AFRICA UNIVERSITY REPORT TO THE 2019 NEW ENGLAND ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Africa University thrives in ministry because of the steadfast support of local congregations of The United Methodist Church. The university community is grateful to the leaders and members of the New England Conference for prioritizing Africa University with the contribution of 100 percent of the asking to the Africa University Fund (AUF) apportionment in 2018.

The students, faculty, and staff value every gift and they are especially humbled by the sacrifices that are being made to maintain a tradition of 100 percent support for the AUF in the New England Conference.

Through its investment in the Africa University Fund, the New England Conference continues to affirm the university’s core mission of nurturing leaders who help communities to know and grow in relationship with Jesus Christ, and to experience peace, sustainable livelihoods, food security and abundant health. Thank you, New England United Methodists, for your steadfast commitment and strong support.

Institutional Update:

• Africa University remains a top choice for African young people who are seeking a relevant and life-changing educational experience. In 2018, Africa University enrolled more than 700 new students and maintained an overall enrollment of around 2,000 students. There were 25 African countries represented in the student body. Women made up 53 percent of the student population, which is almost twice the average for African higher education institutions.

• Throughout 2018, Africa University weathered the challenges of Zimbabwe’s depressed and uncertain socio-economic environment with creativity and prudence. The university delivered teaching, learning and community service activities of high-quality without interruption, while also renewing and expanding its infrastructure. Key enhancements in 2018 included the refurbishment of three residence halls for women students and the full implementation of an ERP software system to integrate and manage all facets of the university’s operations.

• For the first time in five years, there is new construction on the Africa University campus thanks to a 25th anniversary gift from Highland Park United Methodist Church in Dallas, TX. In December 2018, work began on the foundation for a new residence hall. The university subsequently broke ground for the construction of phase two of its Student Union and Cafeteria building. Both projects are progressing well and are expected to be fully in use by August 2020.

• With conflict, poverty, and the impact of climate change persisting as the key drivers of food insecurity and the rise in internal displacement, migration, and refugeehood in Africa, the university consolidated its position as a trailblazer by offering new graduate training and research opportunities. Africa University has also continued to provide scholarships for refugee women so that their experiences, talents and ideas are integrated into the search for sustainable solutions.

• Africa University delivered critical data for reducing malaria deaths in southern Africa and controlling the spread of insect-borne diseases world-wide. AU’s insectary—a laboratory for rearing and studying live insects, such as mosquitos—shares its findings through the Southern Africa Centers of Excellence for Malaria Research. This data informs regional policies, practices and malaria control efforts.
The students, faculty, administrators, and trustees of Africa University thank the members of the New England Conference for their prayers and support, which continue to grow and sustain this ministry. Thank you for all that you have sown into Africa University over the past 27 years. As Africa University and the New England Conference move forward together in missional engagement, we trust in God’s unending grace for the increase.

Submitted by:
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ALDERSGATE CAMP AND RETREAT CENTER
Annual Report to Annual Conference 2018
Submitted by John Spelman, Executive Director

Aldersgate lived fully into its mission as “a sacred space, empowering all in faith and friendship to change the world” in 2018/19.

Aldersgate continues to serve as sacred space for many faith groups, including many United Methodist churches. While not limited to United Methodist groups, Aldersgate welcomes groups from many denominations as well as other faith traditions. Universities and other community groups experience Christian hospitality and reconnect with nature, each other, and the divine at Aldersgate. Due to the different facilities Aldersgate offers, multiple groups are able to use Aldersgate at once, evidenced by the weekend occupied by the RISEM District Resource Day and the Providence College Horizons and Peer Mentoring groups. By bringing people together in a common space, Aldersgate is able to show Christian hospitality and welcome all people into this sacred space.

Aldersgate committed itself to maintaining the position that all means all. The board of directors and executive director continue to work on both facilities and programs to ensure that the needs of all campers and groups can be accommodated and that no camper or group is turned away because of their specific needs. This includes working with campers and rental groups around issues of identity, physical disability, or religious accommodation. For the summer of 2019, Aldersgate has hired an Inclusion Specialist to create a supportive environment for campers with different needs and ensure that both campers and families are set up for a successful summer camp experience. Parents have already expressed relief that campers with social-emotional challenges will be included and welcomed.

One of the ways Aldersgate is empowering people in faith is through intentional faith formation. In addition to worships designed to be assessable to youth, campers are provided access to a camp chaplain to help guide them while wrestling with questions of faith. Faith formation does not stop at campers, as Aldersgate initialized the Staff Scholarship program last summer to for our young adult leadership. The Aldersgate Summer Staff members were given the opportunity to answer the question:

“This summer, our theme has been Micah 6:8, which tells us that God requires of us to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God. How has this verse affected you this summer? How will you live out this message as you leave Aldersgate and go out into the world?”
The Summer Staff embraced this so well that the scholarship committee, comprised of summer camp volunteers, board members, and clergy, could not select only one winner. It became apparent that we had two winners and the funds for another staff scholarship were raised by the Living Arts volunteers. These volunteers went over and above and have started the seed for this next year’s staff scholarship fund.

One of the ways Aldersgate hopes to inspire our youth to change the world is through the Campfire Legends program. Each year, people who volunteered at Aldersgate for many years are recognized for their service to Aldersgate and the larger community. Nominees this year included a volunteer who had started programs for inner city youth to attend summer camp with specific programming around issues that they encountered every day, a volunteer who was instrumental in turning Aldersgate from a summer institute program into a full year adventure style camp program with off-season facilities rentals, and a volunteer who pioneered older adult camping and nature based learning for all ages. Through our recognition of these volunteers, we are instilling the idea in our campers that small actions can create great change.

Through these actions and more, Aldersgate continues to be a key ministry of the New England Annual Conference, a sacred space, empowering all in faith and friendship to change the world.

NEW ENGLAND CONFERENCE ASIAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER COMMISSION

2019 Report to the Annual Conference

At the commission’s annual luncheon in June of 2018, the members have officially approved on its new name as The Asian & Pacific Islander Commission (APIC) from the former Asian Commission. This was intended to reflect and embrace the growing diversity within the body of the commission.

In April of 2018 one of the executive team of the commission attended an event at Boston University to join the conversation in the creation of Boston University School of Theology Korean Alumni Association.

In July, the commission supported three members of the commission to attend The Ohana Conference, a biennial meeting of Asian American and Pacific Islander United Methodist Clergywomen Association. The event took place in Honolulu, HI with the theme “You Belong Here!”

The Commission’s major event of 2018 was the annual retreat between September 25-27 at the Rolling Ridge Retreat Center featuring the Rev. Dr. Grace Jisun Kim (PCUSA). Using the title of her recent book as our theme, “Healing Our Broken Humanity: Practice for Revitalizing the Church and Renewing the World,” we had an opportunity to learn about the history of Asian & Pacific Islander immigration in North America and share our own stories of lament and reconciliation as each of our personal understanding of ethnic identity has evolved. On the last day of the retreat, we worshiped with Bishop Devadhar after having a deep and open conversation to reflect on what the role of APIC sisters and brothers would look like as the conference seeks a way forward after the 2019 Special Session of the General Conference.
As we continue to empower various ministries of the Asian and Pacific Islander United Methodists of the New England Conference, we are excited to share that our primary focus is to better equip next-generation API members to strengthen the connectional identity of our denomination beyond all cultural and ethnic origin.

Respectfully submitted by:
The Executive Team of the Asian & Pacific Islander Commission
Rev. Yunki Kim
Rev. Hyosuk Yun
Rev. Hyungyong Choi

BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Greetings from Boston University School of Theology (BUSTH) as we seek to be faithful and courageous disciples in a hurt-filled world!

NEWS FROM THE SCHOOL:

- **Faculty:** We welcomed two amazing faculty this year: **Shively Smith** as Assistant Professor of New Testament, and **Nicolette Manglos-Weber** as Assistant Professor of Religion and Society.
- **Scholarships:** We continue to offer free tuition to UMC registered candidates for ordained ministry. We also offer new Korean and African Student Scholarships, and four Leadership Fellowships: Raíces Latinas for Latinx leaders, Sacred Worth for persons who lead in the LGBTQIA+ community, Howard Thurman for African-American leaders, and Indigenous Studies Fellowships.
- **Faith and Ecological Justice Program:** This new program sponsors events and initiatives to increase ecological awareness, education, research, and activism in ecological justice.
- **Grants:** Henry Luce Foundation has awarded a 3-year grant to support the Educating Effective Chaplains Project. The grant supports work with other seminaries to develop models that can better prepare chaplains for effective ministry.
- **Website:** A new School website will launch in Fall 2019.
- **2019 marks the 180th year of the School of Theology, originally founded as the Newbury Bible Institute in 1839.**
- **The BUSTH development campaign will end in September 2019, and we continue working toward a strong completion to support future generations and contribute to the vitality of your ministries.**

PARTNERING FOR MINISTRY AND TRANSFORMATION:

- **Creative Callings:** Our vocational project is an exciting partnership with local churches, seeking to create “a culture of call.” It is sponsored through a grant from the Lilly Endowment.
- **Engagement with the UMC:** Many of our students and alums were delegates and participants in General Conference 2019, and in reflection sessions and actions that have followed.
- **Congregational courses:** The Continuing Scholar program offers current BUSTH courses to alums and local clergy as continuing education credit for a small fee per course.
• **Doctor of Ministry**: The DMin in Transformational Leadership is soaring with lively student cohorts that are broadly ecumenical, culturally diverse, and global. The model includes intensives, online courses, and faculty mentoring.

• **Religion and Conflict Transformation Clinic**: The Clinic provides internships and workshops that foster justice and peace.

• **Travel seminars**: These courses engage students with immersion journeys to the Arizona-Mexican border, Israel and Palestine, Argentina, and other sites of learning and ministry. Attendees from the recent Serbia and Croatia Seminar presented to the 2018 Parliament of the World’s Religions in Toronto, Canada.

• **Ecumenical partnerships**: We continue to build robust Communities of Learning with the Episcopal Church and United Church of Christ, and to develop new communities with the Unitarian Universalist and Baptist Churches.

• **Partnership with Hebrew College**: Together we are able to enrich interreligious learning through joint courses and public events and to co-sponsor the *Journal of Interreligious Studies* and the *State of Formation* blogging cohort of emerging leaders.

**TAKING ACTION GLOBALLY AND LOCALLY:**

• **Campus action**: Work to improve accessibility and sustainability. BUSTH is the first certified Green School in BU, and the school participates actively in the Green Seminary Initiative. It has also been named as one of the “Seminaries that Change the World” for the second consecutive year.

• **Internships in global service and peacemaking**: We provide internships that support students who engage in ministry with churches and service organizations across the world.

**COMMITMENT TO JUSTICE**: Celebrating differences while joining in action.

• Faculty and students have led and participated in UMCOR; support efforts with victims of hurricanes and fires in Puerto Rico, Texas, California, and Florida; protests against white supremacist acts of violence; support services with immigrants and DACA young people; and ecumenical and interreligious witnesses for justice in the city of Boston.

• Through student-led Town Hall meetings, the community has had deep conversations on issues that divide (including theological differences). We seek to foster respectful listening that builds community life and communal action, while continuing to build our prophetic witness.

As BUSTH looks to the future, we celebrate transformational leaders of the United Methodist Church. Your living legacy and faithful witness give us hope and courage for the future.

Blessings and gratitude,

Mary Elizabeth Moore, Dean

**NEAC PROVISIONAL CAMP AND RETREAT MINISTRIES EXECUTIVE BOARD**

**ANNUAL REPORT TO ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2019**

The NEAC Camp and Retreat Ministries Executive Board became an official program entity at Annual Conference 2018, after spending the prior year developing structure and processes to enhance
collaborative CRM relationships, shared best practices, and robust outcomes linked to the five core values of NEAC.

The United Methodist Church is a connectional system at all levels. This enhances structure, functionality, impact, collaboration, and potential outcomes. We are stronger together than separate.

The United Methodist Camp and Retreat Ministries are grounded in the Seven Foundations of Camp and Retreat Ministries, developed by Discipleship Ministries. Each of our four CRM sites upholds all seven foundations, which are in harmony with the NEAC vision, mission, and values.

All of the CRM sites invite people into, and provide, a “sacred space” to deepen faith for transformational experiences for leaders and followers of all ages. Each person’s journey is different, but the relationships developed, nurtured and enhanced enable children, youth, and adults to take home strategies, passion, and support in order to transform the world as disciples of Jesus Christ.

Whether it is a week/weekend in the woods, a day apart program/retreat, camp adventures, family/church programming onsite, mission projects, district/conference meetings, or meditating by one of our lakes, the sacred spaces help to reconnect us and recharge us on our journeys.

Outcomes include: “I experienced my call to ministry at camp…” “As a staff person at camp, I realized that Micah 6:8 was a way I could live my life.” “Mom, I wasn’t bullied once at camp—I could just be myself.” “God loves me just the way I am.” “I feel safe at ________.” “It is my spiritual home.” “I didn’t think I was worthy of being a Christian until I talked with my counselor.”

Four of the sites, with a collective total of over 300 winterized beds, have active, year-round Retreat Ministries which serve diverse communities. Three sites have strong camp programs annually reaching thousands of churched and unchurched children, youth, and adults, including participants from underserved communities.

The NEAC Camp and Retreat Ministries’ sites all focus on building Christian community within safe and sacred spaces, free of violence, and focused on connectivity, peacebuilding, and creation care. Affirmation of people of all backgrounds enables them to experience their holy worth. Leadership development occurs at all ages within the context of camping and retreats. CRM’s steward interfaith connection and dialogue. It is critical for each CRM site to not be isolated, but to work in collaboration and community with each other, in order to better serve the mission, vision, and values of the NEAC.

The work of the Camp and Retreat Ministries Executive Board greatly contributes to leadership, accountability, and collegiality in developing unified Camp and Retreat Ministries across all sites.

During this past Conference year, the CRM Executive Board has met five times, for a total of 24 hours, and has worked together as a unified board, with the following results:

- Promotion of camping and retreat programs in the NEAC, through the monthly CATALYST and E-clergy articles, as well as social media
- Development and adoption of nine common policies for all sites, including CRM Safe Sanctuary policy, Employment Harassment and Grievance policy, Code of Ethics policy, Conflict of Interest policy, Payment Card Industry policy, Hiring policy, and more.
- Development of the CRM Reserve Fund policy to mitigate deficit spending, with all sites contributing to the fund in 2018.
- Submission of CRM Parsonage Reports.
Implementation of comprehensive Facilities Assessments for all CRM property/equipment, to be submitted by each site to the Conference Trustees.

Consulting/meeting with Ralph Howe (CFA Chair), Beth DiCocco (Conference Communications), and Joy Mueller (NEAC Statistician) for planning and development of strategies.

Development of CRM History Form to connect alumni and CRM sites.

Collaboration on responses to emerging CRM issues.

Preparation for a collaborative presence at Annual Conference, with the creation of a camp/retreat space to reconnect and recharge.

Strengthening cohesion, collaboration and unity among all CRM representatives.

Submitted by
Karen Pehrson, Chair
CRM Executive Board

CANDLER SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY–2019 UMC ANNUAL CONFERENCE REPORT

For more than 100 years, Candler School of Theology at Emory University has prepared real people to make a real difference in the real world. Since our founding in 1914, more than 10,000 students have graduated from Candler, where they have been shaped as thoughtful, principled, and courageous leaders dedicated to transforming the world in the name of Jesus Christ.

This is especially important to note amid the current uncertainty in our denomination. It is an honor and a privilege for Candler to be one of 13 official seminaries of The United Methodist Church. Yet true to the Methodist tradition of ecumenical openness, Candler has enthusiastically welcomed the entire Wesleyan family to our community for generations. Faculty, staff, and students from the AME Church, the AMEZ Church, the CME Church, Free Methodists, Nazarenes, and others have worked, worshiped, learned, and prayed alongside United Methodists, and have been a vital part of shaping Candler and our mission. This diversity has been a wonderful gift and a rich blessing. As we move forward from the Special Session of General Conference, we will continue to invite and welcome wholeheartedly those from all expressions of the Wesleyan tradition. Indeed, we will continue to welcome all those who follow Jesus Christ.

Candler is also privileged to be one of seven graduate professional schools of Emory University in Atlanta. With the resources of a top-tier research institution and the reach of a global city, our students benefit from a rich academic and hands-on learning environment: The General Board of Global Ministries is in Atlanta, as are numerous public health, international development, and social service organizations. Candler’s intentional involvement with our surrounding community has contributed to our inclusion on a list of “Seminaries that Change the World” for six years running. In short, there is no better place to prepare for ministry that engages our major denominational priorities: developing leaders, starting and growing churches, ministry with the poor, and improving global health.

In order to keep pace with the needs of the church and the world, Candler offers 16 degrees: six single degrees and ten dual degrees pairing theology with bioethics, business, international development, law, public health, and social work. Our Doctor of Ministry degree is 90 percent online, so students can remain in their places of ministry and immediately apply to their context what they learn in class. Our Teaching Parish program allows eligible United Methodist students to serve as pastors in local churches.
while they’re enrolled—they earn a salary as they earn course credit and pastoral experience, plus they are mentored by an experienced United Methodist elder.

Candler’s student body continues to reflect the diversity and breadth of the Christian faithful, with an enrollment of 453, reflecting 51 percent women, 39 percent people of color (U.S.), and a median age of 27 among MDivs. Students represent 44 denominations, with half coming from the Methodist family.

Candler has a deep commitment to alleviating student debt and promoting financial literacy. In 2018-2019, we awarded $5.8 million in Candler scholarships, with 100 percent of MDiv students receiving aid. Plus, our comprehensive “Faith & Finance” program teaches money management skills that serve our students now and will continue to serve them—and the churches they lead—well into the future.

Candler draws considerable strength and inspiration from its relationship with The United Methodist Church. Our ability to fulfill our mission of educating faithful and creative leaders for the church’s ministries throughout the world depends upon your prayers, partnership, and support. Thank you for the countless ways you advance this vital ministry in the life of our denomination. Visit us in person or online at candler.emory.edu to see firsthand how Candler prepares real people to make a real difference in the real world.

—Jan Love
Mary Lee Hardin Willard Dean and Professor of Christianity and World Politics
Candler School of Theology

OFFICE OF CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Congregational Development is a holistic approach to the development and growth of a congregation’s ministries, participation, and impact on its community and world. This work continues to be a collaborative effort, including the Board of Congregational and Community Development, District Ministry Teams, District Superintendents, our Parish Consulting Network, and others.

Highlights of the work this past year include:

- Continuing to identify, assess and deploy pastors called and gifted to start new churches. In the last two years, we have launched 7 new start faith communities in a variety of contexts, with plans to launch a few more in 2019. In addition, we resource pastoral and lay leadership to start 9 new Taizé prayer services in this quadrennium as a way to reach new people in new ways. Scholarships are being provided each year to support this initiative of Bishop Devadhar in collaboration with the Office of Congregational Development.
- Creating a planting culture and providing support for those called to plant new faith communities, by offering First 12 training in the fall of 2018 to 16 participants. This training gives participants the skills needed to connect with and build relationship with 12 people outside their local church in order to launch a new ministry, new worship service, or new faith community. These participants then receive coaching for the next 9 months in order to help them develop their new ministry project. Currently 4 of those projects are at some level of development or implementation. Just a week prior to the writing of this report, another 8 participants went through the training.
- Launching the Advanced Leadership Coaching Network. This network trains coaches to be certified through the International Coaching Federation (ICF), and then provides high level,
qualified coaching to any pastor or church leader that desires this kind of support. In the fall, 5 pastors went through the training and are currently working toward their ICF credential.

- As a result of the Coaching Network, several pastors and congregational teams are receiving ICF (International Coaching Federation) level coaching. This support makes a significant difference in whether or not leaders and churches are able to make the changes they desire to be more fruitful and effective in their mission context. For more information about coaching, contact the Office of Congregational Development.

- Supporting new and existing congregations through the Hebrews 11 process. Currently, the following churches receive Hebrews 11 funds: New Hope UMC, North Adams, MA; First UMC Manchester, NH; Harvard-Epworth UMC, Cambridge, MA; Simple Church, Grafton/Worcester, MA; Jesus Life Center, Worcester, MA; Faith Community Church, Plymouth/Duxbury, MA; Rock Church Ministry, Multisite, NH/MA

- Overseeing the Together for Tomorrow and Urban Ministry grant process.

- Rebooting Ripple Effect to provide in-depth training specific to churches based on their need for development in particular areas. In 2018 this training was focused on helping churches connect with new visitors and build systems to help new people stay connected to a faith community. This year the focus will be on developing a leadership pipeline and how that leadership can lead to greater connection with the larger mission field.

One of the most helpful processes the Office of Congregational Development offers churches is “Discovering the Possibilities.” As of the March 2019, over 60 congregations have used this process to conduct an in-depth study of their ministry context, both internally and externally. This process, supported by follow up coaching, has ignited several churches into new levels of vitality and strength in the areas of worship, hospitality, discipleship, service and generosity.

Of course the Office of Congregational Development continues to create new opportunities for congregations. Just a couple of those include:

- Launchpad. In the past, this training, a church planter “bootcamp” for planting teams, was offered at the jurisdictional level. This year we’ll provide that training right here in the New England Conference for several new church start teams.

- Growing with Hope: The Office of Congregational Development is partnering with HopeGateWay in Portland, ME in supporting “Growing with Hope,” a process for training and coaching to help congregations engage more fully with their ministry context. For details go to www.neumc.org/trainingevents and click on Growing with Hope.

**REPORT OF CONFERENCE COUNCIL ON FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION**

At the time of this writing, several competing considerations have conditioned the work of the CCFA: the actions of General Conference 2019, the need to reduce Mission Shares for local churches and increase alternative income streams, to shift resources so as to facilitate new forms of strategic leadership, better target resources for fruitful ministries, increase connectional and cooperative ministries, and also to provide for effective transition from existing financial support systems for local churches. This has led to extensive consultation with many leadership groups within the Conference that have key interests in one or more areas under review.

**GC2019: How shall we respond?** After serious and lengthy discussion, CCFA will keep its commitments to pay 100% of General apportionments for 2019 but seek a consensus and other
strategic considerations about 2020 remittances with other Conference and Jurisdictional leaders to share with Annual Conference.

Income sources: Shifting our financial reliance from Mission Shares to alternative sources requires investment in several resources: stewardship, capital campaign, and grant writing, as well as supporting the growing fiscal capacities of Camps and Retreat Ministries. UMFNE is a valuable partner in this work. We hope to provide ideas for investment plans at Annual Conference.

Facilitating church renewal and growth: This requires strategic leadership, greater connectional emphasis, more effective targeting of resources for fruitful ministries, and less support for declining ministries. CCFA has worked with Personnel, the Cabinet, GCFA, Congregational Development, Trustees, UMFNE, and Equitable Compensation on these issues. Again, we hope to provide Annual Conference with options.

Transitioning from Existing Local Church supports: Local churches receive support from the Conference in excess of $1m/year. Not all of this has been effective and fruitful. However, where this has been instituted, local churches rightfully expect continuity of support over the planned periods of investment. Thus, we should not cut off this support abruptly, but work to shift funding gradually toward more fruitful systems. We will give Annual Conference further information on how this may develop.

Reduction in Mission Shares for local churches: We are keenly aware of the desire and need for such reductions, but we are not willing to propose reductions in expenditures that will, in the long run, lead to a missionally and fiscally weaker Conference. We are always on the look out for reasonable savings, significant investment opportunities and new ways for doing business, and hope to have some of these built into our 2020 budget request.

One avenue for cutting Mission Shares by about 10% has to do with “connectional shares” found in each of our three budget funds. These are estimated based on the need to fill the gaps left by churches that do not pay their full Mission Shares but are paid by remitting churches. If all or nearly all local churches paid their Mission Shares, we would be able to eliminate these connectional shares from our budget and billings.

To do this, CCFA has considered several alternatives, but these always depend upon local churches and districts working hard to cover our necessary budget expenses. Asking you to do this better has not worked well. We need to change the structure of connectional life so that we are all both incentivized and supported in doing better in paying Mission Shares. We will have a discussion time at Annual Conference to engage you in this conversation.

Preparation for change in our relationship to financial matters will be enhanced by the creation of a new Stewardship Council and strengthened District Finance Committees which are in progress at this time, as well as investments in alternative funding capacity building and more effective use of strategic leadership and resources. In the next few years, we will transition from older, less successful ways of financially supporting our mission.

Thus, while the budget CCFA proposes will not be radically different from 2019, it will reflect significant conceptual changes that shift our financial systems over the next few fiscal years to align more completely with our missional objectives and strategies. You are encouraged to listen to and read the budget information that will be posted on the Conference website and to attend the information and discussion session held at Annual Conference in June.

2019 REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF CONNECTIONAL MINISTRIES/ASSISTANT TO THE BISHOP

I am blessed to serve with gifted and inspiring partners in ministry including Bishop Devadhar, and my resource team, as well as many dedicated laity throughout our conference. My time is shared between
stewarding our mission through the work of Connectional Ministries and my work with the Bishop as his episcopal associate. As part of the extended and appointive cabinets, I share in collaborative learning and leadership for the conference as we seek to develop principled Christian leaders in an ever-changing New England landscape.

Camping and Retreat Ministry: I oversaw the hiring of two new staff: Executive Director at Camp Aldersgate, and a Latino Ministry Coordinator. I worked closely with our Camp and Retreat Ministry Board and the Rules committee to ensure that CRM was adopted as a conference agency at the June Session 2018 and toward strengthening our shared ministry among the sites, including developing a reserve fund that will provide stability and sustainability for our future. We celebrated the 70th anniversary of two of our sites: Mechuwana and Rolling Ridge.

Latino Ministries: We officially opened one new Brazilian Church, with several others budding. We received a $150,000 grant from GBGM (matched by another $150,000 from NEAC) to strengthen these ministries, and two additional $10,000 ethnic local church grants from Discipleship Ministries to develop discipling materials in Portuguese and other programs for our Spanish speaking congregations. I convened a summit of all our partners in Latino Ministry within the conference and our general agencies to develop plans for training and support of lay and clergy leaders. We were pleased to host the 2019 Portuguese Course of Study program in partnership with Garrett-Evangelical Seminary and Boston University School of Theology, which welcomed nearly 20 students.

Annual Conference: 2018 included a third annual opportunity for circle conversations around race and culture; and we also welcomed the Bishop of the Samnam Conference as we continue building a relationships with the Korean Methodist Church.

Pilgrimages: We returned to the Holy Land (this time with a special emphasis and time in the West Bank) and South Korea, welcoming first-time pilgrims and ordinands whose ministry will certainly be strengthened and inspired by these opportunities. The entire extended cabinet traveled to Presque Isle, Maine in September for our fall meeting, where we gleaned potatoes and stayed with local parishioners. It was a great opportunity for us to experience northern Maine and appreciate its gifts and resources.

Boundaries Training: I returned to my second Do No Harm Conference with members of our cabinet and Response and Intervention Team for quadrennial training on sexual ethics and the prevention and response to sexual misconduct within the church. As this is a significant part of my role, it is time well spent and always difficult, but essential to my ministry. It also provides the resources we need to lead our own mandated quadrennial training next year in NEAC.

Staff Coordination: With my database coordinator, our team spent many months this year transitioning to a new online database of record-keeping and benefits management, including appointment records, which is part of my role on the cabinet. We hope this new tool will replace human resources and much time when it is fully in place.

Connectionalism: In anticipation of the Special Session of General Conference to consider the denomination’s stand on human sexuality, Bishops Days, work with our various boards and agencies, special meetings, etc. have been devoted to this and we are still working hard to prepare our churches and leaders for potential shifts and outcomes. At the same time, we are also preparing our leaders and the conference for the certain change in episcopal leadership in September 2020 when Bishop Devadhar retires. We have invited three UMC general agencies to work with our administrative team on best
practices in management, stewardship, and personnel; to develop a comprehensive plan in mission engagement; and, to partner with us in addressing the issues of white privilege and racism throughout NEAC. I continue to resource local churches with materials that encourage connectional giving and participation, including preaching in churches where this has been a concern.

Rev. Erica Robinson-Johnson

REPORT OF THE NEW ENGLAND CONFERENCE DIRECTOR FOR LSM/CLM

I am Marie MacDougall, NE Director of Lay Servant Ministry and Certified Lay Ministry. I serve under the Conference Laity Committee and my budget is included with the Conference Laity Committee budget. My Conference Committee is made up of the District Directors and Registrars and we meet via conference call on an ongoing basis.

Many changes have taken place at each General Conference and in 2012 legislation was approved to change the name from Lay Speaking Ministry to Lay Servant Ministry. It was felt that not all laity wish to speak but still wish to serve in their churches, thus servant was a more accurate title. “Servant” best describes what Jesus told his disciples in John 13

After he washed the disciple’s feet, he put on his robes and returned to his place at the table. He said to them “Do you know what I’ve done for you? You call me “Teacher” and ‘Lord’, and you speak correctly, because I am. If I, your Lord and teacher have washed your feet, you too must wash each other’s feet. I have given you an example: Just as I have done, you also must do. I assure you, servants aren’t greater than their master, nor are those who are sent greater than the one who sent them. Since you know these things, you will be happy if you do them.

In John Wesley’s day laity preached, led worship, did bible study, visited the sick and those in prison and formed small groups known as class meetings or bands with the purpose to “watch over one another in love”. Lay servants express their faith through caring, leading and communicating and kept each other accountable.

At the 2016 General Conference, Lay Servant Ministry, Certified Lay Speakers and Certified Lay Ministers were all brought together under the Lay Servant Ministry committee within the Conference and Districts as they are all laity doing service in the local churches, the districts and conferences they are associated with under the assignment and support of the District Superintendents. It is our hope and prayer that these servants are utilized in their churches, districts and conferences as their calling, gifts and talents allow. There is a NE Conference website that can supply information for anyone who is interested in learning more about the requirements and service of a lay servant or certified lay minister. It is my prayer that each of our laity take the time to pray and listen for God’s calling to do the service you are called by God to do. Your life will be blessed.

My contact information can be found on the NE Conference website and most Districts have a website that will give you your district contacts and what courses are offered in your areas.

Marie MacDougall, NE Director for LSM/CLM
Disaster readiness and capacity building continued in 2018 as devastation mounted with Hurricane Florence causing catastrophic flooding in portions of the Carolinas, then Hurricane Michael, the strongest hurricane on record to hit the Florida Panhandle one month later, decimating whole communities before raging into Georgia and the Carolinas. Rebuilding continued from 2017 hurricanes in Texas (Harvey), the Caribbean and the southeastern U.S. (Irma) and Puerto Rico and the Caribbean (Maria).

In September, our readiness was tested with an unusual disaster in MA – the gas explosions from over-pressurized Columbia Gas lines in Lawrence, North Andover and Andover, Massachusetts, caused over 80 individual fires, including 40 homes, and personally impacted our bishop and disaster response coordinator, as homes, churches and businesses were evacuated in all three towns. The conference, with the help of an UMCOR grant and some church donations, partnered with a clergy association to identify 29 families - people of undetermined status who were out of work, as many businesses were shut down, and afraid to come forward for help through official channels.

The conference responded to two other disasters – the January 2018 Ice Jam Flooding in VT and the MA Nor’easter in March 2018. While the conference has an updated disaster plan, every disaster requires new approaches like improving processes and capacity to better weather disasters. Building an asset mapping database has started in 2019 with hopes of finishing it in 2020. It will identify resources we might depend on in a disaster (churches that can host volunteers & have kitchens, showers, etc.; people in congregations who are ham radio operators; churches willing to provide volunteer support services/phone banks, store disaster supplies, Stephen Ministers to act as listeners or canvas community needs or architects, engineers or construction experts willing to assess home damage, etc.)

Complicating this capacity-building is our aging church population. So, focusing on attracting young adults into this ministry, which often ignites or strengthens their spiritual life, met with some success. (We had a whole team of college-age students volunteer to help re-roof and save expenses for Camp Aldersgate’s dining hall in 2018, we trained two groups with 3-4 young adults each for ERT and VIM teams.)

In 2018, we held 3 Connecting Neighbors trainings (Plaistow, NH, a district day in CT-WMA in Northampton, MA and Bucksport, ME – trained 30 people total, exceeding the goal). In 2 ERT Basic trainings (Acushnet, MA, near RI, & Plymouth, MA, near Cape Cod & one in Bath, ME was cancelled due to low attendance – trained a total of 27, badging all but four & missing the 2018 goal by 3). Also, held one UMVIM training in Plymouth, MA (trained 23 people).

Teams have deployed to SC, WV, Haiti, Guatemala, TX, FL, Puerto Rico, Honduras and Africa, as well as to various places in New England. One two-week team, scheduled before Hurricane Michael hit, served in NC in October and another in November. Youth participated in Appalachia Service project weeks and with UM Army.

The conference delivered to an UMCOR depot 518 cleaning buckets, 5025 health/hygiene kits and 1034 school kits, worth a total of $105,864.

New England Conference churches donated almost $230,000 to UMCOR’s US Disaster Response through the conference after the 2017 hurricanes and when teams reported their plans to deploy, they were offered scholarships of $500 per team led by a trained team leader to help pay for housing or ground
transportation for those volunteering in Texas or Florida after Hurricanes Irma and Harvey to encourage and resource teams. Several long-term, individual volunteers went for several weeks (two months, in one case), 6 teams (that we know of) that went down for a week each and several joined teams going to Puerto Rico.

According to 2017 statistical reports, 33 churches (up from 28 in 2016) sponsored 46 (up from 38 in 2016) VIM mission journeys. Over 12,426 people were engaged in mission/community ministries, 332 of them through VIM teams, 1,395 engaged in community ministries for outreach, justice, and mercy serving over 403,000 people, 363 engaged in global/regional health and 958 engaged in ministry with the poor/socially marginalized.

This fall, I was elected to chair the jurisdictional Volunteers in Mission board and serve with faith and hope & with gratitude for all volunteers.

Barbara Burnside, Conference Disaster Response & Mission Coordinator

DIVESTMENT TASK FORCE

BACKGROUND. The Divestment Task Force was created to implement Resolution 204, which was passed by NEAC in 2005 (“Resolution on Divesting from Companies that are Supporting in a Significant Way the Israeli Occupation of Palestinian Territories”). The task force functions as a committee under the Board of Church and Society.

The task force issued reports in 2007 and 2010. The list of companies recommended for divestment fluctuated up and down over the years, involving about 30 companies.

CHANGING FOCUS. Starting in 2011 the emphasis began to change, focusing on fewer companies, recommending criteria that others could use to identify companies themselves, and including the concept of boycott. At the same time the approach changed from using only local expertise to working with a vigorous national group, UMKR (United Methodist Kairos Response, later renamed United Methodists for Kairos Response).

RESOLUTIONS. The task force has been the initial sponsor of multiple resolutions, all of which have been passed by NEAC: RS-314 (2011); RS-207 (2013); RS-15-301 (2015); RS-17-209, RS-17-210, and RS-17-211 (2017).

CURRENT WORK. Two resolutions, both designed to be sent to General Conference 2020, are being sponsored at this year’s annual conference. The first one entitled “Exclude Government Debt of Countries Involved in Prolonged Military Occupations” provides a standard that today targets three countries: Israel; Turkey; and Morocco. Prolonged military occupations violate international law, and because they are expensive to maintain, governments use bonds to finance them, making the holders of those bonds complicit in the resulting human rights abuses.

The second resolution is a petition to add similar language, identified by underlining, to the Book of Discipline.

It is expected that a Q&A about sovereign or government debt of countries involved in prolonged military occupations will become available on the UMKR website in the near future.

CONCLUSION. The work of the Divestment Task Force is consistent with the United Methodist commitment to a just and sustainable peace for all the people in Israel-Palestine and with repeated calls by the UM General Conference for an end to the Israeli occupation, and offers a tangible way of working
toward those goals. The strong support of our conference for this effort over the years is greatly appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,
William P. Aldrich, Chairperson
Divestment Task Force

Drew University Theological School
2019 Report to the Annual Conference

Drew University Theological School continued its multi-year self-transformation by launching its new curriculum for the Master of Divinity in the fall of 2018. This entirely reconceived degree seeks to form graduates that are rooted in the Christian story and traditions, capable of effective and creative leadership, and spiritually and socially resourceful for cultivating the transformative gospel of Jesus Christ in, with and for the church and the world. A new two-year degree, the Master of Arts in Theology and Ministry also launched, and offers students the opportunity to prepare for public leadership or a specialized vocation through deep theological and ethical reflection informed by biblical, historical, theological and practical sources. New pathways in the Master of Arts, the Master of Sacred Theology, and the Doctor of Ministry were also created as part of the curriculum transformation process which seeks to more intentionally focus the school’s service to the church, as well as to the academy and civil society. Drew welcomed 145 entering students this academic year, its largest entering class in over a decade, with an overall enrollment of 350 for the current academic year. In the coming year a new 5-year strategic plan will be developed, new degree delivery options that increase accessibility and affordability for prospective students, as well as new partnerships with annual conferences, other church bodies, and values-based organizations that share and strengthen Drew’s mission to advance peace, justice, love of God, neighbor, and the earth.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON EQUITABLE COMPENSATION

Since our Annual Conference meeting in 2018, the CEC has held an annual training session at Rolling Ridge and two additional face-to-face meetings as we worked on approving grants, in addition to monitor work, email work, and ZOOM and phone-in meetings as needed. As of March 2019, CEC has approved a total of $247,175 for salary grants to be distributed to 27 pastoral appointments throughout 2019, nine of which were first-time grants. We anticipate some mid-year revisions at our Annual Conference meeting, as well as potential new grants at that time.

In addition, CEC has continued to remind Annual Conference churches to use the Certification of Payment Form to comply with the Arrearage Policy passed by the Annual Conference in 2014 and has provided an informational booklet for SPRCs addressing personnel policy related to pastoral appointments.

Grant distribution for the whole of 2018 is outlined in the chart below, including Minimum, Strategic, Sustaining and Emergency Grants.
### Chart of 2018 Grants by District

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th># of Grants</th>
<th>Total Conference Dollars</th>
<th>% Conf Dollars</th>
<th>Average Grant Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NME</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>$39,309.67</td>
<td>15.50%</td>
<td>$5,615.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MME</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>$28,300.00</td>
<td>11.16%</td>
<td>$9,433.33</td>
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<tr>
<td>NH</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$1,000.00</td>
<td>0.39%</td>
<td>$1,000.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>TRI</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>$61,465.00</td>
<td>24.24%</td>
<td>$10,244.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTWMA</td>
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<td>15.69%</td>
<td>$6,632.92</td>
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<tr>
<td>CMA</td>
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<tr>
<td>MBH</td>
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<td>$50,363.33</td>
<td>19.86%</td>
<td>$12,590.83</td>
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<tr>
<td>RISEM</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>$20,440.00</td>
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<td>$10,220.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>VT</td>
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<td>1.97%</td>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$2,400.00</td>
<td>0.95%</td>
<td>$2,400.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conference Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>32</strong></td>
<td><strong>$253,575.50</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00%</strong></td>
<td><strong>$6,863.69</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For 2020, CEC is recommending an increase to the Annual Conference Minimum Salary Schedule of $1,000, based on the CPI of 2.4%.

The CEC has spent a lot of time this year in reviewing our Disciplinary mandate to assure that all full-time pastors receive at least the minimum salary as set by the Annual Conference (2016 BOD ¶625.2). As the result of that review and consultation with GCFA, CCFA, and the Cabinet, we will be making changes to the CEC grant process. It has been the pattern to provide grants in three grant categories in addition to Discipline-mandated emergency grants: Minimum Salary, Strategic Salary, and Sustaining Salary Grants. In these latter two 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 or missional additional amount.

Going forward, CEC’s primary focus will be on assuring that all full-time clergy receive 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 at the recommendation and request of the Cabinet, in collaboration with the CEC and Congregational Development. For the current time, these additional funds will be included in the CEC budget as Strategic and Missional salary grants. In addition, for 2020, we will continue to provide support for the part-time appointments under our care, but beginning in 2021 Equitable Compensation Grants will be available only for full-time appointments, except in the case of emergency grants (¶ 625.9 of the 2016 Discipline).
The Commission on Equitable Compensation has had eight active monitors working with local churches in 2018-2019. Members of the Commission are available to help with questions around matters of pastoral compensation, both for clergy and local churches. The following individuals are members of the Commission:

Pastor Daniel Ames, RISEM  
Rev. Jackie Brannen, Cabinet Representative, NME  
Ms. Julie Coons, VT  
Mr. Jordan Fiore, RISEM  
Rev. Byungmoo Lee, CTWMA  
Rev. Dr. Pat MacHugh, Chairperson, CMA  
Mr. Bruce Maxwell, CMA  
Mr. Stephen Mockler, CMA  
Rev. David Nicol, UNYAC  
Ms. Susan Sarosiek, TRI  
Rev. David Williams, CTWMA  

Respectfully submitted  
Pat MacHugh

Gammon Theological Seminary, located in Atlanta, GA, is the United Methodist constituent member of the Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC), a consortium of historically African-American theological schools. Gammon/ITC is a co-educational, professional graduate school of theology. Its faculty personifies vigorous scholarship, rigorous academic discipline, and significant research in the service of the church and other communities in the world. Gammon/ITC is the world’s premier resource for black church scholarship and faith-based solutions to the spiritual and socio-economic challenges confronting the African American community and beyond.

Founded in 1883 by the Methodist Episcopal Church and with assistance from the Freedman’s Aid Society, today Gammon Theological Seminary is one of the 13 theological schools of the United
Methodist Church. The faculty and administration of Gammon/ITC create an environment in which critical thinking, investigative reflection, decision making, and responsible action are fostered. Gammon/ITC is a member of the Atlanta University Center Complex, the world’s largest enterprise of African American higher education. It is also a member of The University Center of Georgia and the Atlanta Theological Association. The school is fully accredited by the Association of Theological Schools and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Gammon/ITC offers the following degree programs: the Master of Divinity, the Master of Arts in Christian Education, and the Doctor of Ministry. Admission is open to qualified men and women of the United Methodist Church.

The support of this Annual Conference helps Gammon/ITC students carry on a proud tradition. They are taught to think independently and communicate effectively. They are also challenged to become involved in finding solutions to problems that affect the human condition, and to become active in the community beyond this campus. Additionally, graduates of this institution are encouraged to maintain a lifelong desire for intellectual growth, spiritual development, and the acquisition of skills for the practice of ministry.

Gammon/ITC has had a very exciting and busy year living out its mission, which is to recruit, support and educate pastors and leaders for the United Methodist Church. Gammon Theological Seminary is extremely grateful to this Annual Conference for your support of theological education, and for your commitment to ensuring that God’s church will be served by persons who are called and trained to lead us forward.

Grace and Peace,
Ken J. Walden, Ph.D.
President-Dean
Through its Office of Strategic Leadership, GBHEM refined plans for a center for leadership development and spiritual formation. It is drawing on research to plan the expansion of leadership training offerings to churches and communities through a range of means such as face-to-face training, online conferencing, consulting, and recommending resources and experts.

The Division of Ordained Ministry (DOM), using extensive research on the components of effective ministry, introduced a new formation process, Effective Ministry 360 (EM360), which guides pastors and congregations to plan and execute mission and ministry objectives. EM360 also offers assessment modules for candidacy, district superintendents, eight-year clergy assessment and Course of Study. DOM provides introduction and orientation sessions about the process.

The Division of Higher Education (DHE) has initiated research to inform a “leadership pipeline” process for university leaders on United Methodist campuses. Among the books GBHEM published this year, “Missio Dei and the United States: Toward a Faithful United Methodist Witness” (book and study guide) exhibits the best of church and academy collaboration. Contributors explore how the church can reengage its Wesleyan heritage as it participates in God’s mission.

The Office of Loans and Scholarships announced an increase in the maximum amount of money United Methodist students can borrow to pursue their education. The annual maximum is $10,000, with a lifetime maximum of $40,000. On average, the agency distributes $5.5 million in scholarships annually.

Partnering with churches and institutions, GBHEM has promoted projects, programs, initiatives, education and leadership development in various cultural contexts within United Methodism and in pan-Methodist relationships. The agency expanded the Methodist Global Education Fund for Leadership Development, supported the work of regional networks with the International Association of Methodist Schools, Colleges, and Universities, and established Regional Hubs for Leadership, Education and Development. In 2018, hubs were active in nations in Africa, Asia, Europe and England, North America and South America.

THE NEW ENGLAND CONFERENCE BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND CAMPUS MINISTRY

The New England Conference is blessed to have many colleges and universities within our geographical bounds. We have such amazing potential to transform lives through a relationship with Jesus Christ. Thanks to your generous giving through mission shares we funded programmatic activities (mission trips, special speakers, meals for students), chaplain’s salary support and campus ministry overhead (space rental, electricity)

This year was a year of significant transition with the Conference Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry. One of our two United Methodist related institutions, Green Mountain College, is closing at the end of the Spring 2019 semester. The College had enjoyed a good relationship with the Annual Conference through the ministry of their campus minister Rev. Shirley Oskamp. Over the years, through her leadership, students responded to their call to ministry, she taught religion and meditation courses, sent young adults on alternative spring breaks to the Red Bird Mission, empowered a staff member to join the Bishop on a spiritual pilgrimage to Taize, broadened students cultural understanding through the Parliament of World Religions in Toronto, Canada among many other activities. We will miss working with Rev. Oskamp.
Another transition was the difficult decision of the Board to stop funding salaries and transition to programmatic grants only. In the Spring of 2019, the Board evaluated the campus ministries we’ve supported in the past and determined how we’d like to provide financial support going forward. A big word of thanks to the committee members for their hard work and discernment. It is difficult to offer salary support when our own funding is based on mission share remittance. Since only 61% of budgeted Conference Mission Shares were available to be distributed, it really hindered our ability to offer the salary support needed for campus chaplains. There is perennially a question of supporting a quantity of different campus ministries or providing substantive financial support. We also remain concerned with how campus ministries can become dependent on denominational funding sources, especially when the United Methodist Church is at a crossroads and mission shares throughout the conference are not paid on time or in full.

For the 2018-2019 year, we supported the salaries of Rev. Shirley Oskamp at Green Mountain College, and Rev. Dr. Chang-Hee Son of Bridgewater State University. We also offered programmatic grants for/to the United Christian Foundation at University of Massachusetts-Amherst’s United Christian Foundation Campus Ministry, United Campus Ministry at Plymouth State University, the Taize Ministry at Burlington First UMC (VT), Tufts University’s Protestant Chaplaincy, University of Maine’s Wilson Center for Spiritual Exploration & Multi-faith Dialogue, Boston-Cambridge Ministries in Higher Education at Harvard Epworth UMC, as well as the Marsh Chapel Associate at Boston University.

Out of the nine campus ministries that the Board supported for the 2018-2019 school year, we are aware that five had a new chaplain this academic year or are getting one as of July 1. It is increasingly more difficult to sustain a long-term chaplain because of the stress of having to find funding while ministering to students and staff.

We support the work of the scholarship committee who awards scholarships to New England Conference students attending college. Unlike the United Methodist Merit Scholarships (which are funded through the United Methodist Student Day Special Offerings and are for United Methodists attending United Methodist Colleges or Universities), the New England Conference Scholarships can go to students who are attending non-United Methodist related institutions. We encourage any students to check both the New England Conference and the General Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry’s websites for scholarship opportunities and applications.

As I start a new appointment in July, I will be leaving the Board, but am excited for programmatic grants to new institutions in 2019-2020, a potential retreat for the different campus ministers from around the annual conference to meet, and some resourcing from the General Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry. Thank you to Stanley Wilbur (Vice-Chair), Rev. Joel Guillemette, Sam Purushotham, Rev. Erica Robinson-Johnson, Janice Shuster, Noel Spicer & Tammy Tuttle for their hard work this year.

Blessings,
Rev. Megan Stowe, Chair
REPORT OF THE NEW ENGLAND UNITED METHODIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY
2018-2019 Conference Year

At the time of last year’s report the New England United Methodist Historical Society (NEUMHS) was searching for a permanent home for the artifacts which we hold for the annual conference. The items were placed in a storage facility when we learned that the conference office would be moving and would no longer have space for the items. Our need was publicized throughout the conference with the help of Ms. Beth DiCocco, our conference Director of Communications.

The generous people of Central UMC in Brockton, MA on the Central MA District responded to our need through their pastor, Dr. Abraham Waya. Discussions were begun and a meeting was held at Central UMC in January of this year where we were able to see the space available and be officially welcomed to the church. Our artifacts were taken out of storage and moved to the church in February. The space is being freshly-painted for our use and our curator, the Rev. Margaret Bickford, along with the chairperson of the conference Commission on Archives and History, Jen Turner, have begun organizing our items into their new home. The spring meeting of NEUMHS and the commission will be held at Central UMC in March.

We are grateful to Dr. Waya, Ms. Margaret Watson, the Central UMC building use coordinator, and the congregation for their radical hospitality and gracious invitation. They are honored and excited to be a part of this ministry for the annual conference and are ready to welcome folks into their building to view our treasures. It is our hope to plan some special events at the site in the coming months.

We continue to work closely with the Conference Commission on Archives and History and meet together each spring and fall in a location around the annual conference. We welcome new members and ask each of you to keep the society and its ministry in prayer as we work to preserve and celebrate our past and move into the future by God’s grace.

Rev. Elizabeth J. Bachelder Smith,
NEUMHS President

REPORT OF THE INSURANCE COMMITTEE OF THE NEC BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Since the last Annual Conference, the Insurance Committee of the New England Conference Board of Trustees met on October 11, 2018 and met on March 20, 2019 to monitor the Conference Unit Insurance Plan. The Church Mutual Insurance Company is our primary insurer for the insurance renewal from August 1, 2018 – July 31, 2019, providing coverage for Property, General Liability, Crime, Automobile and Excess/Umbrella Liability as well as our Workers’ Compensation coverage that renewed in January 2019. The Insurance Committee has reviewed the GCFA insurance requirements and is satisfied that the NEUMC Unit Insurance Plan meets those requirements and exceeds them in several coverage areas. The Fred C. Church Insurance Agency of Lowell, Massachusetts continues as the Conference’s insurance broker, providing service on claims, loss prevention, risk management, best practices, and general insurance questions, as well as support for the Committee’s activities.

Our 2019 policy year began August 1, 2018. The overall loss ratio is 36% through February 2019 (as this report was prepared in March 2019). The NEUMC has earned a dividend as a result of the lower claims experience (less than 50% loss ratios) in prior years. Therefore, the Insurance Committee voted to send
100% of the dividends paid by Church Mutual for property/liability directly to the churches in the NEUMC.

Our Workers’ Compensation premiums for 2019 are based on the claims experience of the NEUMC for calendar year 2018. The Insurance Committee is working with F.C. Church to help our churches reduce their claims.

It is critical that each church is insured for full replacement cost. During the past five years, the Fred C. Church Insurance Agency has been working with Church Mutual to bring each church’s replacement value to 100% (unless they have applied for and received permission to elect functional replacement coverage). This has resulted in a fairer premium for all churches. The dividend earned and returned (100%) to the churches is based solely on our loss experience.

The Insurance Committee has found it necessary to institute a policy regarding the use of public adjusters. Our new policy asks the NEUMC churches to work with Fred. C. Church, the NEUMC insurance broker and claims adjuster, before employing an independent public adjuster.

In three of the last four years, claims due to frozen pipes and flooding made up over 50% of the dollar losses of our property damage claims. The Insurance Committee and Church Mutual believes the vast majority of the damages from frozen pipes and flood damage are preventable and want to remind you that Church Mutual has expanded its low-temperature monitoring program to all churches in the NEUMC. This device and monitoring are free to all churches and has significantly reduced damage claims due to frozen pipes and leak damage where it has been installed. However, only 25% of our churches have acquired and installed this free device/service in their churches. This has led the Insurance Committee to recommend that all churches in the NEUMC must install the devices. We have included this policy change in our 2019 Resolution. With all the churches using the sensor device, we expect to reduce our claims and thus our premiums.

The committee thanks the churches that paid their premium by October 15, 2018 with the 9% discount or enrolled in the Automatic Clearinghouse Account process with a 7% discount through the OAS and Vanco Services, LLC. We also want to thank all the churches that faithfully pay their premiums each year.

With the help of our broker, the Fred C. Church Insurance Agency, the Insurance Committee will provide the best coverage and rate possible for the 2019/2020 renewal period. We would like to thank the Fred C. Church Insurance Agency for their diligent efforts to manage our claims in a timely and efficient manner and provide “best practices” through the U. M. Catalyst that help our churches reduce our loss experience. The Conference Unit Insurance Plan is an example of our connectional life as a conference and how together, with God’s help, we can do more than we can do separately.

Grace and Peace,
Bernard Campbell, Chair and LaVergne Randolph, Co-chair
NEW ENGLAND JUSTICE FOR OUR NEIGHBORS
REPORT TO THE 2019 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

New England Justice for Our Neighbors (NEJFON) is blessed to be able to report a year of expansion and generous support for our shared ministry of providing free and quality legal services to our newcomer neighbors. The following is a brief overview of what has unfolded in each of the legal clinic sites:

- **Springfield, MA-Trinity United Methodist Church NEJFON-Clinic Coordinator, Diane Mackie**
  The Trinity UMC NEJFON biweekly clinic in November 2018 celebrated five years of ministry and partnership with the Central-West Justice Center (CWJC) and New Hope United Methodist Regional Ministry. During the five years of operation hundreds of visitors have received free and quality legal services through advice and counsel as well as full representation. From assistance with family unification to applications for domestic violence related visas Springfield area immigrants have benefited from the hospitality of area church volunteers and the legal expertise of CWJC attorneys. Trinity UMC’s non-profit partner Urban Potential, Inc. has worked with the clinic leadership to open an ESOL program for NEJFON visitors and church neighbors. Lastly, the Springfield-Trinity NEJFON clinic is a visible sign of the justice and outreach orientated ministry and leadership of Rev. John Mueller. John working alongside Trinity church leaders, community organizations and local United Methodist congregations created a way for this successful clinic to begin and continue. John and Joy are moving to a new appointment and will be missed in many ways and particularly by their NEJFON family. Thank you for all you both have done to bring justice to your neighbors.

- **Woburn, MA-Woburn United Methodist Church NEJFON-Clinic Coordinator, Melissa McNamee**
  The Woburn UMC NEJFON clinic reopened in January 2018 and has grown in significant ways under the leadership of clinic coordinator Melissa McNamee. Melissa, an experienced immigration attorney has shared her legal skills as well as professional relationships by adding volunteer attorneys to the partnerships with Greater Boston Legal Services (GBLS) and the Northeast Justice Center (NEJC). GBLS and NEJC provided attorneys for the monthly clinic during 2018 and early 2019. Beginning March of 2019 the Woburn clinic will be staffed by the full-time NEJC-NEJFON attorney which will provide increased capacity for full representation of eligible clients. The Woburn UMC clinic is also supported by a wide reaching group of area volunteers and local congregations.

- **Lawrence, MA-Christ United Methodist Church-Lowell, MA, Centralville UMC-Clinic Mgr. Pam Brewster**
  The Lawrence and Lowell NEJFON clinics opened their doors in December 2018 with a solid leadership team and group of volunteers. Pam Brewster, David Troughton and Sharon Jones serving as the clinic coordination team did a remarkable job of opening the monthly clinics with volunteer attorneys while Northeast Justice Center completed the hiring process for a full-time attorney. In early February Attorney Camila Valenzuela started as the NEJFON/NEJC partner attorney focusing on the representation of unaccompanied minors and the provision of general immigration advice and counsel. The Lawrence and Lowell clinics are also supported by a growing core group of volunteers within and outside the United Methodist Church.
NEJFON is very grateful for the passage of RS-18-215 providing for the 2019 Annual Conference fundraiser in support of our shared immigration justice ministry. The NEJFON Board of Directors wishes to thank all the districts, local congregations who have generously contributed to this remarkable effort. As we look forward with strength NEJFON is researching options for expanding into other areas of the Annual Conference where free and quality legal services for immigrants are needed. Thank you again, New England Annual Conference for the generous support of this vital ministry in these challenging times.

In Christian Service,
Gary Richards on behalf of the
NEJFON Board of Directors

LATINO MINISTRY COORDINATOR NEW ENGLAND CONFERENCE
Reporter July 2018 to March 2019

I started this new position in July 2018, so I would like to make the following highlights:

1. The Latino Hispanic Committee of the New England Conference was restructured in 2017-2018. The new organization of the Committee required several meetings during this year.
2. In July I participated in the inauguration service of the Brazilian Methodist Church in Chelmsford-MA.
3. Participated in MARCH 2018 in Charlotte-NC, where I received the AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN THE LEADERSHIP OF THE BRAZILIAN MINISTRY IN THE USA.
4. In January I participated and supported the Third Year of the Portuguese Studies Course that was held at the UMC-Saugus-MA Family.
5. In February I attended the Multicultural Ministry Seminary in Methuen-MA.
6. In February, we received a visit from Rev. Green, District Superintendent of the Washington-Baltimore Conference, which met with the Brazilian Methodist Pastors of the New England Conference to learn about the growth strategies of the Brazilian Methodist Churches at our Conference.
7. In February, I attended a meeting for Planning the Consultation of the Brazilian Ministry in the United States, which will be held in October this year.
8. Planting of New Churches: With Rev. Rick McKinley Director of Congregational Development, we are planting two new Churches, Brazilian and Hispanic in the city of Southbridge-MA and Marlborough-MA.
9. As part of the Planning of the Executive Committee of the Latino Hispanic Ministry, we will hold this March Module I of the Spanish Missionary Course in Lawrence-MA.

In Christ

Rev. Juarez Goncalves
Latino Ministry Coordinator -NEC
LatinoMinistry@neumc.org
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Let’s not get tired of doing good,  
because in time we’ll have a harvest if we don’t give up.  
(CEB)

With the theme of “Going Deeper, Growing Stronger” and the guidance of the scripture above, the New England Conference Board of Laity hosted the gathering of the Northeastern Jurisdiction (NEJ) Annual Conference Lay Leaders. The event, which is held each year in one of the NEJ conferences, was in Springfield, Massachusetts, at Trinity United Methodist Church. Invitees included annual conference lay leaders, associate annual conference lay leaders, district lay leaders, local church lay leaders, and any interested laity from any of the ten conferences within the NEJ.

Several members of the New England Conference Board of Laity participated in the planning, preparation, and on-site tasks, all of which led to a very interesting and successful program that garnered kudos from those attending. From the arrangements for housing, to planning the program, to helping with meals, to all the other tasks inherent in planning a major event, it was a wonderful joint effort.

A disappointment this past year was the lack of entries in the Laity Address Challenge. However, once again, the Board of Laity membership stepped up and provided an excellent presentation at the 2018 Annual Conference Session which followed the theme and was well-received. Additionally, the Laity Session attendance continued to grow and the program was excellent. Both the Challenge and the Laity Session are planned by teams comprised of board members and ably shepherded by the Associate Conference Lay Leaders, Ruby Blake and Joan Farrar.

The board continues to meet by conference call throughout the year with one in-person meeting in the spring. At that meeting, the agenda focuses on learning from other segments of the Conference and preparation for annual conference. With only a day to get to know each other face-to-face, all honor and praise to God in Christ and the Holy Spirit that the members of the Board of Laity are a cohesive, creative and dedicated group faithfully representing the laity of New England Conference.

As this report is being written, the board’s membership includes sixteen district lay leaders (two of whom are also Associate Conference Lay Leaders); two at-large members; the Director of Lay Servant Ministries; the presidents of both United Methodist Women and United Methodist Men organizations within New England; two young adult representatives; and the Conference Lay Leader. A representative of the Cabinet and the Director of Connectional Ministries also regularly attend the meetings.

There are openings on the board, and I would urge any laity interested in serving to view the membership listing on the Conference’s website and prayerfully discern whether the Board of Laity is a place where they might offer their talents. If there is a desire to become a district lay leader, a conversation with one’s district superintendent is the critical first step. For other roles, it is as simple as completing the online nomination form and forwarding it to the Committee on Leadership Nominations for consideration.

A personal note: I am grateful for the opportunity to work with the dedicated and talented NE Board of Laity membership. Each has shown his or her willingness to assume the tasks necessary to fulfill the mandate of the board, and that is very special!

Respectfully submitted, Rene Wilbur, Conference Lay Leader
MECHUWANA ANNUAL REPORT 2018

In 2019 Mechuwana celebrated it’s 70th year of ministry on Lower Narrows Pond in Winthrop, Maine. As we looked to our past we realized how important it is to create a sustainable community for the future. There are countless traditions that we carry on today, and with time we have grown to allow generations, old and new, to connect with our mission. Mechuwana is built on a foundation of inclusivity and faith, which has carried over into all our programs. We firmly believe that camp is important in developing life skills, confidence, and faith. Our programs provide a safe space for people of all ages to grow. The care and leadership that is found in all our volunteers and campers alike drive our mission and contribute to our continued growth.

Mechuwana is a place for people of all ages, of all walks of life, to come together to grow in their faith. As a caring community of believers we strive to nurture, support, and lead others on their faith journey. The relationships that are built between the staff, volunteers, and campers is a huge part of what has made Mechuwana special to so many for over 70 years. Our Mechuwana family includes more than just our own programs, there are numerous organizations who utilize our space for renewal, spiritual growth, and fellowship. Tres Dias of Maine holds five spirit filled weekends a year. The Maine Conservation Corps continues to use Mechuwana as a training site, helping us maintain our forest, bridges and trails. Twenty United Methodist Clergy met at Mechuwana for the Creating a Culture of Renewal program. The inclusivity and love that is grounded in Mechuwana’s mission is a gift to all those who are part of the Mechuwana family.

Mechuwana was blessed during the summer of 2018 with an amazing 830 campers and 183 volunteers. Our camp enrollment was up by 50 campers from the previous year. Our Mission Camps reached out to the Mid-State area where they supported those in need. Some of their missions were with a local homeowner in need of help around their house, the Maine Children’s Home in Waterville, the Mid-Maine Homeless Shelter, the Good Shepherd Food Bank, The Vestry, Tabatha’s Closet, and an Augusta nursing home. Our year round ministries consisted of 5 youth rallies, 3 elementary overnights, 2 all girl retreats, a youth leader training and several adult retreats. Throughout the year 3,000 individuals participated in various programs sponsored by outside groups.

Camp Mechuwana had a busy year with many site improvements. We have a new Day Camp building, a new Alumni building, we opened our pavilion outside of the Commons, we continued updating some Lakeside cabins to be handicapped accessible, we updated lighting around camp to LED, and we started renovations on the Lodge. We also began our Raise the Roof financial campaign to replace and insulate the roof on Asbury Theater.

With all of these new and exciting additions to our camp, we continued to face challenges. While our income was up this year, so were the expenses we were responsible for. The increased cost of credit card and payroll processing fees were added expenses this year. Mechuwana continues to be understaffed, with only two full-time employees. We need to hire a full-time Development Coordinator to continue our outreach and growth. This position would be responsible for grant writing, fundraising efforts, and visiting churches to share the Mechuwana story.

Our camp is dedicated to providing financial assistance to countless families who cannot afford to pay the full cost of our summer camp programs. We receive many testimonies from those who came to camp on scholarships. It’s important to us that we recognize the individual campers and their stories, as
they are a huge part of what makes Mechuwana the holy and safe space that it is. Well over half of our campers throughout the summer have financial help from these scholarships. Our scholarships are something we are very proud of, we have very generous donors and an active fundraising campaign to ensure that we can provide these priceless, life-changing experiences for children, youth, and adults alike. Praise God for our volunteers, staff, and supporters!

NECoNAM 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

2019 has been a year of seeking greater outreach in Native communities for our CoNAM. We have made new contacts with some new groups, and have been actively learning more about the native cultures around us.

This year, PBS sponsored a film, "Dawnland: People of the Dawn", which can be streamed through their web site. This is a valuable tool for churches and individuals who wish to know more about those with whom we seek to stand. Through the film, two of our members have made connections with Maine Wabanaki Reach, which seeks to help native people reconnect with their communities. (Fully 80% of native people live away from their communities.) In addition, there is the Wabanaki Health and Wellness group in Bangor, ME. We have helped Gedakina, which is a group which is using traditional means of growing healthy food for the people. This is a huge need in Native communities.

In addition to this, we have finally been able to get a web site up and running. There is little on there now, but we are working on expanding it. The url for the site is http://www.neconam.org. In the near future we hope to have a model service for Native American Awareness Sunday which churches may use.

In October, Todd Warfield and Patricia Parent attended the annual meeting of the Northeast Jurisdictional Native American Ministries Committee in Carlisle, PA. Todd took a tour of the Carlisle Indian School/Barracks with a group from the meeting, while Patricia stayed behind to work on a Native Identity Statement for NEJNAMC. We have been helping in the work to get more knowledgeable tour guides for the site since then.

And so our work continues. Please remember to include a Native liaison person on your church conference nominations this fall.

Aquiene (peace),
Patricia Parent, CoNAM chair

BOARD OF PENSIONS  2018

The Conference Board of Pensions (CBOP) administers the provision for both pension and health benefits for clergy, staff, and their families. Since the inception of the CRSP pension plan, much of the work of the CBOP has been focused on the ever-changing arena of health benefits.

RETIREE HEALTH INSURANCE: The CBOP provides a retiree health benefit through a “United Health” Medicare Advantage plan for all eligible clergy 65 years or older, active or retired. A dental plan is also provided for eligible retirees.
ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS HEALTH INSURANCE: For several years the CBOP offered one health plan for active participants known most recently as the GBOPHB “B-1000” plan. In 2019 a “Consumer Driven Health Plan” (CDHP), was offered through GBOPHB: Our intention was to provide two options from which our participants may choose a health plan. This second plan could result in lower premiums and allow participants to make decisions regarding type and level of care. In 2021 the GBOPHB will require the CBOP to offer participants a full “exchange” consisting of six different plans, thus offering even greater choice.

SUSTAINABILITY /PRESERVATION OF ASSETS: The question of sustainability continues to be a major concern for the CBOP. While the Board affirms that the sustainability of our pension plans in the short term looks good, continuing work with GBOP Actuaries, reminds us that we rely heavily on investment income to sustain all our plans. There is concern as to whether the Conference will be required to raise additional pension funding, and whether it will be able to continue to provide health benefits to retired participants who are living longer. This becomes more critical as we realize that the Conference has been in decline both in terms of the number of churches and church members. It is at this point that the preservation of resources becomes critical. The CBOP will continue to explore methods by which the Conference can maintain its funding for our health insurance liability.

LOOKING AHEAD: Again, we note that increasingly industry is moving away from employer sponsored pension and health benefits, encouraging individuals to be responsible for their own retirement through IRA’s and 401K programs. The CBOP continues to seek ways to provide the best quality benefit plans that are affordable to the Annual Conference and its churches. However, the CBOP also would encourage all participants to prepare themselves for retirement by contributing as much as possible to their United Methodist Personal Investment Program (UMPIP).

WORD OF THANKS: In closing, we are reminded that the work of the CBOP could not happen without the efforts of Bill Burnside, our benefits officer, Debbie Gagnon, Human Resource Manager, and Thelma Phelan, all of whom keep us well informed and on task. The CBOP is most thankful for their dedicated efforts in assisting clergy, church and conference staff every day with pension and health insurance questions. THANK YOU!

Again, our thanks to the Preacher’s Aid Society for their continued and generous care and support of our retirees.

Respectfully, David A. Hoyt, Chairperson CBOP

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT
May 2018- April 2019

Members: Rev. Barbara Cann, Rev. Clare Chapman, Rev. Jackie Trotter Dove, Dan Genannt, Rev. Stewart Lanier (Chair), Joe Wesley (Secretary), and Ex Officio members Bishop Devadhar, and by invitation, consultant without vote, Human Resources Manager, Deborah Gagnon.

The Personnel Committee continues to fulfill is core purposes:

• Ensure the conference has adequate and just personnel policies, procedures and practices
• Maintain an up to date employee handbook
• Provide consultation to the HR Manager, the Bishop and supervisors on matters related to employment.

Activities this year:

1. Work with the HR Manager, Debbie Gagnon to:
   a. Continue to evolve and refine the staff performance review process
   b. Conduct a survey of staff related to policies and job satisfaction
   c. Continue reclassification of positions to align with best practices
   d. Ensure up to date job descriptions and informal succession planning, especially for key positions that are difficult to fill with temporary staff
   e. Ensure that hiring processes include adequate time and resources to ensure diverse candidate pools
   f. Update the organizational chart

2. Contract with the Human Resource department of the General Council of Finance and Administration to perform two HR assessments. This process is underway at the time of this report, and results will be forthcoming later in the Spring of 2019. The two contracts are:
   a. To assess and make recommendations regarding staff compensation
   b. To assess and make recommendations regarding the conference staffing structure

3. Began conversation about what types of staff positions might best support the emerging and evolving needs of our conference to be most effective and faithful in ministry

Once again, I’m truly grateful for a very dedicated and engaged committee. This year Clare Shaw took on the role of liaison with Debbie Gagnon, serving as a confidential thought partner and sounding board. I am also grateful for the steady hand and spiritual oversight provided by Bishop Devadhar. We all continue to be most appreciative of the thoughtful and professional work of our HR Manager, Debbie Gagnon—she is a great asset to the conference.

Respectfully submitted,

P Stewart Lanier

PREACHERS’ AID SOCIETY OF NEW ENGLAND- 2018

2018 marked the 186th year since the founding of the Preachers’ Aid Society in 1832. PAS continues to provide much needed support and care to the active and retired clergy and the clergy spouses of the New England Annual Conference

Our visitation program is the heart of PAS’ mission. Colleen Williams had to step down as our Director of Clergy Family Services for the southwest region after suffering a stroke. We thank Colleen for her remarkable service in that role for many years and lift our prayers for her continued healing. Karen Ruggiero continued serving our southeast region and provided several months of coverage to the southwest region. Gail Tapply continues her work of visitation in NH and Vermont and also took on our Florida visitation in 2018. Rev. Cathy Anderson is our ongoing Director of Pastoral Care Ministries and
continues as our visitor in Maine. We welcomed Rob Powell on October 1 as the new Director of Clergy Family Services for the southwest region.

In June at our Annual Clergy Luncheon, we celebrated Rev. Carl Siktberg’s gift of over $587,000 to the Preachers’ Aid Society. It was the single largest gift to the Preachers’ Aid Society in its 186 year history. In September, the Society purchased the 25 acres of land next to our Wesley by the Sea development in Wells, Maine. The property was purchased from Barbara and Len Sevigney who had lived there for 40 years. The Sevigneys gifted a single family home on the property to PAS as part of the purchase. The original farmhouse on the property dates back to 1762 and will now become the Epworth Retreat House at Dorfield Farm. The Retreat House will be offered to active pastors from our Annual Conference for a week at no charge beginning in 2019. The PAS Board is seeking to build an additional six new homes for our retiree housing program on the property in 2019. PAS is pleased to be able to play a part in meeting the housing needs of New England Conference Retirees and their surviving spouses.

Our efforts to protect all of our pastors from financial concerns continues on numerous fronts. Our HELP and PELP programs seek to make the cost of student loans for pastors and their children more affordable and less burdensome. Our emergency financial assistance programs keep many of our pastors from being burdened with unexpected financial concerns. We continue to provide budget coaching to those who have gotten overwhelmed by financial struggles and help to get them back on track.

Our Executive Director Rev. Wesley Palmer continues to preach in churches across New England sharing the story of PAS’ mission. He welcomes invitations from any church interested in our work. PAS also encourages every local church to take part in Retired Clergy Sunday which can be celebrated on any Sunday during the year. We hope it will be a time when the gifts and service of our retired clergy are celebrated and that the entire church family can be involved in that celebration. You can obtain bulletin inserts for Retired Clergy Sunday from the PAS’ office.

At our May Board meeting, we welcomed one new Board member Jinsook Song from the Milford UMC in Milford, NH. Stephen Vincent continued his two year term as Board President and Paul Parks Jr. continued preparing to become Board President in May of 2019. We continue to seek a Board that represents laypersons from the entire New England Conference with a variety of gifts and experiences. This allows our organization to better communicate our mission and be aware of the issues facing pastors across New England.

PAS understands our future has been shaped by our past commitments and the vision that was born back in 1832 when a number of laypersons grew concerned for the pastors who had cared for them over many years of ministry. That concern is still the driving force behind all our work. We pray that you will continue to hold our mission in your prayers and remember that all that we do is done on behalf of all of the United Methodists across the New England Annual Conference.

NEW ENGLAND CONFERENCE COMMISSION ON RELIGION AND RACE
2019 Report to Annual Conference

In 2018 New England Annual Conference Commission on Religion and Race established goals and plans for 2018 for the Commission:
1) To continue working with the Bishop, Conference Lay Leaders and the Board of Ordained Ministry for Quadrennial Anti-Racism Training.
2) Identify 3 Districts to use as pilot programs.
3) Recruit leaders of color for work within the districts, AC, Jurisdiction and General Church.
4) Recruits Delegates of Color for AC, Jurisdiction and the General Church.
5) Because Members of the Commission do not represent every district of the AC:
   a) Our goals are to have a representative from every district and for each local church to also have representation on the district level.
   b) Seek out representative from every congregation in the AC.

The NEAC Commission on Religion and Race began addressing the goals/plans listed above for the remainder of 2018 and continued in 2019 by holding monthly meetings at Crawford Memorial United Methodist Church and/or via conference call.

In April of 2018 two members of our commission were trained by *The People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond: Undoing Racism*. This intensive training was then brought back to the whole of the team so that we could better serve NEAC. This training along with the resources from the General Commission on Religion and Race have been our guidelines in the trainings we have administered thus far this annual conference year.

As incidents of racial violence on the church and other faith communities have risen, we as a commission have done our best to state that these acts go against the will of God and the call of those who profess to be lovers of Jesus Christ. Our call to prayer in regards to the attacks on houses of worship for our Jewish and Muslim siblings speak to that. In turn we are sponsoring legislation along with NEAC Commission on the Status and Role of Women and the NEAC Committee on Church and Society whose goal is to show transparency within the life of our annual conference when hate crimes happen to members due to race, class, sexual orientation, and sexual identity.

The Commission on Religion and Race continues to work hard on all the established goals/plans for this quadrennium. We have identified 3 districts within the NEAC as our pilot districts and have begun having Vital Conversations on Race and Racism. Those districts include New Hampshire district, Tri-State district and Central Mass. district. We appreciate the support of each of these districts and from the District Superintendents. We have had 4 training sessions as of this report using the materials that were supplied to the NEAC from the General Commission in 2017: Vital Conversations-Racism and the U.S. Church. When Annual Conference meets we will have finished our pilot program and be in process to taking the conversations to the remaining six districts of NEAC. It is the hope of the Commission on Religion and Race that together we can move in a direction that God has intended for each of us and that is to be one in the Body of Christ and when we are one in the body it also means we are afforded equal opportunities.

The Commission in January 2019 spent two days with members of the Provisional Leadership Academy at Rolling Ridge in Andover, Massachusetts. Together we looked at and talked about Racism through Implicit Bias. Materials from a General Commission on Religion and Race study on Implicit Bias were the basis for this training.

We have made significant progress in our goals and plans listed yet there is still much work to be done. We as The Commission on Religion and Race for the NEAC will continue to work upon each of the
numbered objectives and more until we have reached the Promised Land when there is equality and justice for every one of God’s children.

Respectfully submitted by:

Rev. Effie E. McAvoy, Chair
Pastor Bob Stewart
Ms. Claire Holston
Mr. Gordon Anderson
Dr. Winnie Eke
Reverend Yunki Kim
Reverend Selaima Rousseau

ROLLING RIDGE RETREAT AND CONFERENCE CENTER
Committed to connecting all people, God, and creation

In 1948, a group of Methodist pastors had a vision to convert a North Andover summer home mansion into a Methodist conference center. It was a "Venture in Faith," but 70 years later, Rolling Ridge continues to transform lives as a spiritual home, a place of rest and renewal, an oasis of peace, a historic site of beauty, a hospitality ministry of the New England Annual Conference. We are so thankful for the support we have received over the past seven decades from our United Methodist family. And for our 70th jubilee year, we were blessed in so many ways as our ministry continues to grow and prosper.

Rolling Ridge ended 2018 with the highest income ever in our history, with October being an all out record at over $100K. We had 76 first time donors to the Ridge, and received a large gift and a matching grant from the Methuen Festival of Trees that allowed us to restore the steps of the fountain. We celebrated our 70th anniversary on Sunday, September 30th, with over 150 in attendance including previous directors. We had a 65% increase in program participation with 384 registrations in 2018, compared to 233 in 2017. This year, we launched a new training program in partnership with ISHA (Institute for Spiritual Healing and Aromatherapy) and hosted our first Wellness Weekend. We sponsored a "New Me" breast cancer support group, and began a monthly small group around the Daily Meditations of Richard Rohr and the Center for Action and Contemplation. This summer, our Peace Conference brought together Jewish, Christian, and Muslims for "The Tie That Binds: Creation Care and Interfaith Dialogue." Along with new paving of the road and parking lot, new rhododendrons, new bedroom decor in Main Wing, new chairs in Tyson, new artwork by local artist Mico Kaufman, a new website, a new format for the newsletter, new program booklets, new offices, a new hallway, a new meeting space for the Center for Spirituality and Leadership (CSL), and new windows, new carpet, and new glass table tops in the dining room, 2018 was a very good year at the Ridge.

Although new things are unfolding at Rolling Ridge, Executive Director Lawrence Jay and his dedicated staff continue to maintain the high standards of hospitality and food service which the Ridge has become known for as an adult retreat facility, and the premier Christian retreat and wellness center in New England. While we hosted over 270 retreats this year, we are blessed in being able to provide a safe spiritual space for various entities of the New England Annual Conference to gather, including the Local Pastors Licensing School, Provisional Leadership Academy, Board of Ordained Ministry, New Pastor Orientation, General Conference Delegates, Nominating Committee, Equitable Compensation Commission, District Administrative Assistants, 8 year Assessment Team, the Asian Commission, and various local UMC churches.
Things may have changed at the Ridge, but one thing that hasn't changed in the last 70 years is our commitment to be a hospitality ministry of New England Methodists and our Annual Conference. If your church, commission, or board is looking for a place for retreat or meeting, we hope that you will consider "coming home" to Rolling Ridge. We are committed to connecting all people, God, and creation. Check it out at www.rollingridge.org.

TREASURER’S REPORT

God has blessed me with dedicated and spirit-filled men and women who make up the New England Conference (NEC), and I thank God especially for those on the committees I am privileged to staff and those with whom I serve every day. I am also blessed with the good fortune to do work that I know makes a difference and that I enjoy! As your Treasurer, I am thankful for the creativity, compassion and heart for the Lord that our parishioners, clergy and staff display on a daily basis.

Financially, we are pleased that for the fifth consecutive year we have paid 100 percent toward our General Church Apportionment. Our churches’ commitment to connectional giving is something to celebrate. Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar, the Cabinet, and the Conference Council on Finance and Administration share that commitment.

In 2018, we had 329 churches paying 100 percent or more of mission shares (up from 324 last year). The Conference received 75.7 percent of mission share receipts in 2018. This has been relatively constant over the past four years. We are grateful to all churches that paid as they were able.

The low percent of mission share receipts in recent years, along with negative investment returns in 2018 has put pressure on the conference mission share reserves. Our mission share fund reserves decreased by $275,000, or four percentage points, leaving those reserves at $686,000 (or 9.9% of our 2019 spending budget).

Health Insurance and Pension Costs continue to claim a disproportionate share of conference and local church resources, both financial and human. These costs are higher than the conference’s operating expenses, as over $7.9 million was paid for both retired clergy’s health insurance and active clergy’s health and pensions. The good news is that our health insurance premiums in 2020 will only be slightly higher than 2019. This resulted from a combination of increasing premiums over the past several years (resulting from higher claim cost 2015-2017) and lower claims in 2018. As mentioned last year, an alternative plan (High Deductible Health Plan) with significantly lower participant monthly premiums was offered in 2019 that included a Health Savings Account but with a higher annual deductible. There were 22 participants that choose this plan. The Conference Board of Pensions is currently evaluating the possibility to expand further the offerings.

Finance and Administration has worked hand-in-hand with the Conference Trustees this past year on the move to our new Conference offices. The new location in Methuen, MA has been a positive experience, improving collaboration and communication, as we are all on one floor. There are several advantages to our new space that have allowed more conference groups to host conference-wide meetings at the conference center, which were not able to be held in our old location – a 180-seat
training center with video conferencing capabilities, several smaller conference rooms also with video conferencing equipment, easy access from major highways and free on-site parking. The move also provided an opportunity to purge old, unused equipment and forced document consolidation and archiving, as we moved into a smaller space. I would like to thank our Trustees and especially its president, Bernie Campbell, for their many hours and diligent service during this complex process of relocating and for making difficult decisions relating to the co-op office space on the first floor of our new building.

I can confidently report that the conference is well-served by the considerable contribution, dedication and Christian principles reflected everyday in our conference staff. I very much appreciate the cooperation and hard work to make our move happen on time and with as little disruption as possible, as well as the ongoing ministries, and spirit of common purpose of:

Debbie Cannella, Administrative Assistant  
Debbie Gagnon, Human Resources and Benefits Manager  
Steve Hart, Financial Services Manager  
Joy Mueller, Statistician  
Kerry Patles, Accounts Receivable Specialist  
Thelma Phelan, Benefits Assistant  
Daniel Sierra, Accounts Payable/Payroll

Finally, I extend a special thanks for the witness of our clergy, the members of our local churches, their treasurers and finance chairs, and for the commitment of those on the Council on Finance and Administration, the Conference Board of Pensions, the Equitable Compensation Committee, the Conference Board of Trustees, the Insurance Committee and my colleagues in ministry all over the conference who inspire me by their example and support me with their prayers.

In Christ’s Service, Bill Burnside

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR 2018

As a result of action by the 2018 Annual Conference, I was given the privilege of continuing on the Board of Trustees, and with gratitude to the members of the Board, I have the privilege of yet again preparing another Annual Report of the Trustees for the Annual Conference.

Much like 2017, the 2018 year was dominated by issues related to Conference office properties. With thanks to God, the Conference took occupancy of its new headquarters building at 411 Merrimack Street, Methuen, Massachusetts, in the summer of 2018. There are many folks to thank, but high among them would be Channel Building Company, our design/build project manager, Trident Project Advisors, our Owner’s Project Manager and Bill Burnside, our Conference Treasurer. The facility seems to have met with near unanimous approval of staff and visitors, and the lower level training room has given the Conference capabilities it did not have in Lawrence. Our relationship with our “other unit owner”, H&H Properties/Bethel Child Care, has been mutually beneficial, and our property manager, MEG Asset Management, handles most of the routine items related to the property, taking a significant
responsibility off Bill Burnside. As the year ended, we were about at the end of the punch list, with only a couple minor items to clean up.

The final costs for acquisition and construction was higher than originally estimated, approaching $3 Million Dollars. This was offset by monies received through sale of parts of the building, but the total net cost to the Conference was approximately $2.3 Million. There were funds made available by the Trustees, and we have a $1.2 Million Dollar loan with the United Methodist Foundation that will need to be addressed going forward. The Trustees also used approximately $340,000 of loan funds to fund the final expenses, which will need to be repaid. Some or all of these balances were to be covered by sales of other property, but...

The property at 276 Essex Street has been vacant since the summer of 2018. Efforts to sell are “on hold” as the Trustees deal with an environmental issue related to prior use of the building. Testing revealed the presence of chemicals in the soil and groundwater beneath the building. The appropriate reporting has been made to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Our environmental consultant, Watermark Environmental of Lowell, MA has been leading efforts to document the extent of the problem and propose solutions for remediation. A preliminary report is due to the Commonwealth this June. At that time, the Trustees may be in a position to attempt to market the property to a Buyer willing to taken on the subsequent “clean up” expenses, recognizing that this will significantly impact the return we can receive. Also...

The property at 566 Commonwealth Avenue in Boston, continues to be a significant liability to the Conference. Last summer the Conference filed a legal action against the Board of the Cooperative asserting that their actions had interfered with potential assignments of our interest in that space. That suit remains pending in the Suffolk County (MA) Superior Court. Until certain issues are resolved, marketing cannot really resume. The Conference, through its counsel, continues to urge a dialogue toward a settlement, but to date, the Co-Op Board has not been responsive.

The issue that has come to the forefront near the end of the year is the serious need to consider bringing on board someone who would have responsibility for “property” issues related to Conference properties. Throughout 2018, former Trustee, Caryl Walsh, graciously agreed to serve in the role of coordinating maintenance activities on our various parsonages and residences. Her efforts are appreciated, but clearly, they are not the “long term” solution that is needed. In conversation with Rev. Ralph Howe, and other members of CFA, as well as other stakeholders, there is a growing realization that the Conference needs an individual who, with property background, can help in several areas (i) overseeing ongoing repairs and maintenance of Conference parsonages; (ii) working with the Trustees to secure, evaluate, maintain and sell abandoned church properties, (iii) supporting the District Superintendents and District Committees on issues of review and approval of building projects proposed by local churches. As this report is written a recommendation for the addition of a staff member with “property” responsibilities is under consideration, provided a source of funding can be identified.

The issue of property maintenance and disposition has become critical again, as the number of closed/abandoned local churches is on the rise again. As of early 2019, there are at least ten (10) different properties, in every state in our Conference, which are being overseen by the Trustees. I want to especially thank the Rev. Roy Richardson for his work on these properties, as Roy wraps up an 8-year commitment to the Trustees. His services will be deeply missed and cannot be truly replaced. His departure reinforces the need to consider new strategies to deal with these properties.
In addition to this activity, the Trustees continued to oversee the Conference Unit Insurance program (see their own report), a program of Grants and Loans, and oversight of our Camps and Conference facilities. The Trustees continue to “caretake” the Covenant Hills property in Cabot, Vermont, while awaiting the recommendations of other groups within the Conference.

In addition to thanking Roy Richardson, I specifically commend James Stephen for his years on the Trustees, many as Treasurer. He will be very hard to replace.

Last year at this time, I envisioned that my 2017 report would be my last. It was not, and perhaps that was presumptive because it was clearly not God’s plan. In these and other matters,

“... thy will be done ...”

Your Servant in Christ

Bernard H. Campbell, President
NEAC-UMC Board of Trustees


UNITED METHODIST ECONOMIC MINISTRY

Each year, we engage with God and people near and far in the work of connecting others to hope. Together, we work in places where life is difficult due to economics, income, hunger, lack of adequate warmth in the cold, and other issues. In this last year, we have continued to offer the seeds of hope. It is with God, the Master Gardener, our many volunteers, staff and Board of Directors, we continue to bring the soil, the water, the fertilizer to the places where hope is planted.

Together, we have continued to help provide for our children with backpacks, sneakers and school supplies. Each year we serve more than 180 children. When a child, of any age, receives the items that help them succeed in school, the roots of learning sink deeper into the soil of a future where dreams are fulfilled. A pair of sneakers means it’s a great joy to run at recess. A gently worn pair of cleats from the Thrift Store means it’s possible to play soccer on the school team! These seemingly simple articles: a backpack, a binder with paper, pencils, a new pair of socks encourages the seeds of future possibilities to grow.

Our Food Pantries are places where there is food for the body. They are places where the basic necessities of cereal, break, milk, fresh fruits and vegetables are found. They are the places where soap, shampoo and deodorant are often available. Food is donated by Hannaford and others involved with Good Shepherd and Feed America programs. Having a choice is a life changing miracle! We have surpassed last year’s total for the year of families served at the Food Pantry. By November 1, 2018, we served more than 2958 individuals with more than 26,622 meals served. The generosity of churches, individuals, Good Shepherd, Feed America program, local farmers and local grocers continues to help sustain others.

The Summer Housing program, as most years, had more applications than we could get too. We also had three new groups, Church on the Cape, Cape Porpoise, Maine, Bow Mills, Bow, NH and Wesley UMC, Hadley, MA join us this past summer. The North Boston Korean Church returned for a 3 day mission trip after a hiatus of nearly 10 years. Several homes are more accessible or warmer or safer.
Last year, in 2017, the positive change to the UMEM brought by mission teams, volunteers (including Board members!) and staff was the winterization of the Work Group Headquarters (aka The Apartment) for emergency needs.

The Christmas shop helped over 160 children receive needed items such as boots, ski pants, warm hats and gloves, books, socks and a treasured toy or crafting kit. This program does not happen without the generosity of others, the Christmas shop increases the seeds of generosity sewn in others. The Prom Shop continues to be a big hit. This year, we could offer not just gowns, but some formal wear and suits. This program helps to build the self-esteem of our youth. A good self-esteem is vital to the development of a positive personhood. The Thrift Shops continue to do well and find shoppers coming from many places. Without volunteers, we could only accomplish a fraction of what we offer.

The seed we planted last year with a new and exciting venture in partnering with God and people in life changing miracles is the development of a new site in conjunction with the Howland UMC congregation continues to grow. We will begin year two of having a Thrift Shop. The parishioners who worship and volunteer in Howland are finding their way in a new section of the garden of kindness and sowing the seeds of hope in God. Volunteers from the community are learning new skills and young adults are gaining confidence in their ability to make a difference.

In preparation for celebrating 50 years of ministry, the UMEM is offering a program for churches and individuals to become Mission Partners. Mission Partner Churches include many listed above as well as long time supporting churches and individuals. We would invite you to be part of our work through Mission Partners.

Peace be with you!
Rev. Michele St. Cyr

UNITED METHODIST ELDER CARE/ALDERSBRIDGE COMMUNITIES

The past year has been one of transition and change. What was founded as United Methodist Elder Care is now known as Aldersbridge Communities.

Leading up to our June rebranding kick-off, we embarked on a Strategic Planning initiative to unite our staff and operations under a common mission and vision. Today, this effort continues, incorporating finance, information technology, staffing, home and community-based services, facilities marketing and capital operations, and development goal-planning and tactical discussions.

At our “Adding Life to Years” Gala and Auction event in June, our new name and logo was unveiled and accepted with positivity and understanding by those in attendance. In addition to our Gala being the most successful fundraising event for Aldersbridge, we introduced a new wish-granting program for our residents called ElderVentures and raised $13,000 in 10 minutes. These funds were used to grant three wishes in 2018: 1) to make a replica engagement ring for a widow; 2) to send a terminally ill resident to a Billy Joel concert with his children; and 3) to send a resident on a trip to upstate New York to visit her brother.
Our 2018 Annual Appeal carried through our theme of “Adding Life to Years” and featured several residents’ stories and testimonial quotes. We are proud to say that we achieved 100% Board of Trustees participation in our campaign which raised a total of more than $21,000.

We continue to enhance the lives of those we serve through programs and activities, such as “Music and Memory” and “Joy for All” robotic pets for residents with cognitive challenges.

Rebranding has also affected the look of our properties, with new exterior signage and awnings as well as a plan for new parking lot signage at our main campus. We issued new badges and lanyards for all staff, increased our social media presence, and updated our website. Collateral materials such as stationery, presentation folders, and brochures were produced to reflect our brand and convey a consistent look and targeted messages to residents, donors, healthcare professionals, and family members. Our development staff engaged with an organization called CARS that runs a vehicle donation program to assist nonprofits. This is expected to bring additional income to our organization and to raise awareness of our cause, and is being implemented in 2019.

Chief among our accomplishments was the construction of a Rehabilitation and Wellness Center within Linn Health & Rehabilitation. Measuring 1,800 sq. ft. in size, the Center is the largest in-house rehabilitation unit within a nonprofit skilled nursing facility in the East Bay. Fundraising from private donations and grants allowed us to complete the architectural design and construction phases, renovating a former dining room into a state-of-the-art space for occupational, speech and physical therapy services to Linn residents and eventually outpatients from the community. Our Linn staff has created unique rehabilitation programs for weight loss, neurological therapy, and wound care, for example, and was recognized as a four-star quality rated nursing home by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services for its ratio of nursing staff to residents and the high level of quality care provided to residents every day.

An important facet of our organization is our volunteer leadership at the governance level. New Trustees joined our Board, bringing expertise in areas of IT, healthcare, government, and LGBTQ initiatives. We worked throughout the latter part of 2018 to embrace the LGBTQ community and welcome them as both staff and residents of our Communities.

Since our mission is to care for low and moderate income individuals, we rely on supplemental funding to subsidize the losses we incur from inadequate Medicaid reimbursement. We ask that the Conference enhance the strength of its commitment and dedication to our mission and ministry by encouraging individual Conference churches and church members to help us by giving generously. Our elders need your support.

On behalf of the Trustees and residents of Aldersbridge, thank you to all who express their support of our communities through Golden Cross and other donations. Your $4,716.45 in Golden Cross dollars during 2018 provided subsidies for personal care, housekeeping, and meal services for our residents. We are truly grateful for your generous assistance.

**UNITED METHODIST FEDERAL CREDIT UNION**

We would like to say thank you to our members and volunteers for your continued support of The United Methodist Federal Credit Union. Through your support, we’ve been able to create and continue our safe haven for financial improvement through stewardship, friendship and faith that has continued
for over 70 years. Our mission continues to be that of enhancing the financial lives of our members.

The credit union was able to complete this past year with considerable fiscal strength. Some notable increases include an 8% increase in total gross income, an increase in loan interest income of 8%, and an increase in loans to members of 11%. Through our successes, we were also able to increase our dividends to members by almost 65%. Overall, we saw an increase in total equity of 8.5%, pointing to the promise of continued growth in 2019 on assets growth of .63% for the year.

In 2019, we have more big plans ahead, including adding more services to allow our member's even easier access to accounts regardless of location. We will continue to offer some of the best loan rates available so members and churches can accomplish their financial goals with ease. Keep an eye out for news on our website www.umfcu.org or through email for more information on what's coming ahead!

Membership in the United Methodist Federal Credit Union is open to all United Methodist Churches, members of those churches, and their families. We know the special needs of churches and offer a host of special services tailored to your church's individual needs. We offer a full complement of financial services for our members and have nationwide branches.

UMFCU while carrying the United Methodist insignia in our name and logo, we operate independently of the Church. We are a financial institution not involved in matters regarding church law. Our credit union will continue to treat all its members equally as we have for over 70 years.

Respectfully submitted by:
Rev. Garvin Warden, New England representative on the UMFCU board of directors
Sandra Moore, New England Branch Member Services, Westbrook Maine
Lucy Palmer, New England Member Development

UNITED METHODIST FOUNDATION OF NEW ENGLAND

2018-2019 was a year of transition for the United Methodist Foundation of New England. After serving as President for seven years, Rev. James Mentzer announced in July 2018 that he would be retiring from the Foundation the following year. This early announcement provided ample time for the Foundation to conduct a thorough national search for its next president. After interviewing candidates from across the country, the Foundation selected one of New England’s own – Rev. Ted Crass – to serve as president beginning in July 2019.

During this transition, the Foundation continued to serve as a trusted ministry partner in the areas of stewardship, planned giving, and financial services for the New England Annual Conference. In 2018-2019, the Foundation offered [Giving][Jesus][Generosity], its laity-focused stewardship presentation, on several occasions across the Conference. The annual Pre-Retirement seminar for pastors nearing the end of their ministry career was expanded to a two-day event featuring Rev. Clayton Smith, recently retired from the Church of the Resurrection. And for the first time, the Foundation offered a two-part webinar on clergy taxes as it began a new initiative to use electronic communications in offering programming to pastors all over New England. The Foundation’s goal is to provide an on-going series of webinars on key topics as part of its commitment to support spiritual formation programming that connect faith and finances here in New England.
In the area of pastoral leadership, the Foundation’s cohort-based program received a major boost with the receipt of a Lilly Foundation grant for almost $1 million. This grant will fund new leadership cohorts for entrepreneurs, pastors in challenging positions, cross-cultural appointments, and licensed local pastors who are serving in less than full-time appointments. This initiative stems from the Foundation’s belief that there are skills needed for pastors to be transformative in today’s New England culture that are not explored in seminary or course of study programs.

The Foundation’s grants-making ministry provided grants in 2018 totaling more than $65,000 to churches across New England. Grants this year provided support for projects such as a technology bridge between two faith communities in rural Maine that will allow them to worship together by live-streaming their worship service, and seed money to fund a grant writer to assist Old West UMC (Boston) in raising funds beyond traditional resources. Annual grant applications (for up to $5000) are due each year by May 15th. Rapid Response grant applications (for up to $2500) may be submitted at any time of the year.

The conservative philosophy of the Foundation’s investment program helped mitigate end-of-year losses in the stock market last year. The Foundation ended 2018 with just over $105 million in assets under management. These dollars, which belong to the Annual Conference and more than 370 local churches, provided the funding needed to support essential ministries across New England, as well as explore possibilities for new outreach initiatives. The Foundation is recognized as a leader in socially responsible investing (SRI) among United Methodist Foundations nationally. All holdings in UMFNE portfolios are regularly screened against the SRI list published by Wespath Benefits & Investments. Because of this commitment to SRI investing, the Foundation remains uniquely qualified to manage individual church accounts and endowments. The Foundation also partners with the denominational pension plan in direct voting on all corporate resolutions presented by companies represented within the Foundation’s investment portfolio. In 2018, the “net-of-fees” total returns for each of the Foundation’s core investment strategies were:

| Stock Pool: – 8.15% | Fixed Income Pool: 0.25% | Money Market Pool: 2.00% |

All these performance numbers were in line with their corresponding benchmarks while providing reduced risk and volatility.

Members of the 2018-2019 Foundation Board of Directors

Elizabeth Alletto
Rev. Barbara Cann
Rev. Theodore Crass
Rev. Allen Ewing-Merrill
Pastor Crystal Gardner
Rev. Robert Hill
Rev. Anne Marie Hunter
Roberto Machuca
Kristine Owen
George Reagan
Brad Stayton
Rev. Herbert Taylor

Wesley Blair, III
Pamela Carpenter
Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar
Rev. Brigid Farrell
Rev. Peter Hey
Joan Humphrey
Rev. Taesung Kang
Rev. James Mentzer
Roxie Pin

Rev. James G. Mentzer, President
ANNUAL REPORT UNITED METHODIST MEN 2018

Men’s ministries have changed and developed over the years. I have found that there are several models of men’s ministries happening throughout our conference and my passion is to connect with these ministries.

In my research, I have found that many churches across our conference have a men’s ministry happening in their midst. The statistical report shows that 71 churches are reporting a men’s ministry. The national statistical report shows that only 13 groups are known to the General Commission. That is a significant difference. The United Methodist Men’s organization has many resources available to supplement men’s ministries and it is my goal to be available to as many of these ministries as possible. I need your assistance and support in identifying groups and hearing from you some of the issues facing men’s ministries in your area.

Our role in 2018, after being dormant for many years, was to begin a focus of identifying opportunities from which to begin. We made many church visits, had numerous table conversations at district gatherings and events like Walk to Emmaus, and for the first time in many years a table and presence at Annual Conference which attracted much attention and conversation. We wrote a letter to each of the 9 District Superintendents asking them to help us identify men’s groups in their district as well as identifying some active men in their district that might be a point of contact. We used reports from the General Commission of United Methodist Men that helped us identify chartered groups of UMM as well as the EMS members in the conference. We are working with the Conference Committee on Camps and Retreats by establishing a list of mission projects that can be made available during our visits throughout 2019 to promote men’s ministry in connection with our camps and retreat center. Results in 2018 were the addition of 3 chartered UMM groups and an addition of 2 EMS members as well as 3 Legacy members. We also identified several previously unknown men’s ministries.

Our primary goal in 2019 is to have a key Men’s Ministry contact available in each district as well as to continue building relationships with men throughout the New England area. In 2020, it is our vision to have an active resource person available in each district (reinforcing the relationship) that is trained to help facilitate men’s ministry throughout each district. Some churches or clusters may have groups or teams of men, others may need individual opportunities. Our goal is to help facilitate the growth of men’s ministries, regardless of the form.

I look forward to working with many of you, to help me be a resource for developing and expanding men’s ministries across New England. As Conference President, I am willing to come speak to your group and discuss men’s ministries and its value to your churches.

Together, we can enhance men’s ministries – both to young men and to those of us with more experience.
UNITED METHODIST WOMEN REPORT

United Methodist Women is having an Awesome time celebrating 150 Years of women organized for mission. We were founded right here in Boston, MA! We just had a wonderful time of celebration at BU School of Theology on the very day – March 23, (1869) – that 8 women met at the Tremont Street Methodist Episcopal Church in Boston, saw a need, and sent a teacher (Isabella Thoburn) and a doctor (Clara Swain) to India to work with women, children and youth.

United Methodist Women has gone from 8 women and 2 missionaries sent to India – to 800,000 members working in over 80 countries! We are so thankful that that ‘Handful of Women’ – our foremothers – had the courage and foresight to look beyond what was ‘convention’ and traditional roles of women in their day, to start what would become a ‘movement’ and go on to inspire thousands of women to continue their Legacy and advocate for women, children, and youth all over the world!

We continue to work on issues involving: 1. ‘Criminalization of Communities of Color & Mass Incarceration: Interrupt the school-to- prison pipeline’; 2. ‘Economic Inequality: Adopt legislation in states/localities that builds the base for a Living Wage’; 3. ‘Climate Justice: Reduce carbon footprint emissions of corporations and individuals’ (‘All creation is the Lord’s, and we are responsible for the ways in which we use and abuse it. Water, air, soil, minerals, energy sources, plants, animal life, and space are to be valued and conserved. . . . God has granted us stewardship of creation. We should meet these stewardship duties through acts of loving care and respect.’ (Social Principles, The Book of Discipline)

Finally – ‘Maternal and Child Health: Decrease maternal mortality; develop a network of women’s health advocates for access to health care and education.’

‘Health care is a basic human right’ (Social Principles, UMC). We continue to work to establish Maternal Mortality Review Boards in every state.

Together we CAN make a difference!

Betty Shippee, New England Conference UMW President

UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

459 men and women are being equipped as faithful, fruitful pastors and Christian leaders for the Church:

292 Masters Students
167 Doctoral Students

Third largest United Methodist seminary in the United States

Founded nearly 150 years ago by Bishop Milton Wright, father of famed aviators Wilbur and Orville Wright, United has continued that spirit of innovation through:

Online degrees:
98% of master’s students have taken one or more course online while studying at United.
United students live in 39 different states.

Week-long intensives fulfill UMC residency requirements.

Live Interactive Virtual Education (LIVE):
New grant brings the latest technology in virtual education.
Participate in on-campus courses via webcam and enjoy live lectures and real-time discussion with faculty and peers.

**Doctor of Ministry Degree:**
Become a doctor for the Church, addressing a real problem or challenge in your church or community.
Study under a mentor who is an expert in their field and learn alongside a small group of dedicated peers.
3-year program that allows you to complete project as you go, leading to a 78% program graduation rate in 2017 (vs. 54% average among other seminaries)iii

**Practical education designed to resource the Church:**
The majority of United faculty have pastored churches.
91% of entering United students are already serving in ministry, bringing that context to the classroom.

**A focus on Church Renewal:**
165 Course of Study studentsiv
42 students in the Hispanic Christian Academy (3-year Spanish online course of ministry program for Hispanic lay pastors and leaders)iv
Certificates in Church Planting, Disability Ministry, and Supervision

**Academic AND Spiritual Growth:**
95% of students say the United community supports both their academic and spiritual growth.v

**Diverse Christian Views:**
Over 30 different denominations
19 international students from 15 different countries
96% of students feel their views are respected in the classroom/seminary community and say they have been taught to respect the views of others.
47% of students who reported are African-American, 43% Caucasian and 10% represent other ethnicities

We thank God for the men and women coming to United because God has called them to serve the least and the lost. We pray as the Lord Jesus instructed his disciples saying, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest” (Luke 10:2).

Dr. Kent Millard
President
United Theological Seminary

**WANAKEE UNITED METHODIST CENTER**

2018 was another amazing year of community, growth, and life-changing ministry at Wanakee.
We were blessed to welcome over 530 campers during our summer programming, 15% more than 2017.
In addition, we continued to develop our volunteer base, added new school-year programs, improved the safety and usability of our 20+ buildings, and so much more.
Wanakee’s mission statement includes a desire “to help individuals interact with one another, build relationships, and grow in their Christian faith through experiences within a Christian community,” and according to parent feedback, we were fortunate to realize this aspiration. As three parents wrote to us;

“[Wanakee is] a wonderful, healing, spiritual place in God’s creation!”

“Wanakee is a place where kids can be unplugged, learn to love nature […] and learn about God and the love God has for them. The staff are wonderful. The grounds are beautiful. [...] I wish I had a Wanakee to go to when I was a kid”

“Wanakee has definitely helped deepen my daughter’s faith in God.”

Besides the chance to serve more campers, one of the most exciting areas of growth in 2018 was in the support given to Wanakee by dedicated volunteers. During the summer camping season, more than 80 teachers, accountants, nurses, designers, pastors, and professionals from all walks of life volunteered for more than 7,000 hours, supporting the spiritual, personal, and social growth of all who joined us on Upper New Hampton Road. In addition to summer growth this past year, our annual Work Days continued to enjoy strong volunteer participation, and we added seven new Board and Committee members. The time and energy given by each of these individuals in support of our mission is a blessing to the Wanakee community.

In our facilities and finances, Wanakee was able to continue our positive momentum. In order to improve the camper experience, donors contributed enough funds to purchase 40 new bed frames and mattresses during the first phase of our Buy-a-Bed campaign. Other improvements happened all over camp, including new roofs, screens, and picnic tables, as well as repairs to cabins, the Homestead Retreat chimney, and aging dining hall equipment. Financially, while our operating income has increased over 40% since 2015, the average total amount of yearly donations to Wanakee from 2016 to 2018 has been 338% higher than the average total yearly donations received from 2013 to 2015. In this challenging financial moment for churches and non-profits, the Wanakee community is showing its strength and commitment to our mission.

Wanakee’s biggest annual event is the Wanakee Wilderness 5K and Homecoming BBQ, occurring in mid-August each summer for the past six years. In 2018, we once again registered over 100 runners while raising more than $12,000 in support of facilities upgrades and camperships. Later in the day, we welcomed 160 people at our Homecoming BBQ.

Summer camp 2019, which was planned in late 2018, includes many favorite programs from previous seasons, as well as new offerings. We continue to offer parent-child programs for children ages 2-9 (also great for aunts, uncles, and friends!), family camps, and a wonderfully diverse range of youth programming for kindergarteners to high school graduates. We look forward to welcoming you.

Respectfully Submitted,
James B. Tresner, Executive Director

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i Data represents Fall 2018 headcount enrollment, unless otherwise specified.
ii ATS 2017-2018 Annual Data Tables. Data represents Fall 2017 headcount enrollment.
iii ATS 2017-2018 Strategic Information Report for United Theological Seminary. Graduation rates represent the percentage of students who were able to complete their chosen degree within a specified period of time which approximates two times the normal length of the degree.
iv Data represents unduplicated headcount enrollment in the 2017-2018 academic year.
v United Theological Seminary 2017-2018 Student Satisfaction Survey, in which 30% of students responded.