



JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
CONSEIL JUDICIAIRE DE L'EGLISE METHODISTE UNIE
RECHTSHOF DER EVANGELISCH-METHODISTISCHEN KIRCHE
CONSELHO JUDICIAL DA IGREJA METODISTA UNIDA
CONSEJO DE LA JUDICATURA DE LA IGLESIA METODISTA UNIDA



Report by Bishop on Decision of Law

This form is to be used for (please check one):

- ☐ Reporting of decisions of law made by bishops in response to questions of law submitted to them in writing during the regular business of a conference session (§ 56.3 Const. and § 2609.6 *The Book of Discipline 2016*).
- ☐ Reporting of episcopal decisions on questions of law when such decisions are appealed by one-fifth of the members of the conference (§ 56.2 Const. and § 2609.7 *The Book of Discipline 2016*).

Name of Bishop: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

State/Province: _____ ZIP/Postal Code _____ Country: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____ E-mail: _____

Annual Conference: _____ Date of session: _____ (month/day/year)

Question(s) of Law: _____

Authorities Cited (indicate paragraph or decision number where applicable):

Constitution: _____ Book of Discipline: _____

Judicial Council Decision(s): _____

Signature: _____

Bishop of The United Methodist Church

Date: _____

(month/day/year)

The following must be attached:

- Decision of Law, including facts, rationale and ruling
 - Text of the written request for decision
 - Minutes of annual conference proceedings (relevant portions only)
 - List of names and addresses of interested parties
 - Other relevant materials (e.g. conference rules, resolutions, policies, reports)
- Eight (8) hard copies must be submitted via USPS or other delivery service to:
Secretary of the Judicial Council, 5556 N. Sheridan Road, #610, Chicago, IL 60640, USA
- Electronic copies in both Word and PDF (with security features disabled) must be submitted to:
secretaryjudicialcouncil@gmail.com

ORIGINAL TURNED IN REQUEST

May 21, 2018

Question of Law

In reference to a resolution presented in the addendum of the pre-conference booklet on “Segregation in New Jersey Schools”, does a bishop, committee(s) or agency(ies) or all combined of the GNJUMC have an authority to make a decision for the United Methodist Greater New Jersey to join and participate in a lawsuit filed on May 17, 2018 against the State of State Board of Education and an Acting Commissioner of the State Department of Education between the annual conference fo 2017 and 2018?

Submitted by
Gyuchang Sim
Lay Member at Large
Tenaflly UMC
201-481-5372

The United Methodist Church of Great New Jersey

Decision of Law Request May 21, 2018

Segregation in New Jersey Schools

John R. Schol, Bishop

STATEMENT OF FACTS

On May 21, 2018, during the discussion of legislation to desegregate New Jersey public schools, Mr. Gyuchang Sim, an at large lay member to the annual conference asked for a ruling of law:

In reference to a resolution presented in the addendum of the pre-conference booklet on “Segregation in New Jersey Schools”, does a bishop, committee(s) or agency(ies) or all combined of the GNJUMC have an authority to make a decision of the United Methodist Greater New Jersey to join and participate in a lawsuit filed on May 17, 2018 against the State of State Board of Education and an Acting Commissioner of the State Department of Education between the annual conference for 2017 and 2018?

On May 17, 2018, the anniversary of Brown vs. Board of Education, the Greater New Jersey board of trustees with the support of eleven other conference agencies, the connectional table, conference council on finance and administration, board of higher education and ministry, board of church and society, commission on religion and race, Black Methodists for Church Renewal,

the Hispanic/Latino Committee, the Korean Association Executive Committee, United Methodist Women Executive Committee, the committee on episcopacy, and the cabinet, filed a law suit on behalf of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference to desegregate New Jersey public schools. The suit was filed against the State of New Jersey, the State Board of Education, and the Acting Commissioner of the State Department of Education.

The State of New Jersey, the fourth most diverse state in the United States, has the sixth most segregated public school system in the nation and is more segregated than any other state public school system in the southern part of the nation. More than half of the Black and Latino public school students in New Jersey, 271,000, are segregated into schools in which as much as 100% of the students are Black and Latino.

New Jersey's segregation is in part due to a state law that requires students to attend the public schools in their municipality. Because of the way New Jersey is organized, it has 565 municipalities, more than any other state in the U.S., school boundaries segregate students into small geographic areas. A number of New Jersey's urban municipalities are populated by Blacks and Latinos because of housing and employment inequities, essentially a system of racism that impacts Blacks and Latinos.

For years, civic and religious leaders have lobbied and encouraged state legislators to change the law requiring students to attend public schools in their own municipalities. In each instance, the legislature failed to change the law or create policies that would desegregate public schools. A lawsuit was the next logical and necessary step.

The Greater New Jersey Annual Conference became more aware of the seriousness and urgency of the problem when retired New Jersey Supreme Court Justice, Gary Stein made a presentation to the 2017 Greater New Jersey Annual Conference Session about public school segregation in New Jersey. The board of church and society and the commission on religion and race continued to study the situations and Bishop John Schol worked with leaders from across the state to determine the best course of action. In late March of 2018, a decision was made by a newly formed board concerned about segregation in New Jersey to file a lawsuit on May 17, 2018, the anniversary of Brown vs. Board of Education. GNJAC was not a part of this timing decision. Bishop Schol raised the possibility of GNJAC's joining the law suit with the Connectional Table. The connectional table supported the initiative and took the idea back to their respective groups. By the time all the groups had reported in affirming the joining of the law suit, with Annual Conference beginning on May 20th, there was no way to convene a Special Annual Conference in accordance with the Discipline. It was also impossible, by Conference Rules, to have a timely mail-in-ballot. However, knowing that the Conference Trustees had the authority to file the law suit on behalf of the Conference, the Board of Trustees join the law suit, but also decided, because it was important to be amenable to the conference to have the GNJAC session vote whether to affirm the action of the Trustees and its participation, or to withdraw from the law suit. Bishop Schol specifically reminded the Conference before the Resolution was voted upon, that it could withdraw its name from the law suit. This legal option is provided for in New Jersey Court Rules 4:5-1 et seq.

The lawsuit seeks to change the law that requires students to attend schools in their municipalities and create magnet schools to draw suburban students to urban schools and urban

students to suburban schools. This strategy has effectively addressed segregation in school districts across the U.S., including places like Hartford, Connecticut.

In addition to being immoral, studies have shown that segregation has disadvantaged Black and Latino students as well as white students who do not have the benefit of socializing with students of color. Studies have further shown that Black and Latino students who attend integrated schools do better on standardized tests, have higher graduation rates and are more likely to attend college.

The board of trustees filed a law suit in the name of the annual conference with the support of 11 agencies to address the segregation of Black and Latino students within the state of New Jersey on May 17, 2018. It felt compelled to take this action because there was no other plaintiff organization in which the majority of its members and/or constituents were White and because The Book of Discipline calls all United Methodists to work collaboratively to end racism and address segregation (§¶ 5, 162, 162 A, and 164 E).

May 17 was a crucial date to file the lawsuit because it was the anniversary of Brown vs. Board of Education and the other organizations believed this symbolism was significant for filing the lawsuit. This meant that it would be prior to the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference Session. The Board of trustees having approved moving forward on May 12, 2018 on behalf of the annual conference. Additionally, the board of trustees and the supporting agencies approved bringing legislation to the annual conference to approve being a plaintiff in the lawsuit with the

understanding that if the legislation did not pass, the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference would be withdrawn as a plaintiff from the lawsuit.

It was explained to the annual conference prior to the session and during the session that the board of trustees and 11 other agencies supported being a plaintiff and that the annual conference would have the opportunity to vote on the legislation. The legislation was sent to all members of the annual conference on May 17, 2018 and directed the members to a website that had written material, a podcast and a video explaining the issue and the lawsuit. During the discussion of the legislation, it was explained that Greater New Jersey Annual Conference would be withdrawn as a plaintiff if the conference decided not to be a plaintiff.

On May 21, 2018 the annual conference approved legislation with one dissenting vote that the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference continue as a plaintiff in the lawsuit to seek to end segregation of New Jersey public schools.

JURISDICTION

The Judicial Council has jurisdiction pursuant to Par. 2609.6.

ANALYSIS

The Judicial Council ruled in decisions 584 and 590 that the annual conference cannot delegate its authority and responsibility to other agencies or groups of the church. It can also be assumed

that an agency cannot initiate action on behalf of the annual conference unless The Book of Discipline gives the agency authority in certain instances.

Paragraph 2512.1 states that the board of trustees shall be the “directors” of the annual conference corporation. In the State of New Jersey, the board of directors/trustees are the governing body of a nonprofit corporation – which GNJAC is. According to the State Statutory General Powers section, the powers include the ability to “sue and be sued, complain and defend and participate as a party or otherwise in any judicial, administrative, arbitative or other proceeding in its corporate name.”

Paragraph 2512.4 states, “The board may intervene and take all necessary legal steps to safeguard and protect the interests and rights of the annual conference anywhere and in all matters relating to property rights...” This paragraph gives the board of trustees the authority to take all necessary legal steps on behalf of the annual conference in two distinct matters, 1) “to safeguard and protect the interests and rights of the annual conference anywhere and 2) in all matters relating to property and rights to property...” It is reasonable and granted by paragraph 2512.4 for the board of trustees to pursue legally the interests of the annual conference in matters particularly when there may be time constraints, such as representing the conference when it is sued, or when a vendor has not provided services that it was paid for, or to secure an injunction to protect the safety of annual conference members or employees, etc.

Paragraph 2512.2 states that the board of trustees is amenable to the annual conference. The board of trustees was amenable to the annual conference by presenting legislation to the annual conference for its endorsement and recognizing that the annual conference name would be withdrawn if the annual conference did not approve the legislation.

Paragraph 2510 states, “the board of trustees may not financially obligate the annual conference.” The board of trustees did not obligate the annual conference financially by being a plaintiff because the legal work and court fees were provided by a law firm, pro bono, and will continue to be. The annual conference resolution requested \$1500 for the promotion of educational materials about the lawsuit with the congregations of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference but this \$1500 was not material to filing the law suit.

The annual conference, being the basic unit of The United Methodist Church has interests and commitments to:

1. End racism in the church and society at large ¶ 5
2. Work collaboratively with other organizations and individuals to end racism ¶ 5
3. Provide equal access to education ¶ 162 and particularly underrepresented racial and ethnic persons to equal and equitable opportunities...to education and training of the highest quality ¶¶ 162.A and 164.E
4. Change systems that segregates Black and Latino students who attend Greater New Jersey United Methodist Sunday schools and children in the communities of our congregations as well as White students because all are disadvantaged by attending segregated schools

5. Change the system for children of clergy who attend public schools, particularly those students who are forced to attend segregated schools because of where their clergy parent is appointed and the state law requiring students to attend public schools within their municipality.

The church is required to take action because these are interests of United Methodist in New Jersey and further these injustices require action by the church according to The Book of Discipline. ¶ 5

RULING

When a board of trustees/"directors" acts, they are not acting on behalf of the board but the organization. The board of trustees may act to safeguard and protect the interests of the annual conference, using legal remedies as necessary and must be amenable to the annual conference. In the action of the board of trustee to initiate the annual conference as a plaintiff in a lawsuit to seek an end to segregation in New Jersey public schools is a self-interest for United Methodists and the board of trustee's action in this matter is granted under The Book of Discipline ¶ 2512.4. The board of trustees is the only agency by discipline that may take this step in the interests of the annual conference but other agencies may endorse and support the action.

Therefore, the board of trustees, acting on behalf of the interests of the United Methodists of Greater New Jersey with authority under ¶ 2512.4 may take legal action and did so in collaboration with other New Jersey nonprofit organizations. Further, the lawsuit did not obligate the annual conference financially and, in order to re-affirm that the board of trustees was

amenable to the annual conference, it reported its actions and presented legislation to the annual conference for the annual conference's vote to continue and be a plaintiff in the lawsuit. The Greater New Jersey Annual Conference may continue as a plaintiff in the lawsuit to seek to end segregation in New Jersey public schools by vote of the annual conference session on May 20, 2018 affirming it as a plaintiff in the lawsuit.

Legislation Approved by the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference, May 20, 2018

Segregation in New Jersey Schools

WHEREAS, according to the US Census, the State of New Jersey is ranked as the 4th most diverse state in the U.S and yet segregation by race, ethnicity and class in New Jersey's public schools is among the worst in the United States of America¹, and

WHEREAS, the State of New Jersey has created and followed laws, policies and practices that do not allow Black and Latino students to attend schools outside of their school district except with very limited exceptions, which fosters segregation for a majority of Black and Latino students, and

WHEREAS, as a result, educational opportunity is undermined for public school students in schools that are often characterized by intense poverty and social isolation in numerous, well

documented studies, these state laws, policies and practices deny an alarming number of Black and Latino students the benefits of a thorough and efficient education and the possibility to develop to their full God-given potential, and

WHEREAS, school segregation harms all students, including White students, by creating homogeneous learning and social environments that narrow their social experiences and puts them at a greater risk of adopting prejudicial views since rejection of stereotypes and comfort in interactions across racial lines are predicated on cross racial experiences, and

WHEREAS, this type of segregation of students was ruled unconstitutional by the United States Supreme Court 64 years ago in *Brown v. Board of Ed. of Topeka*, which held that “separate educational facilities are inherently unequal” in that they “deprive the children of the minority group of equal educational opportunities.”, and

WHEREAS, the *de facto* segregation that exists in New Jersey Public Schools also violates the New Jersey Constitution, Article I, ¶ 5, which mandates that “no person shall be...segregated...in the public schools, because of...race, color, ancestry, or national origin.”, and

WHEREAS, as United Methodist we believe “...that every person has the right to education” and “... that the responsibility for education of the young rests with the family, faith communities and the government” and that “in society this function can best be fulfilled through public

policies that ensure access for all persons to free public elementary and secondary schools and to post-secondary schools of their choice”², and

WHEREAS, as United Methodists we are called to address with prayerful determination the issues of race and class that threaten public education in America³

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church strongly opposes policies and practices instituted and practiced by the State of New Jersey and its municipalities that result in the segregation of public schools, especially for Black and Latino students,

thus depriving them of the thorough and effective education to which they are entitled under New Jersey Constitution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference joins with The Latino Action Network (LAN); The Latino Coalition (LC); The NAACP New Jersey State Conference (NAACP) - an affiliate of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; and The Urban League of Essex County, as a participant in a complaint that seeks to end segregation in New Jersey Public Schools, and seeks a remedy to segregated NJ public schools by which students and their families voluntarily agree to attend magnet schools or schools outside their school district.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference calls congregations in GNJ to educate their members, constituents and community at large on the

issue of segregation in New Jersey schools and become better informed about and engage the needs of the public schools in their communities so that all NJ students have equitable access to high quality educational opportunities.

Presented by;

| | |
|--|---|
| The Board of Trustees | The Committee on Episcopacy |
| The Council on Finance and Administration | The Hispanic/Latino Committee |
| The Connectional Table | The United Methodist Women, Executive Committee |
| The Cabinet | |
| The Board of Church and Society | The Korean Caucus, Executive Committee |
| The Board of Higher Education and Ministry | The Black Methodist for Church Renewal, Executive Committee |
| The Commission on Race and Religion | |

Budget Impact: \$1,500

Submitted by: John R. Schol, Bishop

1 According to a November 2017 report, New Jersey has the 6th highest rate of segregation of black students among

the States, and the 7th highest with respect to Latinos. Gary Orfield, et al., New Jersey's

Segregated Schools: Trends and Paths Forward, UCLA Civil Rights Project (November 2017).

2 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church ¶164.E

3 2016 Book of Resolutions, #3165, "United States Public Education and the Church"

APPENDIX I – Test of Decision of Law submitted by Mr. Gyuchang Sim on May 21, 2018

May 21, 2018

Question of Law

In reference to a resolution presented in the addendum of the pre-conference booklet on “Segregation in New Jersey Schools”, does a bishop, committee(s) or agency(ies) or all combined of the GNJUMC have an authority to make a decision of the United Methodist Greater New Jersey to join and participate in a lawsuit filed on may 17, 2018 against the State of State Board of Education and an Acting Commissioner of the State Department of Education between the annual conference fo 2017 and 2018?

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Tenaflly UMC
201-481-5372

APPENDIX II – Minutes of from the GNJ Annual Conference

Monday, May 21, 2018 – 8:30 AM

GATHERING

The conference praise team gather the worshippers with songs of praise.

BAR OF THE CONFERENCE

Conference Secretary, Rev. Dr. David Wiley made a motion to set the bar of the Conference. The motion passed.

Rev. Wiley made a motion to allow John Cardillo, Conference Treasurer and Carolyn Conover, Director of Communications, to speak throughout the conference. The motion passed.

Announcements

Rev. Wiley made the necessary announcements.

OPENING PRAYER

Chad Callahan from St. Peter's UMC in Ocean City, led the conference in an opening prayer.

Bishop Schol welcomed and introduced Rosa Williams, Conference Lay Leader.

EPISCOPAL ADDRESS

Bishop Schol opened his episcopal address by reading Psalm 77:14 "You are the God who performs miracles, everywhere." He spoke about the miracles that have occurred in the Conference, telling how the UMC in Union was about to close its doors in six months but they were able to develop a thriving multi-cultural congregation. He spoke about how Camp YDP was growing in attendance and GNJ has developed a new camping, youth ministry and campus ministries called Next Generation.

Bishop Schol told the story of Rev. Heather Valosin, who needed surgery that had a significant chance that she would not survive and if she did not have the surgery she would die within 48 hours. Rev. Valosin had the surgery and not only did she survive but she had another child and a year ago she was ordained.

Bishop Schol gave thanks for and celebrated the Holy Spirit, who breathes power, wonder working power sending GNJ leaders and disciples into the community to stir up faith, hope and justice.

Bishop Schol celebrated the generous giving in our conference. He celebrated that for the eleventh year in a row, GNJC paid 100% of General Church apportionments. He went on to list

some of the results of that giving: the seeds of miracles in new congregations; making new disciples in Tanzania; the Ukraine, the Philippines and in GNJ and a scholarship for students at Africa University enabling leader training. Bishop Schol praised Bishop Mande Muyombo for being the first graduate of Africa University. He went on to state that GNJ has raised \$17.7 million for Superstorm Sandy relief. Part of this came from foundations, individuals, corporations and Major League Baseball. Bishop spoke about the \$426,000 raised for hurricane relief – half of which will go to Puerto Rico. He told the body that we are developing a relationship with Bishop Hector Ortiz in Puerto Rico and are learning from each other's experiences to help in other disaster relief efforts. Bishop Schol celebrated that in the last five years, GNJ's giving rate has gone from 78% to 88% and thanked everyone for their generosity.

Bishop Schol announced that worship attendance in 2017 had increased due mostly to better connections by congregations with their communities.

Bishop reported that through GNJ's A Future With Hope ministry, 271 homes will be restored by the end of June that had been damaged by Hurricane Sandy. He went on to celebrate that our AFWH organization is working wonders extending our mission so that we are relevant, transformational and impactful. Bishop encouraged clergy to be willing to take risks and be willing to learn from each other.

Bishop Schol talked about the path forward for GNJ, stating that there are five items for leadership to support and pursue. First is to approve the new strategic plan. The second path forward is to continue to grow our intercultural competence. The third path forward is to develop the next generation of disciples. Our fourth path is to approve the 2019 budget that reduces the percentage we apportion churches so that more resources are available to the local church. The fifth path is to approve the Miracles Everywhere Campaign that will raise \$5.2 million to build Hope Centers, make new disciples, fund new congregations and clergy in Tanzania and assist with hurricane recovery.

Bishop Schol went on to speak of the challenges our denomination currently faces, issues such as gender equality and segregated congregations. He stated that GNJ is proud to be diverse in culture, ethnicity and language. Because of this, GNJ has been called to be a leader for our denomination to demonstrate how the church can serve together in the midst of our differences. He spoke about the issue of how there are differences over how we read, understand and interpret scripture. He gave a brief history of the evolution of scripture explaining that difference in understanding has always been a part of the church.

Bishop spoke about the Commission on the Way Forward and the three models they are offering to the Council of Bishops to find a way forward for our denomination. He mentioned the traditional plan, the connectional conference plan and the one church plan, which is the plan recommended by the Council of Bishops. He trusted that, no matter what happens at the 2019 Special Session of General Conference, GNJ will have the character and commitment to rise above the differences, to respect each other and to honor each other's understandings and to work together.

Bishop went on to raise up some of the challenges the church is facing currently within our culture. He spoke on how the world longs for a moral voice, a compass to navigate the problems our society. He listed a list of hashtags now found on Twitter. He encouraged pastors to give prophetic voice to the challenges in preaching and teaching, to be a courageous church to be the body of Christ for the world. He discussed how NJ schools are more segregated than any state public school system in the south even though NJ is the 4th most diverse state in the nation because of how the setup of 565 municipalities is causing much of the segregation. He spoke about how GNJ will have the opportunity to vote to affirm GNJ's participation in a lawsuit that can change the future for all students of all backgrounds. He reminded the body that there is no convenient time to work for justice. This is God's time – calling us to be the church of Jesus Christ, not just when it is convenient for us. This is God's time to act. He stated GNJ should be leading the way to end gender and segregation inequalities. He called for GNJ to lead on!

Bishop Schol expressed thanks to GNJ from he and Beverly for having the opportunity to serve here.

LEGISLATION

Segregation of New Jersey Schools

Bishop Schol introduced retired NJ Supreme Court Justice Gary Stein in the audience.

Rev. Clifford Still, chairperson of the Conference Board of Trustees, introduced the Segregation in New Jersey Schools resolution. The following persons spoke to the legislation: Rev. Myrna Bethke, District Superintendent of Gateway South, Rev. Kyu Tae Pak, Chair of the Korean Caucus, Rev. Waleska Trinidad, Chair of the Hispanic/Latino Committee and Kathy Schultz, President of GNJ UMW.

Rev. Still made a motion for the approval of the resolution.

Question of Law

A Question of Law was submitted by Gyuchang Sim:

In reference to a resolution presented in the addendum of the pre-conference booklet on 'Segregation in New Jersey Schools', does a bishop, committee(s) or agency(ies) or all combined GNJAC have an authority to make a decision for the United Methodist Greater New Jersey to join and participate in a lawsuit filed on May 17, 2018 against the State Board of Education and an Acting Commissioner of the State Department of Education between the annual conference for 2017 and 2018?

Bishop Schol took this under advisement. Bishop Schol also explained that while the Board of Trustees filed the complaint with the support of 11 other agencies all unanimously agreed to participate in the lawsuit, it also had to be approved by the Annual Conference, “with the belief that GNJ could and would support this, but also the understanding that if you did not, our name would be withdrawn from the law suit. And so based on that it was decided to move forward. ... we wanted approval by this body.” If the conference chose not to approve signing on to the lawsuit, then the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference name would be withdrawn from the lawsuit.

AMENDMENT

Creed Pogue moved for approval of an amendment which would state, after the last resolved, “Be it further resolved that the GNJAC authorizes the expenditure of \$1500 from the emerging needs line item as well as a further \$1500 from the emerging needs line item upon a vote of the Connectional Table. Be it further resolved that any further expenditures would only occur after a vote of the Connectional Table and a mail vote of the clergy and laity members of the annual conference that receives a majority of affirmative votes and receive a minimum of 430 affirmative votes. Be it further resolved that any future litigation against either state governments or federal government would require an affirmative vote of the Connectional Table and a mail vote of the clergy and laity members of the annual conference that receive a majority of affirmative votes with a minimum of 430 affirmative votes.

Bishop Schol ruled that the second and third ‘Be it further resolved’ were out of order with our rules.

PARLIMENTARY INQUIRY

Pogue asked for a parliamentary inquiry about the procedures for a mail vote. Bishop explained that mail ballot can only be done in the case of an emergency and has to be approved by the Council of Finance and Administration. He also explained that a mail vote was looked at and was not possible by our rules and that the conference leadership look at a special called session but because of the nature of the lawsuit and the requirements of the Book of Discipline a special session of the Annual Conference could not be called.

The motion was made for the approval of the first part of the amendment. The motion passed.

A motion for the approval of the amended resolution was made. The motion passed with only one dissenting vote.

Bishop Schol thanked Justice Gary Stein who spoke to his personal commitments in the legislation and thanked the conference for its support.

2019-2023 Strategic Plan

Judy Colorado and Rev. Sang Won Doh made a motion for the approval of the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan resolution.

Discussion ensued.

AMENDMENT

Creed Pogue made a motion for an amendment to be added after line 29 on page 21 of the pre-conference booklet: Lay Servant Ministries - Certified Lay Servants, Lay Speakers and Lay Ministers, expand the ministry of the laity for training for pulpit supply as well as caring, leading, and communicating across the connection for transformational growth. The motion passed.

A motion for the approval of the entire legislation was made. The motion passed. There were no dissenting votes.

Trustee Enabling Resolutions

Rev. Clifford Still made a motion for the approval of the Trustee Enabling Resolution. The motion passed.

Nominations Report

Rosa Williams made one change to the Nomination Report, the removal of Chuck Mitchel, and then made a motion for its approval. The motion passed.

Making, Shaping and Engaging Passionate Disciples of Jesus Christ

Bishop Schol introduced, Rev. Junius Dotson, General Secretary of Discipleship Ministries. Rev. Dotson went on to speak of the resources Discipleship Ministries offers.

Rev. Dotson offered a prayer, then made an analogy between Major League Baseball rules and work in the local church. He explained that in Major League Baseball, if you miss first base, it doesn't matter what else you do, nothing after that will count. Dotson stated that making disciples of Jesus Christ is the equivalent to first base in the church. For the local church, there are two dimensions of intentional discipleship: First, personal – to make disciples you must be a disciple. He reminded the body that no one ever graduates from discipleship class because it is an ongoing process. He defined a disciple as someone who knows, grows and shares Jesus and then stated that discipleship begins with one's self. He reminded the body that you cannot teach what you do not know, you cannot model what you do not practice and you cannot lead where you are not willing to go. Your commitment to grow as a discipleship defines how you will lead others. Rev. Dotson then challenged the body to think of this corporately. He stated that we are to do everything we can to provide opportunities to equip and empower people.

Rev. Dotson used the example about how we must show intentional discipleship by reminding the body if you want to build a boat, you don't just round up workers, but you also teach them to yearn for the vast and endless sea. How this applies to the church is that we must be involved in our communities. We need to have a yearning for the people in our communities. He also warned that this takes relationships which is work and often messy.

VIDEO

Rev. Dotson presented a video titled, 'See the People' that explained how discipleship starts with relationship and how they should be authentic, organic and consistent. It reminded the body that rebirth can happen at any time during the church's life cycle.

He emphasized important consistent relationships with people in our communities are one of the most important ingredients for effective discipleship.

Rev. Dotson presented the One Matters Discipleship Award which is awarded to a church that increased from zero baptisms and/or professions of faith to positive numbers and this award includes a \$1,000 award. First UMC of Dover was honored for building relationships and discipling young men in the Holy Hoops program. This program has resulted in 28 new professions of faith in 2017.

Rev. Dotson invited every member of conference to fill out an 'A Miracles Everywhere Card' which were distributed to all attendees. This was to enter into a time of commitment. While the cards were collected, 'I Have Decided to Follow Jesus' was sung.

Bishop Schol thanked Rev. Dotson for all he does at Discipleship Ministries.

Emotional Support Ministry

Bishop Schol introduced Gus and Ty, two crisis response dogs, to the conference. He explained they are part of a program at Centenary UMC. They provide emotional support for people during crisis events around the country. The dogs attend worship each week and sit on the laps of the children as well during children's time. The Bishop presented them with a gift of bones.

A Future With Hope Celebration

Bishop Schol celebrated the successes of A Future With Hope and cited many miraculous statistics. He celebrated what has been done in the five years since Hurricane Sandy; 50,000 meals have been prepared by UM churches. 5,000 people were sheltered by United Methodists in the aftermath, 11,000 cleaning buckets were distributed, 3,000 health kits were supplied, and 2,000 homes were mucked out. We had 12,173 volunteers assist in the relief and recovery from 46 states and 2 countries, totaling 303,198 volunteer hours. The estimated cost of that work was \$8,095,413.30. We also received \$998,604 from donations from volunteers. He went on to tell the body that we had support from ecumenical partners as well. The Lutherans, the Salvation Army, the Episcopal Diocese, Christian Public Service and World Renew and we worked with all nine county's long-term recovery groups. UMCOR generously donated \$3,088,224. In total, we raised \$17,552,869. We worked with 271 homeowners to get them back in their homes.

VIDEO

A video was shown of some of the people helped by A Future With Hope. Each expressed how much it meant to have A Future With Hope there for them.

Bruce Hartman, President of Board of AFWH talked about where we're going next. We will be focusing on three places. First is Communities of Hope training, helping churches to identify what their communities need. The second focus will be to open eight to ten Hope Centers. The third focus will be repurposing of under or unused church properties for sustainable community projects. He ended by thanking GNJ for our commitment to this ministry.

Bishop Schol thanked Hartman for all he has done and what he has accomplished in his life. He went on to talk about Hartman's new book 'Jesus and Company' explaining that all donations for 250 books will go to the Miracles Everywhere Campaign.

UM Stewardship Foundation:

Bishop Schol introduced Visanth Victor, chair of the United Methodist Stewardship Foundation. Victor explained how the Stewardship Foundation helps us be better stewards of our financial gifts. WesPath is the company chosen to lead our efforts and it invests in a socially responsible way. UMSF also focuses on: Resourcing churches to have successful stewardship campaigns with socially responsible investments and sound financial management, education for planned giving and managing resources, grants and donor advised funds.

Centenary Fund

Bishop Schol introduced Rev. Doug Miller who spoke about the Centenary Fund. Rev. Miller explained that the fund was started in 1857 as part of the centennial celebration of the Methodist Church to aid retired pastors. The Centenary Fund gives \$600,000 each year to the budget of GNJ for maintenance of supplemental health care and the remaining funds are used to assist retired pastors in time of need. Rev. Miller gave his appreciation for all the gifts given to the Centenary Fund.

United Methodist Communities

Bishop Schol introduced Rev. John Callanan to speak about United Methodist Communities. Rev. Callanan explained that the UMC have been a vital missions partner since 1907. It is a faith based, not for profit ministry and is a statewide leader in services for older adults.

VIDEO

Rev. Callanan shared a video about the UM Communities Pilgrimage, a two day pilgrimage to historic UM Churches in NJ, PA, and MD.

Next Generation

Bishop Schol introduced Rev. Brandon Cho to speak about Next Generation Ministries. Rev. Cho spoke about how the Spirit is blowing new wind into the youth ministry with GNJ. He talked about IGNITE, new camping and campus ministries, confirmation day with the Bishop, an online student leader gathering using ZOOM and a think tank summit. He also celebrated two new campus ministries pastoral appointments, one at Drew and the other at Rutgers. Rev. Cho informed the body that the GNJ Next Gen website has been designed and launched, and encouraged the body to check it out. The site already has 1,430 names in the database, they are aiming to have 8,000 names. Rev. Cho went on to celebrate ministries of diversity, teaching

youth that differences are gifts. He also talked about new ministries at Pinelands and relaunched youth ministries at Aldersgate. Rev. Cho encouraged all to invest in Next Gen Ministries.

Service of Passage: Honor Retirees:

Bishop Schol began the Service of Passage by asking the body to sing one verse of “O, How I Love Jesus.” Rev. Dr. Regina Hendrickson led the body in the call to celebration and introduced the retirees. She ended by celebrating the 550 years of servant ministry represented by the retirees.

Bishop Schol gave thanks for all the years of leadership the retirees have given to the church. The District Superintendents then anointed the retirees.

Passing of the Mantle

Rev. Michelle Ryoo came forward and introduced the new ordinands. They stood before the retirees.

Bishop Schol then led the ritual of passing the mantle from the retirees to the new ordinands. The retirees anointed the ordinands.

Rev. Eunice Vega-Perez came forward and read the list of the newly commissioned class. The newly commissioned stood before the new ordinands. The mantle was passed from the ordinands to the commissioned candidates. The commissioned candidates were anointed by the ordinands.

Rev. Douglas Goldberg read the list of newly appointed local pastors. They stood before the newly commissioned candidates. The mantle was passed from the commissioned to the local pastors. The newly commissioned class anointed the new local pastors.

Bishop Schol asked Rosa Williams forward. The local pastors passed the mantle to Rosa Williams.

The service ended with singing “Here I Am, Lord”.

Announcements

Rev. Wiley made the necessary announcements.

Blessing

Alexis Jones from Kearney and Roselle UMC’s gave the blessings.

Appendix III

The United Methodist Church of Great New Jersey
Decision of Law Request May 21, 2018
Segregation - NJ Schools
John R. Schol, Bishop

Interested Parties

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