



ALL
ABOUT
LOVE

**239th Session of the
Baltimore-Washington Conference
of The United Methodist Church • 2023**

We gather in love for the glory of God: Welcome!

Welcome to the 239th Session of the Baltimore-Washington Conference as clergy and lay members from 603 churches in Maryland, Washington, D.C. and the panhandle of West Virginia gather in-person for the first time since 2019. This time of worship, fellowship, learning, service and holy conferencing promises to be a meaningful one.

While together in Baltimore, the birthplace of Methodism in the United States, members will celebrate the reclaiming, reviving and renewing of our churches as we grow together in vitality and discipleship. This year's session will be a unique one as members gather for a time of holy conferencing in circles of love, joining together in mission both inside the hotel and throughout the city of Baltimore on Friday morning, and devote Saturday morning to a focus on the young people of the Baltimore-Washington Conference. Members will also vote on the disaffiliation of several United Methodist churches who have expressed the desire to leave the denomination.



BISHOP LATRELLE EASTERLING

PRESIDING BISHOP OF THE BALTIMORE-WASHINGTON & PENINSULA-DELAWARE CONFERENCES

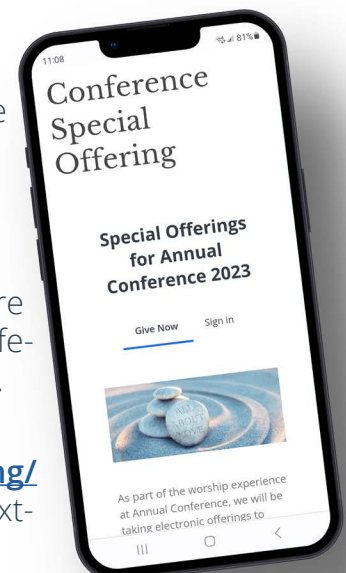
And throughout it all, we'll immerse ourselves in the proclamation that "It's All About Love." Throughout the first two days of the conference, members will be seated at round tables. We hope you'll take the opportunity to share some time and conversation with someone who is new to you. We also hope you'll use this session as a time of renewal and an opportunity to restore hope as – connected and together – we put love into action, inspiring and equipping local faith communities to develop disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, certain in our vision that "transformed lives transform lives."

OFFERINGS

The offering at Opening Worship will go to Seeds of Security, a ministry of Bishop LaTrelle Easterling and the Baltimore-Washington Conference that offers healing and a safe haven for survivors of domestic violence/intimate partner violence. Learn more at bwcumc.org/ministries/wellness-missions/seeds-of-security

The offering at the Service of Ordination and Commissioning will go to the Peter D. Weaver Congo Partnership (congo-mission.org/about-us) and rebuilding the computer center at the Higher Pedagogical Institute of Wembo-Nyama in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which was recently destroyed by arson (pen-del.org/newsdetail/17396018). The Congo Partnership is a vital ministry of the people of the Peninsula-Delaware Conference and the Central Congo Episcopal Area. It is named after the life-giving witness and work of our ordination preacher, Bishop Peter Weaver.

To give on our conference special offering page visit bwcumc.org/offering/ or text **AC2023** to **410-220-2402**. Alternatively, you can give directly via text-to-give by texting **SOS** or **CONGO** to **410-220-2402**.



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*Please note: the content of this booklet will be updated in the printed version you will receive at the Annual Conference Session.

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CONSENT CALENDAR

In parliamentary procedure, a consent calendar groups routine discussion points into a single agenda item. Within the BWC, the annual reports from committees and agencies that do not include recommendations are put on the consent calendar and voted upon as one item.

The reports on the consent calendar can be found at bwcumc.org/events/2023-annual-conference/2023-discipleship-ministry-reports.

Individual reports may be removed from the consent calendar by sending 10 requests (from different people at unique email addresses) to the Conference Secretary, Kevin Silberzahn, at bwcsecretary@bwcumc.org before 5 p.m. on Thursday, June 1. The consent calendar will be voted on during the plenary session Friday evening.

CURIOUS ABOUT WHAT'S 'IN ORDER'?

The [rules of the session](https://bwcumc.org/events/2023-annual-conference) are online, in the sidebar of the 2023 Annual Conference page at bwcumc.org/events/2023-annual-conference.

NEW TO ANNUAL CONFERENCE?

See all the information you need to know, including, what is an Annual Conference, who are the members, what is the business of Annual Conference, who can vote, and more in our [Annual Conference Primer](#).

AC 2023 AGENDA

*Annual Conference Agenda is subject to change.

Wednesday, May 31	
8 a.m.	Ordination and Commissioning Rehearsal
9 a.m.	Annual Conference Registration Opens
10 a.m.	Workshops
10:30 a.m.	Celebration of Retirees (by invitation only)
	No General Lunch
1:30 p.m.	Clergy Session
2 p.m.	Laity Session with Rev. Jack Shitama speaking
5 p.m.	General Dinner
7 p.m.	Session begins - Opening Worship with Bishop LaTrelle Easterling preaching
Thursday, June 1	
6 a.m.	Wellness Screening
6:45 a.m.	General Breakfast
8:15 a.m.	Gathering Music
8:30 a.m.	Bible Study with Bishop Peter Weaver
9:30 a.m.	Conference Session - Circles of Love and Call to Order
12 noon	General Lunch
2 p.m.	Plenary with Organizational Motion, Rules Committee and Resolutions
5 p.m.	General Dinner
7 p.m.	Service of Remembrance with Rev. Linda Motter preaching
8:30 p.m.	Plenary Session
Friday, June 2	
6 a.m.	Wellness Screening
6:45 a.m.	General Breakfast
8:15 a.m.	Gathering Music
8:30 a.m.	Bible Study with Bishop Peter Weaver
9:30 a.m.	Love in Action Mission Project
12 noon	General Lunch
1:45 p.m.	Plenary Session: Laity Address, BOOM, Stewardship and Ministries Reports, and Awards
5 p.m.	General Dinner
7 p.m.	Plenary Session - Approval of the Consent Calendar (Order of the Day) Discipleship Council and Nominations Committee Reports
8 p.m.	A Festive Evening of Fellowship and Fun led by Young Peoples Ministries
Saturday, June 3	
7:15 a.m.	General Breakfast
9 a.m.	Plenary Session with Confirmation Celebration and Focus on Young People
11:45 a.m.	Motion to receive ALL Annual Conference Reports (Order of the Day)
12 noon	General Lunch
2 p.m.	Ordination and Commissioning Service with Bishop Peter Weaver preaching

METHODIST HISTORY, JUST AROUND THE CORNER

Just a stone's throw from where the Annual Conference is meeting is the oldest church in continuous use in Baltimore – Old Otterbein United Methodist Church.

The sanctuary, erected in 1785-86, was built for about \$6,000 from ballast bricks discarded by ships in the nearby harbor. All the nails used in construction were hand-made. The church bells, cast in London, were installed in 1789 and have been sounded for nearly every important event in American history since the end of the Revolutionary War.

Today the church is a herald of justice and discipleship, whose witness bears legacy to its identity from 1800 when it became the Mother Church of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ under the leadership of Bishop Philip William Otterbein.

Through mergers in 1946 with the Evangelical Association and 1968 with the Methodists, the church became "United Methodist."

Philip William Otterbein (1726-1813) came from Germany in 1751 as a missionary to German colonists in Pennsylvania. The Baltimore pastorate, which he assumed in 1774, was his fifth, and he stayed for the rest of his life, a 39-year pastorate. Otterbein and Martin Boehm helped found the United Brethren in Christ in 1800, and Otterbein's church in Baltimore became the cradle of the new denomination.

Otterbein had a close relationship with Francis Asbury; in 1784 he assisted in Asbury's ordination at the Christmas Conference which founded the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Asbury preached at Otterbein's church many times, and on March 24, 1814, some months after Otterbein's death, Asbury wrote the following in his journal: "Forty years have I known the retiring modesty of this man of God; towering majestic above his fellows in learning, wisdom, and grace, yet seeking to be known only of God and the people of God."

Otterbein is buried in the churchyard and a monument was placed over his grave in 1913.

Today, the church is pastored by the Rev. Bonnie McCubbin, who also serves as the BWC's Director of Museums and Pilgrimage.

See videos about several of the historic sites in the Baltimore-Washington Conference at bwcumc.org/about/history-archives/pilgrimage-week/



SPEAKER BIOS

Bishop LaTrelle Easterling

Bishop LaTrelle Miller Easterling is the episcopal leader of the Baltimore-Washington and Peninsula-Delaware Conferences. She will preside over this Annual Conference session and will preach at the opening worship service on Wednesday, May 31.

Bishop Easterling was assigned to serve the BWC in September 2016, becoming the first woman to lead this historic conference. She became bishop of Pen-Del in September 2021, when the two conferences were affiliated. Her focus for the Affiliation is to ensure that 100 percent of the churches become 100 percent vital. She is committed to homiletical excellence, servant leadership and transformative justice.

Prior to being elected, Bishop Easterling served as superintendent of The Boston Metro District, the most diverse and inclusive district within the New England Annual Conference. She was also selected to serve as Dean of the Cabinet.

She has a bachelor's degree in Telecommunications and Political Science from Indiana University and a Doctor of Jurisprudence from Indiana University School of Law. She graduated summa cum laude in 2004 with a Master of Divinity from Boston University School of Theology. Prior to entering full-time ministry, Bishop Easterling served as an associate attorney in a leading law firm, a prosecuting attorney for a municipality and a human resources executive.

She is married to the Rev. Marion Easterling Jr., pastor of Locust UMC in Columbia. They have two sons, Garrett and Miles.



Jack Shitama

The Rev. Jack Shitama is an author, teacher, speaker and coach. His family-systems approach to leadership helps congregational and nonprofit leaders achieve their best spiritually, physically and professionally. He is an avid learner with a passion for taking the most recent secular learnings and applying them to spiritual leadership. This passion for learning makes him one of the denomination's best teachers.

Shitama is the director of the Center for Vital Leadership, a resource of the Baltimore-Washington and Peninsula-Delaware Conferences. He served for many years as the Director at Pecometh Camp & Retreat Ministries in Centreville, Maryland.

He is the author of several books. You can see a video series on leadership, Level Up, which he created, at <https://www.pdcbwc.org/level-up.html> and read his Non-Anxious Leader blog at <https://thenonanxiousleader.com/blog/>.

Jack and his wife, Jodi, have four adult children and five grandchildren. Jack is an avid runner and has completed the Baltimore Marathon three times. He enjoys all kinds of sports, cooking, reading, traveling and, most of all, seeing people experience spiritual growth.



GUEST PREACHERS

Bishop Peter Weaver

Bishop Peter D. Weaver, a retired bishop of The United Methodist Church, will preach at the Ordination Service and lead the Bible study during this Annual Conference session.

Weaver served as a bishop from 1996-2004 in the Philadelphia Area (Eastern Pennsylvania and Peninsula-Delaware Conferences) and from 2004-2012 in the New England Conference. In 2004, he became the president of the Council of Bishops and served a two-year term.

Weaver was born into a parsonage family in Greenville, PA. He entered the ordained ministry in 1967 in the Western Pennsylvania Conference and received degrees from West Virginia Wesleyan (B.A.), Drew University (M.Div.), and Boston University (Th.D.) and honorary degrees from Albright and Lebanon Valley Colleges. He has been an active member on the boards of five colleges and universities, served on the General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns and the General Board of Global Ministries, and has worked with Jim Wallis and others to “Make Poverty History.”

He enjoys woodworking, music and water sports. He is a noted dreamer with the heart of a prophet. In a sermon several years ago to graduates at Boston University, Weaver said, “To dream with eyes open, means that dreams without deeds are simply daydreaming—and deeds unrooted in dreams can simply be a way of sleepwalking through life.”

The title of the ordination service will be “Becoming the Gospel,” based on 1 Thessalonians 1:1-8.



Linda Watkins Motter

The Rev. Linda Motter, pastor of Calvary UMC in Annapolis, will preach at the Service of the Saints.

Dating back to her great-grandfather, Motter says she feels thankful and blessed to be one of five Methodist pastors (one in each generation) in her paternal Watkins family tree.

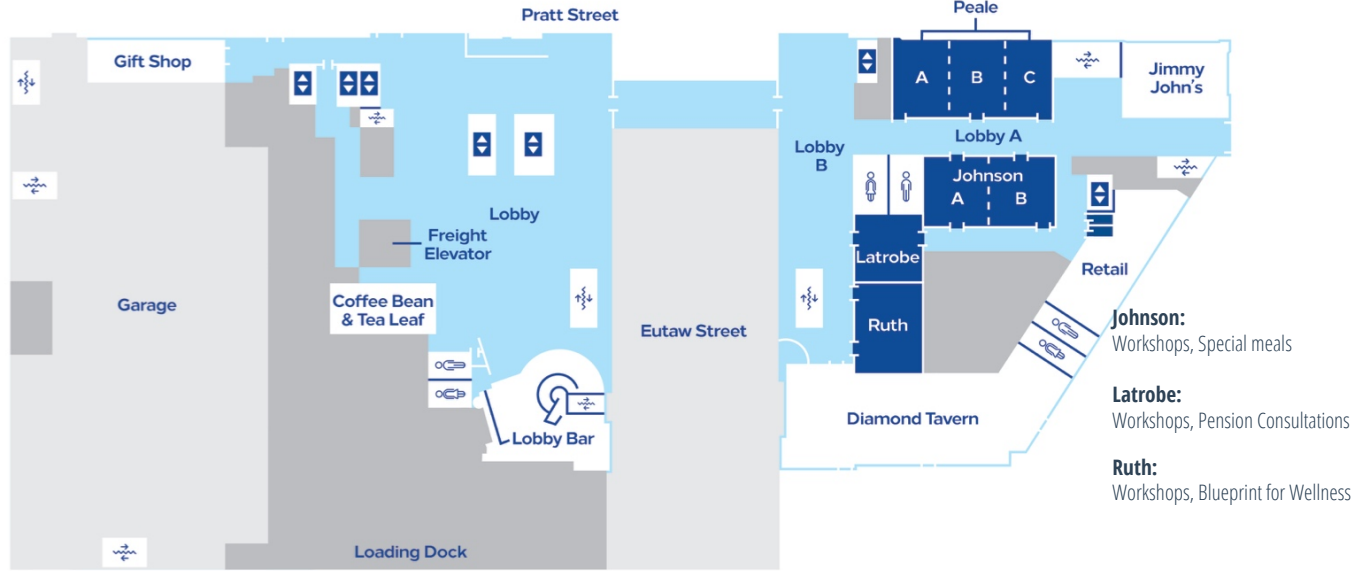
Prior to answering God’s call to the ministry and graduating from Wesley Theological Seminary, she worked as a dental hygienist for 32 years. She has served on staff at Damascus UMC as the Minister of Evangelism and Spiritual Formation and was also appointed there in 2011 as the associate pastor. In 2014, she was appointed to Olivet UMC in Lusby, where she served through June 2021, before moving to Calvary UMC.

Outside of ministry, she says, she “loves to read, laugh, enjoy music, dance and spend time with her dear family – her supportive husband, their three adult sons, two daughters-in-law and one adorable grandson.”

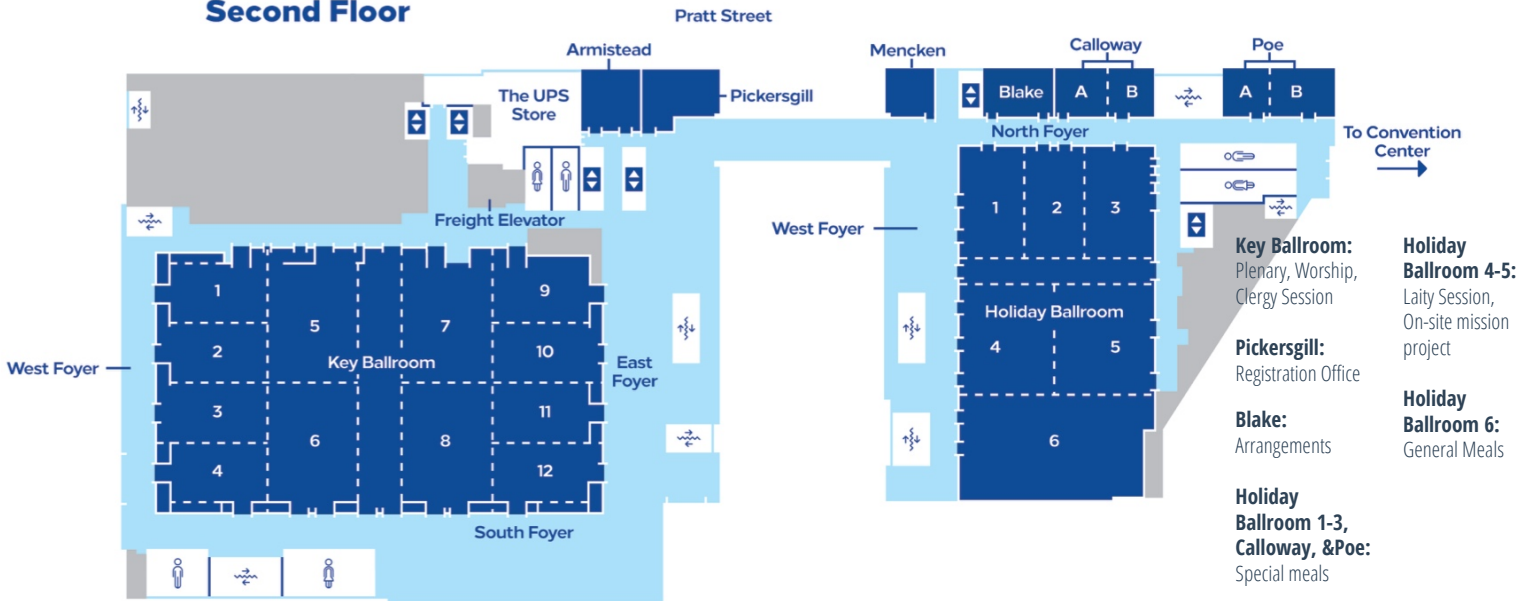


HOTEL MAP

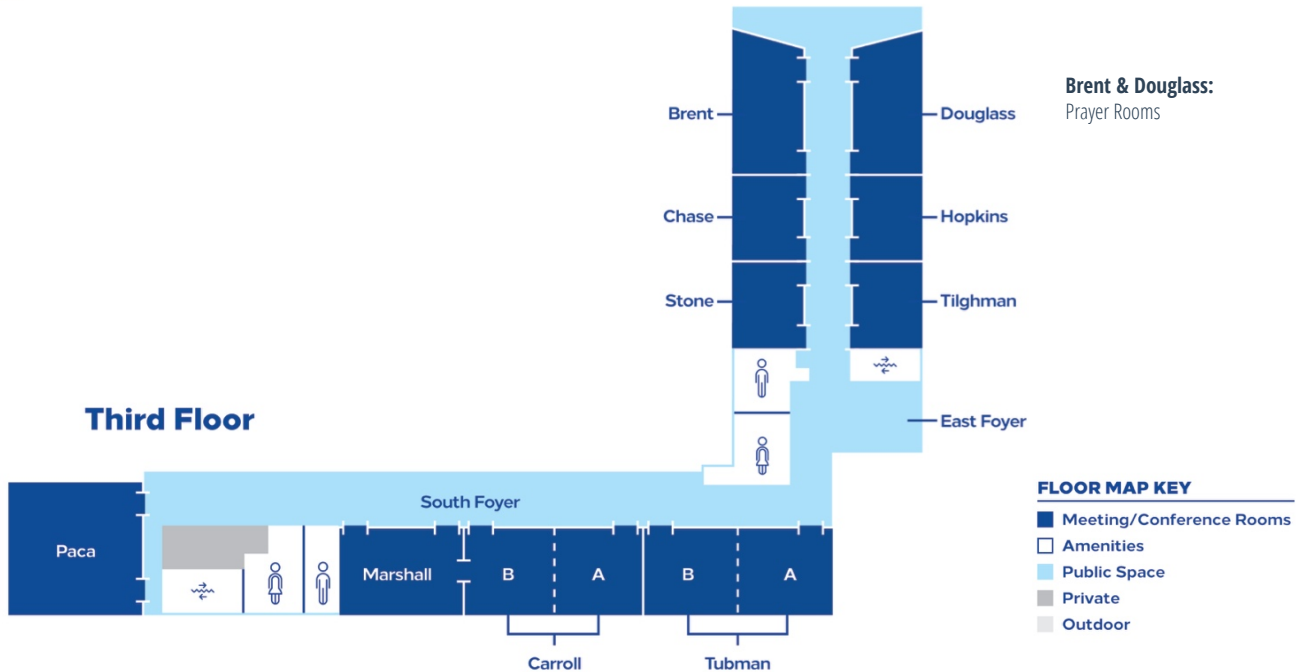
First Floor



Second Floor



Third Floor



- FLOOR MAP KEY**
- Meeting/Conference Rooms
 - Amenities
 - Public Space
 - Private
 - Outdoor



Secure Online Voting Webpage

demo.gntvmedia.com

What Do You Need to Vote?

1. Six digit **"Voter ID"** as provided in advance.
2. **A web browser** on your computer or a second device (phone, tablet, etc.).

Practice Voting is Now Available!

1. Visit [**demo.gntvmedia.com**](https://demo.gntvmedia.com)
2. At demo.gntvmedia.com, enter the practice Voter ID: **"123456"**
3. Click the **"Submit"** button
4. The practice ballot will show on your screen
5. Make your voting selection(s)
6. Click the blue **"Submit Vote"** button
7. You will receive confirmation that your vote has been received.

That's it! Go ahead and practice again!
You can click the green **"Load Ballot"** to load the ballot again

Fields marked with an * are required

Voter ID *

Submit

Load Ballot Get Recognized

Approve the Administrative Review Committee

Yes
 No

Submit Vote

Help Me

Need Help?

Help Me

Visit our online resources at
gntv.info/zoom/
or call our Tech Support Hotline at **(478) 245-4042**

LOVE IN ACTION MISSION PROJECT

"The Holy Spirit calls all Christians to engage in God's mission of bestowing grace, love, forgiveness, and reconciliation in the world through Jesus Christ. We affirm that believers of all ages, races, genders, and nationalities of all times and places are united in bearing witness to God's presence in all creation. Holy Scripture proclaims this truth and gives the church its mission mandate (Matthew 28:19, Acts 1:8). Mission sustains the church in its work of preaching, teaching, serving, transforming, and healing." – Our Theology of Mission, United Methodist Global Ministries



LOVE in ACTION



On the morning of June 2, Annual Conference members are invited to embody the truth that "It's All About Love," by putting their love into action.

Attendees will don their Love in Action t-shirts and

embark on service projects that focus on meeting the expressed needs of under-resourced schools and their students in partnership with Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPS) and Heart of America (HOA)* and other sites in partnership with BWC's Volunteers in Mission (VIM) team.

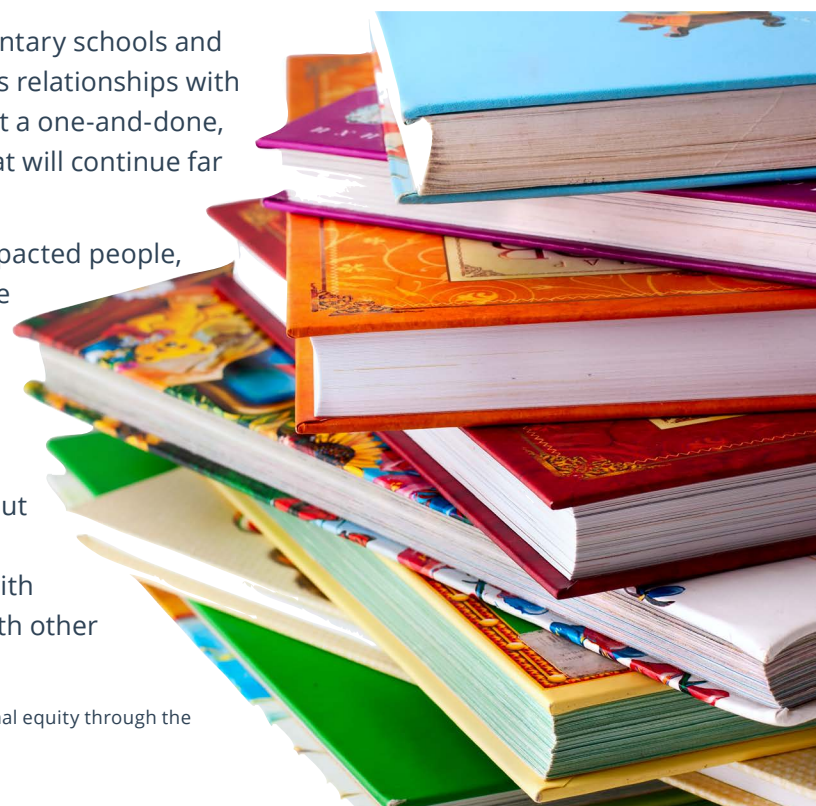
Some members will stay on site to pack resource bags for 2,000 pre-K to second-grade students in eight elementary schools identified by BCPS. These bags will include school supplies purchased on Amazon by United Methodists, books made possible through a grant that HOA received, and notes of encouragement and bookmarks created by annual conference members.

In the bags, the students will each receive a book. According to national literacy experts, a school library that meets resource recommendations will have 15-20 books per child. In Baltimore, the startling rate is two to three books per student. And, most of those books are old and irrelevant to the children's lives.

Other members will head out on buses to nearby elementary schools and other sites to clean up and beautify spaces. Each site has relationships with nearby local churches so the work that we are doing isn't a one-and-done, but continues building on previous relationships and that will continue far beyond the June 2 project.

Engaging with the local community, deep listening to impacted people, and being in ministry with, not for, are principles that are taught to VIM team leaders as they prepare for mission journeys and are essential foundations of Missional Action Planning (MAP) as well.

We hope this time will be a catalyst for our members to return to their local congregations inspired to be All About Love in their neighborhoods through ongoing, mutually transformative relationship building in all directions -- with neighbors, with impacted persons, with one another, with other churches and organizations. It's all about love.



* Heart of America Foundation is a national nonprofit focused on educational equity through the renovation of spaces and resource distribution.

BPHB RECOMMENDATIONS

THE CONFERENCE BOARD OF PENSIONS AND HEALTH BENEFITS REQUESTS THAT THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE ADOPT THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That BWC continue to provide retiree medical to all eligible participants.
2. That in accordance with paragraph (e) of Supplement One (Pre-1982), the surviving spouse pension benefit shall continue to be 85% of the participant's formula.
3. **Pre-1982 Service – Past Service Rate (PSR):** That the Annual Conference shall approve the following pre-1982 prior service funding plan in compliance with the Disciplinary requirement listed in ¶1506.8: The Past Service Rate (PSR) for 2023 is confirmed at \$807. The PSR for 2024 will be set at \$840.
4. That the Annual Conference shall approve the following funding plans based on the receipt of a favorable opinion from Wespath Benefits and Investments in compliance with the Disciplinary requirement listed in ¶1506.6.

Funded status and contributions are based on actuarial valuations as of January 1, 2022,

Pre-82 Plan: Baltimore-Washington Conference is fully funded, with its Pre-82 Plan assets equal to 121% of its liabilities.

Corridor Funding: Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP-DB) and Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP) annuities. The funded Ratio for this funding is the same for all Conferences

<u>Plan</u>	<u>Assets</u>	<u>Liabilities</u>	<u>Funded Ratio</u>
CRSP-DB	\$2.829B	\$2.285B	124%
MPP Annuities	\$4.759B	\$3.665B	130%

Post-Retirement Medical: Based on the biennial actuarial report received in April 2022, the Post-Retirement Medical plan is reported to have a current view funding ratio of 106.7%. The ongoing view funding ratio is 174.8%. These funding ratios are lower than the 146.6% and 214.4 values that were respectively reported in the previous report. An increased liability in the valuation caused the change as the assumed annual increase in the HRA was increased from 2%/yr to a new value of 4%/yr. The 4%/yr assumption is more consistent with the actual increases in recent years and the new funding ratio of 106.7% is a good indication that the fund is properly funded to support that new assumption. The next actuarial report will be based on December 31, 2023 funding levels.

The funding plan as of December 31, 2021 is summarized below.

	<u>Current View</u>	<u>Ongoing View</u>
Discount Rate	2.80%	6.50%
Plan Liability	\$44,318,165	\$27,062,578
Plan Funding	\$47,300,000	\$47,300,000
Funded Status	\$ 2,981,835	\$20,237,422
Funded Ratio	106.7%	174.8%

5. **That the following resolution, as required for IRS compliance, shall be approved:**

Resolutions Relating to Rental/Housing Allowances for Retired or Disabled Clergypersons of the Baltimore-Washington Conference

The Baltimore-Washington Conference (the "Conference") adopts the following resolutions relating to rental/housing allowances for active, retired, or disabled clergypersons of the Conference:

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

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

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

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

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT an amount equal to 100% of the pension or disability payments received from plans authorized under The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church (the Discipline), which includes all such payments from the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits ("GBOPHB"), during the years 2023-2024 by each active, retired, or disabled Clergyperson who is or was a member of the Conference, or its predecessors, be and hereby is designated as a rental/housing allowance for each such Clergyperson; and

THAT the pension or disability payments to which this rental/housing allowance applies will be any pension or disability payments from plans, annuities or funds authorized under the Discipline, including such payments from the GBOPHB and from a commercial annuity company that provides an annuity arising from benefits accrued under a GBOPHB plan, annuity or fund authorized under the Discipline, that result from any service a Clergyperson rendered to this Conference or that an active, retired or disabled Clergyperson of this Conference rendered to any local church, annual conference of the Church, general agency of the Church, other institution of the Church, former denomination that is now a part of the Church, or any other employer that employed the Clergyperson to perform services related to the ministry of the Church or its predecessors, and that elected to make contributions to, or accrue a benefit under, such a plan, annuity or fund for such active, retired, or disabled Clergyperson's pension or disability as part of his or her gross compensation.

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

CHURCH DISAFFILIATIONS

Following the procedure outlined in Para. 2553 of the Book of Discipline, 23 churches of the Baltimore-Washington Conference have decided to leave The United Methodist Church. Their disaffiliation must be approved in a vote of the Annual Conference.

The Local Church Disaffiliation Resolutions will be considered together as a single vote by the Annual Conference on Thursday, June 1, 2023. As a motion to accept the local church disaffiliation resolutions by a simple majority vote of the Annual Conference is entered, no amendments to the individual resolutions will be considered per Para 2553 of the Book of Discipline.

If a legitimate reason exists supported by specific evidence that may warrant excluding a resolution from consideration, then a notice must be provided by a voting member of Annual Conference to the Conference Secretary (bwcsecretary@bwcumc.org) no later than noon on Thursday, June 1, 2023 providing answers to the following questions to document the inquiry:

1. What resolution should be excluded from consideration by the Annual Conference?
2. How was the procedure followed inconsistent with Para 2553?
(<https://cdn.cokesbury.com/images/community/cokesburyportals/2016boderrata.pdf>)
3. What specific evidence is provided to illustrate the inconsistency with Para 2553?

Res #	Church	Charge
1	Alpine UMC	Alpine in Berkeley Springs
2	Brandenburg UMC	Brandenburg in Sykesville
3	Butlers Chapel UMC	Butlers Chapel in Martinsburg
4	Cedar Grove-Oakland UMC	Cedar Grove-Oakland in Deale
5	Community with a Cause UMC	Community with a Cause in California
6	Davis Memorial UMC	Davis Memorial in Cumberland
7	Ebenezer UMC	Ebenezer in Ijamsville
8	Fairview UMC	Timonium-Fairview Co-Op Parish in Timonium
9	Greenwood UMC	Morgan in Berkeley Springs
10	Highland UMC	Alpine in Berkeley Springs
11	Mizo UMC	Mizo UMC in Rockville
12	Mount Oak UMC	Mount Oak in Mitchellville
13	Mount Pleasant UMC	Alpine in Berkeley Springs
14	Mount Zion UMC	Mount Zion in Bel Air
15	Mount Zion UMC	Mt. Zion in Great Cacapon
16	Murleys Branch UMC	Flintstone in Flintstone
17	New Covenant UMC	New Covenant in Cumberland
18	Oakdale Emory UMC	Oakdale Emory in Olney
19	Oakland UMC	Oakland in Charles Town
20	Parkhead UMC	Potomac in Big Pool
21	Prosperity UMC	Flintstone in Flintstone
22	Salem UMC	Salem in Myersville
23	Union UMC	Harford Co-Op Parish in Bel Air

To view the resolutions from each church, visit: bwcumc.org/2023-Disaffiliations.

CHURCH CLOSURES

In following God's call for their congregations, four United Methodist Churches in the Baltimore-Washington Conference have requested to be closed. We give thanks to God for their faithful ministries and the witness they have provided to their communities and the world.

Res #	Church	Charge
1	Carlos UMC	Eckhart in Eckhart Mines
2	Friendship UMC	Berkeley Place - Friendship in Martinsburg
3	Hyattstown UMC	Hyattstown-Clarksburg in Hyattstown
4	Marley UMC	Messiah/Marley Co-Op in Glen Burnie

To view the resolutions from each church, visit: bwcumc.org/2023-closures.

Money Management from a Wesleyan Perspective

Saving Grace: A Guide to Financial Well-Being

Experience Saving Grace: A Guide to Financial Well-Being, a new personal money management curriculum guided by Wesleyan values that seeks to promote financial well-being for clergy and laity.

This exciting six-session resource draws on the expertise of United Methodist leaders across the connection through videos, a workbook, a leader guide and devotional materials. With study sessions for both pastors and laity, participants will explore money management from a Wesleyan perspective helping you reach personal financial goals as well as address life concerns.

Buy it at: cokesbury.com/saving-grace



RECOMMENDATION

FROM THE COMMISSION ON EQUITABLE COMPENSATION

Recommendations from the Commission on Equitable Compensation The Commission on Equitable Compensation is recommending that the base salary for the 2024 Clergy Salary Table be increased 4.0%, or \$1,920, which will make the base salary \$49,910. The Commission is also proposing an increase in the recommended housing allowance of 3.0% or \$642, which will make the recommended housing allowance \$22,036.

Submitted by:
Kim Ayres, Chair, Commission on Equitable Compensation

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COUNCIL ON FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

1. The proposed budget of \$18,107,147 shall be adopted for 2024, including a mission share income budget of \$12,564,729. This represents an increase of \$80,346 or 0.6% in the mission share asking compared to the 2023 budget.
2. The Benevolence Factor (BF) for 2024 will be reduced from 17.55% down to 17.45%. The collection rate assumption for 2024 is set at 87.0%, which is 3% less than the 2023 assumption.
3. As required by The Book of Discipline, the ratio for World Service and Conference Benevolences shall be set as follows: 33% for World Services and 67% for Conference Benevolences.
4. The firm of Ellin & Tucker is approved as independent auditors to audit the Conference Treasurer's financial records for 2023.
5. The date for closing the 2023 Conference financial books shall be set at January 9, 2024, with all payments to be received by the Treasurer's Office no later than that date.
6. The Baltimore-Washington Conference grants authority to the Council on Finance and Administration, in consultation with the Bishop, the Cabinet, and the Discipleship Council to act on financial matters between sessions of the Annual Conference.

Submitted by:
Phil Potter, President
Paul J. Eichelberger, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer

NARRATIVE SUMMARY OF THE 2024 PROPOSED CONFERENCE BUDGET

BUDGET ASSUMPTIONS

Benevolence Factor – Proposed 2024: 17.450%

The benevolence factor is the percentage churches are apportioned based on their operating expenditures less exclusions. The percentage for 2024 is lower than the percentage used in 2023 (17.550%).

Mission Shares Collection Rate - Proposed 2024: 87.0%

The projected collection of the amount apportioned to churches in the 2024 Budget is 87.0%. The percentage for 2024 is less than the budgeted Collection Rate for 2023 (90.0%).

REVENUE

Mission Shares: \$12,564,729

A church's share of the local and global mission work and operating expenses of the Annual Conference as determined by the mission shares formula.

Grants: \$241,490

This represents grants given directly to the conference for ministry and mission. For example, General Church grants to operate the Episcopal Office and residence.

Event Registration: \$2,270,027

This includes Annual Conference registration, workshop registrations, Retreat and Camping Ministries registrations (majority of line item) and other conference events.

Individual Gifts:

Gifts from individuals for specific programs. These are for the conference, specifically, rather than for ministries outside of the conference. No such gifts are anticipated in 2024.

Reimbursements: \$226,635

The conference receives reimbursements from denominational agencies for specific operating programs. The Mission Center tenant leases are also captured in this revenue category.

Other Income/Sources of Funds: \$2,731,266

Miscellaneous income or sources of funds, such as the funding from agency reserve funds. For example, Retiree Medical expenses (majority of line item) are 100% paid from the Board of Pension Reserves. The funds from the sale of closed churches are used to fund a portion of the New Faith Expressions. Starting in 2023, the Conference Center mortgage payments in the Operations budget are fully paid from the debt reserves established during the accelerated debt payoff initiative.

Interest: \$73,000

An estimate of the interest the conference will earn on operating funds in investment vehicles.

TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE: \$ 18,107,147

EXPENSES

I. DISCIPLESHIP EXPENSES

Regional Ministry Teams: \$2,170,231

Funds to operate the ministries and administrative support of the Regions. The Regional Teams include:

- a. Southern Region (Annapolis and Washington East Districts)*
- b. Baltimore Region (Baltimore Metro and Baltimore Suburban Districts)*
- c. Washington Region (Greater Washington and Central Maryland Districts)*
- d. Western Region (Frederick and Cumberland-Hagerstown Districts)*

Discipleship Ministry Teams

Discipleship Ministries

a. **Discipleship Ministries:** \$1,396,547

Funds to operate the ministries and administrative aspects of the Discipleship Ministries and Congregation/Leadership Development Teams. Funds are also allocated for Discipleship Council, Connectional Table and Board of Laity.

b. **General and Jurisdictional Missional Shares:** \$2,867,032

The funds that the General Church and Northeast Jurisdiction request for ministry and programs from each conference. The conference celebrates its track record of paying 100% of these missional shares since 1998. General Church funds include:

World Service

To help our denomination strengthen its evangelism efforts, stimulate church growth, expand Bible studies, and enrich spiritual commitment. This fund allows us to share in a worldwide ministry, including support for missionaries.

Interdenominational Cooperation

This fund allows United Methodists to have an effective presence in the activities of ecumenical organizations.

Africa University

This fund supports the further development of the first private university for men and women in Africa.

Black College Fund

This fund represents the denomination's support of the operation and capital funding of historically black colleges and medical schools.

Ministerial Education Fund

This fund provides our church support for the recruitment and education of future pastors and bishops.

Episcopal Fund

This fund pays the salaries and benefits of active bishops in the denomination and supports retired bishops.

General Administration

This fund supports administrative areas of the church, such as the General Council on Finance and Administration, the General Conference session, and Archives and History.

Jurisdictional Administration

This fund supports mission and ministry through the Northeastern Jurisdiction.

Leadership Development and New Faith Expressions: \$1,579,753

- a. *Grants to local churches and ministries to grow congregations and expand ministry in the community.*
- b. *Start new churches*
- c. *Board of Ordained Ministry*
- d. *Certified Lay Ministry*

Young People's Ministry: \$2,325,427

Ministries funded by Young People's Ministry include Children, Youth, Young Adults, Campus Ministries, and Retreat and Camping ministries.

- a. *Youth Ministries engage and support young disciples of Jesus Christ.*
- b. *Retreat and Camping Ministries provide opportunities for spiritual growth and formation for children and adults.*
- c. *Campus Ministries support staffing and programs on five area college campuses.*

Advocacy & Action; Abundant Health: \$922,320

Social Justice Ministries such as Justice for our Neighbors, NEJ Call to Action, and Hope for the City are funded through Advocacy and Action. Funds are also devoted to Deaf Ministries. Abundant Health includes funds for our partnership ministries with other conferences, such as Zimbabwe, South Korea, Latin America, and Eurasia.

Total Discipleship Ministry Teams: \$9,091,079

TOTAL DISCIPLESHIP EXPENSES: \$11,261,310

II. STEWARDSHIP EXPENSES

Communications: \$489,782

The publications produced by this area are tools for implementing the ministries of the Conference, such as the Web site and e-connection.

Operations: \$3,022,735

This area is responsible for overall operations of the conference facilities, and IT systems and infrastructure.

Property Ministries

The Conference Trustees oversee all property owned by the conference, to include the Conference Mission Center, three Retreat and Camping facilities, the Episcopal Residence and the leased offices in Frederick and on Capitol Hill.

Archives and History

The conference provides support for the preservation of our United Methodist Heritage.

Conference Chancellor

Provides legal resources to the Trustees and other conference leadership.

Annual Conference – Commission on Sessions

The commission prepares all aspects of the annual conference session including program and logistics.

Finance: \$614,614

This area is responsible for maintaining and administering comprehensive fiscal and administrative policies and services. The office of the treasurer provides support and information for clergy and laity in local churches.

HR/Benefits Administration: \$2,060,984

This office administers all active and retired benefit plans for clergy and laity. They also provide personnel and HR support for Conference staff.

TOTAL STEWARDSHIP EXPENSES: \$6,188,115

Episcopal Leadership Ministry: \$657,722

Ministries that lead our mission and develop the leadership to lead congregations, ministries, and staff.

TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES: \$18,107,147

OPERATING NET: \$0

2024 PROPOSED BUDGET

SUMMARY	2022 ACTUAL	2023 BUDGET	2024 BUDGET
Benevolence Factor	17.550%	17.550%	17.450%
Collection Rate	89.00%	90.00%	87.00%
INCOME			
MISSION SHARES***	12,843,694	12,484,383	12,564,729
NON-MISSION SHARES INCOME			
Grants	123,205	253,470	241,490
Event Income	1,222,378	2,399,027	2,270,027
Individual Gifts	3,316	0	0
Reimbursements	287,771	229,181	226,635
Other Income/Sources of Funds	2,381,267	2,790,445	2,731,266
Interest	78,109	66,500	73,000
TOTAL NON-MISSION SHARES INCOME	4,096,046	5,738,623	5,542,418
TOTAL INCOME	16,939,740	18,223,006	18,107,147
EXPENSE			
<u>DISCIPLESHIP</u>			
REGIONS			
Southern Region	561,021	585,686	611,929
Baltimore Region	568,358	584,936	611,179
Washington Region	547,854	585,686	333,989
Western Region	518,822	586,891	613,134
TOTAL REGIONS	2,196,055	2,343,199	2,170,231
MINISTRY TEAMS			
Discipleship Ministries	4,255,253	4,235,363	4,263,579
<i>Note: General Church Mission Shares</i>	2,882,915	2,861,380	2,867,032
Leadership Development	441,437	819,753	819,753
New Faith Expressions	298,571	760,000	760,000
Young People's Ministry	1,934,830	2,446,427	2,325,427
Advocacy and Action	363,382	655,374	655,374
Abundant Health	124,067	266,946	266,946
TOTAL MINISTRY TEAMS	7,417,540	9,183,863	9,091,079
TOTAL DISCIPLESHIP	9,613,595	11,527,062	11,261,310
<u>STEWARDSHIP</u>			
Operations	3,113,789	2,987,745	3,022,735
Communications	391,441	469,929	489,782
Finance	571,163	572,935	614,614
HR/Benefits	2,390,087	2,033,595	2,060,984
TOTAL STEWARDSHIP	6,466,480	6,064,204	6,188,115
<u>EPISCOPAL OFFICE</u>	556,482	631,740	657,722
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSE	16,636,557	18,223,006	18,107,147
	303,183	0	0

- Denotes items funded from Non-Mission Share sources
Indicates percent non-mission share if less than 100%

***Used to be Apportionments

RESOLUTIONS

1 **Title: Establishment of a BWC Clergy Bereavement Protocol and Policy**

2 **Budget Implications:** There are no Conference budget implications.

3 **Rationale:** Surviving the death of a spouse or child requires the reordering of every aspect of
4 life; this is true for clergy as well as laypersons. Since few pastors are adequately trained in
5 processing grief, it is unrealistic to expect a congregation to understand or address the needs of a
6 bereaved pastor. While not attempting to cover every situation regarding the death of a loved
7 one, the following resolution establishes precedent and sets a baseline for response, providing
8 much-needed direction to congregations seeking to support their pastors at critical life moments.

9
10 **Submitted by:** Terri Cofiell terricofiell@epworthchurch.org Elder in Full Connection

11
12 **RESOLUTION:**

13
14 **Whereas** there is no existing policy specifically regarding clergy bereavement leave in the
15 Baltimore-Washington Conference Policy and Procedure Manual;

16
17 **Whereas** the death of a spouse or child is among the most traumatic life events a person can
18 experience; and whereas unresolved grief can impact the physical and mental health of even the
19 most devout people of faith;

20 **Whereas** clergy often sacrifice self-care and family relationships in order to meet the needs and
21 demands of their parishioners; and whereas the compassionate care of grief-stricken pastors has
22 been left solely to congregations to offer (or withhold); now

23 Therefore, be it

24 **Resolved,** that The Baltimore-Washington Conference of The United Methodist Church adopt
25 the following protocol and policy regarding bereavement leave for all Full and part-time
26 ordained clergy and licensed pastors under appointment within the bounds of the Conference.

27 • Within 48 hours after notification of the death of a clergy's spouse, child, or parent, the
28 District Superintendent shall collaborate with the SPRC to arrange pastoral coverage for the
29 charge including, but not limited to, worship planning, preaching, pastoral care, and any
30 immediate administrative needs.

31
32 • The Superintendent will emphasize to the SPRC the need of the pastor for space and
33 time to grieve and help the committee to discern appropriate ways to offer care and support. It
34 will be stressed that pressing parish needs be addressed to the District Administrator until the
35 pastor returns from leave.

36
37 • The Superintendent, in conjunction with the District Administrator, shall provide to the
38 SPRC a list of potential supply ministers, Certified Lay Speakers/Ministers, as well as retired and
39 neighboring clergy. In addition, the Superintendent will inform (via email) possible
40 supply/neighboring/retired pastors of the impending need.

41

2023 PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

42 • The pastor's Full salary shall be maintained for six to eight weeks following the death of
43 a spouse or child, and one to two weeks following the death of a parent. The length of the
44 bereavement leave will be determined through consultation between the pastor and
45 Superintendent.

46
47 • Bereavement leave will be in addition to and not subtracted from vacation time,
48 continuing education time, and/or days off. The local church or conference agency to which the
49 clergy is appointed shall continue to provide salary and housing, as well as pension and
50 insurance payments, during the Full bereavement leave period.

51

52 **Effective Date:** July 1, 2023

53 **Co-Sponsors:**

54 Patricia Allen, Full Elder pallen@stpaulsk.org
55 Erik Alsgaard, Elder, erik@cumc.net
56 Michael Beiber Full Elder, rev.Mike.Beiber@gmail.com
57 Katie Bishop, Full Elder, pastorkatie@mtownumc.org
58 Margaret Clemons, retired Full Elder. Revmecclemons@gmail.com
59 Jack Day, Full Elder, jackdayconnect@gmail.com
60 Malcolm Frazier, Full Elder, fraziermalcolm374@gmail.com
61 Ken Hawes, Full Elder pastorken.fairhavenumc@gmail.com
62 Joey Heath-Mason, Full Elder, joeyhm@stpaulsk.org
63 Charlotte Hendee, retired Full Elder umcnubble@gmail.com
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70 Mandy Sayers, Full Elder, pastormandy10@gmail.com
71 Jennifer Smith Full Elder Jsmith@wesleyfreedom.org
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73 Shannon Sullivan, Full Elder, shasullivan@gmail.com
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75 Laurie Pierce Tingley, Full Elder, lptingley@gmail.com
76 Laure Gates Ward. Full Elder, revlaurie@aol.com
77 Patricia Watson, Full Member Elder, reverendwatson@gmail.com
78 Angela Wells, Full Elder, angelawells153@gmail.com
79 Dana Werts, Full Elder dwerts@bhumc.org
80 Linda Yarrow, Full Elder, lindayarrow.church@gmail.com
81 Dottie Yunger, Full Elder, patuxentpastor@gmail.com

82

83 *As per Baltimore-Washington Conference Rule Para. 3006.2.c., this resolution was reviewed by the*
84 *Conference Secretary and found consistent with the current Book of Discipline. At a Feb. 25 meeting, 90*
85 *percent of Connectional Table members voted concurrence with this resolution.*

86

87 **Title: Building Missions and Stewardship of UMC Property**88 **Budget Implications:** No expected budget implications.

89 **Rationale:** The financial challenges facing many of our Baltimore-Washington Conference
 90 churches are well known. Membership and giving rates are down, while aging buildings are
 91 requiring increasingly costly maintenance and repairs. At the same time, many of our churches
 92 have been blessed with property assets that are substantial. The challenge we face is that of
 93 tapping into the property assets with which we have been blessed to address local churches'
 94 financial needs, while engaging the local church in ministries that help address the needs of the
 95 community. Developing affordable housing and other enterprises that meet community needs on
 96 church property may afford a "triple bottom line" solution: 1) providing quality affordable
 97 housing or other enterprise with the community to address its needs; 2) creating revenues for the
 98 local church—both short-term and long-term—to enable the church to focus and engage on
 99 mission instead of building maintenance; and 3) creating opportunities for new ministry
 100 engagement with its community through the church's gospel witness of loving its neighbors.
 101 The purpose of this resolution is to encourage the local church to consider affordable housing
 102 development or other initiatives to meet community needs as a possible path to help achieve
 103 vitality and sustainability.

104

105 **Submitted by:** Rev. Sam Marullo, sam.marullo@gmail.com, deacon in full connection. This
 106 resolution is submitted on behalf of the Affordable Housing Committee of the Greater
 107 Washington District.

108

109 **RESOLUTION:**

110

111 **Whereas** the United Methodist Churches of the Baltimore-Washington Conference seek to be
 112 faithful gospel witnesses throughout the entire geographic territory of the Annual Conference, in
 113 which we currently have 615 church locations, spread across the complex diversity of our
 114 Conference;

115

116 **Whereas** we seek to love and serve our neighbors—inviting them into relationships and
 117 witnessing the gospel truth of God's love for them—in ways that reflect the giftedness of our
 118 faith communities while simultaneously embodying sensitivity and cultural awareness of our
 119 neighbors and the communities in which we are located, while acknowledging their ongoing
 120 transitions and transformations;

121

122 **Whereas** we seek to be faithful stewards of our churches' properties, fully utilizing the assets
 123 with which we have been gifted to provide a foundation for our mission and ministry, while
 124 simultaneously caring for those property assets by maintaining them well and investing in them
 125 for the future, to provide a legacy for the saints who are to engage in ministry after us;

126

127 **Whereas** we are fully aware of the challenges of declining church memberships, declining rates
 128 of giving, the deterioration of our churches' physical infrastructures due to aging and increasing
 129 maintenance costs, leading to further deferred maintenance and increasing likelihood of
 130 infrastructure failures, all of which exacerbate the likelihood of additional church closures;

131

132 **Whereas** through multiple Conference initiatives we seek to inspire our local UMC
133 congregations to greater levels of vitality, to be faithful ministry innovators that seek to explore
134 creative paths of missional and entrepreneurial ministry that utilize the church’s gifts and assets,
135 including their property, and encourage them to share their experience, wisdom and fruit with
136 other churches seeking to follow similar paths of ministry development. This includes the
137 understanding that effective land use is a vital ministry and that property can be managed and
138 developed by the local church in ways that address identified community needs;

139
140 **Whereas** the Affordable Housing Committee of the Greater Washington District (AHC) has
141 been created to develop and preserve affordable housing by utilizing the resources (property,
142 people, money, ministries) of the United Methodist Churches of the Baltimore-Washington
143 Conference, thereby serving a “triple bottom line” of: 1) meeting a desperate community need
144 for affordable housing, 2) generating assets and revenues to support the entirety of the local
145 church’s ministry needs, both currently and into the future, and 3) creating opportunities for
146 missional engagement with new neighbors to demonstrate God’s love for all God’s children;

147
148 **Whereas** the AHC seeks to operate in accord with scriptural understanding of justice,
149 generosity, and love of our neighbors, we seek to live into Jesus’ teachings to serve “the least of
150 these” (Matthew 25:45); to pay forward our blessings so that additional churches can join in such
151 development efforts in the future, as in the parable of the talents so that our gifts may multiply
152 their impact (Mt. 25:14-30); while also being wise as serpents yet innocent as doves (Mt 10:16)
153 in operating in the realm of property development; and show our love for our neighbors at
154 greatest risk of housing insecurity by providing from the abundance we have been given (James
155 2:14-20);

156
157 **Whereas** the AHC has developed expertise, resources, and networks to be shared with local
158 churches for the purposes of preserving and developing their property—and doing so in a timely
159 manner—thereby making such property an asset for both the local church and the larger
160 community;

161
162 **Whereas** the AHC seeks to partner with Conference ministries and committees to provide
163 educational resources and opportunities for discussion as to how best to steward our church
164 properties while creatively exploring additional and alternative uses for them; and

165
166 **Whereas** we seek to operate in full accord with the Book of Discipline, maintaining and
167 developing our property assets so as to create long-term assets and revenue streams wherever
168 possible that will support all of the ministries of the local church; now

169
170 Therefore, be it

171
172 **Resolved,** that all of our Baltimore-Washington Conference ministries, committees, and
173 initiatives understand and take steps to ensure that the transfer of closed church properties be
174 undertaken only after all reasonable steps have been taken to explore whether there are
175 alternative mission and ministry opportunities that the property can be repurposed to address the
176 needs and context of the communities, including, but not limited to, the development of
177 affordable housing. The steps listed below are not exhaustive of the ways in which we can
178 collectively, creatively discern alternative ministry uses for church properties, but rather are

179 intended to spark creative practices throughout our Conference’s ongoing ministry activities. We
 180 resolve that, at the minimum, these steps occur to ensure that a wide range of alternative uses be
 181 considered for mission and ministry of church properties, including the development of
 182 affordable housing:

- 183
- 184 ● Elders and Local Licensed Pastors who serve congregations that own property initiate
- 185 with their Board of Trustees conversations on stewardship and best use of church
- 186 properties to support ministry.
- 187 ● District Superintendents work with churches to explore and discern how their property
- 188 assets might be utilized to support relevant mission and ministry with the community.
- 189 Especially for churches confronting severe financial challenges and considering closure,
- 190 to explore alternative uses for their property that may generate revenues. This could
- 191 include working with the AHC to attain a feasibility study of the church’s property, at no
- 192 cost to the local church, to explore its potential use for affordable housing development
- 193 or other community-based ministry that requires significant work to the building.
- 194 ● dMAP and cMAP (District and Conference Missional Action Planning) teams explore
- 195 how alternative development of church properties might support District ministry
- 196 innovation and missional strategy.
- 197 ● Conference Trustees review recommendations of dMAP and, if provided, available
- 198 feasibility studies as properties enter their portfolio upon church closures, to discern their
- 199 alternative ministry uses for affordable housing and other community-based projects,
- 200 prior to the sale of the property.
- 201 ● Encourage our United Methodist seminaries and lay leadership training programs to offer
- 202 courses that would help our church leaders understand property management and
- 203 property development as integral elements of church leadership and stewardship; and
- 204

205 Further, we invite all Conference ministries and committees to discuss with the DS, dMAP teams
 206 and/or AHC additional strategies and processes through which these alternative property uses
 207 can be explored.

208
 209 **Effective date:** immediately upon completion of Annual Conference

210
 211 **Co-sponsors:** Members of the Affordable Housing Committee of the Greater Washington
 212 District.

- 213
- 214 Rev. Rochelle Andrews
- 215 Rev. Rachel Cornwell
- 216 Ms. Amelia Duroska
- 217 Rev. David Hall
- 218 Rev. Lucinda Kent
- 219 Rev. Sam Marullo
- 220 Rev. Samson Nortey
- 221 Mr. Gary Williams
- 222

223 *As per Baltimore-Washington Conference Rule Para. 3006.2.c., this resolution was reviewed by the*
 224 *Conference Secretary and found consistent with the current Book of Discipline. At a Feb. 25 meeting, 83*
 225 *percent of Connectional Table members voted concurrence with this resolution.*

226 **Title: Identifying and Opposing Apartheid in the Holy Land**

227

228 **Budgetary Implications:** None

229

230 **Rationale:** Current escalation of violence in the Holy Land, and particularly in “Occupied
231 Palestinian Territories” where Palestinians are forced to live under increasingly discriminatory
232 laws and polices, calls for people of faith to speak out against this situation. This resolution calls
233 for the people called United Methodists in the Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference to take
234 steps to demonstrate our abhorrence for the actions of the current government of Israel that
235 perpetuate this violence and oppression of Palestinians.

236

237 **Submitted by:** Mittie Quinn, Laity, Dumbarton UMC, umcmittie@gmail.com (primary sponsor)

238

239 **RESOLUTION:**

240

241 **Whereas** the area identified as “The West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem,” and established as a
242 separate entity from Israel in 1948 was intended as a homeland for Palestinians;

243 **Whereas** the Israeli government seized this area following the Six Day War, however, and their
244 occupation has been declared "unlawful under international law" by the United Nations; ¹

245

246 **Whereas** Israel has gradually seized more than three-quarters of the land once designated for a
247 future Palestinian state and continues their dispossession today, choosing to identify this land as
248 Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT);

249 **Whereas** Palestinians in the OPT have lived under Israeli military law for generations without
250 any protected civil rights;

251 **Whereas** within Israel and in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT), the Israeli government
252 has established its control over the lives of Palestinians with discriminatory laws and policies
253 specifying where they can live, whom they can marry, where and when they can travel short
254 distances, which roads they can drive on, how much water they can use, when they can access
255 their own farms, what land they can purchase, which justice system they are subject to, whether
256 they will receive due process, and the kinds of punishment they will receive;

257 **Whereas** Israel has developed a governing principle in the Nation State Basic Law of 2018,
258 which grants self-determination exclusively to the Jewish citizens of Israel and not Palestinians,
259 and;

260

261 **Whereas** The Human Rights Watch report of April 2021² and Amnesty International’s
262 investigation, published in February, 2022³, both show that Israel imposes a system of
263 oppression and domination against Palestinians across all areas under its control: in Israel and the
264 Occupied Palestinian Territories, and against Palestinian refugees, in order to benefit Jewish
265 Israelis. The conclusion of their findings is that this system is by definition a system of apartheid,
266 which is prohibited in international law;

267

268

269 **Whereas** apartheid is named as a “crime against humanity” under international law⁴ and the
 270 primary features of apartheid include:

271

- 272 • codifying into law a preferred group of people and giving that group preferential
- 273 access to resources, benefits and services,
- 274 • segregating the population into geographic areas based on identity, and
- 275 • establishing laws and policies designed to suppress opposition to the regime and
- 276 enforcing domination through arbitrary imprisonment, torture, cruel and inhumane
- 277 treatment, and other violations of human rights;

278

279 **Whereas** Kairos Palestine, the Palestinian Christian movement endorsed by all the major
 280 Christian denominations in Palestine, in their "Cry for Hope" of 2020 has called upon the Church
 281 around the world to nonviolently oppose both “apartheid and occupation” in the Holy Land and
 282 to “uphold a vision of inclusivity and equality for all peoples of the land;”⁵ and

283

284 **Whereas** The United Methodist Church has forcefully declared its opposition to the crime of
 285 apartheid, calling it a “heresy” and “a sin” that must be “condemned unequivocally – within
 286 Southern Africa and neighboring countries and throughout the world;”⁶ now

287

288 Therefore, be it

289

290 **Resolved**, that the Baltimore-Washington Conference of The United Methodist Church affirms
 291 that apartheid is antithetical to the Gospel message and that we recognize and oppose Israeli
 292 apartheid as we strive to "resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present
 293 themselves;"

294

295 **Be it further Resolved**, that United Methodists of Baltimore-Washington Conference are urged
 296 to contact their U.S. Representatives and Senators, and/or to contact President Biden to urge him
 297 to stand for peace with justice by recognizing the Israeli apartheid system and working to
 298 safeguard all the rights due to Palestinians under international law, and to condition U.S. funding
 299 to Israel upon Israel’s willingness to dismantle its apartheid system and implement all the rights
 300 due to Palestinians under international law; and

301

302 **Be it further Resolved**, that the Baltimore-Washington Conference urges all United Methodist
 303 clergy and laity to listen to the voices of Palestinians regarding their situation, by meeting with
 304 them in their homeland, by seeking opportunities to hear from them at online events, and through
 305 the study of the Palestinian Christians’ landmark 2020 document entitled “Cry for Hope: A Call
 306 for Decisive Action” and that any mission trips to the Holy Land that are sponsored by BWC
 307 will include such opportunities.

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FOOTNOTES

1. *UN News* (10/20/22); Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory illegal: UN Rights Commission. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/10/1129722>
2. Human Rights Watch report –
“A Threshold Crossed: Israeli Authorities and the Crimes of Apartheid and Persecution”
<https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/07/19/israeli-apartheid-threshold-crossed#>
3. Amnesty International report –
“Israel’s Apartheid against Palestinians: A Look into Decades of Oppression and Domination”
<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2022/02/israels-system-of-apartheid/>
4. The International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid, United Nations –
<https://legal.un.org/avl/ha/cspca/cspca.html>
The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court –
<https://www.icc-cpi.int/resource-library/documents/rs-eng.pdf>
5. Kairos Palestine Statement –
“Cry for Hope: A Call for Decisive Action
”<http://www.cryforhope.org>
6. Southern Africa,” United Methodist Book of Resolutions, adopted 1988; “Web of Apartheid. South Africa and the destabilization of its neighbors,” United Methodist Book of Resolutions, adopted 1992

Effective Date: June 3, 2023

Co-sponsors:

Rev. Ken Hawes, Clergy, Fairhaven UMC
Rev. Dr. Doris Warrell, BWC
Cynthia Taylor, Laity, Mt. Olive UMC, Randallstown
George Kahl, Laity, Grace UMC Baltimore
Helen L. Doman, Laity, Millian Memorial UMC
James W. Doman, Laity, Millian Memorial UMC
Tracy Collins, Laity, Foundry UMC
Ursula Alao, Laity, Dumbarton UMC
Michael Beard, Laity, Dumbarton UMC
Joan Countryman, Laity, Dumbarton UMC
Joe and Elaine Friebele, Dumbarton UMC
Roger Gilkerson, Laity, Dumbarton UMC
Karl Georgi, Laity, Dumbarton UMC
Rev. Judith L. Birch, Clergy, BWC
E. Virginia Lapham, Laity, Dumbarton UMC

- 362 Alan and Jackie Mayers, Laity, Dumbarton UMC
- 363 Sarah McKnight, Laity, Dumbarton UMC
- 364 Howard Moreland, Laity, Dumbarton UMC
- 365 Melinda G. Murray, Laity, Dumbarton UMC
- 366 Lorette Picciano, Laity, Dumbarton UMC
- 367 James E. Quinn, Laity, Dumbarton UMC
- 368 David Cook and Ann Thompson Cook, Laity BWC
- 369 Sandy Cheldelin, Laity, Dumbarton UMC
- 370 Gene Rice, Laity, Dumbarton UMC
- 371 Pam and Greg Thielmann, Laity, Dumbarton UMC

372

373 *As per Baltimore-Washington Conference Rule Para. 3006.2.c., this resolution was reviewed by the*
374 *Conference Secretary and found consistent with the current Book of Discipline. At a Feb. 25 meeting, 53*
375 *percent of Connectional Table members voted nonconcurrence with this resolution.*

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396 **Title: Maternity & Paternity Leave for Foster/Resource Parents**

397 **Budgetary Implications:** None

398 **Rationale:** This resolution provides pastors who are foster/resource parents the ability to focus
399 much needed time and attention on children who come into their care in the very busy and
400 crucial first two weeks of care. This resolution also affirms the importance and value of children
401 who have been traumatized by offering them the opportunity to experience continuous care as
402 trust is built and a relationship with the foster/resource parent is established.

403 **Submitted by:** Rev. Dr. Alicia L. Vanisko

404 **RESOLUTION:**

405 **Whereas** “but Jesus said, *“Let the children come to me, and do not stop them, for it is to such as*
406 *these that the kingdom of heaven belongs.”*” (Matthew 19:14) and *“for I was hungry and you*
407 *gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you*
408 *welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was*
409 *in prison and you visited me;”*” (Matthew 25:35-36)

410

411 **Whereas** Paragraph 355 in the 2016 Book of Discipline allows for maternity leave and paternity
412 leave *“for the birth or arrival of a child into the home for purposes of adoption;”*

413

414 **Whereas** We affirm the social principle that states, *“We lament that in some instances, birth*
415 *parents are unable or unwilling to fulfill their caregiving obligations. Under these*
416 *circumstances, we applaud the willingness of extended families and foster and adoptive parents*
417 *to step in as primary nurturers. Even in these situations, however, we recognize the trauma that*
418 *may be caused by separating children from their families of origin and urge that such actions be*
419 *handled justly, sensitively and compassionately.”* (pg. 21 of the Revised Social Principles);

420 **Whereas** Children entering into foster care do so because of trauma in their lives. They need
421 time to bond with their foster family in order to feel safe;

422 **Whereas** The first few weeks of a foster care placement often involve appointments with social
423 workers, doctors, court appointed special advocates (CASA workers), and court appearances as
424 well as family visitation, meetings with school personnel, day care providers, and therapists; and

425 **Whereas** Neither the Book of Discipline nor the Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference
426 Policies and Procedures Manual makes a provision for leave for pastors serving as foster parents
427 who receive children into their home; now

428 Therefore, be it

429 **Resolved,** that a provision for two weeks of maternity and paternity leave be given to pastors
430 serving as foster/resource parents (Maryland uses the term “Resource Parent”) when they receive
431 the placement of a new child(ren) so that the foster/resource parents can focus on the immediate
432 needs of the vulnerable and traumatized children placed in their care and begin to establish a
433 relationship of mutual trust with the child(ren).

434 **Effective date:** July 1, 2023

435 *As per Baltimore-Washington Conference Rule Para. 3006.2.c., this resolution was reviewed by the*
436 *Conference Secretary and found consistent with the current Book of Discipline. At a Feb. 25 meeting, 62*
437 *percent of Connectional Table members voted concurrence with this resolution.*
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465 **Title:** Affirmation of the Queer Delegates’ Call to Center Justice and
466 Empowerment for LGBTQIA+¹ People in The UMC

467 **Budget Implications:** None

468 **Rationale:** *The Book of Discipline* ¶ 140 states, “Inclusiveness means openness, acceptance, and
469 support that enables all persons to participate in the life of the Church, the community, and the
470 world; therefore, inclusiveness denies every semblance of discrimination.” LGBTQIA+ people
471 are among the members faithfully serving the Baltimore-Washington Conference in many
472 capacities and supporting its work with their prayers, their presence, their gifts, and their service
473 and providing leadership throughout our connection. LGBTQIA+ people should be able to be
474 fully included in the life of the Church without having to hide the light of who they are.

475 **Submitted by:** Ann Brown, BWC member, Foundry UMC

476 **RESOLUTION:**

477 **Whereas** in a groundswell response to the passage of harmful legislation at the 2019 Special
478 Session of General Conference, Annual Conferences elected queer clergy and lay persons to be
479 General and Jurisdictional Delegates in record numbers, for the first time empowering queer
480 delegates to speak and act from our diverse experiences;

481 **Whereas** the 2019 Special Session of the United Methodist General Conference passed the
482 Traditional Plan, which increased penalties for United Methodists clergy who are LGBTQIA+
483 and for clergy who support the LGBTQIA+ community through officiating their weddings;

484 **Whereas** in an attempt to address the divide within The United Methodist Church, an abeyance
485 or moratorium was proposed to the General Conference, referenced below,² by the authors of the
486 Protocol of Reconciliation and Grace through Separation;

¹ The queer delegates chose to describe themselves using the umbrella term “queer,” but refer to the broader community of persons with the LGBTQIA+ acronym.

² “Effective immediately upon adjournment of the 2020 General Conference, no complaint proceedings (including, without limitation, a bishop’s supervisory response, suspension proceedings, attempts to achieve a just resolution, or referral of a complaint) shall be initiated, and all current or pending complaint proceedings shall be suspended, insofar as the alleged Book of Discipline violation asserted in the complaint is that the respondent is a ‘self-avowed practicing homosexual’ (however that term may be defined, including, without limitation, living in a same-gender marriage, domestic partnership or civil union); that the respondent has conducted, officiated, performed, celebrated, or blessed a same-gender wedding or other same-gender union; that the respondent has certified, licensed, commissioned, ordained, consecrated, or appointed a ‘self-avowed practicing homosexual’; that the respondent has provided ‘funds to any gay caucus or group’ or used funds ‘to promote the acceptance of homosexuality’; or that the respondent has otherwise engaged in conduct that The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church currently states is ‘incompatible with Christian teaching’ as it pertains to LGBTQ relationships. This moratorium on all new and pending complaint proceedings concerning human sexuality provisions applies not only to charges that are explicitly based on ¶ 2702.1b, but also to any charge that the same alleged underlying conduct constitutes a chargeable offense under any other provision of the Discipline, including (without limitation) ‘immorality’ under ¶ 2702.1a; ‘disobedience to the order and discipline of The United Methodist Church’ under ¶ 2702.1d; and ‘dissemination of doctrines contrary to the established standards of doctrine of The United Methodist Church’ under ¶ 2702.1e. This moratorium is inclusive of charges related to the

487 **Whereas** we understand our call and responsibility as United Methodists to do good, do no
 488 harm, and stay in love with God;

489 **Whereas** we call straight and cisgender allies to do good by using their voice and vote to
 490 support, empower, and amplify the voices of the LGBTQIA+ community in The United
 491 Methodist Church; and

492 **Whereas** 46 queer General and Jurisdictional Conference delegates from across all five
 493 jurisdictions wrote the original resolution, which was historically adopted at all five
 494 jurisdictional conferences in November 2022;³ now

495 Therefore, be it

496 **Resolved**, that the Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church:

- 497 1. Supports and amplifies the queer delegates’ call to justice and empowerment for the
 498 LGBTQIA+ community throughout the Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference,
 499 within and beyond our local churches, districts, departments, centers, and committees;
- 500 2. Affirms the spirit of the abeyance or moratorium as proposed to the General Conference,
 501 as referenced above, until changes can be made in The United Methodist Book of
 502 Discipline;
- 503 3. Implores our Annual Conference to either not pursue (i.e., hold in abeyance) or resolve in
 504 a timely fashion through a non-punitive, just resolution process any complaints against
 505 clergy regarding their sexual orientation or the officiating of weddings of LGBTQIA+
 506 persons;
- 507 4. Aspires to become a United Methodist Church in which LGBTQIA+ people will be
 508 protected, affirmed, and empowered throughout our life, mission, and ministry together.
 509

510 **Effective Date:** Immediately upon passage of the resolution

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512 *As per Baltimore-Washington Conference Rule Para. 3006.2.c., this resolution was reviewed by the*
 513 *Conference Secretary and found consistent with the current Book of Discipline. At a Feb. 25 meeting, 75*
 514 *percent of Connectional Table members voted concurrence with this resolution.*

following paragraphs: ¶ 161, ¶ 304.3, ¶ 310.2, ¶ 341.6, ¶ 613.19, ¶ 806.9, and ¶ 2702.1b. This moratorium does not apply to charges under any of these provisions in which the underlying alleged actions address a different subject matter, including but not limited to sexual misconduct, sexual abuse, and sexual harassment. This moratorium shall remain in effect until the close of the first General Conference of The United Methodist Church after other denominations separate. Any complaints pertaining to this paragraph filed during this period shall be held in abeyance, and no time limits shall commence until the above-referenced General Conference has concluded.” - From the Protocol of Reconciliation and Grace through Separation

³ The Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference resolution is available at <https://nejumc.org/pdf/NEJ%20DCA%20October%2031.pdf>.

515 **Title: Vital Connections Within Our Annual Conference**

516 **Budgetary Implications:** None

517 **Rationale:** Much misinformation has been circulating about The United Methodist Church,
518 whether local churches need to take a vote to stay or disaffiliate and as hard as the BWAC tries
519 to communicate and educate the reality of our denominational challenge, this information is not
520 being received and processed. Our connectional relationship has certainly suffered during
521 physical distancing during Covid and a more direct approach is needed with the assistance of our
522 District Superintendents.

523 **Submitted by:** Rev. Debbie Scott, Elder Lovely Lane UMC, Ann Brown, Foundry UMC

524 **RESOLUTION:**

525 **Whereas** paragraph 53, Article IX of the Book of Discipline (BOD) states: "In Each annual
526 conference there shall be one or more district superintendents who shall assist the bishop in the
527 administration of the annual conference and shall have such responsibilities and terms of office
528 as the General Conference may determine;"

529 **Whereas** paragraph 419 in the BOD says "As an extension of the office of bishop, the district
530 superintendent shall oversee the total ministry of the clergy...and of the churches in the
531 communities of the district in their missions of witness and service in the world;"

532 **Whereas** paragraph 419.4 says "The superintendent shall establish working relationships with
533 staff/pastor-parish relations committee, clergy, district lay leaders...Through the use of charge
534 conferences (246.4-5), congregational studies (213) and other gatherings, the superintendent
535 shall seek to form creative and effective connections with the local congregations on his or her
536 district;"

537 **Whereas** paragraph 246.5 says, "The district superintendent shall preside at the meetings of the
538 charge conference or may designate an elder to preside;"

539 **Whereas** these are very difficult and challenging times leading to the Dec. 31, 2023 deadline for
540 paragraph 2553 Disaffiliation from the United Methodist Church over human sexuality;

541 **Whereas** there has been much misinformation distributed to local churches making decisions
542 about staying or leaving our denomination;

543 **Whereas** this needs to be an opportunity to strengthen our connectional relationships. Charge
544 conferences can and should be more than a check list; and

545 **Whereas** the time leading to the delayed 2020 General Conference scheduled for May, 2024 and
546 the period following the decisions of the 2020 General Conference will have broad implications
547 for the future of the United Methodist Church and each local church in the Baltimore
548 Washington Annual Conference; now

549 Therefore, be it

550 **Resolved**, that for the calendar years 2023-2025, the appointed district superintendents will
551 aspire to preside at each local church charge conference in the district they are responsible for or
552 find another intentional time to be present and in person(or zoom) to “creatively and effectively”
553 have intentional conversations about the state of the local church, the pastor and their shared
554 ministry; and

555 **Be it further Resolved**, that to help make this possible, other duties and responsibilities that are
556 assigned to appointed district superintendents will hopefully be reduced during this time period
557 to ensure these creative and effective connections with all local churches and clergy.

558 **Effective date:** Immediately

559 *As per Baltimore-Washington Conference Rule Para. 3006.2.c., this resolution was reviewed by*
560 *the Conference Secretary and found inconsistent with BOD paragraphs 246.4, 246.5, 246.10,*
561 *and 419 (especially 419.12). As written, the first “Be it Resolved” statement directs appointed*
562 *District Superintendents to preside at Charge Conferences; however, the relevant BOD*
563 *paragraphs (especially 246.5) give the District Superintendent the authority to designate*
564 *another elder to preside and 419 grants the Bishop authority over the work of the District*
565 *Superintendent. An Annual Conference cannot abrogate these authorities through its own rules;*
566 *only the General Conference can make such changes. After a change in language by the*
567 *presenters of the resolution that made it aspirational rather than directive, the Conference*
568 *Secretary found it consistent with the current Book of Discipline.*

569 *At a Feb. 25 meeting, with the new language inserted into the resolution, 63 percent of*
570 *Connectional Table members voted nonconcurrence with this resolution.*

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584 **Title:** Integrity in Conference, District and Local Church Leadership

585 **Budgetary Implications:** None

586 **Rationale:** To ensure all nominated, elected and participating clergy and laity serving our
587 Conference, District, Local Church and General Church are doing so with integrity working
588 toward the future of the United Methodist Church.

589 **Submitted by:** Rev. Debbie Scott, Elder Lovely Lane UMC and Ann Brown, Foundry UMC

590 **RESOLUTION:**

591 **Whereas** the vibrant future of The United Methodist Church requires deep commitment and
592 faithful leadership at every level;

593 **Whereas** grounded in a sense of duty and loyalty to the mission of the church, leaders are
594 counted on and expected to make decisions about the future of The United Methodist Church
595 with the absolute best interest of Christ's church at heart;

596 **Whereas** the selection, election, and appointment of clergy and lay leaders throughout The
597 United Methodist Church includes the implicit understanding that leaders will ethically serve in
598 each of their leadership roles with the utmost integrity;

599 **Whereas** the Book of Discipline has proscribed steps for congregations and clergy to leave the
600 United Methodist Church;

601 **Whereas** these steps include discussions, negotiations, and decisions of various Annual
602 Conference bodies for separation;

603 **Whereas** such decisions should be made with full transparency and integrity of those involved;

604 **Whereas** Annual Conference Committees & District Committees, Boards, Agencies,
605 Delegations make decisions impacting the future vitality of the domination;

606 **Whereas** such decisions should be made by those committed to the continuance and long-term
607 vibrant future of the United Methodist Church; and

608 **Whereas** in November of 2022, and in historic fashion, a resolution in support of leading with
609 integrity was adopted at all five Jurisdictional Conferences; now

610 Therefore, be it

611 **Resolved**, that the 2023 Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference request that the Bishop and
612 Cabinet make inquiry of all persons on District and Annual Conference Committees, Boards, and
613 Agencies as to their intention to remain in the United Methodist Church;

614 **Be it further Resolved**, that any persons that express an interest in leaving the United Methodist
615 Church be asked to resign from their leadership roles on any District and Annual Conference
616 Committees, Boards, and Agencies;

617 **Be it further Resolved**, that the Bishop and Cabinet shall report to the 2024 Baltimore-
618 Washington Annual Conference the number of persons who expressed an intention to leave the
619 denomination that were in leadership roles on District and Annual Conference Committees,
620 Boards, and Agencies and the number of those persons, as requested by this resolution, stepped
621 down from those roles; and

622 **Be it further Resolved**, that all appointed pastors in their role as Chair of the Lay Leadership
623 Committee, make similar inquiries in their local churches and take the same action.

624 **Effective date:** Immediately

625 *As per Baltimore-Washington Conference Rule Para. 3006.2.c., this resolution was reviewed by the*
626 *Conference Secretary and found inconsistent with BOD paragraphs 251, 252.5, and 258 (specifically*
627 *258.2), in that the resolution adds requirements for participation in church leadership that is not part of*
628 *the BOD and usurps the authority of the Committee on Nominations and Leadership Development. An*
629 *Annual Conference cannot abrogate make such changes or these authorities through its own rules; only*
630 *the General Conference can make such changes. At a Feb. 25 meeting, 67 percent of Connectional Table*
631 *members voted nonconcurrence with this resolution.*

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649 **Title: In Support of Creating a U.S. Regional Conference**

650 **Budget Implications:** None

651 **Rationale:** To celebrate the breath and width of the United Methodist Church in very different
652 geographical and cultural settings, Regional Conferences in the United States and across the
653 Globe would affirm the many possibilities of transforming the world by making disciples of
654 Jesus Christ.

655 **Submitted by:** Rev. Debbie Scott and Bryant Oskvig, Co-Chairs BARM Advocacy

656 **RESOLUTION:**

657 **Whereas** the seven Central Conferences and five U.S. Jurisdictions of The United Methodist
658 Church engage in mission together in 136 countries;

659 **Whereas** the connectional ties between the church in the United States and the Central
660 Conferences are significant and vital to the continued mission and ministry of the worldwide
661 United Methodist Church;

662 **Whereas** the existing structure of The United Methodist Church at the general church level has
663 historically impeded each region from effectively tailoring its ministry to its specific contexts;

664 **Whereas** the existing structure of The United Methodist Church at the general church level
665 diminishes our ability to be a vital and effective church and needs to be re-envisioned to achieve
666 more fair and equitable church governance;

667 **Whereas** the creation of a U.S. Regional Conference and the conversion of the Central
668 Conferences to Regional Conferences, as outlined in the Christmas Covenant, developed by
669 Central Conference leaders in Africa and the Philippines, would establish structural parity
670 throughout the worldwide church;

671 **Whereas** the creation of a U.S. Regional Conference, as outlined in legislation put forward by
672 the Connectional Table will establish the governance necessary to allow each region to design
673 ministry for its particular contexts, and thus more effectively make disciples of Jesus Christ for
674 the transformation of the world;

675 **Whereas** the Baltimore Washington Annual Conference aspires to vital, thriving, multicultural,
676 and diverse ministries that are open to all people and can be a beacon of hope for the worldwide
677 United Methodist Church; and

678 **Whereas** in November of 2022, and in historic fashion, a resolution in support of a U.S.
679 Regional Conference was adopted at all five Jurisdictional Conferences; now

680 Therefore, be it

681 **Resolved**, that the Baltimore Washington Annual Conference supports the expressed intents of
682 the Christmas Covenant and Connectional Table legislation, including the creation of Regional
683 Conferences in Africa, Europe, the Philippines, and the U.S., respectively;

684

685 **Be it further Resolved**, that the Baltimore Washington Annual Conference recognizes and
686 supports the leadership of our Central Conferences in the creation and furtherance of the
687 Christmas Covenant as well the Connectional Table's future visioning on behalf of our
688 worldwide fellowship;

689 **Be it further Resolved**, that the Baltimore Washington Annual Conference urges the Council of
690 Bishops to expedite the process of voting on the constitutional amendments necessary to enact
691 the regional conferences legislation, calling special sessions of annual conferences where
692 necessary;

693 **Be it further Resolved**, that in line with the intent of the non-disciplinary petition submitted by
694 the Connectional Table, the Baltimore Washington Annual Conference requests the Council of
695 Bishops to immediately appoint a 20-25 member Interim Committee on Organization for a US
696 Regional Conference to develop and propose to the 2024 general conference the structure and
697 organization of a US Regional Conference. In line with the CT's legislation, this body would
698 organize and plan for the establishment and functioning of a new United States Regional
699 Conference comprising the five jurisdictions of the United States. Committee membership
700 should have a minimum of 3 members of each US jurisdiction, 3 central conference members
701 and shall meet standards of racial and gender diversity. The Committee should recommend a
702 structure for the US Regional Conference including considerations such as its membership,
703 committee structure, meeting time, agency, and function; and

704 **Be it further Resolved**, that the Baltimore Washington Annual Conference secretary shall send
705 copies of this resolution to all delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conferences, including
706 alternates, to the Commission on the General Conference, and to the Council of Bishops.

707 **Effective date:** Immediately

708 *As per Baltimore-Washington Conference Rule Para. 3006.2.c., this resolution was reviewed by the*
709 *Conference Secretary and found consistent with the current Book of Discipline. At a Feb. 25 meeting, 84*
710 *percent of Connectional Table members voted concurrence with this resolution.*

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719 **Title: Supporting the Removal of Discriminatory Policies**

720 **Budgetary Implications:** None

721 **Rationale:** We are all God’s children and as such we would hope that the United Methodist
722 Church would broaden its welcome so all feel safe and part of this large circle. Removal of
723 discriminatory policies will help this become a reality.

724 **Submitted by:** Rev. Debbie Scott and Rev. Bryant Oskvig, Co-Chairs BWARM Advocacy

725 **RESOLUTION:**

726 **Whereas** a more diverse and fully welcoming UMC is a testament to a more complete image of
727 God, which includes persons of all sexual orientations and gender identities;

728 **Whereas** a more diverse and fully welcoming UMC allows all United Methodists to offer their
729 prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness, as followers of Jesus, to further Christ’s mission;

730 **Whereas** by the power of the Holy Spirit, God calls and includes all persons into the life and
731 leadership of the Church, transcending the limitations of human categorization;

732 **Whereas** the current language in the Book of Discipline places limits on Christ’s teaching and
733 example of God’s universal love;

734 **Whereas** the current language in the Book of Discipline falls short of embodying the spirit of
735 John Wesley’s simple rules to do no harm, do all the good we can, and love God; and

736 **Whereas** legislative changes to the Book of Discipline would reduce barriers and allow
737 movement toward wider diversity and inclusion in our United Methodist Church; now

738 Therefore, be it

739 **Resolved**, that the Baltimore Washington Annual Conference supports the removal of all
740 discriminatory policies and harmful language related to sexual orientation, and urges delegates to
741 adopt the following petitions; petitions already submitted and that will be before the voting body
742 of the next General Conference:

743 **Petition No: 20730-CB-¶161-G;**

744 Entitled: Revised Social Principles-161 and 162

745 [ADCA Vol 2, Sec 1, Page 208](#)

746 Summary: Removes the statement that affirms marriage as only between “one man and one
747 woman.” Removes the statement that only affirms “heterosexual” marriage. Removes, “The
748 UMC does not condone the practice of homosexuality and considers this practice incompatible
749 with Christian teaching.”

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752 **Petition No: 20177-FO-¶304.3**

753 Entitled: A Simple Plan #3

754 [ADCA Vol 2, Sec 2, Page 624](#)

755 Summary: Removes ¶304.3 which states, “self-avowed practicing homosexuals are not to be
756 certified as candidates, ordained as ministers, or appointed to serve in The United Methodist
757 Church.” Also removes the corresponding footnote stating that “self-avowed practicing
758 homosexual is understood to mean that a person openly acknowledges to a bishop, district
759 superintendent, district committee of ordained ministry, Board of Ordained Ministry, or clergy
760 session that the person is a practicing homosexual; or is living in a same-sex marriage, domestic
761 partnership or civil union, or is a person who publicly states she or he is a practicing
762 homosexual.”

763

764 **Petition No: 20469-OM-¶341.6**

765 Entitled: A Simple Plan #5

766 [ADCA Vol 2, Sec 2, Page 1041](#)

767 Summary: Removes ¶341.6, which states (under unauthorized conduct), “ceremonies that
768 celebrate homosexual unions shall not be conducted by our ministers and shall not be conducted
769 in our churches.”

770

771 **Petition No: 20181-FA-¶613-G**

772 Entitled: A Fully Inclusive Way Forward-Part 6 of 8

773 [ADCA Vol 2, Sec 1, Page 504](#)

774 Summary: Removes ¶613.19, which prohibits annual conferences from giving “United
775 Methodist funds to any gay caucus or group, or otherwise use such funds to promote the
776 acceptance of homosexuality.

777

778 **Petition No: 20190-FA-¶806-G**

779 Entitled: A Fully Inclusive Way Forward-Part 7 of 8

780 [ADCA Vol 2, Sec 1, Page 508](#)

781 Summary: Removes ¶806.9, which tasks GCFA with “ensuring that no board, agency,
782 committee, commission, or council gives United Methodist funds to any gay caucus or group . . .

783 “

784

785 **Petition No: 20304-HS-¶415.6-G**

786 Entitled: Next Generation UMC #11—Amend Episcopal Responsibilities

787 [ADCA Vol 2, Sec 2, Page 977](#)

788 Summary: Removes statements prohibiting bishops from commissioning, ordaining, or
789 consecrating persons determined to be “self-avowed practicing homosexuals.”

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2023 PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

792 **Petition No: 20387-JA-¶2711.3-G**

793 Entitled: Next Generation UMC #22—Penalties

794 [ADCA Vol 2, Sec 2, Page 933](#)

795 Summary: Removes predetermined, mandatory minimum penalties for clergy who officiate same
796 sex weddings.

797

798 **Petition Number: 20365-JA-¶2702.1-G**

799 Entitled: Next Generation UMC #21 - Chargeable Offenses

800 [ADCA Vol 2, Sec 2, Page 924](#)

801 Summary: Removes chargeable offenses that target “self-avowed practicing homosexuals” and
802 clergy who conduct same-sex weddings.

803

804 **Petition No: 20420-OM-¶310.2d-G**

805 Entitled: A Simple Plan #4

806 [ADCA Vol 2, Sec 2, Page 1022](#)

807 Summary: Removes statements from Footnote 3 that repeat phrases being removed from other
808 paragraphs in the BOD; and

809

810 **Be it further Resolved**, that the Baltimore Washington Annual Conference secretary shall send
811 copies of this resolution to: all General and Jurisdictional Conference delegates and alternates,
812 the Commission on General Conference; and the Council of Bishops.

813

814 **Effective date:** Immediately

815 *As per Baltimore-Washington Conference Rule Para. 3006.2.c., this resolution was reviewed by the*
816 *Conference Secretary and found consistent with the current Book of Discipline. At a Feb. 25 meeting, 81*
817 *percent of Connectional Table members voted concurrence with this resolution.*

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828 **Title:** Clarity When Churches Disaffiliate from the United Methodist Church
 829 within the Baltimore Annual Conference and at some Future Point Want to Return
 830 to the BWAC

831 **Budgetary Implications:** None

832 **Rationale:** Clarification for those churches who disaffiliate from the United Methodist Church
 833 and want to return in the future.

834 **Submitted by:** Rev. Debbie Scott and Rev. Bryant Oskvig, Advocacy Co-Chairs BWARM

835 **RESOLUTION:**

836 **Whereas** the 2019 Special Session of the General Conference of the UMC adopted paragraph
 837 2553 Disaffiliation of a Local Church Over Issues Related to Human Sexuality (see full text
 838 below);

839 **Whereas** this paragraph cannot be used after Dec. 31, 2023; and

840 **Whereas** local churches who have exercised this onetime disaffiliation clause and have
 841 completed all requirements and payments; now

842 Therefore, be it

843 **Resolved**, that until new language is written by General Conference for the Book of Discipline,
 844 that at any future date a disaffiliated congregation reconsiders their decision and would like to
 845 return to The United Methodist Church and the BWAC, they would follow Book of Discipline
 846 Section VII. The Method of Organizing a New Church paragraph 259.

847 **Effective date:** Immediately

848 *As per Baltimore-Washington Conference Rule Para. 3006.2.c., this resolution was reviewed by the*
 849 *Conference Secretary and found consistent with the current Book of Discipline. At a Feb. 25 meeting, 84*
 850 *percent of Connectional Table members voted concurrence with this resolution.*

851

852 ******2553. Disaffiliation of a Local Church Over Issues Related to Human Sexuality**

853 1. Because of the current deep conflict within The United Methodist Church around issues of
 854 human sexuality, a local church shall have a limited right, under the provisions of this paragraph,
 855 to disaffiliate from the denomination for reasons of conscience regarding a change in the
 856 requirements and provisions of the Book of Discipline related to the practice of homosexuality or
 857 the ordination or marriage of self-avowed practicing homosexuals as resolved and adopted by the
 858 2019 General Conference, or the actions or inactions of its annual conference related to these
 859 issues which follow.

860 2. Time Limits - The choice by a local church to disaffiliate with The United Methodist Church
 861 under this paragraph shall be made in sufficient time for the process for exiting the denomination

862 to be complete prior to December 31, 2023. The provisions of ¶ 2553 expire on December 31,
863 2023 and shall not be used after that date.

864 3. Decision Making Process - The church conference shall be conducted in accordance with ¶
865 248 and shall be held within one hundred twenty (120) days after the district superintendent calls
866 for the church conference. In addition to the provisions of ¶ 246.8, special attention shall be
867 made to give broad notice to the full professing membership of the local church regarding the
868 time and place of a church conference called for this purpose and to use all means necessary,
869 including electronic communication where possible, to communicate. The decision to disaffiliate
870 from The United Methodist Church must be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the
871 professing members of the local church present at the church conference.

872

873 4. Process Following Decision to Disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church - If the church
874 conference votes to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church, the terms and conditions for
875 that disaffiliation shall be established by the board of trustees of the applicable annual
876 conference, with the advice of the cabinet, the annual conference treasurer, the annual conference
877 benefits officer, the director of connectional ministries, and the annual conference chancellor.
878 The terms and conditions, including the effective date of disaffiliation, shall be memorialized in
879 a binding Disaffiliation Agreement between the annual conference and the trustees of the local
880 church, acting on behalf of the members. That agreement must be consistent with the following
881 provisions:

- 882
- 883 ▪ a) Standard Terms of the Disaffiliation Agreement. - The General Council on
884 Finance and Administration shall develop a standard form for Disaffiliation
885 Agreements under this paragraph to protect The United Methodist Church as set
886 forth in ¶ 807.9. The agreement shall include a recognition of the validity and
887 applicability of ¶ 2501, notwithstanding the release of property therefrom. Annual
888 conferences may develop additional standard terms that are not inconsistent with
889 the standard form of this paragraph.
 - 890 ▪ b) Apportionments - The local church shall pay any unpaid apportionments for the
891 12 months prior to disaffiliation, as well as an additional 12 months of
892 apportionments.
 - 893 ▪ c) Property - A disaffiliating local church shall have the right to retain its real and
894 personal, tangible and intangible property. All transfers of property shall be made
895 prior to disaffiliation. All costs for transfer of title or other legal work shall be
896 borne by the disaffiliating local church.
 - 897 ▪ d) Pension Liabilities - The local church shall contribute withdrawal liability in an
898 amount equal to its pro rata share of any aggregate unfunded pension obligations
899 to the annual conference. The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits shall
900 determine the aggregate funding obligations of the annual conference using
901 market factors similar to a commercial annuity provider, from which the annual
conference will determine the local church's share.

- 902 ▪ e) Other Liabilities - The local church shall satisfy all other debts, loans, and
903 liabilities, or assign and transfer them to its new entity, prior to disaffiliation.
904 ▪ f) Payment Terms - Payment shall occur prior to the effective date of departure.
905 ▪ g) Disaffiliating Churches Continuing as Plan Sponsors of the General Board of
906 Pension and Health Benefits Plans - The United Methodist Church believes that a
907 local church disaffiliating under ¶2553 shall continue to share common religious
908 bonds and convictions with The United Methodist Church based on shared
909 Wesleyan theology and tradition and Methodist roots, unless the local church
910 expressly resolves to the contrary. As such, a local church disaffiliating under ¶
911 2553 shall continue to be eligible to sponsor voluntary employee benefit plans
912 through the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits under ¶ 1504.2, subject
913 to the applicable terms and conditions of the plans.
914 ▪ h) Once the disaffiliating local church has reimbursed the applicable annual
915 conference for all funds due under the agreement, and provided that there are no
916 other outstanding liabilities or claims against The United Methodist Church as a
917 result of the disaffiliation, in consideration of the provisions of this paragraph, the
918 applicable annual conference shall release any claims that it may have under ¶
919 2501 and other paragraphs of The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist
920 Church commonly referred to as the trust clause, or under the agreement.

921 From The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church - 2019 Addendum. © 2019 by
922 The United Methodist Publishing House.

923

924

DISCIPLESHIP COUNCIL REPORT

Over the past seven years, the Discipleship Council has helped realign the conference boards, launched our anti-racism work and re-rooted our focus on world-transforming discipleship.

This past year, we continued to focus our work on the mission and vision of the Annual Conference: *the Baltimore-Washington Conference inspires and equips local faith communities to develop disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world so that more transformed lives transform lives.* Deepening discipleship is at the heart of everything we do. Our discipleship ministry boards—leader development, new faith expressions, young people’s ministry, advocacy & action and wellness & missions — all are rooted in the fact that our ministry is all about love.

During our time of reflection about ministry outcomes over the past several years, we celebrated the beneficial ways that the Discipleship Ministries Report from local churches is being used to align the work of the Discipleship boards and Annual Conference resources to support the vitality of local churches. We also acknowledged how this faithful work will continue to be nurtured going forward as we encouraged our Discipleship Agency Boards in their work to support 100% of churches becoming 100% vital.



Deepen Discipleship



See all the People



Live and love like Jesus



Multiply Impact

This vitality includes deepening discipleship, seeing all the people, living and loving like Jesus, and multiplying impact through Missional Action Planning.

As a part of our work to check on the alignment of ministries to our mission, we have been monitoring the data provided by churches on the Discipleship Ministries Report submitted and celebrated during church conference season.

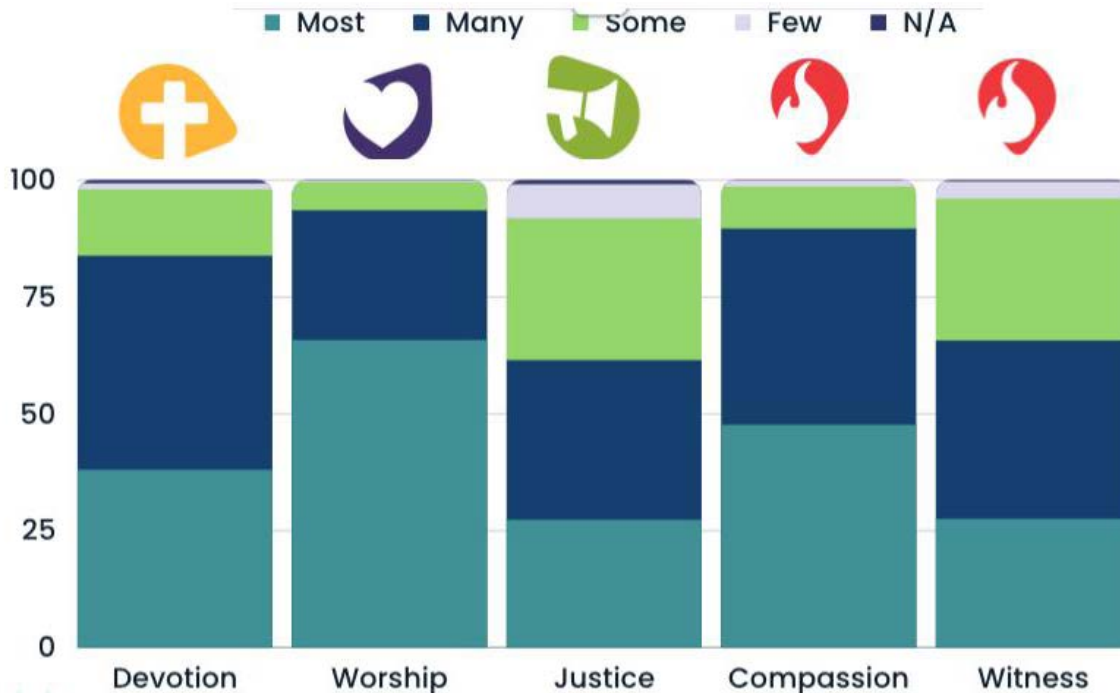
Question #1 is designed to measure the degree to which churches are witnessing to Jesus Christ through acts of justice, compassion, devotion and worship under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. This year we celebrate gains made in more fully embracing the totality of discipleship.

General Rule of Discipleship

“To witness to Jesus Christ in the world and to follow His teachings through acts of compassion, justice, worship and devotion under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.”

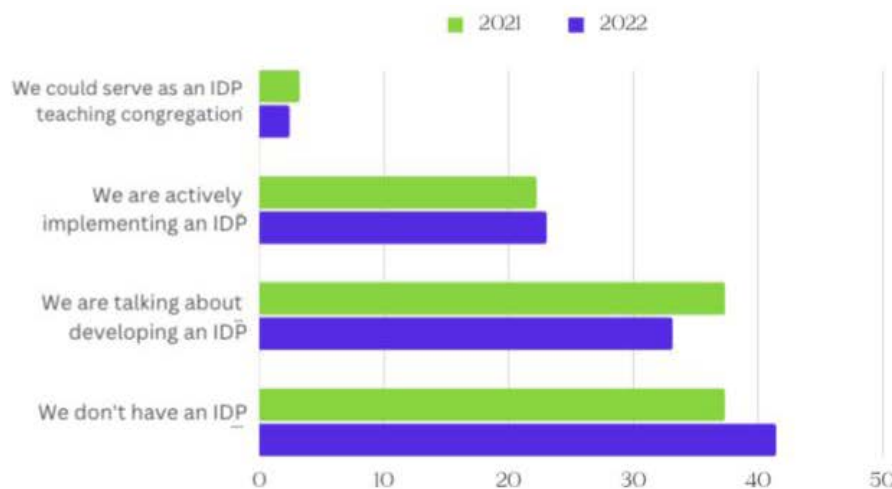


There seems to be more consistent discipling behavior across all five aspects: witnessing, compassion, justice, worship and devotion.



We celebrate the more holistic living out of discipleship and the increased numbers and stories of transformation from people engaged in conference-wide ministries of advocacy, wellness and missions.

Question #2 asks *What is the current state of the congregation's intentional discipleship process?* The Leadership Development Board contacted each church that indicated that they could serve as an intentional discipleship process teaching congregation in 2021 and in the process provided feedback and additional training for congregations. We are able to see the ways that the faithful work of The Leadership Development Board is bearing fruit in helping congregations develop, maintain, and strengthen an intentional discipleship process.

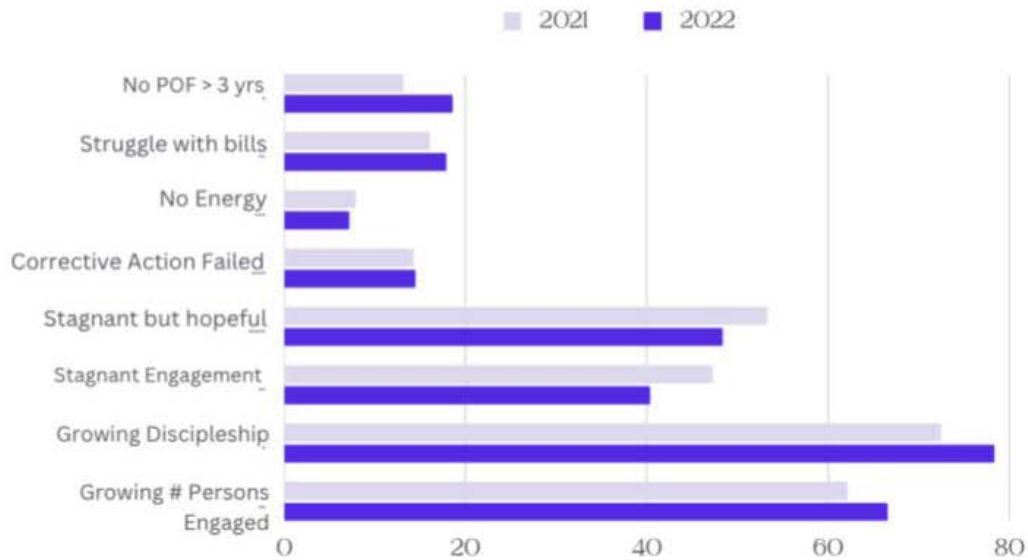


Specifically, we celebrate that: 1% more churches are actively implementing an intentional discipleship process. While more churches are reporting not having an intentional discipleship process this year than last year, we believe that this is due to an increased awareness of what that entails.

In reviewing the data from the Discipleship Ministries Report, we noticed an interesting correlation between the strength of a congregation's intentional discipleship and their overall vitality.

DISCIPLESHIP COUNCIL REPORT

Question #3 of the report asks congregations to select all statements which best describe the congregation's level of vitality.



There were some shifts in vitality reporting including:

- 5% fewer churches have had a profession of faith in the past three years
- 2% more churches are struggling to pay their bills
- 5% fewer churches are stagnant but hopeful
- 7% fewer churches with stagnant engagement
- 5% more churches growing in discipleship
- 4% more growing number of persons engaged

The work with the Congregational Vitality Pathways has been especially instrumental in helping congregations achieve 100% vitality. Churches participating in the initiatives work from an assessment specific to their congregations and, with the assistance of a guide, develop goals that lead to greater vitality. Through Congregational Vitality Pathways, the congregations can see progress and decide next steps. As each congregation is working with a guide, the feedback on the congregational progress is timely.

Congregations Who Indicated That They Could Teach Others to Create an Intentional Discipleship Process Describe Higher Levels of Vitality

3. Describe congregation's level of vitality	1. Yes	2. No
3a. We have had no professions of faith for the past 3 or more years	8%	92%
3b. We are struggling to pay our bills	8%	92%
3c. We don't have the energy to maintain ministry		100%
3d. We are in decline and have tried many things but none of them have worked		100%
3e. We are stagnant or in decline but are hopeful our current initiatives will bear fruit		100%
3f. We are stagnant in terms of the number of persons who are engaged	8%	92%
3g. We are growing in our discipleship	100%	
3h. We are growing in the number of persons who are engaged	100%	

3. Congregation's racial justice status	1. Yes	2. No
4a. The congregation is on a pathway toward racial justice.	100%	

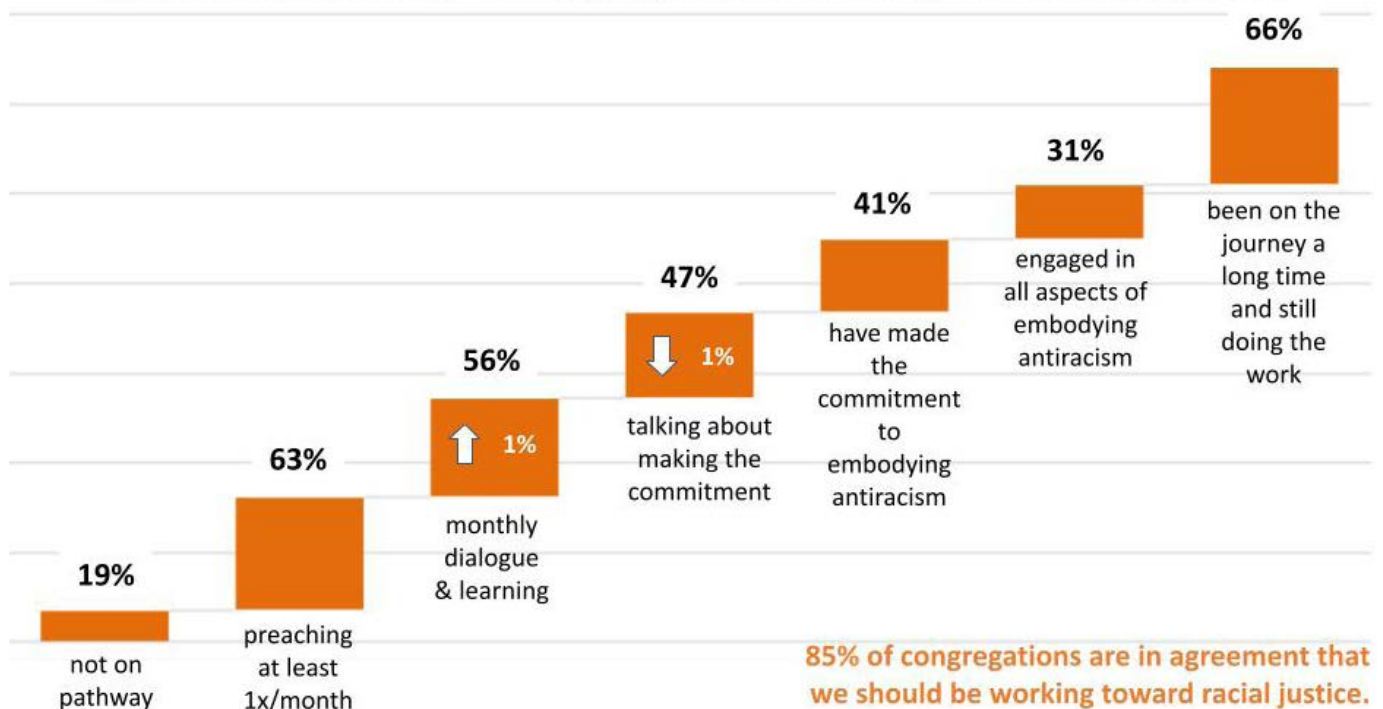
Congregations that classify themselves as potential teaching congregations (for developing an intentional discipleship process) are significantly more vital across almost all dimensions than those that do not. 100% of the congregations who identify as potential teaching churches also say they are growing in discipleship, growing in the number of persons who are engaged and are all on a path to racial justice. None report being in decline or being stagnant. 92% aren't struggling to pay the bills and have experienced professions of faith for the past three or more years.

Look at what happens when congregations keep the main thing the main thing! Amidst the changing landscape of our world, communities and denomination, we are called to remain focused on bearing fruit that will last. We achieve this through our faithful work in deepening discipleship, seeing all the people, living and loving like Jesus, and multiplying impact.

We will most certainly continue to experience the impact of Covid-19 and the process of Disaffiliation in many areas across our denomination, Annual Conference and local congregations. In the midst of any uncertainty, angst or trepidation we feel, let us hold fast to that which is constant and ever before us - Christ's commission to us to Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. As we live into this call, we are assured that Christ will be with us wherever we go.

Question #4 starts with an excerpt from the United Methodist Constitution on Racial Justice in the Book of Discipline. Then invites congregations to describe where they are with regards to racial justice.

Q4 Describe where your congregation is with regards to racial justice

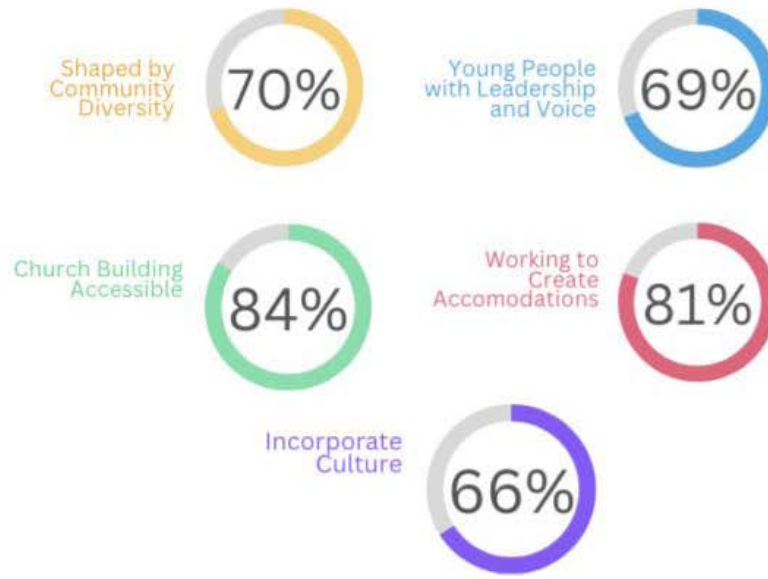


- 1% fewer report that they are on a pathway to racial justice. We still celebrate the more than 80% of our congregations who are.
- There is a slight increase in the number of pastors who preach on racial justice at least once a month
- 1% more congregations report monthly dialogue and learning opportunities

We celebrate the evolution of this work as we listened to leaders struggle to make this real in their contexts. Brave Conversation Resourcers stand ready to support leaders and congregations who ask for help and/or would like support.

DISCIPLESHIP COUNCIL REPORT

Question #5 asks congregations to share the ways that they are creating spaces of belonging and Beloved Community through inclusion, diversity and equity.



- 7% more congregations report being shaped by the community in all of its dimensions of diversity
- 3% fewer congregations report including young people in ministry through providing leadership and voice
- 6% fewer report that their church building is accessible, from entry throughout the interior spaces, to people of a variety of physical abilities. This is likely due to the difference between front door accessibility and full church accessibility.
- We celebrate that 82% of our congregations are working with participants, members and persons who use the space to create accommodations that enable them to fully engage in the life of the congregation. That represents a more than 3% increase from last year
- 3% more congregations with different languages and/or nations represented in their congregation are finding ways to incorporate all participants' cultures into their common, collective culture.

We celebrate the good work at many levels to grow in awareness and action to be and build beloved community, from accessibility audits to engagement that leads to more just and inclusive behavior. And we continue to prayerfully seek to mitigate the effects of Covid on children, family and youth ministry at local church and conference levels even as we celebrate gains in campus ministries.

We thank God for the ways that the realignment of ministry is bearing fruit and for the tenacity of our churches and conference boards and agencies in the midst of significant changes in social and denominational landscapes. Our Discipleship Boards have continued to work to advance local church mission and vitality as well as create more synergy with one another.

Finally, as our Missional Action Planning — otherwise known as MAP — builds momentum and the conference and congregations more actively seek to be good stewards of our God-given resources for the good of our communities, we anticipate more work for the BWC MROC team. The Ministry Relationship Oversight Committee of the Discipleship Council is a standing committee of the Discipleship Council whose purpose is to review, recommend and oversee the process for entities seeking to establish a ministry relationship with the BWC. This year MROC reviewed the contract with Charge Enterprises as the preferred provider for churches who want to provide electric charging stations on their church property.

As the Greater Washington District's Affordable Housing Committee begins to provide consultations for churches outside the district, we anticipate bringing ministry agreements to the 2024 Annual Conference regarding these consultation services and free feasibility studies from Georgetown University.

Thank you for receiving this information about our shared ministry together. We hope you see – as we do – that it's all about love.

CIRCLES OF LOVE

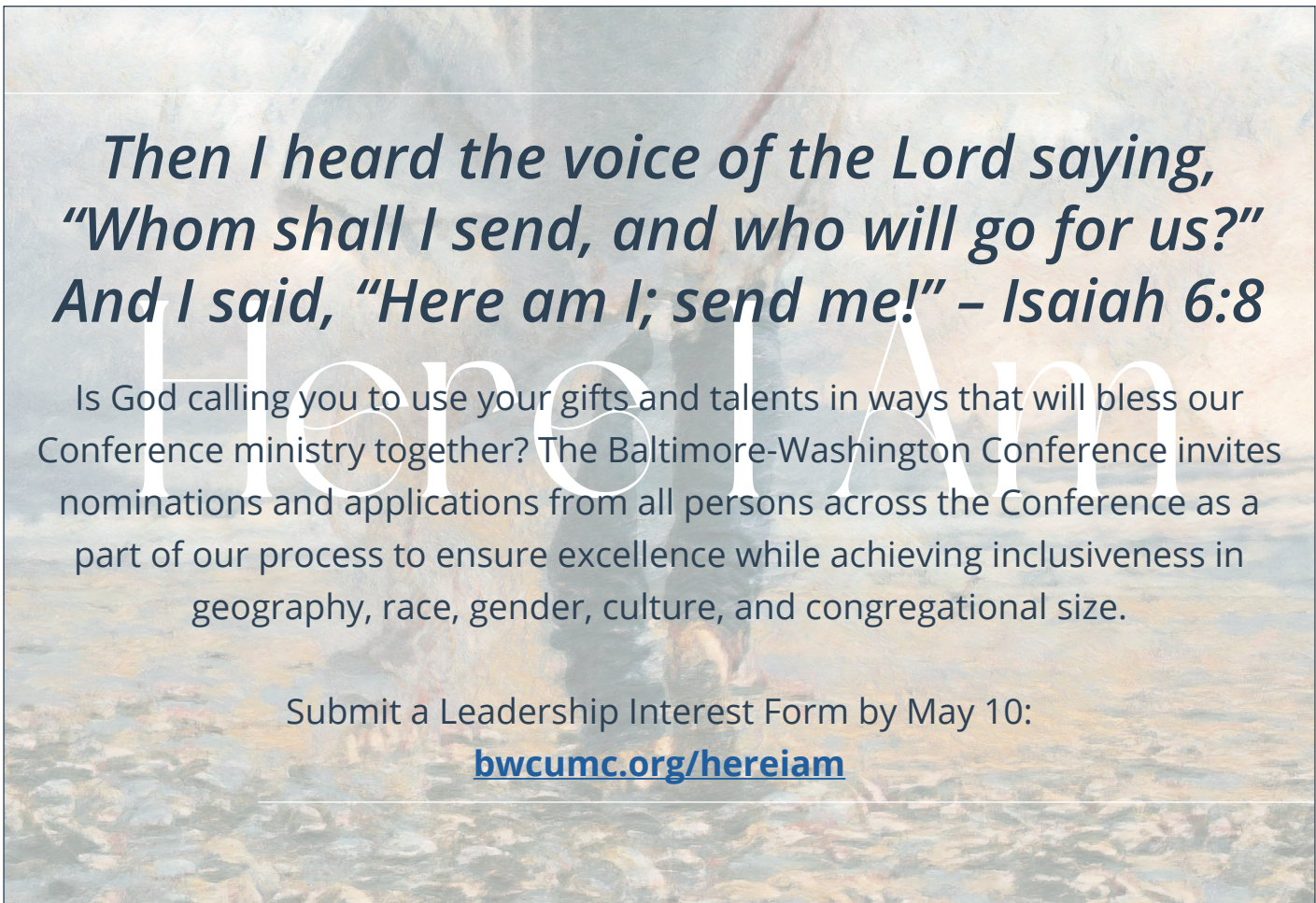
A TIME OF HOLY CONFERENCING AND TRANSFORMATIONAL CONVERSATIONS

Immediately following Bible Study on Thursday, June 1, we will enter a time of holy conferencing and transformational conversations called Circles of Love. Around designated tables of no more than ten people, this will be a sacred (set apart) time for us to have honest and respectful conversations rooted in who we are as disciples of Jesus Christ and how we can unconditionally hold loving space for each other in this particular season in the life of the Church and beyond.

We will co-create an experience of why we must and how we can stay at the table together even when we disagree. In so doing, we will take needed steps toward rebuilding connection and relationship for more healthy holy conferencing.

Each table will have a Table Host (centering voice), guidelines for these conversations, and prompting questions to undergird us. All voting members of the Annual Conference will be randomly assigned to tables and are invited to join us with open minds and hearts. Non-voting members may participate with a neighbor in their areas as desired.

We hope and pray that these conversations will be a source of revival and renewal for each of us in all the ways that make a difference.



*Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying,
“Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?”
And I said, “Here am I; send me!” – Isaiah 6:8*

Is God calling you to use your gifts and talents in ways that will bless our Conference ministry together? The Baltimore-Washington Conference invites nominations and applications from all persons across the Conference as a part of our process to ensure excellence while achieving inclusiveness in geography, race, gender, culture, and congregational size.

Submit a Leadership Interest Form by May 10:

bwcumc.org/hereiam

2023 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMMISSIONING AND ORDINATION

Recommended for Provisional Membership

Jaleesa K. Hall (Deacon)
Cassandra Lawrence (Deacon)
Laurel McNeal (Elder)
Sharon Georgia Milton (Elder)
Lesley C. Newman-Adams (Elder)
Jennifer Tabor Osterfeld (Elder)
Yo Rhie (Elder)
Gwendolyn Faye Rodriguez (Elder)

Recommended for Full Membership

Patrick Hurder Buhrman (Elder)
Narae Kim (Elder)
David Norton (Elder)
Michael Anthony Parker, II (Elder)
Robert Charles Ruggieri, II (Elder)
Melaina N. Trice (Elder)
Sam Tryon (Elder)

Deaconess to be Commissioned: Daphne Hurd

RETIREES CELEBRATE 80+ YEARS OF SERVICE

Glen Arnold	34	Dennis Jackman	32
Valerie Barnes	22	Joan Ann Jones	24
Ira Barr	29	Daniel Theodor Kutrick	12
Cynthia Belt (1/1/2023)	26	Jerry Lowans	32
Thomas Jay Blake	17	Melissa McDade	37
Cindy Caldwell	14	Samson Yebuah Nortey	30
John H. Dean	20	Donna Renn	27
David Deans	20	Leo Rodriguez	35
Lee Steer Ferrell	26	Deborah Scott	43
Lisa Franzen	7	David Showalter	14
Malcolm Frazier	23	Barbara Vivian Suffecool	24
Gerard Americus Green	35	Patricia Turnage	6
Victor Harner	36	Joseph Whalen (2/1/2023)	22
Charles Michael Henning	24	Kathryn Woodrow	33
Chris Holmes (4/1/2023)	42	Thomas E. Young, Jr. (5/1/23)	43
Peggy Ireland	2		

EXHIBITORS

Visit our exhibitors in the South Foyer area:



BWARM

Discipleship Ministries

Heritage International Fashions

Educational Opportunities Tours

Prayer Quilts

Epiphany Studios, Inc. Full Service Stained Glass Art Studio

Wesley Theological Seminary

St. Mary's Ecumenical Institute

The Blueprint for Wellness

Breathe - A Pastor's Journey to Wholeness

Quality Business Solutions

BWCUMC Creation Care-Climate Justice Action & Advocacy

The United Methodist Credit Union

Mid-Atlantic Dept 370

Cheryl's DMV BLING

Quality of Life Retreats

Turnkey Enterprises, LLC

Safe Gatherings

Disability Ministries & Deaf Ministries

Appalachia Service Project

The DeVan Group Publishing Project Spirit Sickle Cell

Wellness & Missions/Heal the Sick (Wesley Theological Seminary)

General Board of Global Ministries

Volunteers in Mission

JOIN BISHOP EASTERLING ON A

HOLY LAND PILGRIMAGE

JANUARY 29 — FEBRUARY 7, 2024

EMBARK ON AN EXTRAORDINARY JOURNEY

Join Bishop LaTrelle Easterling on a sacred adventure that will bring the Bible to life in new ways. Come deepen your discipleship and walk where Jesus once walked.

Enroll today for the 10-day tour of "Land of Jesus: Then and Now" with the Society for Biblical Studies. Additional excursions are also offered.



For every pilgrim you recruit, you get a \$500 discount, bring in five people and your trip is free.



ISRAEL



JORDAN



JERUSALEM

The Holy Land tour includes your flight, transportation, lodging, breakfast and dinner daily and

- A 10-day biblical survey in Israel and Palestine,
- A deep exploration of biblical texts their application in discipleship,
- Experiential learning through extensive site visitation and encounters with Christians, Muslims, and Jews,
- Visits to Jerusalem, Galilee, Bethlehem, Jericho, Nazareth, and the Sea of Galilee.

BWCUMC.ORG/HOLY-LAND-PILGRIMAGE



Lighthouse CONGREGATION

As some churches disaffiliate, many members are choosing to maintain their membership in The United Methodist Church. Lighthouse Congregations offer a welcoming place to belong during this time of grief and transition.

Within the BWC, these are a few that have been named as Lighthouse Congregations:

Westminster UMC in Westminster – Rev. Malcolm Stranathan
St. John’s UMC of the North Carroll Cooperative Parish – Rev. Melissa Rudolph
Hopewell UMC & Wesleyan Chapel UMC in Havre de Grace – Rev. Lynne Humphries-Russ
Mill Creek Parish in Derwood – Rev. Joan Carter-Rimbach
Faith UMC in Rockville – Rev. Laura Norvell
Linden-Linthicum UMC in Clarksville – Rev. Gayle Annis-Forder
Fairhaven UMC in Darnestown – Rev. Ken Hawes
National UMC in Washington D.C. – Rev. Doug Robinson-Johnson

See a full list of Lighthouse Congregations at bwcumc.org/lighthouse. To learn more about remaining United Methodist, contact Rev. Bill Brown at bbrown@bwcumc.org.



A.I.M. to take your *administry* to **the next level.**

Who Are We?

A.I.M. is a Local Chapter of The Professional Administrators of the United Methodist Connectional Structure.

Our Mission:

To provide administrative professionals a supportive base for unity and fellowship and to promote individual growth, professional development, continuing education, and spiritual enrichment.

Upcoming Events:

July 21: Mission Event Supporting Women and Girls thru UMCOR

September 15: Annual Meeting @ West River

Fall Mission Project and Winter Fellowship plans forthcoming.

For more information, visit www.adminsinministry.org

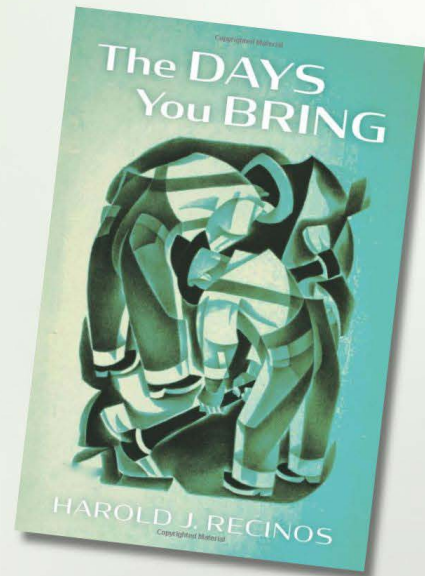
Thursdays at the Table
 TELLING THE WHOLE TRUTH
 WITH BISHOP EASTERLING

CATCH UP ON THE FIRST FIVE EPISODES
 FINAL PODCAST OF THE SEASON, WITH WILLIE JENNINGS, AIRS ON THURSDAY, JUNE 1
PDCBWC.ORG/THURSDAYS-AT-THE-TABLE

Love

love in a time of illness
 opens the gates,
 breaks down the walls,
 sells all hate,
 hushes crying and brings dreams alive with
 a simple kiss. in these times,
 love enfolds us, has us cling
 to each other on earth with
 thirsty lips, stirs the finite
 frame with heaven and feeds
 the hidden sacred flame. love
 in a time of illness is tender
 with the faltering voice,
 warm
 with the sorrowing heart and
 always a kindle of hope. love
 is an unpredictable emotion
 rushing like a river to wash
 us clean and cut canyons in
 our fragile soul.

The Rev. Hal Recinos, a BWC pastor who teaches at Perkins School of Theology, recently published a book of poetry, "The Days You Bring." This poem, Love, is from that book:



Monthly message from your Annual Conference

The Bulletin

Join us as 100 percent of our congregations become 100 percent vital and thriving



NEW RESOURCE OFFERS CONNECTION

Provide the people in your pews with all the vision, purpose and joy of the connection as its being lived out in the Baltimore-Washington and Peninsula-Delaware Conferences of The United Methodist Church. Share the monthly Bulletin with members of your congregation.



IN THE KNOW

Are you receiving all the information you need? There are a variety of ways the conference communicates with you. Make sure you are subscribed to or following all of these communications:

Baltimore-Washington Conference e-connection

The e-connection is a free weekly e-newsletter sent straight to your inbox. Not receiving it? E-mail Melissa Lauber at mlauber@bwcumc.org to be added.

Monthly message from your Annual Conference

The Bulletin

Join us as 100 percent of our congregations become 100 percent vital and thriving

The Bulletin is an information resource to help you tell our connectional story to the people in your faith community. The Bulletin is a monthly, ready-to-reproduce insert designed for your church bulletin and newsletter. pdcbwc.org/the-bulletin



Are you following us on social media?

Facebook: facebook.com/BWCUMC

Instagram: instagram.com/BWCUMC

YouTube: youtube.com/@baltimorewashingtonconference

2023 MINISTRY CALENDAR

AUGUST

22-24: [Living Well Retreat at Pecometh](#)
(Deadline to apply is July 31)

SEPTEMBER

- 1: [Missional Innovation](#) Grant Applications open
- 12: [Training Tuesday](#) from 7-8:30 p.m. – Leader Development Opportunities
- 15: [Hispanic Heritage month](#) (through Oct. 15)
- 19: [Training Tuesday](#) from 7-8:30 p.m. – Congregational Development Opportunities
- 25-Oct 1: [Deaf Awareness week](#)
- 26-28: [Living Well Retreat at Manidokan](#)
(Deadline to apply is July 31)
- 30: UMC Has Talent Youth Gathering (at Pecometh)

OCTOBER

- 1: [Unified Funding Task Force grant applications due](#)
- 1: [Church Conference Reports Due](#)
- 1: [World Communion Sunday](#)
- 7: Small Church Forum
- 9: [The Non-Anxious Leader: Family Systems Basics Online Course](#) (runs until 11/5; Deadline to apply is September 29)
- 9: Planter's Discernment Academy begins (Deadline to register September 29)
- 10: [Training Tuesday](#) from 7-8:30 p.m. – SPRC
- 15: [Laity Sunday](#) - "Rise Up! - Remain" (II Tim. 1:13)
- 19: [Next Level](#) with Bishop Easterling from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. (Deadline to register for in-person October 6)
- 21: Fall Confirmation Historic Sites Visit
- 24-26: [Living Well Retreat at Ocean City](#)
(Deadline to register July 31)
- 24: [Training Tuesday](#) 7-8:30 p.m. – Nominations
- 27-29: Youth Retreat at Manidokan
- 28: [CRCC - A Diverse Church by Design](#) begins (Deadline to register October 1)

NOVEMBER

- 1: Missional Innovation [grant applications](#) due
- 1: Intent to Apply [Congregational Vitality Pathways](#) due
- 4: YPM Training Day for Leaders at West River
- 4: Fresh Expressions Academy begins (Deadline to register is October 23)
- 7: [Training Tuesday](#) from 7-8:30 p.m. – Trustees
- 9: Clergy Training: Impact of Pornography and the Intersection with Child Sex trafficking and Abuse (Virtual), 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (Deadline to register October 20)
- 14: [Training Tuesday](#) from 7-8:30 p.m. – Finance
- 17-19: Children's Retreat at West River
- 26: [United Methodist Student Day](#)
- 28: [Training Tuesday](#) from 7-8:30 p.m. – Church Council

DECEMBER

- 1: [Pastoral Evaluations](#) are due
- 3: [Advent](#) begins
- 9: West River winter camp retreat
- 25: Christmas Day "Christ our Savior is born!"

2024 MINISTRY CALENDAR

JANUARY

- 1: Camping [summer staff application](#) opens and hiring begins
- 2: College Scholarship applications are open
- 6: [Epiphany](#)
- 14: [Human Relations Day](#)
- 20: Racial-Ethnic Church Forum
- 30: [Statistical reports due](#)

FEBRUARY

- 1: Overnight [Camping registration opens](#)
- 1: [Resolutions to Annual Conference due](#)
- 4: [Disability Awareness Sunday](#) (first Sunday in February)
- 11: [Scout Sunday](#)
- 14: [Ash Wednesday](#)
- 15: Catalyst Initiative application due
- 15: Clergy Sexual Ethics and Boundary Training (Virtual), 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (Deadline to register January 31)
- 15: Day [Camp registration opens](#)
- 25: Camping Sunday

MARCH

- 1: [Summer camp scholarship application](#) and Volunteer Registration opens
- 7: [Next Level](#) with Bishop Easterling from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. (Deadline to register for in-person February 6)
- 17: [UMCOR Sunday](#)
- 24: Palm Sunday
- 28: Maundy Thursday
- 29: Good Friday
- 31: Easter Sunday - "Christ is Risen!"

APRIL

- 1: [United Funding Task Force grant applications due](#)
- 1: Annual Conference Award nominations due
- 5-7: Annual Youth Worker Retreat
- 13: Spring Confirmation Historic Sites Visit
- 23-May 3: General Conference

MAY

- 1: [Peace with Justice grant applications due](#)
- 11: [Pre-Conference Session](#)
- 13: [Seeds of Security](#) Golf Tournament
- 19: UM Heritage Sunday
- 29-31: BWC Annual Conference Session

JUNE

- 2: [Peace with Justice Sunday](#)
- 3-8: Pilgrimage Week (June 8 is Pilgrimage Day)
- 15: Colonial Days at [Strawbridge Shrine](#), 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- 30: Fund balance reports due

JOHN 13:31-35

“When he was gone, Jesus said, ‘Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God is glorified in him, God will glorify the Son in himself, and will glorify him at once. My children, I will be with you only a little longer. You will look for me, and just as I told the Jews, so I tell you now: Where I am going, you cannot come. A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.’”

GUIDELINES FOR HOLY CONFERENCING WHAT GOD EXPECTS OF US

- Every person is a child of God. Always speak respectfully. One can disagree without being disagreeable.
 - As you patiently listen and observe the behavior of others, be open to the possibility that God can change the views of any or all parties in the discussion.
 - Listen patiently before formulating responses.
 - Strive to understand the experience out of which others have arrived at their views.
 - Be careful in how you express personal offense at differing opinions. Otherwise, dialogue may be inhibited.
 - Accurately reflect the views of others when speaking. This is especially important when you disagree with a position.
 - Avoid using inflammatory words, derogatory names, or an excited and angry voice.
 - Avoid making generalizations about individuals and groups. Make your point with specific evidence and examples.
 - Make use of facilitators and mediators.
 - Remember that people are defined, ultimately, by their relationship with God — not by the flaws we discover, or think we discover, in their views and actions.
-

LOCAL, JURISDICTIONAL, AND GENERAL CONFERENCES:

The General Conference of the United Methodist Church
April 23-May 3, 2024, in Charlotte, NC

The Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference Session
Wednesday, May 29, to Friday, May 31, 2024, at the Hilton Hotel in Baltimore

The Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference
July 10-13, 2024



Baltimore-Washington Conference
The United Methodist Church