

DAILY PROCEEDINGS

WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 8, 2011

CLERGY SESSION - Bishop Peter D. Weaver called the clergy session to order at 2:33 P.M.

Ernest Belisle, Co-Chair of the Board of Ordained Ministry (BOOM), read the names of all clergy who died during the past year, followed by a moment of prayer, then we sang Hymn #164 "And Are We Yet Alive" followed by worship.

Ernest Belisle introduced BOOM's report, containing answers to questions of the Business of Annual Conference.

Bishop Weaver reminded the body of the rules of eligibility to vote on matters of clergy credentials. Only full Deacons and Elders can vote. For General Conference and Jurisdictional delegate candidate the rules are different.

Ernest Belisle recommended that: Dorothy Asare, Seth Asare, Lois Bailey, Patricia L. Bristow, Susan Carlson, George E. Curtis III, C. Edward Deyton, Louise J. Dumas, Barbara Dwyer, Richard Gray, Susan Hager-Smith, Barbara Herber, Robert L. Johnson, Samuel Johnson, Chungsoo Kim, Everett C. Kuder, Pamela J. Maden, Jean Marsh, Robert A. Moore, Ruth Oduor, Gil Ott, Clinton E. Parker, Neil S. Sweet, Jr. and Vicki Woods be approved as retiring elders. The motion was approved.

During the session, Ron Wilson, as the Dean of the Cabinet, answered Question 17 (See the Business of the Annual Conference.)

Ernest Belisle moved that Theodore (Ted) Crass, Xia Jiao, Adam Randazzo, Matthew Willis-Goode be elected as Provisional Elders. They were asked to leave the room. They were elected and returned to be greeted with applause.

Ernest Belisle moved that Jacquelyn Brannen, Han Sung Kim, Deborah (Desi) Larson, Byungmoo Lee, Jong-Sun Lim, and Catherine Nicol be elected as elders in full connection. They were asked to leave the room. They were individually elected and returned separately to be greeted with applause.

Other questions were answered and voted respectively, including those requiring 2/3 or ¾ majority votes. The entire report was then adopted. (See the Business of the Annual Conference.)

Ernest Belisle made an announcement concerning Residency in Ministry Program. Erica Robinson-Johnson presented the document. Also it was announced that Continuing Education Policy has been finalized and on the Conference website (1 per year and 8 per quadrennium) - 1 CEU = 10 hours of instruction. Anyone wishing to offer CEUs should fill-out the form online for the Committee to approve CEUs. Clergy can send a form to BOOM to have CEUs approved.

Sue Evans, Registrar of BOOM handed out a list of persons who are no longer United Methodist clergy and therefore should no longer present themselves as such. Any questions can be directed to the respective district office.

Bishop Weaver presented information about Pastor's Winter Gathering – there will be a mid-winter retreat for Clergy Renewal. SPRC's are encouraged to support their pastors to attend.

Bishop recognized the VT clergy in the body.

After instructions by Ralph Oduor the Conference Secretary, the first Clergy ballot for 2012 General Conference delegates was conducted.

After the balloting, Bishop Weaver held a conversation with the clergy. Following questions from Jim Todd and a statement from Allen Ewing-Merrill, more than 50 clergy stood up to signify they would sign a document declaring their intention to sign a pledge to conduct blessings of Christian marriage to same gender couples. There were many questions and answers, including a statement of support from Catherine Johnson, former Executive Director of Methodist Federation for Social Action (MFSA).

Bishop Weaver declared the Clergy Executive Session adjourned at 5:30 P.M.

WEDNESDAY EVENING JUNE 8, 2011

OPENING WORSHIP - At 7:00 P.M. conference musicians opened with the theme, "A Gathering of Many Pieces".

CALL TO ORDER - Bishop Peter D. Weaver called the session to order at 7:22 P.M. He offered a welcome and introduction to Annual Conference, describing the dry bones as "coming alive" in the New England Conference. Jim McPhee spoke of the "Imagine No Malaria" campaign. The conference collected socks for the campaign.

ORGANIZATIONAL - Bishop Weaver welcomed everyone to this session of the Annual Conference. Bishop Weaver introduced Conference Secretary Ralph Oduor who noted the agenda for this evening. The Conference Lay Leader, Oscar Harrell, joined the Bishop at the head table. He would be the first of many Laity to assist Bishop Weaver during this year's Annual Conference.

Bishop Weaver welcomed all the first time attendees to conference. He welcomed Bonnie Marden and she noted the visitors attending. He thanked the Monitoring Team led by Lisa Fagerstrom.

Bishop Weaver turned over conference to Ralph Oduor for the Organizational Motions.

ANNOUNCEMENTS - Ralph Oduor, Conference Secretary, announced that the roll call would be taken from the registrations at the registration desk. When voting, vote with the pink (lay) or blue (clergy) voting card included in the registration packet. He noted the corrections for RS-304 in pre-conference booklet (PCB):

P.37 on LINE12 – Book of Discipline ref is 162j

P. 40 on LINE 7 – Should be “DISCIPLINE” not “Disciple”

The following were distributed to members this evening: RS-101, 120, 122, 209, 210 and the resolution to discontinue TRINITY UMC, Lynn, MA, Metro Boston Hope (MBH) District.

Ralph Oduor reminded the Conference of its rules of order and procedures. Any motion that is made must be in writing to the Secretary and Presiding Officer before it can be acted upon. Motion forms are available from any of the usher/tellers. If you wish to be recognized, please raise and wave your voting card from your seat, before moving to a microphone. This helps visibility in the front of the Chapel.

ORGANIZATIONAL MOTIONS - Ralph Oduor moved that the bar of the Conference include the entire chapel, floor and the balcony. Motion was approved.

Ralph Oduor moved that the agenda printed in 2011 Pre-Conference booklet be adopted as the working agenda for this session. Motion was approved.

Ralph Oduor moved that Kristine Anderson, David Calhoun, Glenna Keleher, Ruth Oduor, Ami Sawtelle, Lyle Seger, Josephine Sierra, and Kristin White, be elected as the Committee on Journal and Assistant Secretaries.

Ralph Oduor moved that Ruby Blake, Fran Camacho, June Carter, Sandi Charbono, Sharlene Cormie, Donna Costa, Lawrence Curtis, Melanie Fengler, Paula Fletcher, Nancy Kenty, Ted Locke, Jean Marsh, Bob Packard, be elected as ushers and tellers with Fran Camacho as head usher and teller.

Ralph Oduor moved that those who have appropriately filed excuses with the Conference Secretary be excused from the sessions as requested.

Ralph Oduor moved that all reports printed in the booklet be adopted and printed in the conference journal.

CONSENT CALENDAR – Ralph Oduor noted that the current Consent Calendar is on page 2 of the pre-conference booklet, and that RS-101, RS-120, RS-121, RS-122 and RS-201 have been taken off the Consent Calendar and will be acted on individually.

The vote on the Consent Calendar is scheduled for FRIDAY AT 4:00 P.M. as an order of the day. No debate or amendments will be allowed. To remove any additional items from the Consent Calendar, simply provide the Conference Secretary with a written request for such, signed by 10 members of the Conference, before the close of the session this evening.

Bishop Weaver explained the General Conference voting process for the benefit of the new attendees.

BALLOTING FOR CANDIDATES FOR DELEGATE TO GENERAL AND JURISDICTIONAL CONFERENCES - Ralph Oduor explained the balloting for General Conference:

We will elect five (5) Lay and five (5) Clergy Delegates to the General Conference. We will also elect (5) Lay and five (5) Clergy Delegates to the Northeastern Jurisdiction. Finally we will elect five (5) Lay Reserve and five (5) Clergy Reserve Delegates to the Jurisdictional Conference. Each of the General Conference Delegates will also be Delegates to the Jurisdictional Conference. Each of the Jurisdictional Conference Delegates will also be the General Conference Alternate Delegates.

In summary, we will elect fifteen (15) Lay and fifteen (15) Clergy Delegates, Alternates, and Reserves. Results of each balloting will be announced by the Bishop. Results will also be posted.

If you are eligible to vote for the candidates, pick up your ballot book in the chapel after completing your registration. These books are not transferable. If you have to leave before the entire slate of candidates is elected, please hand over the balance of your ballot book to one of the ushers. Eligibility to run for election:

Any Elder in Full Connection and any Deacon in Full Connection may be nominated as a Clergy Delegate.

Any Elder in Full Connection and any Deacon in Full Connection may move an additional nomination of another Elder or Deacon in Full Connection from the floor of the Annual Conference.

Any Lay or Equalization Member from a United Methodist Church within the bounds of the New England Annual Conference may be nominated as a Lay Delegate.

Any Lay or Equalization Member from a United Methodist Church within the bounds of the New England Annual Conference may move an additional nomination of another Lay Member from the floor of the Annual Conference. No speeches will be allowed.

A voter may write-in an eligible candidate's name during balloting, provided the resulting number of votes on the ballot does not exceed the number to be elected.

Note that Fay Flanary is a candidate for Lay Delegate to the Jurisdiction.

Note that Gwen Purushotham (#18 on the Clergy Ballot) has withdrawn and is no longer a candidate for election.

ELIGIBILITY TO VOTE:

LAY:

Each Lay Member of Annual Conference representing her/his church or the alternate, if the member is unable to be here, as well as each equalization member, may vote for Lay candidates.

Your Ballot Book of 18 Ballots is yellow or canary. You should also have a booklet (green cover) containing each Lay Candidate's name, biography, and the number that corresponds to her/his name on the Ballot.

CLERGY:

The following are allowed to vote for Clergy Candidates:

1. Clergy Members in Full Connection.
2. Provisional Members who have completed their educational requirements and have been elected to Provisional membership.
3. Local Pastors who have completed course of study or a M.Div. degree, and have served a minimum of two consecutive years under appointment immediately preceding election. In other words, service under appointment must have begun on or before June 8, 2009.
4. Associate Members, active or retired

Your Ballot Book of 20 Ballots is white. You should also have a booklet (yellow cover) containing each Clergy Candidate's name, biography, and the number that corresponds to her/his name on the Ballot.

Only those within the Bar of the Annual Conference may vote (i.e. the entire chapel floor and the balcony.)

VOTING:

1. In order to vote for your Candidate(s), completely fill in the oval to the right of your choice, using any pen or pencil including the pencil you received with the Ballot Book (later clarified to exclude red ink, and recommend black ink). The number to the left of the oval corresponds with your choice.

2. THE FIRST BALLOT:

You may vote for as many as 5 Candidates. You may write-in a candidate's name in the space so specified in the Ballot. However, any Ballot with more than five votes will render the Ballot defective and it will be discarded. After you have voted, stand up until all the Ballots have been handed to the teller.

BALLOTING - Bishop Weaver reminded the body that last year's Annual Conference voted a suggestion to have one Laity and one Clergy of the Vermont (VMT) district go to General Conference. One may nominate from the floor for Laity or Clergy. He asked if there were any questions. Two additional names were added to the clergy ballot, namely, #21 Barbara Dwyer, and #22 Michele Grube. Bishop Weaver asked if there were additional nominations from the floor. Marla Marcum of Cambridge Welcoming Ministries was nominated as a lay candidate. She was added as #14 on the lay ballot. Pat McHugh, DS of NME was nominated and added as #23 on the clergy ballot. Following additional Q & A's, Bishop Weaver reported the results of clergy ballot #1. The results were also on the PowerPoint slides, on the screen. Ralph noted to look at your booklet when balloting, in order to match names to numbers on the ballot.

Clergy Ballot #2 and Laity Ballot #1 respectively were cast then closed.

BOOM - Bishop Peter D. Weaver handed a certificate to each retiree, with the assistance of Ernest Belisle and Lynn McCracken, the co-Chairs of BOOM. He offered a prayer for the lives and gifts of the retired pastors.

Dorothy Asare, Seth Asare, Lois J. Bailey, Patricia Bristol-Carrico, Ira N. Cameron, Susan Carlson, Calvin E. Carpenter, Donna Costa, Carol A. Cray, George Curtis, C. Edward Deyton, Louise Dumas, Barbara Dwyer, Richard W. Grey, Susan-Hager Smith, Barbara Herber, Kurt Herber, Robert Johnson, Samuel M. Johnson, Chungsoo Kim, Edward C. Kuder, Betty Le Geyt, Pamela Maden, Jean Marsh, Robert Moore, Ruth Oduor, Gilmore Ott, Clinton E. Parker, Leon Robinson, Neil Sweet Jr., and Vicki Woods.

Bishop Weaver invited Dot Hollenbeck to come forward. Dot has been Administrative Assistant to the Bishop for Bishop Skeete, Bishop Hassinger, and Bishop Weaver and is retiring at the end of the year. Dot thanked everyone for her years of ministry. There will be a journal to write your memories for Dot in the dining room afterward.

RETIREE VIDEOS - The first retiree video shown was Vicki Woods. Similar videos of retirees would be interspersed during the rest of the Annual Conference session.

ORDINANDS - Bishop invited 2011 ordinands to the stage: Jacquelyn Brannen, Han Sung Kim, Deborah (Desi) Larson, Byungmoo Lee, Jong-Sun Lim, and Catherine Nicol. He asked them the historic questions and they responded. He then offered a prayer for them and all of our ministers.

COMMITTEE ON LEADERSHIP (COL) - Marie MacDougall and Leeda Marsh, the co-chairs introduced the committee's report stating that members should report corrections to the committee and it would be ongoing with the vote on Saturday.

ELECTION OF CONFERENCE SECRETARY – Leeda Marsh nominated Ralph Oduor as Conference Secretary for 2012-2016 quadrenniums. The motion was seconded and approved.

ELECTION OF CONFERENCE STATISTICIAN – Leeda Marsh nominated Joy Mueller as the Statistician for 2012-2016 quadrennium. The motion was seconded and approved.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION (CF&A) - Barbara Cann and Bill Burnside presented the 2012 Budget Proposal-Changes from 2011 Budget: Details were shown on the screen. The vote on the budget would be held on Friday as an order of the day.

STATISTICIAN - Joy Mueller reported on Call to Action Project and other statistics with a slide show presentation.

NICARAGUA PLANNING COMMITTEE - Nicaragua Covenant showed a video on Water Project.

RECESS - Bishop Weaver declared a recess at 9:45 P.M.

EVENING PRAYER - Mary Elizabeth Moore, Dean Boston University School of Theology, briefly addressed the body and then closed with prayer.

THURSDAY MORNING, JUNE 9, 2011 – Soul Searching Healing, The Strength of Self

OPENING WORSHIP - Worship convened at 8:30 A.M., with theme of, "You Knit Me Together". The conference musicians played.

CALL TO ORDER – Bishop Weaver called the session to order at 8:57 A.M.

ORGANIZATIONAL - Ralph Oduor stated the agenda for the morning. Evelyn (Evie) Doyon, Lay Leader of Vermont, joined the Bishop at the head table.

BALLOTING - Bishop Weaver reported results of the Lay Ballot #1 accompanied with a PowerPoint slide show of the detailed results, followed by a reading of the vote results of each candidate, by Ralph Oduor the Conference Secretary. This reporting process would be followed, with minor adjustments, for subsequent ballot results. Bonnie Marden, Ralph Oduor, and Lorene (Rene) Wilbur were elected, in that order. Bishop Weaver reported Clergy Ballot #2. We Chang was elected.

BALLOTING - Lay voted on Ballot #2. Clergy voted on Ballot #3. Bishop Weaver noted that Clergy Ballot #2 had 247 ballots cast, 7 were invalid ballots. Therefore, clergy needed 120 votes to be elected. Rebecca Clark was declared elected on the Clergy Ballot #2. The number needed for election was correct on the Lay Ballot. Clergy Ballot #3 was disregarded and Clergy Ballot #4 was cast. Bishop led us in prayer. Ballots were cast. Balloting was closed.

COMMITTEE ON JOURNAL – Kristine Anderson reported for the Committee on Journal that the proceedings of the previous day had been received and found to be in order. She moved their adoption. The motion was adopted.

MONITORING – Bishop Weaver introduced Lisa Fagerstrom of the Commission on Religion and Race (CORR). She spoke regarding our accountability process. On behalf of CORR and Commission on the Status and Role of Women (COSROW) there will be monitors, mandated by Book of Discipline, and the Bible, to monitor and to love our neighbor and ourselves. We should want to monitor ourselves. She challenged us, who do you eat your meals with at conference? Who do you and they look like?

HOLY CONFERENCING GUIDELINES - Oscar Harrell, Conference Lay Leader read the Holy Conferencing Guidelines. The Board of Laity has distributed these on plastic cards to everyone here at conference.

NORTHERN MAINE DISTRICT (NME) APPOINTMENTS –Pat MacHugh the DS read the new appointments. Bishop Weaver invited all those being appointed to the Northern Maine District and the Lay Members to the stage to receive papers from him, the DS, and District Lay Leader, as well as the district Administrative Assistant.

Bishop Weaver asked members from the district to stand and then led us in prayer. Subsequent district appointments followed a similar process.

PRAYER REQUEST – Pat MacHugh noted that a tornado hit Northern Maine the previous night – Caribou, Bishop Weaver led us in prayer.

SMYRA MILLS UMC FUNDS - Pat MacHugh introduced Marilyn Rohdin to present the resolution for the proceeds of sale of church (RS-208) to go to Camp Mechuwana. RS208 was adopted.

MISSION LEAP FORWARD – NME video was shown.

RETIREE VIDEOS – Barbara Dwyer and Sam Johnson.

ORDER OF THE DAY – DREAM ACT (video) by Church & Society/ presented by We Chang and Gordon Shaw. We Chang spoke of the Dream Act going hand in hand with the children to the US Senate and the vote being defeated by 4 votes. We Chang spoke of the children not being defeated by this vote and cards are available to be mailed to the senators with collection boxes in Narthex. Bishop Weaver elaborated.

Dwight Haynes-Bow Mills NH noted that the screen stated the act will save tax money. How? We Chang explained it further.

ANNOUNCEMENTS - Ralph Oduor announced the following:

10:15 Learning Centers - on page 11 of PCB.

11:30 – 1:15 Lunch by districts, Bishop with Memorial Service guests

1:30 Memorial Service – Please do not sit in front rows.

RECESS - Bishop Weaver declared a recess at 10:08 A.M.

THURSDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 9, 2011

MEMORIAL SERVICE

The Memorial Service convened at 1:30 P.M. with the theme of, “None of These Will Be Missing” with Bishop Peter Weaver presiding. As read by Margaret Bickford and youth, we remembered these saints:

CLERGY - Peter Gordon Bridge, W. Ralph Bruce, Sidney E. Buzzell, John Lewis Camp, S. Blake Ellis, Robert William Huston, Quinton S. Ivy, Evan R. Johnson, Franklin E. Kooker, Sang-Ho Lee, James K. Matthews, Kyle McGaw, Phillip G. Palmer, David A. Ripley, Frances P. Swartz, Sherwood A. Treadwell, and Ann G. Whiting.

SPOUSES – Jean M. Benedict, Grace B. Gilbert, David W. Havens, Marguerite M. Hudson, Fay M. John, Chandler Newton, Doris E. Painter, Gloria Mae Reeves, M. Francis Reeves, Edith G. Richardson, Norma L. Tripp, and Vera C. Woodley.

REMEMBERING BISHOP MATTHEWS – Bishop Cliff Ives spoke of Bishop Matthews.

NAMING OF CHURCHES MINISTRIES – He named Trinity U.M.C. in Lynn, MA (MBH) and asked for the naming of all other churches ending their ministries.

READINGS – Psalm 23 and others.

CELEBRATIONS OF MUSIC AND CLOSING

THURSDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 9, 2011

CALL TO ORDER – Bishop Weaver called the afternoon session to order at 3:49 P.M

ORGANIZATIONAL - JoAnn Carlotto joined the Bishop at the head table.

Ralph Oduor previewed the agenda for the afternoon.

BALLOTING – Bishop Weaver reported Clergy Ballot #4, no elections. Lay Ballot #2, no elections. Bishop led us in prayer. Ballots were cast, Clergy and Lay. Ballots were closed.

RHODE ISLAND AND SOUTHEASTERN (RIM) APPOINTMENTS - Seok Hwan Hong, DS.

MISSION LEAP FORWARD – RIM District Video.

RETIREE VIDEOS – Pam Maden and Ruth Oduor.

VISIONING TABLE REPORT ON SHARED MINISTRIES – Veta Daley the chair, reported with video aid. The committee handed out bookmarks to members of the New England Conference. The bookmark contained guidelines for Holy Conferencing.

CONFERENCE BOARD OF GLOBAL MINISTRIES – Rene Wilbur-Chair and Fay Flanary reported on our missionaries and three of them are present with us today. Rene noted we have been in mission, but communication was needed to make sure everyone knew what was going on. CBGM has over 27 requirements in the book of Discipline. The Board is trying to meet those requirements here in the NE Conference. A video was shown by GBGM. Dan Randall –Missionary, interpreter for the NE Jurisdiction spoke. Dan introduced Jeramaï Francois GBGM/Africa-missionary working in global health.

Jeramais Francois spoke and thanked the Conference for the covenant together with him. He reported on his ministry. Dan spoke of the US-2 program, which is a two year training program for young adults. He introduced Amihan Jones, who spoke of her journey and entering into this program.

BLESSING –Dan Randall gave a blessing to all of us, spoken in Latin.

TRI-STATE DISTRICT (TRI) APPOINTMENTS – Jan and Mike Davis, co-DS's.

MISSION LEAP FORWARD – TRI District Video by Linda Brewster.

ANNOUNCEMENTS – Bishop Weaver noted procession changes for this evening due to inclement weather.

BALLOTING – Bishop Weaver reported Lay Ballot #3, no elections. There were no elections on clergy Ballot #4. The next ballots were cast. Ballots were closed.

RECESS - Bishop Weaver declared a recess at 5:33 P.M.

GRACE -Don Anderson - RI, representing State Councils of Churches led us in grace before dinner.

THURSDAY EVENING, JUNE 9, 2011

ORDINATION SERVICE – Worship convened at 7:00 P.M. with the theme of, “The Service of Word and Table”. Bishop Weaver commissioned Provisional Elders and ordained full Elders. Local pastors licensed for the year were recognized.

Commissioned as Provisional Elders: Theodore Crass, Xia Jiao, Adam Randazzo, Matthew Willis-Goode

Elders in full connection ordained: Jacquelyn Brannen, Han Sung Kim, Deborah (Desi) Larson, Byungmoo Lee, Jong-Sun Lim, and Catherine Nicol.

Local pastors recognized: Cathy Cantin, Aaron Cox, Robena Jackson Landsperg, Christa Levesque, James Mercurio, Danielle Rodrigues, Joseph Saunders, and Jennie Thrash-Crichlow.

CALL TO FULL-TIME CHRISTIAN MINISTRY - Bishop Weaver invited those who wanted to make a commitment to some form of full-time ordained or pulpit ministry to come forward for a time of prayer and dedication. Several persons answered the call and came forward.

FRIDAY MORNING, JUNE 10, 2011 –Side by Side

OPENING WORSHIP – Worship convened at 8:30 A.M. “Living Side by Side” theme with music led by the conference musicians.

CALL TO ORDER – Bishop Weaver called the morning session to order at 8:49 A.M

ORGANIZATIONAL – Spring Hanna, Co-Lay Leader Mid-Maine (MME) District joined the Bishop.

Bishop Weaver stated the agenda for the afternoon. He reported the Ordination offering totaled \$4,762.63.

RETIREE VIDEOS – Bob Moore, Jean Marsh, and George Curtis.

BALLOTING – Bishop Weaver reported Clergy Ballot #5. William (Scott) Campbell and David Abbott were elected, in that order. Lay Ballot #3, Oscar Harrell was elected. Bishop led us in prayer. Ballots were cast. Balloting was closed. Leigh Dry removed herself from the next Clergy Ballot due to diversity.

COMMITTEE ON JOURNAL – Kristine Anderson reported for the Committee on Journal that the proceedings of the previous day had been received and found to be in order. She moved their adoption. The motion was adopted.

MONITORING REPORT – Lisa Fagerstrom thanked Bonnie Marden and the worship team. Lisa apologized for the miscommunication on location for the cross racial discussion yesterday. Another cross racial discussion will be held at Chester's Place during dinner this evening. “If you were a different person, how would you see people around you?” Lisa presented the report (slides) Now switch back to the person you really are. “We need to be sitting together side by side as one.” “Try to listen with your heart and see it thru a different lens.” Introduced Rev. Kim-“Drop the I Word” project.

VMT DISTRICT APPOINTMENTS – Brigid Farrell, DS.

ORGANIZATIONAL – Rebecca Hewett-Director of Conference Lay Speaking Ministries joined Bishop Weaver.

MISSION LEAP FORWARD – VMT District Lay Leader Evie Doyon, reported on the missions in the communities in Vermont. Evie spoke of a youth's story of the church getting out of the building.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER –Bishop Weaver introduced Bishop Minerva Carcaño of the Phoenix Episcopal Area, Desert Southwest Conference of the United Methodist Church. She read from Matthew 25. Bishop Carcaño preached on our conference theme, “Living Side by Side-The Broken and the Whole.” She told Juanita's journey. Bishop Carcaño invited us into conversation. Bishop Carcaño led the conference in reflection around our call to “welcome the stranger”, and shared thoughts and experiences in her ministry with and for immigrants. Her presentation engaged and challenged conference

attendees to reflect on their own experience, and explore ways God may be calling us to stand for justice in this issue. "What opportunities is God giving you to walk side by side with others?" "What opportunities is God giving your church to walk side by side with others?" "When was the last time you were in the presence of an immigrant and what happened?" Bishop showed a video of Jasmine Franco's story. Her parents were deported back to Guatemala. She asked us to consider this question, "What gets in the way of our living side by side with the stranger?" Matthew 25 focuses on our omissions that we fail to live with. Bishop asked that we be in prayer for our Immigration situation and our churches. She spoke of Wesley and his belief that caring for the broken is a means of grace. Bishop Carcaño showed some pictures of the border, the wall, and immigration detainees. She showed a picture of care tents for immigrants. Bishop spoke of 2 children, Melvin and Joclyn, she met while she was assisting at the border. As their picture was displayed, Bishop Weaver thanked Bishop Carcaño for her ministries, despite the tragedies in her area. Bishop Weaver led us in prayer for Bishop Carcaño.

BOARD OF CHURCH AND SOCIETY - JUSTICE FOR OUR NEIGHBORS: We Chang spoke of Interfaith Immigration Services-Body formed to reform our immigration system. Bishop Carcaño was the voice of church marching with Dream in the last demonstrations. We Chang noted the Bishop also receives many threats along with her letters and to keep her in prayer. We Chang noted 1,500 cards were distributed, intended for Senators. He asked that they be returned to boxes in the Narthex for mailing. We Chang introduced Shandirai Mawokomatanda who spoke of what Justice for our Neighbors did for him. Bishop Weaver noted he will be the new senior pastor of Wesley UMC, Worcester, MA.

BALLOTING – Bishop Weaver reported Clergy Ballot #6. There were no elections. Lay Ballot #4. Oscar W. Harrell II was elected. Bishop led us in prayer. Ballots were cast. Ballots were closed. Karen Munson removed her name from the next Clergy Ballot.

BLACK COLLEGE STUDENT – Fay Flanary introduced Braque Talley our black college student from Russ College, Lena H. Accord Ambassador. He spoke of the Black College Fund and our 100% Contribution to the fund.

ANNOUNCEMENTS - Bonnie Marden noted that the Stop Hunger Now packages are being made and help is needed. Bishop Weaver mentioned the Imagine No Malaria Campaign walk/run coming up during lunch.

RECESS - Bishop Weaver declared a recess at 12:13 P.M.

GRACE –Rev. Dr. Sergei Nikolaev, President Moscow United Methodist Theological Seminary. He read Psalm 42, followed by music youth sang in their language. Rev. Dr. Sergei Nikolaev led us in grace (sung by the youth) before lunch.

FRIDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 10, 2011

CALL TO ORDER – Bishop Weaver called the session to order at 1:51 P.M.

ORGANIZATIONAL – Ruby Blake – Co-Lay Leader of MBH District joined the Bishop.

Bishop Weaver gave the agenda overview for the afternoon. Videos not seen will be on the website. He also spoke of the "prayerlimentary" procedures during resolutions.

BALLOTING – Bishop Weaver reported the results of the Clergy Ballot #7. There were no elections.

Bishop reported the results of the Lay Ballot #6. JoAnn Carlotto was elected, completing the slate of Lay Delegates to General Conference. The Lay delegates in order of election are: Bonnie I. Marden, Ralph R. R. Oduor, Lorene (Rene) F. Wilbur, Oscar W. Harrell II, and JoAnn Carlotto. Bishop led us in prayer. Ballots were cast respectively for clergy and lay. Balloting was then closed.

UNITED METHODIST FOUNDATION OF NEW ENGLAND – The new president, Jim Mentzer led us in the observation of the 20th Anniversary of the Foundation

COMMISSION ON EQUITABLE COMPENSATION – Laurel Scott, chair, presented the amended RS-101-on minimum cash salaries for adoption. After Q & A, RS-101 was adopted.

UNIT INSURANCE PLAN - Bruce Maxwell moved adoption of RS-112- pg. 21 & 22 of the PCB. The motion was adopted.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES - PARSONAGE GUIDELINES - Bernie Campbell, the mover, introduced amendments to RS-120 – pg. 25. He moved its adoption as amended. The motion was adopted with these amendments:

Three corrections:

- 1) That the Trustees be allowed to work with the Secretary to number the separate paragraphs under each section, and eliminate the letter designations
- 2) Replace line 33, Page 26 of the PCB with the following: "The following utility services shall be provided at the expense of the church providing the housing:
- 3) Replace words "De-leading" in lines 8 & 9 on page 29 with the words "lead remediation"

Ernest Belisle made the first of two amendments: Line 47 of PCB – The District Superintendent is responsible, at the time of the annual charge conference to ensure that the regular annual inspection of the parsonage be done properly and responsibly in keeping with paragraph 258.2g (16) Book of Discipline, 2008. This was accepted as a friendly amendment. RS-120 as amended above was adopted.

The second proposed amendment below plus one to change “guidelines” to “policy” were properly referred to the Board of Trustees:

Use of the Parsonage as the Location of a For Profit Business

Before using the parsonage as the location of “for profit business” permission shall be given by:

- a) The District Superintendent
- b) The Charge Conference of the local parish
- c) Any/all relevant local/civil authority(s)

All or any such non-charitable or for profit business shall in no way jeopardize the tax free status of the property.

The occasional yard sale and/or any other such intermittent or sporadic activity shall not be understood as a business for profit.

ORGANIZATIONAL – Robert Moulton – New Hampshire District (NHD) Lay Leader- joined Bishop Weaver at the table.

BALLOTING – Bishop Weaver reported the results of Clergy Ballot #9. LaTrelle Easterling was elected! Clergy had elected all five (5) General Conference delegates. The delegates, in order of election were: We Hyun Chang, Rebecca (Becca) J. Clark, William (Scott) M. Campbell, David J. Abbott, and LaTrelle M. Easterling. Bishop led us in prayer before the next Clergy and Lay ballots were cast and balloting closed.

CLERGY COUPLE HOUSING – Laurel Scott moved adoption of RS-121 with amendments. It was adopted with amendments.

BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND CAMPUS MINISTRY – James McPhee moved adoption of RS-122 as amended title. The motion was adopted.

COMMITTEE ON RULES – Gwen Purushotham, the chair, moved adoption of RS-201, for nominating Episcopal candidates. A proposed amendment by Scott Campbell, Harvard-Epworth UMC, and Cambridge to give the Jurisdictional Conference delegation a separate role in the nomination of Episcopal candidates was not adopted.

These amendments were adopted:

By Mike Davis to add “The ballot will include an option for selecting ‘none’,”

By David Abbott’s to change the threshold percentage from 1/3 to 50% plus 1, and by Fay Flanary to change the maximum number of words of each Biography from 100 to 200. The amended RS-201 was adopted.

CONSENT CALENDAR – Ralph Oduor moved the adoption of the Consent Calendar on page 2 of the PCB, noting that RS-101, 120, 121, 122, and RS-201 were removed from the Consent Calendar.

CFA - Barbara Cann and Bill Burnside moved adoption of 2012 Budget resolutions, **RS-203**. The Budget resolutions were adopted.

CALL TO CONSCIENCE - RS-204 - Bishop Weaver explained the purpose as a rallying for our conscience. It was adopted by saying “Alleluia Amen.”

RETHINKING HEALTHCARE- Dot Matson moved adoption of RS-207 with amendments plus a friendly amendment by Donald G. Joel to wit, “health insurance” to read “health insurance, that includes dental coverage” in the resolution. This was accepted as a friendly amendment. The amended resolution was adopted.

BALLOTING – Bishop Weaver reported on Jurisdictional Ballots-Clergy Ballot #1 (#10), Martin McLee was elected. Bishop reported on Lay Ballot #1 (#7) for the Jurisdictional Conference. Annie J. MacNeal, Samuel (Sam) D. Purushotham, and Fay M. Flanary were elected, in that order. Bishop led us in prayer. Ballots were cast respectively for clergy and lay then closed.

MME DISTRICT APPOINTMENTS – Beverly Stenmark, DS.

CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS (CMA) DISTRICT APPOINTMENTS – Ronald Wilson, DS.

Bishop Weaver recognized Rene Perez, appointed new DS of CMA.

CONNECTICUT, WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS (CWM) DISTRICT APPOINTMENTS – Heidi Chamberland, DS.

Bishop Weaver presented retiring DS, Ron Wilson, with a framed Wesley’s Covenant Prayer.

GREEN MOUNTAIN COLLEGE, VT – Bishop Weaver welcomed Paul Fonteyn, the college president. Rene Wilbur and Dave Adams joined Paul as part of the Green Mountain team. Paul reported on the college, and Red-Bird mission, with a video aid.

RECESS - Bishop Weaver declared a recess at 5:24 P.M.

GRACE –In closing, Sandi Melius, chair of the Nicaragua Planning Committee, stated it was our 25th year in covenant with Nicaragua. She introduced the new director, Evelyn Forbes. Sandi introduced Otoniel, president of Las Iglesias de Cristo de Nicaragua who led grace before our evening meal.

FRIDAY EVENING JUNE 10, 2011

OPENING WORSHIP –Worship convened at 6:40 P.M. Music led by St. Andrews U.M.C, Boston and Lee Soto.

CALL TO ORDER - Bishop Peter D. Weaver called the session to order at 7:20 P.M.

ORGANIZATIONAL – Chuck Fraser, CMA District Lay Leader joined the Bishop at the table.

RECOGNITION OF LATINO MINISTRY – Bishop Weaver introduced Patricia Pena of St. Andrews U.M.C, and then a video was shown.

BALLOTING – Bishop Weaver reported on Clergy Ballot, Jurisdictional Conference #2 (#11). Leigh Dry was elected. Ralph Oduor read the list. Bishop reported results of Lay Ballot, Jurisdictional Conference #2 (#8). There was no election. Bishop led us in prayer before balloting process established previously.

BOARD OF LAITY –Oscar Harrell Conference Lay Leader noted that the board is aware of concerns that have been brought to their attention and discussed the “Holy Conferencing Principles” that were handed out earlier, highlights being: 1. Every person is a child of God. Always speak respectfully. One can disagree without being disagreeable. 2. As you patiently listen and observe the behavior of others, be open to the possibility that God can change views of any or all parties in the discussion. 3. Listen patiently before formulating responses. 4. Strive to understand the experience out of which others have arrived at their views. 5. Be careful in how you express personal offense at differing opinions. Otherwise dialogue may be inhibited. 6. Accurately reflect the views of others when speaking. This is especially important when you disagree with that position. 7. Avoid using inflammatory words, derogatory names, or an excited and angry voice. 8. Avoid making generalizations about individuals or groups. Make your point with specific evidence and examples. 9. Make use of facilitators and mediators. 10. Remember that people are defined, ultimately, by their relationship with God – not be the flaws we discover, or think we discover, in their views and actions.

Oscar Harrell introduced other Board of Laity members: JoAnn Carlotto, Bob Holden, Jack Sears Co-Lay Leader NHD, Wendy Miller Page-Co-District Lay Leader MBH, and District Director of Lay Speaking Ministries; Ruby Blake Co-District Lay Leader MBH, Betty Auto-Co-Lay Leader MME, Spring Hanna-Co-Lay Leader MME, Evie Doyon-Lay Leader-VMT, Pearl Wilkinson Co-Lay Leader CWM, Dave Dunham, Co-Lay Leader CWM. Chuck Fraser-Lay Leader CMA, Rebecca Hewitt-Conference Director Lay Speaking Ministries, Ginny White, UMW Executive Team, Glen Burley-Lay Leader NME.

ZEIGLER PREACHING AWARD - Curtis Brown, Director of Congregational Development, explained the award. We Chang, chair of the Board of Church and Society presented the award to Rev. Richard Capon of Lexington U.M.C, MA. Scripture was read in Korean, Spanish, and then Richard Capron read the scripture in English. Lexington choir performed. Richard preached, “The Gospel Is Freedom”. As Richard stated he wants his confirmation classes to learn at least one thing, “The grace of God is freely given for all”. The text of the sermon is available at www.neumc.org,

OFFERING FOR COOPER COMMUNITY AND UNITED METHODIST ECONOMICAL MINISTRY -

Bonnie Marden reported and introduced Kevin Fusco, the new director of Cooper Community. Cooper Community is completing 95 years of serving the community. Kevin thanked us. Calvary Church in Arlington, MA, donated \$50,000 to Cooper Community.

Bonnie Marden noted there were offering cards in the pew to use. Music was by the conference music team during the offering collection.

UMW – Leeda Marsh reported on the UMW and their mission projects. Leeda presented a special UMW Mission pin to Fay Flanary. Fay spoke of Mary Wyatt a UMW member who was present from Wesley U.M.C.

PREACHERS AID SOCIETY – Cathy McGovern recognized life time awards of discipleships. The first recipient was Mary Pittman Wyatt. Coleen Williams made the gift of this award a couple weeks ago. The second recipient was Beverly Abbott. David Abbott accepted the award for his mother. He noted that she was watching with us. David spoke some words sent via email from his mother. Preachers Aid gave the recipients a plaque and a donation in their honor. Kim Tisdale, Director of Preachers Aid, noted; if your church is interested in capital campaign to reach out to them.

TORCH (SCOUTING) AWARD – Rich Hughen explained the award. The award by UMM, was presented to Chris Sackett.

BALLOTING – Bishop Weaver reported results of Clergy Ballot for Jurisdictional Conference #3 (#12), in which Karen L. Munson was elected; followed by Lay Ballot for the Jurisdiction #3 (#9), in which William P. Aldridge and Sean Delmore were elected. Lay election for Jurisdictional Conference Delegates was complete. Lay Delegates for the Jurisdictional

Conference, were in order of election: Annie MacNeal, Samuel (Sam) Purushotham, Fay Flanary, William Aldrich and Sean P. Delmore. The next ballots were conducted as per previous process.

DENMAN AWARDS –Curtis Brown explained the award and this year there were three recipients. Steve Murray spoke of the recipient’s ministry. Steve Murray introduced and Rick McKinley presented Frank King with the Laity Denman Award. Martin McLee spoke of the recipient’s ministry. Rick McKinley presented Patricia Pena with the Clergy Denman Award. Curtis introduced Andy Burr. Andy spoke of the recipient’s ministry. Rick McKinley presented Nathan Weber with the Youth Denman Award.

RECOGNITION AWARDS –Jim McPhee spoke of Curtis Brown’s ministries here in the New England as Director of Congregational Development and he is leaving us to the Pacific Northwest Conference. Bishop Weaver spoke of Curtis’s ministries too. Curtis thanked everyone for being a part of his ministries. Jim McPhee introduced Rick McKinley our new Director of Congregational Development. Rick mentioned the race that we are in to pursue further relationships with Jesus Christ.

INCLUSIVENESS ESSAY RECIPIENT – Marla Marcum of the Reconciling Ministries Committee presented the award to Samuel Thompson, a student at MIT. Samuel donated 50% of his award money to go towards Amy DeLong. Samuel read his essay (see addendum #1).

RECONCILING MINISTRIES – Ten percent of the sale of Reconciling stoles will go to JFON. Lunenburg Church will match these sales for the funds to go to Amy DeLong’s trial defense. (loveontrial.org)

Samuel Thompson requested that his award be divided between JFON and Amy DeLong’s trial defense. The text of the essay is in the addendum.

RETIREE VIDEO – Retire video shown for Ed Deyton.

RECESS - Bishop Weaver declared a recess at 9:32 P.M.

SATURDAY MORNING, JUNE 9, 2011 – Being Broken and Whole Together

OPENING WORSHIP - Worship convened at 8:21 A.M. The conference musicians played.

CALL TO ORDER – Bishop Weaver called the session to order at 9:04 A.M.

ORGANIZATIONAL – Arlene Mackie, President of United Methodist Women, joined the Bishop at the head table. Ralph Oduor previewed the agenda for the morning.

COMMITTEE ON JOURNAL – Kristine Anderson reported for the Committee on Journal that the proceedings of the previous day had been received and found to be in order. She moved their adoption. The motion was adopted. She also moved the minutes of today’s session be adopted as printed in the Conference Journal. The motion was adopted.

MONITORING REPORTS – Lisa Fagestrom reported. She reminded us that we are a denomination that is 92% white, but that is not the racial mix in US. Highlights of Lisa’s observations:

- Whatever is in your heart - that is what will be in your mind and come out of your mouth and actions
- Ways we say thanks, listen to each other
- When we speak in code, "We need to make sure people are qualified...."
- We have some really important work to do in light of Jurisdictional Conference this year
- We are in a diverse world, what are we going to do to bring that Kingdom
- If we bring that we will have vitality
- Anyone wishing to be a part of Commission on Religion and Race, to see Lisa.

Lisa gave us the challenge. “What are you going to do?” “Are you committed to be changed?” “What is in your heart?”

PERSONAL PRIVILEGE – A request was made that the Inclusiveness Essay from Friday be printed in Journal. The Bishop agreed.

BALLOTING - Bishop Weaver reported the results of Lay Ballot #10 (Reserve Jurisdiction #1). There were elections, in this descending order: Rebecca U. Hewitt, M. Philip Susag, Evelyn (Evie) R. Doyon, Dwight W. Crain, and Marla J. Marcum.

Bishop Weaver reported the results of Clergy Ballot #13 (Jurisdictional Conference #4). Nizzi Santos Digan and Gary Shaw were elected. Mike Davis withdrew his name from Clergy ballot. In summary, those elected for the Jurisdictional Conference were, in order of election: Martin D. McLee, Leigh E. Dry, Karen L. Munson, Nizzi Santos Digan and Gary L. Shaw.

MOTION - Scott Campbell moved that the next Clergy Ballot and results of the ballot have the top five clergy with the highest totals as alternates (Reserves). The motion was seconded and adopted.

ORGANIZATIONAL –Glenn Burleigh, NME District Lay Leader joined Bishop Weaver.

TOGETHER FOR TOMORROW (TFT) –Marion Grant explained the campaign and gave her report, with visual aids of PPT slides on screen. The detailed report is online and in this Journal, “Reports” section.

AFFIRMATION OF MARION GRANT – Bishop Weaver recognized Marion’s work which is ending. He thanked Marion and thanked God for what is being done in this Conference and what TFT dollars have done for Transformation.

CAMP DIRECTORS AND CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON YOUTH MINISTRIES–Norm Thombs, Director Mechuwana, reported on their camp ministries.

Larry Peacock, Director Rolling Ridge and Conference Center (RR), reported on their ministries and the pending agreement by the town of North Andover to pay Rolling Ridge \$500, 000 for conservation restriction on the land.

Gerry Piper reported on Covenant Hills in Vermont. Hale Ritchie of Central Vermont Mission (RS-210) spoke of a new ministry, based at Covenant Hills.

Jenn Carpenter, Director Camp Aldersgate reported with the aid of a video for all the camps. Norm thanked Jim McPhee for his leadership.

CHECK CHALLENGE - Lauren Umberhind, Mission of Peace youth representative reported the results:

<u>District</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Dollar Amount</u>
NME	69	1508.39
MME	47	1175.03
NHD	52	1622.96
TRI	.05	278.00
CWM	16	564.90
CMA	14	588.36
MBH	17	483.25
RIM	14	280.00
VMT	12	585.58

The Check Challenge would end at 11 A.M. Natalie reported for the youth.

MISSION OF PEACE - Emmy reported on Mission of Peace. Lauren representing NE Council on Youth Ministry, reported on the Mission of Peace to China with aid of a video. This year’s Mission trip is to Nicaragua.

WANAKEE - Mike Moore, Director, arrived and observed the 50th Anniversary of Wanakee.

CCYM sang a familiar camp song, “Kumbaya” and the whole body joined in.

COL - Linda Reiber, the outgoing co-chair, presented the committee’s nominating report from COL’s handout material and noted there are ongoing changes.

Bishop Weaver declared us convened as the Board of Directors, for the election of officers, as Linda moved the elections for the Board of the United Methodist Foundation of New England. All nominated were elected.

Bishop declared us adjourned as the Board of Directors of the United Methodist Foundation of New England.

Bishop declared us convened as the Board of Directors, for the election of officers, as Linda moved the elections for the Board of the Methodist Home. All nominated were elected.

Bishop declared us adjourned as the Board of Directors of the Methodist Home.

Linda moved the adoption of its report as amended. The nominating slate was adopted.

MBH DISTRICT APPOINTMENTS – Martin McLee, DS.

DISCONTINUANCE OF TRINITY UMC, LYNN, MA – Martin McLee, DS, moved the adoption of the motion. The motion was approved.

NHD APPOINTMENTS –David Abbott, DS.

DEAN OF CABINET – Bishop Weaver announced that Jan and Mike Davis will be the new co-Deans of Cabinet, effective July 1, 2011.

PERSONAL PRIVILEGE – Vermont would like more discussion on RS 112 Unit Insurance Plan. There is a concern. Bishop Weaver noted this is a discussion that needs to go on. Bishop recommended for affected persons to please be in discussion with Bill Burnside.

BALLOTING - Bishop Weaver reported the results of Clergy Ballot #14 (Reserve Jurisdictional Conference #1. The following having gained the top 5 leading vote amounts, were elected in order: Sandra J. Bonnette-Kim, Tsitsi N. Moyo, Pat MacHugh, Thomas (Tom) M. Getchell-Lacey, and Thomas (Tom) W. Bentum.

Bishop Weaver had all clergy and Lay who had been elected stand and led us in prayer

ZIEGLER AWARD – RS-205 -Scott Campbell moved the adoption of the motion. It was approved.

THE "DREAM ACT" - RS-206 - We Chang moved the adoption. It was approved.

RENEWAL OF MISSION SHARE REVIEW COMMITTEE FOR ONE YEAR – RS-209 – Motion by Bill Burnside. It was adopted.

ADVANCE SPECIALS – RS-210 – Motion by Fay Flanary. It was adopted.

PETITIONS TO 2012 GENERAL CONFERENCE - Bishop Weaver explained the Petitions to the General Conference from the New England Conference in the PCB pg. 35. Bishop Weaver noted the three distinct groups as determined in discussions with the Agenda Committee as follows:

1. RS301-310-Human Sexuality
2. RS311-313-Disabilities 3. RS314-Divestment.

Following a lengthy dialogue, the motions were put for sending them to the 2012 General Conference as petitions from the New England Conference in these groups:

HUMAN SEXUALITY – RS-301 – Adopted.

HUMAN SEXUALITY – RS-302-309 – Adopted.

HUMAN SEXUALITY – RS-310 – Adopted.

DISABILITIES – RS-311-313 - Adopted

DIVESTMENT – RS-314 - Adopted

CHECK CHALLENGE FINAL RESULTS- Total amount was \$9,507.45, a record!

VMT - 100%, Brigid Farrell, DS

MME- Honorable mention, Beverly Stenmark, DS

NME- 100% (1st to reach it) Pat MacHugh, DS

NHD - Highest money raised (edging out NME), David Abbott, DS - \$2,713.91,

Our Ninja was John Blackadar of NHD. T-Shirts were awarded to David and John. The "Flamingo" went to Bishop Weaver. Thanks to all who made it possible!

ANNOUNCEMENTS - Bonnie Marden thanked everyone. "Alleluia". She noted that VMT was the most creative.

Fair Trade Scavenger Hunt winner - Melissa Yoshua

Stop Hunger Now - 50,000th meals - David Arruda

Stop Hunger Now 284,000 meals to our Nicaragua Covenant

THANKS - Bishop Weaver thanked everyone.

FRIDAY EVENING OFFERING - Ralph Oduor reported that Friday's offering totaled \$3,827.15.

MOTION TO ADJOURN - Ralph Oduor moved the adjournment of the 18th session of New England Conference, till we meet again here June 7-9, 2012. The motion was adopted.

ADJOURNMENT - Bishop Weaver declared us adjourned at 12:03 P.M.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 9, 2011 – Global Reality

WORSHIP WITH CONFIRMANDS

Worship convened at 1:00 P.M., with the theme of Being Broken and Whole Together: Healing of the All Sending Service Celebration. The conference musicians played, the conference drummers played, the conference liturgical dancers danced, and the Korean choir sang, and our guests, V. Rev. Fr. Mattias Alan Shaltan and Mr. Gabriel Aydin sang songs of praise. Isaiah 55: 1-1, John 6:1-13, and Psalm 23 were read. The worship ended with communion and a closing prayer.

ADDENDUM #1

WINNING ESSAY – INCLUSIVENESS by Samuel Thompson

This is a response to a call from the Reconciling Ministries Network for essays describing "My vision for an inclusive church." To think of the steps toward inclusion, we must first look at the exclusion within the church today.

As a gay Christian, I hate the passage of scripture that begins Chapter 8 of the Book of John – the story of the woman accused. Surprising, I know. This story should be seen a witness of the restorative, reconciling power of Jesus' love. But for me, I see the congregation going through the sermon, following up to the point where the crowd walks away. Yes! Jesus loves us. Jesus forgives us. Jesus is protecting us. Everything is right with the world. The rocks fall from once threatening now limp hands, and then:

"Go and sin no more."

Suddenly, the congregation is no longer the woman on the ground. We are now the people in the crowd, and unlike in the story, we are still judging. In this way we pick the rocks up off the floor of the sanctuary, and while still holding them, walk out into the world. As the service closes and we come before God in prayer, I have the gut-wrenching feeling that the people sitting in the pew next to me have suddenly turned on me and are preparing to drag me towards Jesus, rocks in hand.

Yet, what are rocks but a burden? And whose burdens are they but our own burdens? Our own guilt that we desperately want to shed, and to rid ourselves of them, we throw them at others, just as the woman was thrown before Jesus: as a distraction. As if to say "It's not me, it's her. Her sin, not ours, was her destruction." This is the picture of the current church which is afraid to live side by side with all of God's creation, breaking and casting off the rough edges in the hope that the remnant church is left whole by the sacrifice.

It might be someone who comes from a land far away, or who has fled many houses in search of a home.

Someone who may not share their family's plans to settle down, marry, raise a family, but who chooses to focus on the goals and aspirations they believe God has given them.

Someone who loves others in a way that is not socially acceptable and who embraces those who are themselves not socially acceptable.

Someone who is dependent on the generosity of others for life and survival.

Someone who disagrees with religious leaders, who challenges us to deeper perspectives and understandings, and who is considered heretical.

Someone who calls out authority and abuse of privilege, only to anger the powers that be.

Someone who lacks citizens' rights, and whom the government refuses to protect.

In list you may have heard me suggest, but not explicitly name, the children of God who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, non-Anglo, the independent women, immigrants, and others who have been disenfranchised, but together these would be a correct answer that misses the greater truth. With each point, I was describing Jesus. My vision for an inclusive church is a church where Jesus is still welcome. Until we have a church that can embrace Jesus as Jesus was, how can we hope to have a church that embraces all those since who seek to walk as Jesus walked? How can we hope to uplift those we know to be the oppressed when we have rejected the very one we have declared that we follow? How can we accept the body of Christ when we cannot even accept Christ.

We have allowed an obsession with blaming an individual to cloud our judgment, but clearly our concept of a broken individual is an unacceptable sacrifice. When offered, Jesus does not even give the accusatory crowd the time of day, and refuses to play in their game to gain attention and approval by distraction. God desires an inclusive church that becomes whole by mending what is broken, and joining together as the mosaic church, rather than one that declares everything outside as broken. I was taught as a child that sin is anything that separates us from God. So, what do we learn if we take that last statement that Jesus says, "Go, and sin no more," and we reexamine it in this light? It might become something like "Go, and be separate from me no more," or "Go, and know that I am with you." Who then holds the obligation of change and improvement? The church must be the inclusive church that does not become that sin which breaks and separates us from God.

A church where David is freed of condemnation to joyfully dance out of praise in the presence of God.

A church where Deborah is free to lead the children of God in accordance with her gifts.

A church that Onesimus is free to return to without fear.

A church where Phillip will baptize the Ethiopian Eunuch without asking for any change in advance.

An inclusive Church is a church that would not tell Jesus who to love and who not to love, whose home to stay in and whose home not to stay in.

An inclusive Church is a church that knows that even if God had created Adam and Steve, God would have still said, "It is good."

An inclusive Church is a church that would not crucify Jesus today as Jesus was crucified then because of challenging closed-mind tradition, rebuking closed-heart authority, and rejecting closed-door houses of worship.

Gathered friends, if you still sit comfortably, reflect on this: the United Methodist Church is still the gathered crowd, and 10 days from now a woman from our midst will be cast out to face judgment. But who is judging her? It is God, or is it man? Who among us will be the first to cast the first stone? It is no coincidence that in the story, the accused is the closest to Jesus. United Methodists, now is the time for us to come together, to embrace our sister Amy Delong, and not a time to retreat away from her, away from our duty as Christians, and away from God.

ADDENDUM #2

Equality for All in Christian Marriage – Pledge by certain Clergy of New England Annual Conference

We joyfully affirm that we will offer the grace of the Church's blessing to any prepared couple desiring Christian marriage. We are convinced by the witness of others and are compelled by Spirit and conscience to act. We thank the many United Methodists who have already called for full equality and inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people in the life of the Church.

We repent that it has taken us so long to act. We realize that our church's discriminatory policies tarnish the witness of the Church to the world, and we are complicit. We value our covenant relationships and ask everyone to hold the divided community of the United Methodist Church in prayer.

Any United Methodist person in the New England Conference who conducts Christian marriages is welcome to sign. If you wish to sign, please see Leigh Dry, Allen Ewing-Merrill, or Sara Ewing-Merrill for a copy of the statement. Your name will be added to the posted list.