the community previously served by the church/ministry setting shall be served by The New England Annual Conference moving forward.

5. When presented to the Annual Conference for a vote, the Disaffiliation Agreement must be accompanied by a full report of the outlined process, the assessments and recommendations named in (2.) above, a summary of the financial and missional impact to the community, conference, and wider Church of the assets and ministries under consideration, and a
recommendation for how the community previously served by the church/ministry setting shall be served by The New England Annual Conference moving forward.

RS – 19 – 212 - ASPIRING TO LIVE INTO NONCONFORMITY
(Adopted Saturday Afternoon, June 15, 2019)

The 2016 session of the New England Annual Conference, working as a collaborative body, approved “An Action of Nonconformity” (attached below for informational purposes only). This was later ruled illegal by the Judicial Council (Decision No 1327). The 2019 Called Session of the General Conference, however, passed legislation to strengthen the Book of Discipline’s discriminatory treatment of LGBTQIA+ persons, and the Judicial Council upheld several of these restrictions.

Therefore, the 2019 session of the New England Annual Conference hereby expresses our aspiration of the principles of the 2016 Action of Nonconformity, including: our opposition to legislation or provisions of the Discipline which discriminate against LGBTQIA+ persons with respect to marriages and to clergy candidacy and status; our expectation of equal employee benefits for clergy and employees and their families without regard to the sexes or genders of the partners; and our commitment to neither participate in nor fund judicial or punitive procedures pertaining to the Discipline’s prohibitions against LGBTQIA+ persons, instead focusing on developing inclusive cultural competency resources.

Further, the New England Annual Conference aspires and continues to live into the principles of the 2016 Action of Nonconformity, and our commitment to being a Methodist body that is inclusive of all persons in the life and ministry of the church.

Informational:

Action of Non-Conformity with the General Conference of The United Methodist Church
Adopted by the New England Annual Conference, June 17, 2016

The New England Annual Conference as a body affirms our commitment to a fully inclusive church. Therefore:

The NEAC will not conform or comply with provisions of the Discipline which discriminate against LGBTQIA persons, including marriage (161.B), the incompatibility clause (161.F), ordination and appointments (304.3), homosexual unions (341.6), AC funding ban (613.19), GCFA funding ban (806.9), chargeable offenses pertaining to being “a self avowed practicing homosexual” or to officiating at weddings for couples regardless of the sex of the partners (2702.1b,d).

The NEAC and its members will not participate in or conduct judicial procedures related to the Discipline’s prohibitions against LGBTQIA persons.

The NEAC insists that any benefits available to clergy and employees and their families are available to all clergy and employees and their families, regardless of the sexes or genders of the partners, and requires the District Superintendents to inform all clergy under their supervision of this right.
The NEAC will realign its funding to reflect these commitments, using no reserve funds to pay for judicial procedures related to the Discipline’s prohibitions against LGBTQIA persons, and instead request that the Connectional Table and Conference Council on Finance and Administration develop and fund programs of cultural competency, anti-racism, anti-ageism, anti-sexism, anti-oppression and anti-homophobia training at the conference and district levels, as well as for advocacy and implementation efforts related to the same.

New England Conference Board of Ordained Ministry
Co-Chairs’ Response to the Special Session of General Conference March 2019

As Co-Chairs of The New England Annual Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, we receive the actions of the 2019 Special Session of General Conference – “A Way Forward” – with deep concern. The General Conference compromised our baptismal theology, the bishop’s role in ordination and the authority of the Annual Conference.

A primary task of the Board of Ordained Ministry is to discern the call to licensed and ordained ministry in our church. While it is not the purview of the Board of Ordained Ministry to make decisions regarding marriage, we accept our call to fully support and hold clergy accountable to fidelity and faithfulness in covenant relationships.

Discernment of the call to ministry in the Christian Church is an ongoing process. We walk with our candidates in the process of discerning their vocations. We look to see that they manifest gifts for ministry as Licensed Local Pastors, readiness to serve as Provisional Members, and demonstrations of effectiveness in ministry as Ordained Deacons and Elders.

Peter came to recognize and celebrate the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in the life of Gentile believers, radically altering and expanding his understanding of God’s action in the community of faith. Throughout its history the church has recognized the ever-widening circle of inclusion across ethnicity, gender and categories of “ritual cleanliness.” It is long past time we acknowledge the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in the lives and ministries of LGBTQIA persons.

We believe the Board of Ordained Ministry of the New England Conference should respectfully maintain its current posture with regard to its discernment with those called to ministry in our midst: sexual orientation is not our concern, rather the manifestation of the Holy Spirit expressed in the gifts and graces of those hearing a call from God.

We believe the board has thoroughly examined all candidates and applicants in the qualifications for their ministries, and we stand by the decisions we have discerned together. We will not engage in or tolerate the harassment of others by extending inquiries into relationships and intimacy beyond the scope of fidelity in one’s covenant relationships.

We will continue to look for the Holy Spirit’s indicators of calling to see that God has gifted and empowered those articulating a call. This is the guiding principle in what compels us to license, commission, and ordain by the grace of God.

Rev. Dr. Charlotte Pridgen Randolph
Rev. Mark Demers
March 5, 2019

In the name and spirit of Jesus Christ, grace and peace to the people called Methodist in New England.

We speak with one heart and voice of our commitment to lead a church that does not discriminate in membership, ordination, or service in ministry based upon any person’s gender or sexual identity. We stand with the NEAC Board of Ordained Ministry in its commitment and ministry.

We are heartbroken by, and repent of, the harm caused by the recent Special Session of General Conference and years of discrimination in the United Methodist Church to LGBTQIA friends, neighbors, and family members, as well as many of you.

In New England, we have long aspired to operate in a manner similar to the One Church Plan. Our reality is that most of our churches are diverse in many aspects, as are our families, workplaces, and neighborhoods. By God’s grace, we live together, love one another and grow as disciples of Christ across our differences.

As we all await a clearer picture, we hold each and all of you in prayer asking that you do the same for us. We will share information as it becomes available.

In Christ’s love,

Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar
Episcopal Leader

Rev. Rene Perez
Cabinet Dean, DS Central Massachusetts

Rev. James McPhee
DS Tri-State

Rev. Dr. David Calhoun
DS Connecticut/Western Massachusetts

Rev. Taesung Kang
DS New Hampshire

Rev. Jackie Brannen
DS Northern Maine

“...If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation.”
II Cor. 5:17
RS – 19 – 213 - GATHERING THE NORTHEASTERN JURISDICTION OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
(Adopted Friday Morning, June 14, 2019)

Whereas vast information and discernment are needed to process the outcomes of the 2019 Called Session of the General Conference and prepare for the 2020 General Conference, and

Whereas some of this processing and discernment may be most effective in the context of the regional bodies of the church, where ministry and mission may share commonalities, and where mutual relationships of trust and collegiality may be stronger, and

Whereas the Book of Discipline allows for the College of Bishops to call a special session (see ¶521), and the Northeastern Jurisdiction Vision Table has previously called for a gathering of the delegates in the Jurisdiction outside of an official session,

Therefore, the 2019 session of the New England Annual Conference hereby requests that the Northeastern Jurisdiction College of Bishops consider calling a special session of the Northeastern Jurisdiction prior to the 2020 General Conference, for the purpose of exploring how to organize our ministry as a Jurisdiction, given the theological, missional, and temporal divisions in denomination.

Further, the 2019 session of the New England Annual Conference requests that the Northeastern Jurisdiction Vision Table call a gathering of the 2020 delegates to the Jurisdictional Conference, after their elections, but prior to the start of the 2020 General Conference, regardless of whether the College of Bishops decides to call a special session.

The NEAC requests that the Conference Secretary send a copy of this resolution to the chair(s) of the Northeastern Jurisdiction Vision Table, and to Bishop Johnson, President of the NEJ College of Bishops.

RS – 19 – 214 - MAINTAINING CONFERENCE RESERVE FUNDS
(Adopted Friday Morning, June 14, 2019)

The mission of The United Methodist Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. While we are united in mission, our worldwide denomination is diverse in the ways we equip and live out this mission. The New England Annual Conference seeks to align our resources with our mission more effectively.

Hindering this aspiration, The United Methodist denomination spent an estimated $1.5 million on the Commission on the Way Forward and an estimated $3.6 million on the 2019 Called Session, without resolving the division and harm across our global connection.
In addition, in 2018, the New England Annual Conference Mission Share Fund Reserves were decreased by $275,000 in order to meet our expenses and obligations to the denomination.

At the same time, local churches and communities across New England struggle to engage in transformational ministry in our secularized context, amid widespread uncertainty and confusion about the denomination, while stewarding precious financial resources.

Therefore be it resolved that, compelled by both conscience and responsible stewardship, it is the will of the 2019 session of the New England Annual Conference that the New England Annual Conference Council on Finance and Administration assure no NEAC reserve funds are used in the payment of General Church apportionments.

RS – 19 – 215 - ASPIRING TO “DO NO HARM”
(Submitted by: Rebecca Girrell, Lebanon, NH, Effie McAvoy, York-Ogunquit, ME, Vicki Woods, Newport, ME, Allen Ewing-Merrill, Portland, ME, Sara Ewing-Merrill, Portland, ME, P. Stewart Lanier, Melrose, MA, Ralph Howe, Pittsfield, MA)
(Adopted Saturday Afternoon, June 15, 2019)

The first of John Wesley’s simple rules of faith can be summarized: “first, do no harm.”

Yet, for nearly 50 years, The United Methodist Church has done harm to LGBTQIA+ persons and their friends, families, and allies, through words and actions that undermine the full sacred worth and dignity of all people.

Recently, this harm has increased, at great personal, spiritual, and financial cost, harming LGBTQIA+ persons and dramatically undermining the witness, mission, and relationship of The United Methodist Church in communities all over the world. Our denomination is implementing discriminatory policies akin to the harm we did in the creation of the segregationist Central Jurisdiction.

Meanwhile, ministries in our own communities across New England, struggling to mend relationships and outreach, also find themselves short on the necessary financial resources to “do all the good we can” in service to God and God’s people.

We can no longer be complicit in this harm. We cannot agree, however, where the harm resides, and how best to live out of our conviction and calling to be a fully inclusive church.

Therefore, be it resolved that it is the will and desire of the 2019 session of the New England Annual Conference permit that

1. The Annual Conference Council on Finance and Administration provide local churches information about the uses and organizations in United Methodism to which the Mission Share Fund 1 (General Church Apportionments) are sent, and

2. The Council on Finance and Administration request and receive communication from local churches concerning Fund 1 remittances or refusals to remit, explaining the intentions of the
local churches for the use of those remittances and/or the reasons for not remitting, and that the Council summarize these responses for distribution via the Catalyst and send them to the UMC General Council on Finance and Administration prior to the 2020 General Conference, and

3. Local churches will be encouraged to support our shared ministry and Mission Shares (especially Funds 2 and 3), through both the gifts of financial remittance and principled witness in communicating intentions for remittances and/or reasons for not remitting.

4. The Conference Statistician shall publish as part of the statisticians report the apportioned amounts and funds received for fund 1, fund 2, and fund 3 of every local church in the district. Local churches who refuse to remit fund 1 shall be noted as part of the statisticians report.

**RS – 19 – 216 - RESPONDING TO EMERGING EXPRESSIONS OF METHODISM**

(Submitted by: Rebecca Girrell, Lebanon NH, Effie McAvoy, York-Ogunquit ME, Vicki Woods, Newport ME, Allen Ewing-Merrill, Portland ME, Sara Ewing-Merrill, Portland ME, P. Stewart Lanier, Melrose MA, Ralph Howe, Pittsfield, MA, Pat MacHugh, Weston, MA)

(Adopted Saturday Morning, June 15, 2019)

Because we know that the time has come to listen for God’s direction in shaping the future of the Methodist movement,

Because we are still a global and interconnected church, with skill and leadership manifest across the connection,

Because “United Methodists for a Way Forward” hosted a Summit on May 17-18, centering the voices of People of Color + Queer + Trans people of faith and allies (lay and clergy), seeking to shape a future for the church, and at this gathering created a proclamation declaring the full liberation of people of color, LGBTQIA+ and trans Christians as the only way forward, and committed to intersectionality and the dismantling of colonialism, white supremacy, and oppression based on gender or sexuality;

Because “UM-Next” centrist and progressive leaders met at the Church of the Resurrection on May 20-21 to envision next steps for the denomination, and at this gathering expressed four commitments, to following Jesus, resisting evil, injustice, and oppression, rejecting the Traditional Plan, and eliminating discriminatory language about LGBTQ persons from the Discipline;

Therefore, the New England Annual Conference endorses the proclamation of the United Methodists for a Way Forward, adding our voices to the uncompromising call to end discrimination and oppression for LGBTQIA+ people, persons of color, and trans people, hierarchical organizational structures and to the many other forces of oppression against which we still labor

Furthermore, the New England Annual Conference concurs with the commitments of the UMC Next gathering, including the rejection in principle of the Traditional Plan as inconsistent with the gospel of Jesus Christ and the resistance in principle to the implementation of the Traditional Plan, but calls the denomination to not only remove discriminatory language from the Discipline, but to commit to becoming a movement of full liberation by the rejection of all oppressive systems of racism, sexism, classism, heterosexism, ableism, etc., and creating where necessary new structures and systems that center the people who have been previously marginalized.
RS – 19 – 217 - A RESOLUTION TO BOYCOTT GENERAL CONFERENCE 2020
(Submitted by: Linda Brewster, Sean Delmore, Allen Ewing-Merrill, Sara Ewing-Merrill, Will Green, Ross Johnson, Mimi Magee)

(Ruled out of order Saturday Morning, June 15, 2019)

Whereas the General Conference of the United Methodist Church continues to do harm by explicitly targeting for punishment lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA) people, and those who are associated with LGBTQIA people, and

Whereas the New England Annual Conference has consented to this harm by participating in a system that rejects the gospel of Jesus Christ, rejects the spirit of a Wesleyan social witness and rejects a commonly held understanding of basic decency that affirms discrimination is wrong, by sending delegates and directing significant resources of time, energy and money to General Conference, and

Whereas experience has taught us to no longer invest our faith in outcomes from General Conference,

Therefore be it resolved that the New England Annual Conference formally withdraw its consent to participate in this process by refusing to send delegates to General Conference 2020 of the United Methodist Church. Delegates elected at the New England Annual Conference will serve as delegates to the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference.

And be it further resolved that the New England Annual Conference call for its members to invest our energy and imagination in multiple, local, creative alternatives to General Conference 2020 that express the good news revealed to us in Jesus Christ, such as, but not limited to: community based conferences that seek to educate, enlighten, and bless people of all sexual orientations and gender identities; supporting efforts to promote justice for LGBTQIA people in our local contexts; spiritual and liturgical acts of repentance for people who have tolerated discrimination, including United Methodists; and other expressions of hope and good will.

These actions serve as a public affirmation of our Action of Non-Conformity with the General Conference of the United Methodist Church, adopted at the 2016 session of the New England Annual Conference.

RS – 19 – 218 – PROPOSED SLATE FOR ELECTION OF CONFERENCE OFFICERS
(Submitted by the Committee on Leadership/Nominations)
(Adopted Friday Morning, June 14, 2019)

[ED Note: Please see actual slate of Conference Officers in opening pages of this Journal]

RS – 19 – 219 - TO CLOSE WEYMOUTH UMC, WEYMOUTH, MA
(Submitted by Rev. We Hyun Chang, DS, Metro Boston Hope District)
(Adopted Friday Afternoon, June 14, 2019)

Weymouth United Methodist Church of Weymouth, Massachusetts has been committed to sharing God’s love with people in Weymouth and South Shore area since 1910’s. Among many faithful ministry
and mission, women of Weymouth have formed United Methodist Women that included not only members of the church but also of the town itself. During the recent years, Weymouth congregation has created a gracious and open place for the elderly to come and share their fellowship and support. However, during the last few years Weymouth has experienced steady decline in both membership and stewardship. We discern that a time to end the long history of Weymouth UMC as a congregation in order for God’s grace to work to open new possibilities for God’s ever expanding ministry of love and justice.

WHEREAS Weymouth United Methodist Church of Weymouth, Massachusetts over the past years have found we have not been able to reach out and grow the church; and WHEREAS we have found the resources of people power and finances become limited; and WHEREAS we have worked closely with Holbrook United Methodist Church in Holbrook, MA; and WHEREAS we have prayerfully discerned that the ending of a church does not mean the ending of God’s ministry here in Weymouth and in all places,

THEREFORE, WE RESOLVE to surrender Weymouth United Methodist Church as a legacy to The New Family UMC, a new church re-launch effort, presently worshipping at Weymouth UMC in Weymouth, surrendering the church building and the parsonage as of July 1, 2018 as a legacy to our rich heritage, with the hope that God will continue to expand the circle of God’s love here in Weymouth and beyond through this new possibility.

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the future use of all remaining financial assets other than the buildings shall be discerned and decided by the district committee on buildings and locations of Metro Boston Hope District in consultation with the bishop and the cabinet.

RS – 19 – 301 - EXCLUDE GOVERNMENT DEBT OF COUNTRIES INVOLVED IN PROLONGED MILITARY OCCUPATIONS

(Submitted by the Conference Board of Church and Society, and the Conference Divestment Task Force)
(Adopted Saturday Afternoon, June 15, 2019)

WHEREAS Amos 5:24 says “But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream” and Psalm 103:6 says “The Lord works righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed,” and WHEREAS The United Methodist Church, through its general agencies and annual conferences, has endeavored to be accountable to our Social Principles through screening against investment in military occupations,¹ and WHEREAS The United Methodist Church’s Social Principles state “…we endorse the United Nations, its related bodies, the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court as the best instruments now in existence to achieve a world of justice and law,”² and

WHEREAS three nations have held subject populations under prolonged military occupation: Israel has occupied the Palestinian territories since 1967, Turkey has occupied Northern Cyprus since 1974, and Morocco has occupied Western Sahara since 1976, thus denying the subject populations their self-determination in violation of the system established by the Charter of the United Nations and International Law in general, and

WHEREAS the above-named occupying powers have been named in United Nations Security Council resolutions and/or International Court of Justice rulings as having engaged in prolonged military occupations and are thereby violators of international law and are responsible for human rights abuses, generally including reduction of food assistance to refugees, failure to protect civilian persons, land confiscation, home demolition, and violence against civilians, and

WHEREAS government debt (also called sovereign debt), especially that held in bonds denominated in foreign currencies, is unrestricted funds that a government uses at its own discretion and without any formal mechanism for advocacy by the bond holder, unlike stocks which represent an ownership interest in a corporation and provide a platform to advocate for change, and

WHEREAS holders of the government debt of countries complicit in prolonged military occupations are effectively financing the high military expenditures of those governments that are necessitated by that military occupation and holders of that debt are therefore earning money in the form of interest payments from the human rights abuses and violations of international law of those countries, and

WHEREAS Wespath Benefits and Investments, the holder of United Methodist pension funds (formally named the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits), in their Human Rights investment guideline says “Wespath also may exclude from investment the sovereign debt of any country demonstrating a prolonged and systematic pattern of human rights abuses,”

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the New England Annual Conference prayerfully calls upon the boards and agencies throughout the connection and its own investment managers to add to their human rights guidelines explicit language with regard to governmental debt so as to exclude those governments maintaining a prolonged military occupation that have been the subject of United Nations Security Council resolutions and/or International Court of Justice rulings, and to align their portfolios accordingly, avoiding the governmental debt of each such country until the time when each government ends their military occupation, and

FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED that the New England Annual Conference submit this resolution to General Conference 2020.

RS – 19 – 302 - AMEND THE BOOK OF DISCIPLINE TO EXCLUDE THE GOVERNMENT DEBT OF COUNTRIES INVOLVED IN PROLONGED MILITARY OCCUPATIONS
(Submitted by the Conference Board of Church and Society, and the Conference Divestment Task Force)


4 http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/sovereign-debt.html

5 https://www.wespath.com/investment_philosophy/human-rights/guideline/
Amend ¶ 717: In the investment of money, it shall be the policy of The United Methodist Church that all general boards and agencies, including the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits, and all administrative agencies and institutions, including hospitals, homes, educational institutions, annual conferences, foundations, and local churches, make a conscious effort to invest in institutions, companies, corporations, governments, or funds with policies and practices that are socially responsible, consistent with the goals outlined in the Social Principles. All United Methodist institutions shall endeavor to seek investments in institutions, companies, corporations, governments, or funds that promote racial and gender justice, protect human rights, prevent the use of sweatshop or forced labor, avoid human suffering, and preserve the natural world, including mitigating the effects of climate change. In addition, United Methodist institutions shall endeavor to avoid investments in companies engaged in core business activities that are not aligned with the Social Principles through their direct or indirect involvement with the production of anti-personnel weapons and armaments (both nuclear and conventional weapons), alcoholic beverages or tobacco; or that are involved in privately operated correctional facilities, gambling, pornography or other forms of exploitative adult entertainment. United Methodist institutions should similarly not hold sovereign or government debt in states conducting prolonged military occupations that have been the subject of United Nations Security Council resolutions and/or International Court of Justice rulings as they violate international law and human rights standards. The boards and agencies are to give careful consideration to environmental, social, and governance factors when making investment decisions and actively exercise their responsibility as owners of the companies in which they invest. This includes engaging with companies to create positive change and hold them accountable for their actions, while also considering exclusion if companies fail to act responsibly.

Date:
Signature of the Petitioner:
Identification of the Petitioner:
Phone:
Fax Number:
Email Address:

Rationale: When we buy sovereign debt (government bonds) we are lending our funds to governments without any formal mechanism for advocacy. Governments conducting prolonged military occupations are violating international law and human rights standards. Such investments are morally wrong and financially risky.
A STATEMENT OF CONSCIENCE FROM THE NEW ENGLAND ANNUAL CONFERENCE


(Adopted Saturday Afternoon, June 15, 2019)

Whereas, in an online statement, hundreds of laity of the New England Annual Conference declared: “led by the Holy Spirit, we yearn to hear New England United Methodists speak with one voice in calling for a reborn church which throws off the shackles of an unjust and oppressive decision-- a reborn Church that unconditionally opens to LGBTQIA+ clergy and laity the doors, pulpits and administrative offices of this emergent and revitalized communion of faith. We call for complete inclusion, with full access to membership, leadership, marriage, ordination and administration in the revitalized United Methodist Church,” and

Whereas the co-chairs of the Board of Ordained Ministry of the New England Annual Conference encouraged the Board to “respectfully maintain its current posture with regard to its discernment with those called to ministry in our midst: sexual orientation is not our concern, rather the manifestation of the Holy Spirit expressed in the gifts and graces of those hearing a call from God,“ and that “we will not engage in or tolerate the harassment of others by extending inquiries into relationships and intimacy beyond the scope of fidelity in one’s covenant relationships,” and

Whereas the Cabinet of the New England Annual Conference issued a statement that “we speak with one heart and voice of our commitment to lead a church that does not discriminate in membership, ordination, or service in ministry based upon any person’s gender or sexual identity,”

Therefore, the New England Annual Conference issues this statement of conscience, proclaiming our principled rejection of the discrimination and punishments on the basis of sexual orientation in the Book of Discipline, whether the new sanctions passed by the 2019 Called Session or those preexisting that meeting. We cannot in good conscience envision a future for our Annual Conference within a denomination that endorses or requires such discrimination and punishment.

Further, the New England Annual Conference requests that the text of this statement of conscience be submitted to the General Conference Secretary for informational purposes only.

PETITION TO THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

REQUIREMENT OF THE TRUST CLAUSE IN THE CASE OF SUCCESSOR ENTITIES

(Submitted by: Rebecca Girrell, Lebanon NH, Effie McAvoy, York-Ogunquit ME, Vicki Woods, Newport ME, Ralph Howe, Pittsfield, MA, Pat MacHugh, Weston, MA)

(Withdrawn Friday Morning, June 13, 2019)

Motion: Amend ¶2501.1 by adding a new paragraph following the first paragraph (which currently ends “from their connection with the entire worldwide Church.”)

This trust requirement must be maintained by The United Methodist Church and its successor denominations, institutions, and entities. In the event that an incorporated conference, agency, or organization of the denomination withdraws from or is removed from the denomination, that entity and its successor will retain responsibility to hold and administer the real and personal, tangible, and
intangible property held or administered prior to withdrawal.

Rationale: The Trust Clause is an essential element of the polity of The UMC, but does not anticipate or account for successor movements or denominations, which may arise as the Spirit moves the church forward.

RS – 19 – 305- PETITION TO THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT: POWERS OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE
(Submitted by: Rebecca Girrell, Lebanon NH, Effie McAvoy, York-Ogunquit ME, Vicki Woods, Newport ME, Ralph Howe, Pittsfield, MA)

(Adopted Saturday Afternoon, June 15, 2019)

Motion: Amend The Constitution of The United Methodist Church ¶16, Article IV

¶16. Article IV. -- The General Conference shall have full legislative power oversight over all matters distinctly connectional, and in the exercise of this power oversight shall have authority as follows:

(retain rest of the paragraph as written).

Rationale: Centralized legislative power in the General Conference is unsustainable, given the diverse and divided nature of our connection. Rather, the GC would become a source of inspiration, connection, and accountability, but not legislative authority.

RS – 19 – 306 – RESOLUTION RELATED TO VOTING RIGHTS AND CLERGY MEMBERSHIP STATUS
(Submitted by New England Assembly of Licensed Local Pastors (Pastor Scott Masters, Pastor Virginia Goode-Doran, et. al))

(Adopted Saturday Morning, June 15, 2019)

WHEREAS, the United Methodist Church and the New England Annual Conference have begun the hard process of discerning how to live into a new reality of an evolving church after Special Session; and recognizing that all members and all corners of the church should possess a voice and vote in the future of the church;

WHEREAS, the current Book of Discipline prevents certain classes of clergy from being able to vote on amendments to the Constitution of the United Methodist Church or delegate representation, by which not only their rights and responsibilities as appointed clergy are managed, but the pathway of the church’s future outlined and realized;

WHEREAS, those disenfranchised classes include not only Licensed Local Pastors until they have completed the Course of Study and/or Seminary; Provisional Deacons, Associate Members, Provisional Elders, and Student Pastors until they have completed Seminary, but also the underrepresented and often smaller and poorer communities they serve;

WHEREAS, this reality stands contrary to our understanding of equality and social justice and stands symbolic of the forms of systemic injustices that is in our calling as United Methodist to actively oppose and overturn.

WHEREAS, our Social Principles remind us that the strength of a system depends upon the full and
willing participation of those within it (Book of Discipline, Paragraph 164.B)

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the New England Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church affirms that its members and leadership have the moral responsibility to offer a prophetic witness throughout the communities in which we serve, noting that to be vote-less is to be voice-less.

FURTHERMORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that in this conviction the New England Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church affirms that changes ought to be made to the United Methodist Constitution and Book of Discipline to amend this practice, and urges delegates at the 2020 General Conference to approve any necessary changes; to fully incorporate all into the life of the church;

AMENDING the appropriate sections of the 2016 Book of Discipline, including, but not limited to, Paragraph 35-Section VI-Article IV, Paragraph 316.6, Paragraph 321.1,2, Paragraph 327.2, Paragraph 602.1b,c, & d affording the aforementioned classes of clergy the right to vote in the annual conference on constitutional amendments, the right to vote to elect and be elected as clergy delegates to General and Jurisdictional or central conferences, and on all other matters except matters of ordination, character and conference relations of clergy.