

## HISTORICAL REPORTS

### **400.01 - The Anti-Racism Task Force Historical Report**

The Anti-racism Task Force's (ARTF) has a committed and engaged leadership team. Led by Nadia Kanhai, the members include Rev. Jarrod Severing, who stepped down from the Co-Chair roll but continues as a member; Yvette Harris-Black; Rev. Hong-kien Jeremiah Lee; Rev. Matthew Krings; Rev. Violet Johnicker; and Rev. Luther Mason. Rev. Jeremiah Thompson served with us in 2020-21. We continue to pray for Latinx/Hispanic representation. Project Manager Amania Drane is instrumental in our work. In January, ARTF welcomed consultant, Dr. Richard Guzman, to help ARTF be more intentional, strategic and sustainable in our work. Dr. Guzman first served as an active member of the ARTF Champion Team.

ARTF continues to focus on youth, adults and clergy goals. Our October visioning session centered on enhancing and expanding programs with proven success in informing, engaging and action toward addressing systemic racism. Our all-volunteer Champion Team has stepped up to help lead these programs and initiatives, which simultaneously provide opportunities for collaborating with local congregations, agencies, and committees. We cannot list all 80 members, but their engagement is beyond anything we expected and we're most grateful.

The Clergy Peer Reflection & Engagement Series (CPRES) rolled out its first in-person retreat in September 2021 with 5 weeks of post-retreat virtual session with 35 attendees. The next retreat will tentatively be held Fall 2022. The Becoming Beloved Community educational initiative held its pilot in September with 25 attendees; followed by its first official session in March with about 25 attendees. An additional five sessions are scheduled for the remainder of the year. These two premier training and engagement experiences are geared toward adult learning for clergy and lay, along with post-event continued engagement. We solicit feedback from our pilot programs and subsequent sessions and try to improve these programs each time. For instance, we plan to add trained facilitators for CPRES sessions.

The other significant training opportunity we worked on centered around the mandatory clergy training requirement passed at the 2020 Annual Conference session. We met with other annual conferences who have rolled out similar training, as well as our ethnic caucuses and Board of Ordained Ministry (BOM) leaders. In November, ARTF presented a menu of 4 training options to BOM. This menu considers that one size does not fit all when it comes to clergy training and allows clergy to pick the best option for them individually. The decision on how to roll out training is in the capable hands of BOM.

A pilot of the South Side Cultural Tour brought together 25 people for a full-day tour to learn, discuss, and see important historical sites and work being done on the south side of Chicago. Based on feedback, the committee plans to host a 2-day/1-night tour in the fall.

ARTF kicked off its first 2022 Speaker Series (four sessions), co-sponsored by General Board of Church & Society, the Indiana and North Georgia Conferences, and the NIC Committee on Native American Ministries. The first session in March 2022 had 125 registrants (88 attendees). This project has been in the planning stages in various forms for nearly 2 years, but postponed and re-worked due to the pandemic and duplication.

Although not as visible, the Ephesus Project (expanded pulpit / congregational exchange) two pilot congregations have worked together for more than 1 year, forming strong bonds that still bring them together weekly via Zoom. Other churches have expressed an interest but expanding beyond our successful pilot program is more complicated as it requires a high level of dedication and cooperation for those congregations and their pastors.

After a year of relative success and deeply meaningful work, the ARTF decided not to continue its youth pilot program, Justice Generation, or its Summer Camp. Instead, the Anti-Racism and Discipleship Task Forces are collaborating on a youth initiative focused on research and supporting local Youth Leaders in sustaining and strengthening their work. This team is consistently learning, supporting, and engaging the local church to assist by being a thought partner of useful information, resources, and support.

As we develop and refine new and existing initiatives, we do so with an eye for who will take on this work after the ARTF ceases. In many cases, the logical successor is the Conference Commission on Religion & Race. In other cases, this may involve other existing committees or new ones. Our hope is that these groups be empowered in the way ARTF has been and that one day, each entity be anti-racism in nature.

Submitted by Nadia Kanhai, ARTF Chair, lay member of Naperville: Grace UMC

### **400.02 - Discipleship Task Force Historical Report**

The Discipleship Task Force has experienced joy this year in breaking new ground and reviving annual activities. We are grateful for the prayers and support of our Annual Conference in Discipleship ministries throughout the year. In October (2021,) our Task Force sponsored the Day of Prayer and Fasting, leading up to the Ordination Service. Thanks to our planning team, which included: Amania Drane, Nadia Kanhai, Brittany Isaac, and Karen Bonnell. With the support of Amania Drane and Anne Marie Gerhardt, many people took turns hosting 1 hour ZOOM sessions throughout the day – Jarrod Severing, G Morris Jarkloh, Karen Bonnell, Seamus Enright, Jeremiah Thompson, Matthew Krings, Scott Christie, Rich Rubietta, Jeremiah Lee, Audrena Nanabray, and Sharon Rice. In addition, in-person prayer times were hosted by First UMC in Arlington Heights, St Mark in Chicago, First UMC in Elgin, Grace UMC in Rockford, and Paw Paw UMC. This was a powerful day of prayer and connection for our local churches, annual conference, and wider world.

On November 13th and 14th, our Task Force organized the NIC “Tending to the Harvest” weekend. On Saturday, we hosted a Youth Leader symposium, “Growing Together,” based on Ephesians 4:15, “ But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ.” Rev. Kyungsu Park offered a presentation on “Youth Discipleship and Relationship.” This presentation was followed by breakout sessions introducing Intentional Discipleship Systems. On Sunday, we hosted an (in-person and virtual) All-Conference Worship service at Our Saviour's UMC in Schaumburg. Music was led by Rev. Rich Rubietta. Preaching was led by Rev. Olu Brown.

In January (2022,) we met with author Gary Neal Hansen to inaugurate the NIC Book Club with his book, *Kneeling with Giants*. During Lent, each District had at least one study group participating in this online study. Special thanks to leaders: Anne Coffman and Joy Thor-Bjornsen Coates (Lake North,) Tenille Power (Lake South,) Kris

Aves (Prairie North,) Steven Novy and Elaine Meldrum (Prairie Central,) and Buzz Wheeler and Karen Bonnell (Prairie South.) Pastors throughout the conference also led their own studies. Videos of Gary Neal Hansen's presentations are on the Discipleship web page at [umcnic.org/discipleship/NICBookClub](http://umcnic.org/discipleship/NICBookClub) for a limited time. We look forward to our next featured book, which is *Soul Reset* by the late Junius Dotson.

We continue our focus on Intentional Discipleship Systems. 3 Districts (Lake South, Prairie Central, and Prairie South) offered IDS training in their annual District Trainings. Trainers continue to meet during quarterly and monthly sessions. The NIC Prayer Network continues to post monthly devotion and prayer focus on the NIC website. We have an NIC Prayer Team that continues to meet monthly on Zoom to pray systematically for clergy and churches, as well as conference leaders, and Advance Specials in "Living the Beatitudes: A Call to Action and Connection." Thank you to all who share our passion for nurturing disciples of Jesus Christ across the NIC.

Discipleship Task Force  
Co-Chairs, Karen Bonnell, Caleb Hong  
P Devon Brown, Sharon Rice, Seamus Enright, Ellen Feliciano, Ayla Samson, Connie Schweitzer

Submitted by Karen Bonnell and Caleb Hong, Co-Chairs

#### **400.03 - Vital Congregations Task Force 2022 Historic Report**

The Vital Congregations Task Force has been challenged by the pandemic as our congregations necessarily focused on basic functions in a time of uncertainty. The taskforce members themselves were also distracted by these needs. Even with these barriers, as we move into 2022 there is renewed energy and planning underway.

During the past year a pilot project was launched with Epicenter under the leadership of Paul Nixon and Beth Estcok. While a good number of churches were identified for the effort, several found it difficult to move forward, while others revealed hidden strengths. A team from each congregation that included clergy and laity went through a Readiness 360 survey and received coaching and on-site visits while setting goals for the future. Eleven churches across the conference have been part of this pilot.

Through this work the taskforce continues to look for tools to assist congregations in defining their futures. One of these tools is a discernment process lead by Beth Estcok. The taskforce will assess this tool as a way of helping our congregations move in new directions.

A grassroots interest in the Simplified Administrative Structure for church governance (SAS) has also surfaced and Rev. Martin Lee, Director of Congregational Development and Redevelopment is pulling together a team to train interested churches in this model. The goal is to free up membership in local churches for vital ministry rather than being bogged down in endless meetings.

Congregational Development also offered a Vital Congregations workshop in March giving laity and clergy tools for discerning their futures. In addition, Bishop Hopkins is leading the NIC cabinet through intentional long-range strategic mapping for congregations. These activities have led to a focus on solidifying more uniform structures in each district for strategic planning.

Coaching remains another strong tool in the work of creating vitality, and a new cohort of churches will be working with Paul Nickerson on taking the church to the community.

A Statistical analysis of the spiritual and financial strengths of our churches will be a focus as we come out of the pandemic over the next several years.

None of this work would be possible without the leadership of Rev. Martin Lee (DCD). There are many entities all working on the same goals. During the 2022-2023 conference year – Code Red (Congregational Development and Redevelopment), district teams, cabinet members and members of the Vital Congregations Task Force will come together to align their work and goals.

Members of the Vital Congregations Task Force are: Mike Jones, Brittany Isaac, Dennis Langdon, Robert Butler, Eddie Eddy, Bob Pritchard, Cerna Rand, Tina Shelton and Tedd Steele.

Submitted by Arlene Christopherson

#### **400.04 - Annual Conference Shepherding Team**

The Annual Conference Shepherding Team and its counterpart organizations at the district level were formed by legislation in 2017 in response to the need for a conference wide central leadership body. The ACST brings the administrative and programmatic bodies of Northern Illinois Conference together for the purposes of strategic planning and overall coordination of the conference's life. The team further connects the work of the conference through the leadership at the district level.

The ACST continues to serve in coordination of the NIC strategic goals of (1) making disciples, (2) working against racism and (3) creating vital congregations. These strategic goals were adopted by the annual conference in the summer of 2019. The work of these three task forces is shared in their own historic reports. We celebrate the dedicated members of our task forces who have offered education, resources, inspiration and information to local congregations as they live out their ministry and mission throughout the season of pandemic. Their energy, creativity and commitment has helped the NIC live out its mission.

In addition to furthering the work of the strategic goals, in 2021 the ACST prepared and successfully passed legislation to realign program areas to better reflect the work of the annual conference.

As a learning organization, each area represented around the table has been given time to share their focus and work with all our leadership. This sharing has created a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities each area addresses while also highlighting the interconnectedness of all that we do.

During 2021-2022 the ACST has prioritized the following responsibilities from its organizing legislation:

- 1) Guiding the NIC in the event of a significant shift in the denomination or jurisdictional realignment of conferences.
- 2) Facilitating communication and healthy relationships between districts, NIC leadership, staff, committees, and ministries.
- 3) Focusing NIC resources to equip local churches and ministry settings to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.
- 4) Advocating, monitoring, and celebrating diversity at every level of leadership throughout the NIC.

In consultation with the Interim Bishop, John L. Hopkins, the ACST has monitored the impact of a thrice delayed General Conference on the life of the Northern Illinois Conference. Reports are regularly shared at ACST meetings so leadership around the conference is informed concerning the impact of the delayed General Conference. The ACST leadership partners with Bishop Hopkins in communications strategies.

During the 2022 annual conference session the ACST will coordinate small group conversations to further build healthy relationships between our conference members as we continue to grow together in our mission and ministry.

We look forward to leading Northern Illinois Conference into a healthy and witness-filled future.

**Members of the Annual Conference Shepherding Team**

Bonnell, Karen S.	Prairie South dST/Discipleship
Chong, Hannah Hwa-Young	BOOM Rep
Dangerfield, Deborah	AC Session Chair
Gracie, Elizabeth	Co-Chair ACST
LaBoy, Facilia	Prairie Central dST
Lacey, Chester	Lake North dST
Manzi, Mark	Lay Leader Rep
Mariari, Matthew	Prairie North dST
McCoy, Myron F.	Co-Chair ACST
Park-Landis, Meg	Age Level Ministries
Pendergrass, Nancy	Nominations
Price, David	Lake South dST
Rawlinson, Mary	Justice and Mercy Ministries
Rudy, Martha	Trustees Chair
Samson, Ayla	Asian American Fellowship Chair
Scott, Tammy	CCFA Rep
Severing, Jarrod	ARTF Rep
Underwood Wilson, Laura	Dev. And Revitalization
<b>Ex-Officio</b>	
Bishop John Hopkins	Interim Bishop
Arlene Christopherson	Director of Cont. Ministries/ Asst to Bishop
Anne Marie Gerhardt	Director of Communications

We would like to thank those whose terms ended in 2021 and those whose terms are ending in 2022 for contributing to our work and enriching our fellowship:

Jeff Brace, Alka Lyall, Harry Nichol, Dennis Oglesby, Meg Park, Mary Rawlinson, Luis Reyes, Laura Wilson Underwood

In Christ Service,  
Submitted by Elizabeth Gracie and Rev. Myron McCoy

**400.05 - Chicago Black Methodists for Church Renewal**

Continuing under the takeover of the COVID-19 pandemic, Chicago BMCR transitioned forward with newly-elected leadership.

Highlights of 2021 Programs and Events

January-March

- Celebrated the installation of newly-elected officers virtually, highlighting the president and recognizing continuing officers, new LIFE and Founders' Legacy LIFE members.
- Six (6) local churches were identified to participate in SBC21 Congregational Development training in partnership with the Northern IL Conference. Negotiated and finalized the SBC 21 contract, implementation of which was delayed until the new SBC 21 national director took charge. Subsequently, teams of the participating congregations were paired with their SBC21 facilitators and met virtually. All of the congregations participated in the orientation. Two (2) churches received technical equipment and training to enable their communication virtually.
- Commemorated Annual National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, providing a speaker for the Hartzell Memorial UMC annual worship service.
- Organized and conducted Pembroke Institute Second Annual Black Teens Matter Holiday Hook-Up on Presidents' Day. Panel members discussed the impact of COVID-19 educationally, socially, emotionally, and spiritually. High school and college students provided leadership, resulting in calling for greater church support, outreach and concern for students' mental health challenges.
- Promoted Annual National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS.
- Participated in National BMCR's 54th Annual Virtual General Meeting, which focused on "Racism: The Unfinished Agenda of the United Methodist Church."

April-June

- Held 1st Quarterly Membership Meeting stressing the importance of participating in conversations around pandemic issues, i.e., testing and vaccination concerns.
- Accepted and responded to invitations from various City agencies and organizations to appeal to the faith community to lead in promoting testing and vaccination efforts. Local churches began to provide opportunities and assistance for members to get tested and vaccinated. This was also encouraged by the Northern Illinois Conference
- During National Nurses Month in May, BMCR partnered with local churches to celebrate and honor nurses who actively serve as COVID-19 Lifesavers. 17 nurses received unique trophies, engraved BMCR Bibles, and masks. Each church determined how and when presentations would be made; some shared videos and photographs.
- Celebrated Juneteenth at Wesley UMC with a forum and panel of first responders, which included a tribute to Rev. Dr. Calvin Morris. New BMCR LIFE and Honorary Founders' Legacy LIFE members were honored, in addition to retirees Rev. Darneather Murph-Heath and Rev. Dwight Stewart. An outdoor festival followed, including vendors, music, games, food and family entertainment. COVID-19 testing and vaccinations were also provided.
- Registered 10 Pembroke Institute Black Teens Matter youth to participate in the Southeast Jurisdiction BMCR's 24th Annual (2-day Virtual) Youth Harambee.

## July-September

- Supported and promoted local church sites for COVID-19 vaccinations. Each month saw an increase in congregations providing this service in their local communities. Our United Methodist Churches were visible and present in partnership with City, County, State, and community health care agencies.
- Joined with the NIC in encouraging local churches to contribute to the Anti-Racism Task Force and Justice initiatives.
- Shared with Resurrection UMC in its Youth Night Revival Service by providing the preacher (youth mentor, motivator, trainer, and author) Minister Jonathan Banks. Youth and leaders from Maple Park and Greenstone attended. Tee-Shirts, BMCR masks and "Raise Your GPA (God Point Average)" book by Minister Banks were given to each youth in attendance.
- Continued support of local church and community food pantry programs funded last year by Global Ministries through the NIC. Post-Grant evaluations, required by the funding body, were collected from each recipient and submitted before the deadline.

## October-December

- Recognized pastors in gratitude for their tireless, selfless servant leadership and challenges throughout the pandemic. BMCR offered encouragement and inspiration with tokens of appreciation to those in close proximity and thoughtful messages to those in outlying areas.
- Completed evaluation and review of 16-month participation in national CoVPN (COVID-19 Prevention Network) Faith Initiative led by the Health Matters component of the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. During virtual meetings, we reported on the work of local churches carrying out various ministries despite the impact of COVID and HIV/AIDS in Black and faith communities.
- Participated in the Virtual North Central Jurisdiction BMCR 49th Annual Meeting, led by Rev. Dennis M. Oglesby, Jr., Chairperson. The theme was RACISM: THE UNFINISHED AGENDA.
- Supported Hartzell Memorial by getting an M.D./HIV/AIDS advocate to speak for their annual WORLD AIDS DAY commemoration worship service. Referral obtained through our partnership with CHAMPS (Creative Health and Medical Pathways for Scholars).
- Completed planning, in partnership with McCormick Theological Seminary, to implement WORLD AIDS DAY, 17th Annual Clergy and Lay Leadership Summit for HIV/AIDS Community Outreach, founded by Sylvia Jo Oglesby, BMCR Keeping Hope Alive HIV/AIDS Ministry and Program Coordinator. The virtual event drew local and national participation.
- Partnered with newly-formed Black-led community-based partner organizations in their first commemorative WORLD AIDS AWARENESS DAY SUMMIT ON RACIAL INEQUITY IN HIV/AIDS PUBLIC HEALTH FUNDING.
- Celebrated the IN-PERSON 53rd BMCR Annual Meeting and Founders' Day event, honoring 17 local church COVID-19 awardees for rising above and beyond the call of duty in sustaining and maintaining their local church during 2021. Each honoree received an Igniting Flame Trophy, BMCR Bible with engraved name, BMCR beverage bottle and mask. CHAMPS Medical students provided temperature checks and volunteers monitored proof of vaccination requirements. Rev. Innis Miller was preacher and Rev. Norval Brown conducted the Libation honoring the legacy of our ancestors, BMCR Founders and those whose memories we cherish. We lifted up names of the following BMCR Members who departed in 2021: Violette Yvonne Brooks, Jessie Lyles Lucas, Rev. Flora G. Robinson, Fonzena McLin, Clarice Dean, Pearl E. Day and Charlie Alexander.

In conclusion, the year 2021 was filled with many unexpected challenges but, by "Holding on to God's Unchanging Hand," we were able to persevere and carry out the mission and ministry opportunities at hand. We are grateful for our partnership with the Northern IL Conference and the support that enables us to continue in pursuit of the goal "To Make Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World. Submitted by Chicago BMCR April 1, 2022

**400.06 - Church and Society Historical Report**

After a hiatus due to COVID, The NIC Committee on Church and Society began meeting again in January 2021. With some returning members and some new, at first we met to get to know each other and to dream what we wanted this committee to be and to accomplish. It seemed important that we continue the grants that had been given out before. After discussing what we hoped to target with the grants and what kind of follow-up we wished to see, we developed our grant application. We found out after considerable time and energy writing our application procedure that there was already one in place that would be used.

We awarded three grants in 2021: The Black Covenant Group at United Church of Rogers Park, Youth Empowerment Program through Elgin First UMC, and Pan-African Rural Health. We also supported Chicago Religious Leaders Network on Latin America. It is a goal of this committee to increase information about this grant in order to get more applications and further help those working in social reform.

Submitted by Elisa Gatz, chair

**Committee on Episcopacy Historical Report 2021-2022**

The Northern Illinois Conference Committee on Episcopacy serves as liaison and wise counsel to the Bishop. We are charged with providing the Bishop with constructive, honest feedback; the voice and sentiment of the UMC body; while offering guidance and direction. While much of the last two years has led committees into uncharted ways of doing their work, this committee has also changed its focus in significant ways. The delay in General Conference also meant a delay in Jurisdictional Conference, which also meant a delay in Episcopal Elections. Since Bishop Sally Dyck took another position as GC Ecumenical Officer, Northern Illinois was left without a bishop. The College of Bishops appointed retired Bishop John Hopkins as interim for the NIC in 2020 for one year. Continued delays in General and Jurisdictional Conferences extended the time that the NIC needed episcopal coverage, and Bishop Hopkin's interim appointment was continued for an additional year. Typically, at this time in the quadrennium, the Committee on Episcopacy would be conducting a mid-quadrennium evaluation. This group is waiting on guidance on a possible 2022 Jurisdictional Conference before going forward with writing any evaluations or conference profiles. In addition, the North Central Jurisdiction voted last year to decrease one episcopal leader position. If Jurisdictional Conference meets this year, one of the items that will likely be decided is which conferences will be yoked under one bishop. There is a NCJ committee meeting, on which NIC's Gregory Gross is a member, to discuss the possible options for episcopal area boundaries.

By the time NIC Annual Conference 2022 meets, we hope to have decisions on a possible Jurisdictional Conference, Episcopal Elections, and realigned conferences. Our future work depends in a large part on the answers to those questions.

Submitted by Elisa Gatz, chair

**400.07 - Board of Global Ministries**

The Itineration and Missionary Support team reports that all missionaries scheduled to itinerate in 2022 will continue to do so virtually. We encourage supporting churches and missionaries to connect in smaller virtual meetings following their Global Ministries hosted #stillinmission episodes. Rather than traveling to the U.S. and making rounds to supporting churches for several months, missionaries will make time available to meet with individual churches for a period of 3 months following their #stillinmission episode.

Each year, the church with the highest per-capita contributions receives the John Wesley Award, which this year goes to Triumph United Methodist Church. The church with the highest total amount of financial support receives the Phillip Otterbein Award, which goes to the United Methodist Church of Libertyville.

The new version of our conference mission giving, Mission Links, Living the Beatitudes is providing an easier access to mission sites, expediting the navigation process for local churches. Each mission site and missionary is given an icon/s indicating how they link back and are responding to Christ's message in the Beatitudes. Churches must still be faithful and honor 100% of apportionment giving to be recognized as a Mission Covenant Church like a Rainbow Covenant Church in past years.

The Annual Conference "Fill the Truck Mission Challenge" has come back after a halt due to the Pandemic. This year we are focusing on Midwest Mission's most needed items. We have designed a form that provides flexibility for church members to provide financial support, donate MMDC kits, make bulk purchases, minimize the need for in-store shopping or choose other options that are safe and convenient for them to support this year's challenge, even if we face additional Covid-19 challenges.

In the fall, a collection drive was organized to support recovery efforts from the 2021 Hurricanes and the devastating earthquake in Haiti. Also, new permanent collection sites in each district were set up around the conference to drop off donations.

Mission scholarship from the Northern Illinois United Methodist Volunteers were set in place for Mission Journey Team Members requesting scholarship funds. The scholarships are given to people participating in a mission journey at an approved mission site with an UMVIM trained leader.

We are grateful for staff member, Lisa Smith, who came on board this year, and is helping us with link and booklet updates.

We extend our gratitude to Rev. Arlene Christopherson who provides us with much support and guidance in this sacred work.

Submitted by Shirley Pulgar Huges, Kris Aves, and Larry Dunlap Berg

**400.08 - Board of Laity**

2020 found most district and conference training events cancelled due to the Covid pandemic. 2021 found us pivoting and working to bring this training back via ZOOM. Members of the Board of Laity in their roles as District Lay Leaders, UMM and UMW presidents, and Director of Lay Servant Ministries helped provide these leadership events. As a Board, we also convened a Laity Session of Annual Conference via ZOOM. Five local church ministries were highlighted. Conference Lay Leaders with Anne Marie Gerhardt, NIC Director of Communications, discussed the multitude of ways local churches can receive help from our conference. Finally, there was a breakout session that provided an opportunity for lay members to Annual Conference to meet with their new District Superintendents and District Lay Leaders. While a technical glitch caused some problems, those that were able to connect to the breakout rooms had a productive time.

The Board of Laity was excited to welcome over 200 people to this year's virtual Laity Convocation - HOLD FAST TO THE MAST, Strengthening Our Spiritual Formation. Bishop John Hopkins led off the morning with an encouraging message of support for the laity of our conference and of the importance of continuing to develop our spiritual formation.

Headliners were Kara Lassen Oliver; Dr. Regina Davis-Bridges; and George Groves. (Ms. Oliver, Associate Publisher of The Upper Room, brought ideas of spiritual formation in community along with John Wesley's focus on spiritual formation.) She also talked about the importance of lay persons and what we bring to the spiritual formation of our churches, districts, and conferences. Rev. Dr. Regina Davis-Bridges, an NIC Deacon, focused her presentation on the power of Rauch - the Divine Gift of Breath. We learned the spiritual practice of sacred breathwork for mind, body, and spiritual healing and restoration. Finally, our own George Groves, UMM Conference President, discussed the importance of small groups for spiritual formation. He also provided practical ways to establish a small group in a local church. We also heard of exciting ministries at four NIC churches - Chicago: Greenstone UMC, "A Legacy of Church and Community Revitalization, Mount Morris: Disciples UMC "Lot 12 Kids Club," River Forest UMC: A New Twist on Traditional Ministry," and Roselle UMC: "NitWits."

Your Conference Co-Lay Leaders continue to represent laity on a wide range of conference committees and boards. Connie Augsburger represents the laity on the Conference Board of "Trustees," NICUM Insurance Board, and the Episcopacy Committee along with co-chairing the Board of Laity. Mark Manzi represents the laity on the Annual Conference Shepherding Team, the Annual Conference Committee, the Association of Annual Conference Lay Leaders, along with co-chairing the Board of Laity. He also is a member of the Anti-Racism Task Force's Champions Team. Eugene Williams represents laity on the Board of Ordained Ministry, the Episcopacy Committee, the Nominations Committee, the Board of Church and Society, the United Methodist Foundation Board, and chairs the CSD Committee of Ordained Ministry, is Treasurer of the Conference UMM, along with co-chairing the Board of Laity. All three of us are also members of the AACLL - Association of Annual Conference Lay Leaders. We are honored to serve the laity of our conference.

Submitted by Connie Augsburger, Mark Manzi, Eugene Williams  
(Conference Co-Lay Leaders)

**400.09 - Board of Trustees Historical Report**

FOCUSING NIC RESOURCES TO EQUIP LOCAL CHURCHES AND MINISTRY SETTINGS TO MAKE DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST FOR THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE WORLD

The Board of Trustees of this conference meet monthly (via Zoom these past two years). Major responsibilities include monitoring the NIC's asset protection program (insurance), risk management, and property management.

**ASSET PROTECTION AND RISK MANAGEMENT**

- Ongoing support of Dwayne Jackson, Arlene Christopherson, and the Cabinet as they work to make sure all clergy have successfully completed Safe Gatherings training as required by our umbrella insurer
- Encouraging clergy to make sure all church staff and volunteers who work with youth and vulnerable persons complete the Safe Gatherings training
- Signed the settlement agreement regarding the class-action lawsuit against the Boy Scouts of America for a little over \$754,000 (the NIC's portion of a \$30M contribution by The United Methodist Church toward the settlement trust fund for abuse victims), which, if accepted by the U.S. Bankruptcy Court, would indemnify troop sponsoring organizations against future liability and avoid potential individual Conference and local church court settlements of many millions of dollars. More information can be found at this URL: <https://www.newsweek.com/united-methodists-contribute-30m-sexual-assault-settlement-boy-scouts-america-1661971>

**PROPERTY MANAGEMENT**

As of April, 2022, Northern Illinois Conference-owned property the Board of Trustees currently cares for:

- 7 Episcopal and clergy/district superintendent residences
- 1 campus ministry building at Northwestern University
- 2 campgrounds—Reynoldswood and Wesley Woods
- 4 other properties
- 6 closed/discontinued churches and parsonage properties

**RECENT PROPERTY MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS OF NOTE**

- Episcopal residence—New hardwood floors, handrails, refrigerator & paint throughout
- Prairie North parsonage—installed luxury vinyl tile throughout the basement
- Lake North parsonage—new boiler, water heater
- University Christian Ministry (campus ministry at Northwestern University)—new concrete retaining walls and exit stairs from basement into back yard

**CLOSED/DISCONTINUED CHURCH PROPERTIES**

- Lindenhurst UMC—church sold to another church; parsonage sold separately as a single-family home
- Lisle Faith UMC—church sold to another church with proceeds going to new church start in Shorewood, 1st parsonage deeded to Lockport First UMC, 2nd parsonage (former church office building) sold as a single-family home
- Elkhorn UMC in Polo—parsonage deeded to Brookville; church donated to cemetery that surrounds it
- Wood Dale UMC—parsonage rented; church repurposed for new church start
- Afolkey: Bethel—church for sale, would need to be relocated due to location surrounded by cemetery
- Ringwood UMC—church with parsonage for sale and under contract as of this writing—should close by Annual Conference

- York House Road UMC, Beach Park—church with parsonage for sale and under contract as of this writing
- Former Elgin District parsonage—4 bedroom/3 bath home for sale and under contract as of this writing—should close by Annual Conference

**CHURCH ITEMS “RE-HOMED”**

Majority of the contents of Lisle Faith UMC's 2nd parsonage, Ringwood UMC, and York House Road UMC has been liquidated. A big “thank you” to non-Trustee Nancy Pendergrass for assisting and lending her vehicle for transporting items. Some of the items have been rehomed, and some are still available to be gifted to other churches. Re-homed items have been shared to churches both near and far:

- Paraments, banners, office supplies, & candles—Clare Christian UMC
- 6 microphone stands & mics/cords—North Central College Chapel
- 6-inch plexiglass letters for exterior sign, a box of bibles, & alter candlesticks—East Side UMC
- 4 boxes of books—Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary's library
- 8-10 bins & boxes of Christmas items—FUMC Arlington Heights for their Christmas sale in November
- 6 boxes of bibles & books, 15 black choir folders, offering plates, & communion trays—The Philippines
- Many, many, many bins & boxes of all kinds of things—New to You Thrift Shop of United Church of Rogers Park
- Art supplies and teacher supplies—The Waste Shed, a non-profit store that offers teacher supplies for free to teachers and art supplies at low cost
- Additional items are still available; contact marthajrudy@gmail.com

This report summarizes Trustee activities for the past two years (no report filed in 2021). Yours in Christ, the Board of Trustees

\*\*Report submitted by Martha Rudy, chairperson, on behalf of the Board: Connie Augsburger, Nancy Blade, Jeff Brace, Walton Davis, Jr., Sarah Hong, Violet Johnicker, Jim Loeppert, Harry Nicol, George Wentworth, and Bob Wood. April, 2022

**400.10a - Cabinet Report**

The people of the Northern Illinois Conference have had to adapt, change, grow and dig deep into the pool of resiliency to overcome the past few years of intense challenges brought about by many external and some internal challenges. The Cabinet is no exception. The biggest challenge for the Cabinet this year was to navigate the changing structure of the conference and deal with the realities of a changing church. The reduction of the number of districts, the changes in district leadership and the geographical changes due to redistricting meant we had to adapt and adapt quickly to continue to serve as we have been called to do. One of the most challenging aspects of this was the change of churches and lay leadership in our districts. We had to quickly learn the history and dynamics of churches and build strong relationships with pastors and lay leaders who we may not have had much interaction in the past. In addition, we had to adjust and learn the leadership style, mission and even humor of a new Bishop who was only supposed to serve a year as interim but accepted the call to continue the God-given work in our conference for one more year. As a Cabinet, we would like to express our deep gratitude and love for Bishop John Hopkins, who did not miss a beat stepping in to serve and has led with gentleness and yet determination, kindness and yet strength, joy and yet willingness to sit in the pain of life. We are blessed to have him. As the Dean of the Cabinet, I also want to express my gratitude for the work



of the Cabinet. There is a bond, a care, and a commitment to the work of the team that is unprecedented. Rarely have I known a more cohesive and united group that is not only supportive of one another, but deeply committed to the whole and not to their own district silos. Their professionalism is amazing. Thank you to the members of the Cabinet which includes, Rev. Jacques A. Conway (Lake South), Rev. Brittany Isaac (Lake North), Rev. Fabiola Grandon Mayer (Prairie North), Rev. Brian Gilbert (Prairie South), Rev. Arlene Christopherson (Assistant to the Bishop/Director of Connectional Ministries), and Rev. Martin Lee (Director of Congregational Development and Redevelopment), and, of course, Bishop John Hopkins.

While the Cabinet is officially made up of seven members and the Bishop, we work very closely with an extension of the Cabinet and other conference staff. Over the past year we have been intentional and excited about strengthening the working ministry with Conference Treasurer, Lonnie Chafin, Director of Communications, Anne Marie Gerhardt and all conference staff. We have experienced the fruits of their hard work and celebrate all of their ministries as we strive to live out, in our working ministry together, the teaching of 1 Corinthians 12, that we are one body but many parts. Thank you to all that they have done, are doing and will do.

The work of the Cabinet is often broken down into seasons:

- January – May Appointment Season
- June – September Clergy summer conversations and learning
- September – December Church/Charge Conference

Though the seasons help us to focus on our work and ministry, there are many other things that take place throughout the year. There are district training events held each year and this year we saw a large growth in excitement and participation in these training events. There are pastoral care issues of clergy and laity alike. Sometimes there are the difficult conversations and supervision that must take place with clergy or with churches. There have been the very difficult decisions that need to be made about merging churches or even closing them. This is just a small sample of the variety of things we do as a Cabinet. Yet, throughout all of this weaves the absolute joy of serving Christ and being in relationship with such hard working and dedicated disciples of Jesus Christ. We are so grateful for every lay person, every pastor and every church in our conference. Thank you for making our ministry appointment so joyful and full.

As the Cabinet, we lift up the following joys in our conference. We celebrate that almost all of our churches are now regularly using the internet to share, broadcast and communicate online. We rejoice that we realized an increase in apportionment giving in our churches. We are excited that even with the challenges of Covid-19, many churches brought in new members, baptized people, started and completed capital projects and adapted to the challenges. One of the biggest thrills is listening to how churches have moved from looking inward and caring mostly about having people sit in pews to looking outward and discovering how they can reach new people and share the Gospel beyond their walls. This is, we believe, why many churches are seeing an increase in new members and those participating in giving. We are grateful that with all of this, pastors, lay person and churches allow the members of the Cabinet to walk the journey with you and we covenant this day to do, to the best of our ability, that which God calls us to support, nurture and guide the Northern Illinois Conference.

As a final thought, every time we gather as a Cabinet, we sit in hope, joy, peace and love. We are so hopeful because God is leading us and we are following. We are joyful that we are experiencing a church ready to adapt and grow and respond to God's call. We live in the peace of Christ because we see the church and its people moving toward revitalization and new opportunities. We love this church, we love this conference, we love our districts and we love the people of the Northern Illinois Conference. We are so excited about our future together.

Submitted by Reverend Jeffrey Bross, Dean of the Cabinet (2021-2022)

**400.10b - NIC Pension Appointment Categories and Guidelines**

Under the guidelines of the 2008 United Methodist Pension Program Clergy Retirement Security Plan (CRSP), pension credit is accrued based on years of service in quarter increments. In order to determine the appropriate category for all persons serving in an appointment less than full time three factors will be utilized: e m p l o y m e n t definition, salary and performance expectations.

Employment Definition:

Persons who have employment in addition to their appointment or/and full-time students cannot be considered full-time in their appointment. Employment that is considered an extension of the ministry (i.e. teaching a class at college, university or seminary) will not be considered outside employment.

2023 Part-Time Category Chart

Conference Average Compensation (CAC) \$57,643  
(\$46,115 Base + \$11,539 Housing) (Does not include reimbursable)

Full Time	¾ Time	½ Time	¼ Time
\$46,115	\$34,586	\$23,057	\$11,529

This chart will be recalculated annually using the CAC as a guideline

Performance Expectations:

For all appointments:

- The United Methodist Book of Discipline 2012, ¶ 338 responsibilities and Duties of Elders and Licensed pastors will apply.
- The following expectations should not limit the work of ministry as a function of maintenance, as clergy are to be engaged in recruitment.

¼ Time:

- Minimum of one day in administration, leadership development and evangelism
- Minimum of one day in Worship preparation, sermon preparation
- Minimum of ½ day in worship leadership
- Pastoral care, teaching ministries and outreach as setting dictates

½ Time:

- Minimum of two days in administration, leadership development and evangelism
- Minimum of one day in worship preparation, sermon preparation
- Minimum of ½ day in worship leadership
- Pastoral care, teaching ministries and outreach as setting dictates

¾ Time:

- Minimum of three days in administration, leadership development and evangelism
- Minimum of one day in worship preparation, sermon preparation
- Minimum of ½ day in worship leadership
- Pastoral care, teaching ministries and outreach as setting dictates

Implementation:

- Categories of ¼, ½ and ¾ time will be used when designating the status of persons under appointment in less than full time situations.
- Part-time clergy, SPRC Chair and Treasurer will sign a document each year verifying the service record of the pastor. In every instance the designation on the Compensation Form governs pension credit.
- The compensation formula and Cabinet expectations will be published each year as part of the Cabinet report in the Northern Illinois Conference Journal.

Submitted by CRSP

**400.11 - United Methodist Clergy Fund Historical Report 2021**

The United Methodist Clergy Fund is an independent, Illinois, not-for-profit, corporation. It is organized to “procure, invest, and manage money and property, the income from which shall go toward the support of superannuated ministers, and the widows and dependent children of deceased members.” The fund is related to the Northern Illinois Conference of the United Methodist Church because its bylaws limit its contributions to this conference.

Founded on October 27, 1885, it was one of the first funds established to provide income for retired pastors and their dependents. In fact, it was one of the first funds in the United States to provide such assistance, and was a forerunner to the concept of pension funds. In existence for 130 years, The Clergy Fund intends to continue providing significant levels of support for retirees of the Northern Illinois Conference.

On December 31, 2021 the fund totaled \$37,802,935. As with many other entities with investments in the stock market, the Fund’s portfolio value fluctuates. In spite of those fluctuations, through the stewardship of its Board of Directors, and the investment management team at Wespath, the Fund honored its commitment to the Northern Illinois Conference for the benefit of its retirees.

The Clergy Fund contribution significantly funds the health benefits that the retirees receive from the conference. Because of this contribution, the Northern Illinois Conference, is able to be one of the few conferences, if not the only conference, to continue providing health benefits to its retirees, and is among the last of the conferences to continue this practice.

The Clergy Fund Board of Directors is comprised of five lay members and two clergy members. These persons are nominated and elected by the current board of directors. They serve for terms of four years. Five retired honorary Directors, the Chair of the Conference Board of Pensions, and the Conference Treasurer and the Conference Benefits Manager are regularly invited to attend the quarterly meetings of the Board.

The Clergy Fund has made annual gifts of approximately \$1 million toward retiree health insurance and retiree benefits of the Conference for more than 20 years. A policy of using a percentage of the three-year rolling average of the year-end fund

value, guides the Board’s annual contribution to the Board of Pensions. The Board contributed \$1,400,000 from the fund for 2021.

The Fund is a 501(c) (3) registered charitable organization, and welcomes contributions and bequests. The Conference office or I can provide information as to the process of making a contribution to the Fund and joining in our mission.

- Rev. Chris Pierson, United Methodist Clergy Fund, President
- Steve Nailor, United Methodist Clergy Fund, Vice-President
- Rev. Jamison Geiger, United Methodist Clergy Fund, Secretary
- Edward Andersen, United Methodist Clergy Fund, Treasurer
- Dr. Kwang P. Chung
- Jocelyn R. Vinluan
- Kristina Gaughan, United Methodist Clergy Fund

Submitted by: Author(s): Chris Pierson

**400.12 - CodeRed - Congregational Development and Redevelopment Committee**

New Church Planting

One of the highlights of 2021 is the celebration of the chartering of Chicago Jesus Love on November 14th. Bishop Hopkins and DS Brittany officiated the chartering service. Chicago Jesus Love chartered with 145 chartering members and an annual budget of \$320,000. A majority are young people under 40 years old and 65% of members are tithing online. They are space sharing with Central UMC in Skokie. They started a tradition where 100% of every Anniversary Sunday offering goes to supporting another new congregation. Each year they are donating between \$6000-7000 in addition to fully participating in the Conference Apportionment System and supporting missionaries overseas. They are also heavily involved with the Sanctuary Movement for Undocumented People in Chicagoland.



In addition, on January 1, we launched Wellspring New Faith Community in Oswego, IL. We also started three Hispanic New Faith Communities. There is now a Living Waters in Franklin Park, in the O’Hare area, and in the Elston Ave area utilizing the former Elston church parsonage as a base. We are learning that there is a population of over 500 Swahili-only speaking people in Rockford. We are dreaming of starting a New Faith Community to reach out to them through space sharing at Brooke Road UMC. We are so grateful for Pastor Violet Johnicker and the congregation’s hospitality towards this NFC. They are also hosting Emerge NFC which is a second site of Emerge UMC in Belvidere.

Congregational Redevelopment Process with Coaching

Five congregations are having on-going coaching with Rev. Paul Nickerson. Chicago Edison Park UMC is a Filipino congregation that we are encouraging to reach out to their neighbors. Brookfield: Compassion NFC faced trouble when they were unable to secure a permanent location for worship and had to move around 13 times over the years. Finally, they purchased a dry cleaner and renovated the space as an art gallery and received permission from the village to use it for two hours on Sundays



for worship. They too have been involved in the community with the local rotary club chapter and are involved in many local services to provide food and free bike tunings in the summer. Through the coaching, Oregon UMC was able to engage with the community, and the pastor received an Excellence in Leadership award from the Village. During the pandemic, Dekalb: First UMC was able to raise over \$3 million to build a new facility on 15 acres in a new location. They are continuing to plan and dream about how to reach out to new people when they relocate. They are in the process of church building currently. Wilmington First UMC is trying to discern how they can reach out to new people in the midst of the pandemic in their small rural town.

The coaching is an intense learning process, and the congregations are holding each other accountable. The pastors meet monthly, and they also meet with their leadership teams monthly as well. We are utilizing Zoom, which has been a gift during the pandemic.

NIC Clergy Coaching Process

After the last coaching session with Jim Griffith, we recruited 7 clergy who are willing to receive further learning on how to coach/support other clergy as a cohort. Again, this pandemic has given us challenges but also learning opportunities. Among the many trainings provided to clergy and laity, we would like to highlight two. The Both/And worship training by Jason Moore (Midnight Oil Productions) and the Stewardship Training by Carla Maxwell had some of the highest attendances among the many events offered. For next year, I am looking forward to hosting Vital Mergers, Cooperative Ministry events, and a Post-Covid-19 Resource For Leaders training event by Olu Brown.

CodeRed Church Trail

After nearly six years on hiatus, representatives from each district of the Northern Illinois Conference returned to the CodeRed Church Trail, visiting potential new church sites and redevelopment areas across the conference over two days in November. The itinerary included churches that housed several ministries and empty farm fields that held potential.



The group listened to the church's story at each site, prayed with the pastor, and witnessed ministries in action.

The group visited St. Mark UMC and Trinity UMC in the Lake South District. In Prairie Central District, the group visited Crossroads UMC in Bolingbrook. The group also prayed over a farm field in Shorewood that organizers are developing into a worship and community space. In Prairie North, visits focused on meeting with Pastor Heewon Kim at the former Hilltop Ministry Center. Pastor Kim is in a discernment process with Harlem UMC, Evans UMC and New Life UMC. Next, the group visited Brooke Road UMC in Rockford. The church hosts both a Hispanic congregation and an African Swahili community.

Lake North church visits included St. Matthew UMC in Chicago and Franklin Park UMC. The trip ended in the Prairie South District at 15 acres of farmland purchased by DeKalb First United Methodist Church to build a new building. What a blessing to be able to see the Holy Spirit in action all across the Conference as faithful clergy and lay ministers follow along with innovative ministry!

Vital Mergers Workshop

40 people registered from 30 congregations for the Vital Merger/Cooperative Ministry event on Saturday, March 19th in Freeport.

Perhaps this will give us a good opportunity to help each and every congregation reposition for the mission and ministry instead of doing the "same old" ministry and expecting a different result.

These are just some of the highlights of the past year. We thank God for the new Chairperson of the CodeRed (Congregational Development and Redevelopment) Committee, Rev. Jonathan Crail and team members: Rev. Victor Melad (Lake North), Attorney Walton Davis Jr. (Lake South), Rev. Jarrod Severing (Prairie Central), Rev. Keri Rainsberger (Prairie North), Rev. Jonathan Crail (Prairie South), David Lagos-Fonseca (At-Large), Rev. Robert Butler (Church Planter). We are so grateful to interim Bishop John Hopkins who encourages to abide in Christ Jesus so that we can bear much fruit and to work closely with the Cabinet for Congregational Development and Redevelopment for the mission and ministry of the conference to reach more new people, more diverse people and more younger people for the glory of God.

Submitted by Rev. Jonathan Crail, Chair Congregational Development and Redevelopment and Rev. J. Martin Lee, Director of Congregational Development and Redevelopment

**400.13 - Commission on Archives and History 2022**

The conference Commission on Archives and History has not had a formal meeting in the last Conference year, due to the pandemic. Our usual meeting place in Styberg Library at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary was unavailable much of the year due to the pandemic. However, members have been in touch with each other via telephone and email.

The Northern Illinois Conference Archives, also housed in Styberg Library, have been closed since March of 2020: first because of the pandemic, then a mold abatement issue, and now because of a remodeling project. Despite these setbacks, we have done our best to respond to research requests and questions about archival holdings and additions.

We have tried to keep exact records of these requests, both those we were able to answer and those that will have to wait until we once again have access to the collections. We had thirteen requests for our services this Conference year; of these, two pertained to general church records, three were requests for someone's baptismal certificate, four were genealogy-related, and four were other. The requests, and our responses, were as follows:

- 3/21/22 Bob Bristol asked if we could locate a copy of his baptismal certificate dated 1960 or 1961 from Richards Street UMC in Joliet. Carol responded that we will check the Richards Street file once the archives re-open, but the most we can hope for is a record of baptisms, not an actual certificate (which would have been given to the family at the time of the baptism).
- 3/18/22 (conclusion) Bruce Greene, historian at Epworth UMC, Chicago, wanted to donate Epworth's records, since the church has closed. Carol responded and said the archives cannot receive any materials at this time because they are closed and will be moved. She suggested storing them temporarily at First UMC of Evanston, which already has an archives room. Greene said he will try that, but in the meantime they are in his apartment in Rogers Park.

- 3/18/22 Bo Rasmussen, a visiting scholar from Southern Denmark University, asked about access to Christelige Talsmand, a newspaper of the Norwegian-Danish Methodist Church, from 1878-1885. The inventory does not list issues from that period, but it is possible there are some issues in the general boxes of materials from Norwegian-Danish Methodism. Carol said she will check once the archives re-open, and in the meantime he might try GCAH.
- 3/3/22 David Murray of Blue Earth, Minnesota asked for a portrait (not group) photo of the Rev. Mary Willis Mayes, a pastor who came to them from Illinois. Marilyn referred him to the “dead pastors’ roll” at GCAH and to the IGRConf CAH/Archivist.
- 3/1/22 Scott Faust of Wisconsin inquired about baptismal records prior to 1891 for a German M.E.C. in Manitowoc, Wisconsin. Manitowoc may have been in the Chicago district of the German Methodist Conference. Carol checked the inventory and responded that we do not have records that old. She suggested getting in touch with GCAH, and also neighboring UMCs in the area, which may have received records if the German church merged into one of them. (He should also check the Wisconsin Conference archives.)
- 2/16/22 David Nuetzmann requested any records pertaining to his family from Richard Street UMC in Joliet. I told him we would be happy to search that file when the archives re-open.
- 1/11/21 (cannot find the original email) Someone wrote with a question about an ancestor who left Sweden in 1868 and settled in a small town in northern Wisconsin. He wondered if we had church records that would show whether he became a Methodist in Sweden or in America. Carol responded that it would have to be in America, since there was not a Methodist church in his hometown in Sweden, but there had been a Methodist church in the Wisconsin town for ten years by the time he arrived. Nice to know we could supply an answer even without access to the archives!
- 10/3/21 DS Jeffrey Bross asked for help sorting through documents belonging to Lisle Faith UMC, recently closed. Marilyn gave him the pertinent directions from the BOD and went to Lisle and helped with the processing for 3.5 hours.
- 9/14/21 Stan Lindaas, a professional genealogist in Salt Lake City requested information about marriage records of First Norwegian-Danish M.E.C. of Chicago. He’s trying to track down a particular person. Carol responded and told him 1) NIC archives are closed at the moment, 2) he should check with the Cook County Department of Vital Records, 3) he should check Arlow Andersen’s book.
- 8/30/21 Beth Wackerlin, nee Strock, requested her baptismal certificate from First UMC of Aurora, which has closed. Marilyn suggested she get in touch with First Nueva Vida UMC, which may have received the church’s records. Then Beth’s mother found a copy of the certificate among her own possessions.
- 8/3/21 Daniel Smith reported they had received the materials from the Bal-fours. I have no idea what that is about...
- 7/7/21 Rito Balducci asked for his baptismal certificate for Rito Pence at South Deering UMC, which has closed. Lynn Berg searched in the archives and determined it was not there. Debra Rogers and Dan Swinson also hunted for possible records, but nothing was resolved.
- 4/26-6/7/21 Carol Slattum in Norway requested information about a number of ancestors who served in the Norwegian-Danish Methodist Church. Daniel Smith found links to some resources and sent them, and Carol referred her to Arlow Andersen’s book.

Submitted by volunteer researcher-archivists Carol Noren and Marilyn Steenyk

#### **400.14 - 2022 Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Relationships Historical Report**

The 2022 Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Relationships is chaired by Rev. Lynn Pries with the support of Ecumenical Officers, Rev. Edgar Hiestand and Rev. Catiana McKay. Members are John George, Rev. Dennis Oglesby, Rev. Uziel Hernandez, Jessie Cunningham, Rev. Eunbae Doh, Rev. Tura Foster Gillespie, Rev. David Poust, Vicky Power Bass, and Rev. Hwa Young Chong.

CCUIR is a commission that is mandated by The Book of Discipline par. 642. It is the work of CCUIR to provide representation of NIC and the Bishop in ecumenical, interfaith, and interreligious spaces including councils and dialogues; to foster ecumenical interfaith, and interreligious relationships; to equip and encourage the building and strengthening of ecumenical, interfaith, and interreligious relationships between congregations and their neighbors. This work is in cooperation with the Bishop and the Council of Bishops. Our work is discipleship strengthening, rooted in humanizing and understanding the “other” and encourages active engagement in our local churches and communities, often creating new opportunities that strengthen vitality.

Our work encourages cooperation, bringing together people and groups in facing similar humanizing concerns with people and churches within and beyond the connection, within and beyond Christianity. At times, we closely partner with other conference and UMC groups (WMC), likewise, with ecumenical, (WCC, NCCC) interfaith, and interreligious bodies on community, city, state, national, and global levels. We partner with other conference commissions and committees through supporting joint efforts where there is overlap, and cross promotion of events and initiatives.

We share training opportunities, resources, and other official information from COB and the ecumenical, interfaith, and interreligious world. As we continue to invite others to begin this work in their churches and communities, we have been able to offer scholarships to Methodists (and Methodist affiliated persons) in our conference with opportunities to join in ecumenical, interfaith, and interreligious dialogue, mission, and activism.

Our goals for 2022 are to strengthen and expand the outreach of our conference CCUIR Team and our engagement in Ecumenism Metro Chicago’s Christians United for the Care of Creation Team; Illinois Conference of Churches; UMEIT (United Methodist Ecumenical and Interreligious Training) through the Council of Bishops (monthly zoom trainings for CCUIR Team and rotation for participation with the National Workshop on Christian Unity).

The results are peace, justice, and mercy work that strengthens vitality of our conference, congregations, and communities. Since, late March of 2020, information and training had to occur through zooms, webinars, and various online venues.

Changes during the last two years will continue to transform our work together. In-person gatherings will increase in 2022 as well as continuation of an added online presence. For 2022, as safe in-person gatherings occur, we will offer Seed Grant money to encourage the start of more intentional dialogue throughout the conference. Work with our partners also brings many changes as we work together on things like public policy, legislation, events, bilateral agreements, trilateral agreements, and social justice needs.

Submitted by Rev. Catiana McKay, Ecumenical Officer

**400.15 - Conference Commission on Religion and Race - CCORR**

We have endured another year of operating under the strictures of an ongoing pandemic, and the limbo of a repeatedly postponed General Conference in which our denomination is expected to fracture.

Much of the effort of the Conference Commission on Religion and Race (CCORR) leadership has been directed in support of the Northern Illinois Conference (NIC) goal, adopted in the Annual Conference of June 2019, “to live out the conviction that racism is incompatible with Christian teaching.” The interfacing of the CCORR with the NIC Anti-Racism Task Force (ARTF) is still a work in progress, with ARTF taking the lead. We have begun quarterly joint meetings between the two entities to build community, facilitate interaction and develop an effective partnership. Nadia Kanhai, Co-chair of CCORR, also serves as chair of the ARTF while Lennox, CCORR Co-chair, is active in the ARTF Champion Team Curriculum and Training Committee, as well as participating in an independent Black Healing Collective. Four CCORR members participate in the Black Healing Collective. A fall retreat, A Journey from Racial Trauma to Spiritual Healing & Renewal, served as a pilot, and the Collective also serves to ventilate concerns pertinent to racial issues in the NIC. Other CCORR members have been active as well, participating in Becoming Beloved Community, Clergy Peer Reflection Series (CPRES), the South Side Cultural Tour, research on mandatory clergy training, Speakers Series and more.

CCORR’s new initiative for 2022 is a racial ethnicity audit of the NIC. CCORR leaders participated in the North Central Jurisdiction (NCJ) Special Session in November 2021, either as a delegate (Nadia Kanhai) or as a facilitator (Lennox Iton) in the “Dismantling Racism” anti-racism program. NCJ delegates endorsed a “Covenant to Build Beloved Community” (<http://www.ncjumc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/NCJ-Covenant-to-Build-Beloved-Community-2.pdf>) at this Special Session. Among other stipulations, it called for “a racial analysis of local church’s total budgets, clergy salaries, new church starts/revitalizations, church closures, Conference staff, board, task force and committee members, and delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conferences.” In part in response to this urging, CCORR has begun to undertake a racial audit of the NIC to be conducted by Elaine Moy of the General Commission on Religion and Race (GCORR) using a GCORR protocol. A contract has been negotiated, and data aggregation will begin following the NIC Annual Conference in June.

Other collaborative efforts include keeping lines of communication open with GCORR. For the past couple years, key leaders from CCORR, ARTF and NIC staff have met with GCORR leaders quarterly to discuss initiatives. In a separate initiative, GCORR staff also holds quarterly meetings with a cohort of CCORR leaders from various Annual Conferences, including NIC.

In the area of learning and development, consideration was originally given to having GCORR develop an anti-racism training program to be implemented throughout the NIC beginning in 2022. GCORR now offers training resources online. However, the NIC Anti-Racism Curriculum and Training Committee developed an in-person training workshop that can be taken by either clergy or laity and ideal for local congregations. This training, the Becoming the Beloved Community workshop, launched with a pilot in September 2021, and has now been conducted in the first local church in March 2022. Five more of these training workshops will be offered in local churches in 2022.

Submitted by Lennox Iton, lay, Hinsdale UMC, and Nadia Kanhai, lay, Naperville Grace UMC (CCORR Co-chairs)

**400.16 - Committee on Accessibility Historical Report 2022**

The NIC Committee on Accessibility Ministries supports local churches in making their buildings and congregations more welcoming to people of all abilities. We do this by awarding annual grants to churches working on accessibility projects; consulting with congregations exploring improvements and connecting them with resources; hosting workshops on accessibility topics; focusing on neurodiversity and authentic welcome and inclusion of people living with mental illness; coordinating information about accessible churches and parsonages; and advocating for fully physically accessible buildings.

When churches request our services, committee members visit a church and meet with the pastor, trustees chair, and/or other interested people. We complete an assessment for them of accessibility issues and work to recommend possibilities for improvement based on the national UMC Committee on Disability Ministries audit. The majority of our budget each year goes to grants for specific projects we have endorsed, such as making areas accessible for people in wheelchairs or with limited mobility, adding equipment for people with visual or hearing impairments to assist them in fully participating in worship, or purchasing products such as large print hymnals. Our grants only ever fund a portion of the project – the local church and other funding entities cover the rest.

In 2021 we worked with Lemont United Methodist Church as they welcomed their new pastor. Neither the parsonage nor the church were accessible for wheelchair users, so we visited the site and wrote a report of recommendations. We also voted to allocate our entire 2021 budget for the renovation project, giving a \$3500 grant to Lemont UMC for installation of ramps. In addition, we met with and wrote reports for several other churches and continue to be available for consultation or discussion with any churches interested in doing accessibility projects.

Submitted by Violet Johnicker

**400.17 - Conference Committee on Native American Ministries**

During the year our Native American Ministry of Presence on the north side of Chicago served the community through Bill Buchholtz who continues to coordinate this ministry. He provided ministry through his music and presence with the Kateri Center, the American Indian Center, the Indian Health Service, the American Indian Association of Illinois and for funeral services of those who died.

We collaborated and co-sponsored with the NIC Racism task force, and the Indiana Conference Anti-Racism Task Force Race, American and the Church: Unafraid and Unashamed to Tackle it! A speaker series on the History, Causes and effects of Racism and the Role of the church in America. The first presentation was entitled: Unsilenced: Our stories, our voices with speakers: Tim Alexander, Rev. Sandy Harlan, Dr. Betty Hart and Rev. Dr. Michelle Oberwise Lacock -our chair of CONAM. Three more sessions will occur this year on June 23, “Unafraid: Stand Up for Social Justice”; with five speakers; Sept 22 “Undenied: No Longer Willing to be unheard” with Rev. Chebon Kernell Director of the Native American Comprehensive plan speaking and Dec 1, “Called: Doing God’s Work for the Beloved Community” with Dr. Drew Hart.

We worked with Midwest SOARRING and assisted as one of their sponsors for the Native American Fall Gathering in Lockport, Illinois. We also worked with Wesley UMC in Aurora and helped to sponsor The Kairos Blanket Exercise in November.

Over 50 people were in attendance from the church, community, a few friends from the Anti-Racism Task Force and Joseph Standing Bear and Annette McNeilly. Joseph and Annette spoke for an hour during the exercise. Many of the committee members also attended the training from KARIOS regarding the blanket exercise with the hope to be trained as facilitators for the event so we might host more events in the future.

The members of CONAM have celebrated with churches on Native American Ministries Sunday, provided pastoral care with Native Americans, supported Native American cultural events in Illinois and offered learning opportunities about Native culture within the local churches.

We greatly appreciated the Order of Elders hosting Kaitlin Curtice as the speaker this year and would recommend her book, *Native: Identity, Belonging and Re-discovering God* as a must read. Another recommended read is *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the US* by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz.

Let us hear the words from Kaitlin Curtice, “For the world to survive, for true justice to take place among us, decolonization must be a goal. We must fight against systems of colonial settler oppression—systems like toxic patriarchy and capitalist greed that give no care to the land—and we must do it together for the sake of all of us, telling stories in those spaces. Decolonization is not just for the oppressed, it is a gift for all of us” (159). May we continue to work together to make that happen.

Submitted by Rev. Dr. Michelle Oberwise Lacock, Chair  
Committee on Native American Ministries

#### **400.18 - Committee on the Status and Role of Women**

Happy Birthday COSROW, Status and Role of Women living our faith for fifty years (April 1972). The General Commission on the Status and Role of Women and the Women’s Division of the General Board of Global Ministries have been calling the United Methodist Church to live the Gospel story. How? We live and act the ways of mercy, compassion, love, and justice so that the lives of women and girls will be transformed into lives of wholeness.

Our ministry and mission is to bring creation out of chaos, freedom from oppression, redemption from brokenness, reconciliation from division, resurrection from deadly ways of being. The biblical story comes alive in our actions and our living. We will continue to raise awareness.

We attended the Conference United Methodist Women Summer Mission School (Virtual) classes-were pushouts: the Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools--(led by Audrey Sherman and Leah Ostwald) Bearing Witness in The Kin-dom: Living into The Church’s Moral Witness through Radical Discipleship--(Judith Siaba). July, 2021

We attended the Annual Celebration and Meeting for United Methodist Women (Virtual) “Theme: Leaning on the Everlasting Arms, Listening, Transforming, Reaching Out.” Speaker, Rev. Megan Dean Tobola, pastor of Wesley UMC, Naperville, IL October, 2021

Lunch and Learn Sessions: July 8,2021-- Women Pastors, part 1, speaker, Alice Williams, Florida Conference. August 26, 2021, lunch and Learn--Women Pastors Part 2, Speakers, Alice Williams and Clarie Bowen, September 23,2021 Lunch and Learn, Salary Study for Women Pastors, Speaker Dr. Magaela Bethune, part 1, October 21,2021 Salary Study for Women Pastors part 2. Dr. Bethune.

We believe that a fully engaged and empowered membership is vital to the United Methodist Church’s mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Submitted by Irma Clark, Chair, NIC Status and Role of Women

#### **400.19 - Director of Connectional Ministries 2022 Historic Report**

The work of the Director of Connectional Ministries (DCM) is defined in the United Methodist Book of Discipline. It includes stewarding the vision of the annual conference, including the development, clarification, interpretation, and embodiment of the vision and serving as leader of the continuous process of transformation and renewal necessary for the conference to be faithful to our Christian identity in a changing world. Ensuring alignment of the total resources of the conference to its vision. And ensuring the connections among the local, district, annual conference, and general church ministries for the purpose of networking, resourcing, and communicating their shared ministry.

I have served as DCM for 5 years during which we launched a new coordinating structure, faced the uncertainty and fallout of General Conference 2019, journeyed through a pandemic, transitioned from a compliment of fulltime program staff to a ½ time director, shifted from 6 districts to five and moved to the leadership of interim Bishop John L. Hopkins.

Little did I know what was in store when Bishop Sally Dyck asked me to take on the role temporarily while new structures were developed.

I begin by celebrating the phenomenal support of our churches and Conference Council on Finance and Administration as we paid our 2021 General Church Apportionments in full. These funds are used to advance the work of Christ and the kingdom across the globe and serve as a living witness of our connectional nature. We receive back more than we can contribute as our congregations benefit from the work of the general agencies in resourcing, training, mission presence, disaster response and even local grants.

Since writing the 2021 historic report last spring we have hosted two ordination services and two annual conference sessions. We have navigated the changing landscape of our denomination. Our Events Coordinator, Laura Lopez coordinated 68 events with participation of 7,675 people over the course of 12 months. Our communications staff led by Communications Director, Anne Marie Gerhardt said goodbye to Diane Strzelecki last March and welcomed Lisa Smith as our Communications Specialist in the fall. Together they provide us with weekly e-news, bi-weekly district e-news, monthly Reporters, a constantly updated website, videos and special announcements, while also tending to the communications needs of over 50 committees, taskforces, conference staff, district interests and groups in our conference. They produced over 200 touch points for telling our story during the last 12 months while also using social media to convey our work. Our NIC Reporter and the NIC Today news briefing video from the 2021 annual conference won communications awards. Of note, more recently we produced a new Apportionments interpretation tool found in the February 2022 Reporter and on the conference website.

I am grateful for the commitment and talents of these staff and all those who help to make the connections between our identity as United Methodists and the work of our local congregations and their communities.

Submitted by Reverend Arlene W. Christopherson

#### **400.20 - Fellowship of Asian American Caucus of the Northern Illinois Conference Historical Report 2020-2022**

The Fellowship ceased to hold all events and gatherings in the 2020 Covid shut down. Despite many hardships, our leadership continues to work to join our voices with other UM agencies.

FAA officers and members have provided major leadership to the main United Methodist Asian American agencies including AALM (Asian American Language Ministries) and NFAAUM (New Federation of Asian American United Methodist).

FAA has also helped offer webinars and zoom gatherings addressing Anti-Racism and Racism in general as well as racism against the Asian American community.

1. FAA officers spearheaded the production of the following National Statements:

a) AALM Anti- Racism Statement 2020

<https://umcmmission.org/asian-american-language-ministry-aalm/>

b) AALM Condemns Violence Against Asian American Elderly 2020

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mEWJbFA\\_1uw&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mEWJbFA_1uw&feature=youtu.be) .)

2. FAA was also represented in a Youth Panel presented by AALM, NFAAUM, and Church & Society on November 24th 2020.

3. NIC Asian American young adults co-led the NIC Justice Generation program.

4. FAA organized a meeting with Bishop Hopkins on Zoom on April 24th 2021

5. FAA gave Audio-Visual Grants(\$600) to the following seven NIC churches.

1. First Korean UMC - Wheeling

2. Sammool UMC - Mount Prospect

3. Emmanuel UMC - Evanston

4. Faith UMC - Lombard

5. Vietnamese UMC - Chicago

6. Ravenswood UMC - Chicago

7. Evans/New Life/ Harlem UMC

FAA held an Advent Musical Event in December 2021, where five Church choirs and soloists sang Christmas hymns and songs in their languages and received grants for their music ministry.

Upcoming events:

On May 1st 2022 FAA will hold a gathering in honor of Asian History month to honor and celebrate the ministry of the Asian American Matriarchs who have diligently served the churches for many years.

On May 22nd 2022 FAA will help organize "Asian Pacific Heritage Month" celebration with ICD (Institute of Congregation Development).

FAA will offer scholarships and grants to Asian American seminarians and for youth/children programs in its gathering at the Annual Conference of NIC in June 2022

FAA continues to celebrate and support the many contributions of Asian American clergy, laity, and congregations throughout the Annual Conference.

FAA Executive Team: President; Rev. Ayla Samson, Vice President; Rev. Victor Melad Jr., Secretary; Rev. Dr. Zaki I. Zaki, Finance officer; Rev. James Fu, Scholarship/grants officer; Rev. Scott Christy.

Submitted by Rev. Ayla Samson

#### **400.21 - HIV/AIDS Task Force**

Our mission and ministry is to educate, inspire, advocate, and provide spiritual support to those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS, affirming that all individuals living with HIV and AIDS should be treated with dignity and respect.

We affirm the responsibility of the Church to minister to and with these individuals and their families regardless of how the disease was contracted. We urge the church to be actively involved in the prevention of the spread of AIDS by providing educational opportunities to the congregation and the community. The Church should be available to provide counseling to the affected individuals and their families.

No person deserves to be stigmatized. When stigma happens within the church, HIV/AIDS persons and their families are further victimized. We are all created in the image of God. We are all God's children

March 11, 2021 Response from President Biden: President Biden signed The American Rescue Plan Act that includes \$3.5 billion to The Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria -\$250 million for the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief to mitigate pandemic impact Acts on Global HIV control efforts, and to prevent, prepare for, and respond to Coronavirus in developing countries.

We, as a Task Force, will continue to share information and keep the local churches, district, and the conference aware of the National Awareness Days of HIV/AIDS and World AIDS Day, which was first observed on December 1, 1988 as an International Day dedicated to raising awareness of The AIDS Pandemic caused by the spread of HIV Infection and remembering those who have died of the disease.

Submitted by Irma Clark, Chair, NIC HIV/AIDS Task Force



#### **400.22 - Justice for our Neighbors (JFON) Historical Report**

Northern Illinois Justice for Our Neighbors serves immigrant neighbors throughout Northern Illinois with free high quality immigration legal services, engages in education and advocacy and creates cross cultural communities. During the pandemic NIJFON continued to serve the areas of Chicago, Aurora, Rockford, Crystal Lake and Buffalo Grove with its services remotely and most recently with small in-person and hybrid (in-person and virtual) events.

NIJFON's work became critical for our clients as immigrants and people of color were affected disproportionately by the ongoing pandemic. NIJFON continued to open and close cases for current clients, opened 21 new cases for Afghan families for human-



itarian parole in September of 2021 to respond to the immigration emergency in Afghanistan. The NIJFON legal team continued to support every single client with court representation when the courts were open and helped clients with re-scheduling of their cases as the pandemic has caused huge delays in the immigration processes further delaying client cases and their justice in court. NIJFON also provided “Know Your Rights” and citizenship classes via zoom, as well as rose to the occasion to provide additional resources to immigrant communities during the pandemic.

NIJFON provided over 2,000 immigrant families that were excluded from stimulus funding with economic support through the Immigrant Family Support Program with our partner from the Illinois Coalition of Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR). NIJFON realized that it was unjust for immigrants to be excluded from stimulus support during the pandemic when immigrants and people of color have been the hardest hit by the pandemic and the ones that are the city and state frontline workers. Seeing NIJFON clients and family members struggling through the pandemic and reaching out for help, NIJFON decided to provide these much-needed resources along with our legal services and education and advocacy efforts. NIJFON also provided families that applied for the program with additional resources such as legal immigration referrals, housing assistance and legal housing referrals, COVID-19 resources like testing and vaccination site assistance, worker rights workshops and many more needed workshops and resources.

All these services were provided by staff and volunteers from our 5 clinic sites. Our clinic sites have re-engaged with support programs as well as providing workshops and resources needed in the local communities that we serve. Together with our partners and volunteers we are committed and re-committed to our vision of a world where immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees are welcomed supported and live without fear.

Submitted by Claudia Marchan

### **400.23 - Lay Servant Ministries 2021 Historical Report**

Lay Servant Ministries is alive and well in the Northern Illinois Conference! How we do our ministry has changed but doing our ministry continues. The Conference Committee continued to meet regularly via ZOOM and District Committees continued to meet, plan for lay academies and support the certification process.

As the Conference reorganized into five districts, Lay Servant Ministries worked to mirror that structure. The movement of churches from one district to another meant that members of district committees, even district directors and deans were shuffled. The district committees were for the most part able to move on smoothly with one exception where the replacement members of the committee and leaders need to be recruited.

The districts have been committed to holding Lay Academies and continue our ministry of education and leadership development. Each district has been flexible in their planning while listening to laity within their districts. Some of the districts have only offered virtual sessions, some have offered a combination of virtual and in-person at different times. Some districts hope to be able to hold virtual and in-person simultaneously in the future. We have come to realize that virtual offerings are here to stay and meet the needs of some of our laity.

It's important that the process of bringing new members of the laity into lay servant ministries continues as the Basic course is offered. Additionally, members of the laity are able to move along their journey because districts continue to offer courses that follow the Certified Lay Servant and Certified Lay Speaker curriculum. Additional advanced courses are offered to address the areas of individual devotional life, leadership development, and stewardship. We are working to offer courses in Spanish so more laity can participate in Lay Academies and become better leaders in their local congregations. We're looking forward to new courses being offered so members of our laity can proceed with the continuous learning advocated by John Wesley.

2021 was the year for one of our Certified Lay Ministers and three of our Certified Lay Speakers to be recertified. We also had an initial certification of one Certified Lay Minister. Six Certified Lay Ministers are serving congregations and eleven Certified Lay Ministers are serving in various leadership, congregational care and outreach ministries.

We made plans to offer Informational Sessions regarding Certified Lay Ministers. Helping members of the laity to know about Certified Lay Ministry is the first step in helping some members of the laity take the next step in their journey to answer God's call to go deeper into their ministry.

The Northern Illinois Conference and Lay Servant Ministries will continue to hear God's call for the laity to be in ministry as knowledgeable leaders in their local churches, communities and across the conference.

Submitted by Peggy Hansen, Conference Director of Lay Servant Ministries

### **400.24 - Outdoor and Retreat Ministries**

The Outdoor & Retreat Ministries reopened both Camp sites in June 2021 following the government shutdowns of 2020.

This was only possible due to the dedication and commitment of staff who donated 9 months of their lives (July 2020 – March 2021), and FUMC Downers Grove, Roscoe UMC and Cedarbrook Boys and Girls Camps who all donated time, money, labor and materials to enable both sites to reopen.

Both sites looked and felt different under the restrictive COVID guidelines, but as one pastor stated—“Praise God, we're at camp!”

Reynoldswood provided three weeks of NIC Summer Camp programming through J.O.Y., Woodland and Total Camp, and hosted Cedarbrook's Boys Week and Girls Week Summer Camps.

Reynoldswood also renewed the partnership with the Dixon YMCA to host 11 weeks of Summer Day Camp in 2021, and is continuing that successful partnership through 2022.

Wesley Woods hosted two weeks of Camp S.O.A.R.—Special Outdoor Adaptive Recreation—for youth on the autistic spectrum, one week of Family Camp, one week of Buffalo Grave Stake Girls Camp, three weeks of various family reunions, several weekend reunions, and FUMC Downers Grove's annual week of Summer Camp.

The annual Ethiopian-American Kids Camp Weekend converted to an all-day Saturday picnic with waterfront activities to alleviate their own participants' COVID concerns about staying overnight.

Chicago area Slavic churches hosted their annual Outdoor Worship – Baptism in the Lake – Potluck Picnic.

From 2019 – 2021 Wesley Woods also expanded its boat slips from six to eighteen—ensuring Wesley Woods' solid financial footing.

Wesley Woods has already picked up two new guest group camps for 2022.

Staff, Board and Guests are all excited that the NIC Trustees approved the expenditure of monies to install a pool liner and deck membrane for the Camp Reynoldswood Swimming Pool. Supply chain issues and weather prevented installation last fall, but we anticipate resolving those issues this spring and opening the swimming pool this summer.

To lessen the financial impacts of the continuing COVID fears, staff again agreed to being laid-off November 16 through March 31, but this year the Conference has paid each of us the equivalent of unemployment insurance in exchange for us working about 3 hours per day. This has enabled us to maintain a basic level of security and to maintain basic communications with guest groups.

We are excited to have corrected several physical plant issues during the lockdowns and to expand our outdoor ministry to transform and nurture guests and neighbors into principled and passionate Christian Disciples in 2022.

Submitted by the Outdoor and Retreat Ministry

#### **400.25 - NIC Chapter of PAUMCS**

##### National PAUMCS

The Professional Administrators of The United Methodist Connectional Structure (PAUMCS, <https://paumcs.org>) is a national United Methodist organization that focuses on the unique ministry of those who work in a United Methodist church of-fice, be it in the local church, district, conference, episcopal or general agency. The mission of the Professional Administrators of the United Methodist Connectional Structure is to provide administrative professionals a supportive base for unity and fellowship and to promote individual growth, professional development, continuing education, and spiritual enrichment. PAUMCS members provide essential administrative support that brings organization and continuity to their ministry. United Methodist church administrators are the critical support throughout the denomination and are the vital link for the connection.

Under the authority & guidance of the General Council of Finance and Administration (GCFA), PAUMCS provides outstanding advanced professional training and enrichment for United Methodist church administrators through the PAUMCS Certification Institute and National PAUMCS Annual Conferences. (§807.19 UM Discipline 2016)

There are currently 14 National PAUMCS members from the NIC PAUMCS, nine of whom have completed the Certification program, and three of whom have completed the Advanced Certification program. The 2022 PAUMCS Conference “Refresh, Renew, Restore” took place in person at Lake Junaluska, NC from April 21-23.

#### Northern Illinois Conference Chapter of PAUMCS

The membership of the Northern Illinois Conference Chapter of PAUMCS (NIC PAUMCS) consists of all secretaries, administrative assistants and staff, paid and unpaid, who serve in a Northern Illinois Conference church, district, conference, episcopal or general agency. The program and budget are administered by the NIC PAUMCS Steering Team, who are chapter members. There is no chapter dues; programs are provided through event registration fees and donations.

Because of the ups and downs of the pandemic this year, the NIC PAUMCS has continued to regularly meet together for an hour via Zoom every month to receive training and to share our insights around topics that are relevant to our work & ministry in the church office. Topics covered during this Annual Conference year were “Being the Church this Summer,” “How Spiritual Gifts Impact Being the Church,” “Getting Ready for Church Conferences,” “Records Retention ~ Should it stay or should it go?” “Preparing for the Holidays with Care,” “A Time to Breathe Retreat,” “Statistical Reports & Lay Leadership Portal,” “Building Blocks of Church Administrative Series: Staff Meetings,” “Building Blocks of Church Administration Series: Partnering with your Pastor,” and “Building Blocks of Church Administration Series: Working with Difficult People.”

We hope to be able to meet together in person next year, however meeting once a month via zoom has been an instrumental way for us to consistently meet our mission of providing “a supportive base for unity and fellowship and to promote individual growth, professional development, continuing education, and spiritual enrichment.”

Respectfully submitted, NIC Chapter Steering Team

Linda Graddick, Community UMC, Hazel Crest IL (Lake South District)

Magnolia Oliver, Neighborhood UMC, Maywood IL (Lake North District)

Wendy Miller, New Lenox UMC (Lake South District)

Debbie Rogers, District Administrative Assistant (Northern Illinois Conference)

Debbie Sampiller, Geneva UMC (Prairie Central District)

Doris Tropp, Roscoe UMC (Prairie North District)

Sara Williams, Flowing Forth UMC, Aurora IL (Prairie Central District)

#### **400.26 - Program Ministries**

The vision of the Northern Illinois Conference is “making and supporting vital Christians in vital congregations that engage with their communities and the world for peace, justice and mercy.”

Program Ministries in the conference were restructured in 2021 and are divided into three primary areas: Vital Congregations Ministries, Discipleship Ministries and Justice and Mercy Ministries. These umbrella areas are represented at the conference Shepherding Team table by connectors, persons who bring the interest of the work to the larger body. Since the inception of the Shepherding Team our connectors have been Mary Rawlinson, Meg Park and Laura Wilson Underwood. I am grateful for their pioneering spirit as we navigated a new vision for this work. They have labored and learned in setting program budgets and sharing oversight for our conference grants. With the 2022 conference year, new leadership will take on these roles and our learning from the first season will help us continue to serve faithfully.

The conference budget and our energies reflect the tangible ways we support our strategic goals, established in 2019 focused on Discipleship, Anti-Racism and Vital

Congregations. These goals are at the heart of our efforts. We could not have done all that we have in these areas without the efforts of committed co-chairs and task-force members. Behind all this thoughtful, energetic work is our Project Manager, Amania Drane. Amania has been a powerhouse giving framework and context to the efforts while also connecting us to the wider United Methodist community. We would not have made the strides we celebrate without her leadership. Reports from these groups can be found elsewhere in this historic section of the journal.

Among the hardest hit areas of ministry during the pandemic is our camping program. Closed early in the crisis and only minimally functioning in 2021 our camp staff and facilities have suffered. We are blessed with some missional hearts as our Camping Director, Jeff Casey and his crew give of themselves even when we were not able to provide financial support. Work is needed to rebuild and reinvigorate the camping properties and ministries.

There continues to be keen interest in continuous learning from the laity and clergy of the Northern Illinois Conference. Much of the leadership development for clergy is addressed through the programs of Congregational Development and Redevelopment reported elsewhere in these historic reports. The Board of Laity has developed a strong tradition through the laity convocation and each year a faithful following of laity attend this event. In addition, the Lay Servant Ministries Board and chairperson Peggy Hansen have equipped countless leaders in our churches. This group has successfully led us into the new world of Certified Lay Ministers.

This year our five districts hosted leadership training events with phenomenal participation. The energy and eagerness to “make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world” is alive and well in our annual conference. Events managed through the conference office included 7,675 participants even in a pandemic year.

I am grateful for the vision, energy and faith of all those who are part of our program ministries.

Submitted by Reverend Arlene W. Christopherson

#### **400.27 - Program Ministries (Council for Older Adult Ministries - OAM)**

The OAM Council refrained from in-person meetings and engagements during the pandemic. In the meantime, the Council contacted conference-related senior care institutions (Bethany Methodist Communities, Chicago Methodist Senior Services, Oak Crest Retirement, and Wesley Willows) for the resumption of the Golden Cross Sunday Offering program in 2022. OAM has traditionally granted scholarships to deserving workers in these institutions. A smaller executive committee did meet before the end of the year to map out related activities for the coming year. The Council continues to make its presence and objectives known to constituents by email and the Internet. The NIC OAM Facebook Page was active all the time as a forum for information and reference on older adults. The Discipleship Ministries (GBOD) in Nashville and the United Methodist Association of Health and Welfare Ministries (UMA) have maintained communication with NIC through OAM.

Submitted by the OAM Council.

#### **Document: 400.28a - Conference Treasurer Historical Report**

Constraints on worship and local church ministries continued with the pandemic into 2021. We have heard multiple stories of local churches overcoming substantial hurdles to remain in ministry. The experience includes financial stress for churches in every context. The stress compounds the experience of the first year of the pandemic in 2020 and the institutional shock of the 2019 Special Session of the General Conference.

Remarkable, then, was the apportionment performance for the conference, which increased to \$5,202,637. A strong improvement of 12% from 2020. And while we are grateful for the improvement, apportionment collections for the conference are still nearly \$1 million below norms of 2015 and before. We respond with gratefulness to our local churches for their faithfulness and continue to approach spending with the green eyeshade of practicality. Spending in 2021 was well below budgeted amounts, largely caused by COVID’s impact upon programming and plans. We also did not fill staff vacancies when they opened and the camp staff was furloughed over the winter months for the first time.

The strong apportionment collections and reduced spending meant the Northern Illinois Conference was one of 7 conferences able to pay 100% of the general church apportionment for 2021. It has been a long time since this was a possibility for us and CCFA is thrilled and immensely proud to reach this milestone even as we face multiple hardships in every local setting. We were able to achieve this goal without using funds from a second federal grant from the Paycheck Protection Program nor were any reserves used for operations of the conference or payment of general church apportionments.

The Red Door Fund created by an April 2013 Special Session of the annual conference has continued with no deficiencies and no delinquencies. The original agreement with Wintrust was for 7 years. By mutual agreement, in 2019 we negotiated a 10-year extension to the arrangement. The new arrangement eliminated interest rate risk to the program. We continue to reduce the loan owed to Wintrust more quickly than scheduled.

The property insurance program, because of reduced claims, ended the year with significant revenue to meet all costs. Revenue for the clergy benefits programs increased in 2021, relative to 2019.

The Conference is making significant contributions to the pre-82 defined benefit pension program, \$1,041,057 in 2021 and we will make another contribution of \$1,725,021 in 2022. There is no contribution due in 2023. We are forecasted to be 98% funded after the December 2022 payment. Funds are being drawn from the Conference Board of Pensions and Health Benefits reserves, which we forecast will be depleted by 2023. Should market instability cause a loss in assets, the undesignated Conference reserves will need to be used in 2024. Wespeth has proposed changes to the pension program for elders which will require us to adapt how we assess local churches for pension and provides an opportunity to rebuild the reserve for potential future obligations without an increase in costs to local churches. Wespeth has approved the Conference’s benefit funding plan as documented on the attached.

Again, the Northern Illinois Conference received an unqualified approval of our annual audit. The complete audit is part of this report.

We are blessed with a talented and church-loving Treasurer's staff. I am thankful for the opportunity of serving as Conference Treasurer and apologize broadly to all who are still waiting on a return phone call.

Submitted by Lonnie Chafin, Conference Treasurer

**400.28b - Historical Report Church Support Chart**

Church	Conference Support	Health Grants	Benefits Write-Offs	Property Insurance Write-Offs	Closed Church Fund	Total:
Afolkey: Bethel					(401)	(401)
Aurora: First Nueva VidaUMC	12,000					12,000
Beach Park: York House					194,841	194,841
Belvidere: Iglesia Cristisana Emerge	9,000					9,000
Bensenville: First		8,000	17,810			25,810
Blue Island: Hispanic	6,000					6,000
Blue Island: La Gracia de Dios NFC	6,000					6,000
Brookfield: Compassion NFC		1,600				1,600
Chadwick/Fairhaven/Hickory Grove		8,000	4,566			12,566
Chicago: Adalberto Memorial UMC	2,033			1,343		3,376
Chicago: Amor De Dios	12,000			3,941		15,941
Chicago: Ashburn				923		923
Chicago: Berry Memorial		4,800				4,800
Chicago: East Side	5,000					5,000
Chicago: Edison Park		1,600	9,000			10,600
Chicago: El Redentor del Calvario		4,800				4,800

Church	Conference Support	Health Grants	Benefits Write-Offs	Property Insurance Write-Offs	Closed Church Fund	Total:
Chicago: Elston Ave Hispanic NFC	5,426					5,426
Chicago: Emanuel				164		164
Chicago: Englewood/Rust	1,200	1,600	12,227	5,769		20,796
Chicago: Faith			6,673			6,673
Chicago: First Vietnamese UMC	2,000					2,000
Chicago: Gorham			15,290			15,290
Chicago: Grace Calvary				6,217		6,217
Chicago: Grace of Logan Square	24,000			4,815	7,500	36,315
Chicago: Great Englewood				3,404		3,404
Chicago: Greenstone UMC	4,000				6,000	10,000
Chicago: Humboldt Park UMC	3,000					3,000
Chicago: Indo Pak UMC	6,000					6,000
Chicago: Ingle-side-Whitfield		1,600	22,840			24,440
Chicago: Kelly Woodlawn		1,600				1,600
Chicago: Lawn	6,000					6,000
Chicago: Lincoln UMC	5,000			4,629		9,629
Chicago: Mandell UMC	4,000					4,000
Chicago: Morgan Park		1,600				1,600
Chicago: New Gresham				5,820		5,820
Chicago: Olivet UMC	9,167			3,908		13,075
Chicago: Parish of the Holy Covenant	3,000	1,600				4,600

Church	Confer- ence Support	Health Grants	Benefits Write- Offs	Property Insurance Write-Offs	Closed Church Fund	Total:
Chicago: Ravenswood Fellowship	4,167	1,600				5,767
Chicago: South Shore		1,600				1,600
Chicago: St. Mark		1,600				1,600
Chicago: Union Avenue UMC	5,000					5,000
Chicago: United Church of Rogers Park		1,600	2,743	10,534		14,877
Chicago: UVC South Loop		1,600				1,600
Chicago: West Ridge UMC	10,000					10,000
Davis: Calvary			11,550			11,550
Des Plaines: First		4,800				4,800
Dolton: Faith			12,992	4,000		16,992
Downers Grove		1,600				1,600
Elgin: Journey of Hope		1,600				1,600
Elk Grove: Prince of Peace		1,600				1,600
Elmhurst: Christ	10,833	4,800				15,633
Elmhurst: Faith Evangelical	3,750	8,000				11,750
Elmwood Park					40	40
Evanston: Hemingway	6,000	4,800				10,800
Evanston: Sherman		1,600	9,607			11,207
Flossmor: South Subur- ban Korean		1,600				1,600
Forreston		1,600				1,600
Freeport: Faith		8,000				8,000
Freeport: First		1,600				1,600

Church	Confer- ence Support	Health Grants	Benefits Write- Offs	Property Insurance Write-Offs	Closed Church Fund	Total:
Glen Ellyn Thomas			4,050			4,050
Harvey: Transformational Community			7,533	12,327		19,860
Highland Park: Galilee		4,800				4,800
Homewood: St. Andrew		8,000				8,000
Itasca: Bethany					3,415	3,415
Itasca: The Center		1,600				1,600
Joliet: Cristo Es El Camino NFC	6,000					6,000
Joliet: Trinity				6,452		6,452
Kirkland: First		1,600	30,000			31,600
Lake Villa		1,600				1,600
Leland		1,600				1,600
Lemont		8,000				8,000
Lena		1,600				1,600
Lisle: Faith UMC	1,333				(986,317)	(984,984)
Lockport: First	2,000	1,600				3,600
MachesneyPark: New Life NFC	11,000	1,600				12,600
Maywood: Neighborhood		4,800				4,800
Melrose Park: Cosmopolitan				6,911		6,911
Melrose Park: Red Door NFC	6,000			2,508		8,508
Melrose Park: UVC Hispanic NFC	2,000					2,000
Mount Carroll/ Argo Fay/ Thomson		8,000				8,000
Mt. Prospect: Sam Mool	10,833	1,600				12,433
Naperville: Korean			13,500			13,500



Church	Conference Support	Health Grants	Benefits Write-Offs	Property Insurance Write-Offs	Closed Church Fund	Total:
Northbrook: North Northfield		4,800				4,800
Oak Lawn: First		1,600				1,600
Oak Park: St. John's		4,800				4,800
Olympia Fields		1,600				1,600
Oregon			30,621			30,621
Oswego: Well-spring NFC	30,000	8,000				38,000
Ottawa: Epworth	6,000					6,000
Park Forest	3,000	1,600				4,600
Pecatonica		8,000				8,000
Poplar Grove		8,000				8,000
Prospect Heights: Central Korean		1,600				1,600
Ringwood					26,886	26,886
River Forest: Urban Village NFC	12,000					12,000
Rochelle		1,600				1,600
Rock Falls	1,200	1,600				2,800
Rockford: Beth Eden		1,600				1,600
Rockford: Brooke Road Hispanic NFC	1,500					1,500
Rockford: Christ the Carpenter	10,000					10,000
Rockford: Emerge Rockford NFC	12,000					12,000
Rockton		4,800				4,800
Roselle		8,000				8,000
Savanna: First		1,600				1,600
Shorewood NFC	1,000					1,000
Tinley Park		1,600				1,600

West Dundee: First		1,600				1,600
Wilmington			5,391			5,391
Wood Dale: The Center NFC	6,000					6,000
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>286,442</b>	<b>195,200</b>	<b>216,394</b>	<b>83,663</b>	<b>(748,037)</b>	<b>33,662</b>

**400.28c - Treasurer Historical Report - Wespeth Approval of Conference Benefits**

This funding plan incorporates, to the best of our understanding, the plan sponsor's obligations and funding of the benefits provided to clergy and laity, as noted below.

It is understood by the signees that defined benefit plan liabilities [Pre-82 Plan, Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP) and Clergy Retirement Security Program Defined Benefit (CRSP DB) and other sponsored defined benefit plans] continue until the last benefit is paid to participants and their surviving spouses irrespective of the funding level of the plan. That is, even if the assets in the plan are larger than the liabilities in the plan, the plan sponsor still has a liability (obligation) and potential future contribution due to the plan.

Benefit Obligations Summary

**Plan Contributions for 2022**

Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) DB	\$1,478,785
Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) DC	\$490,000
Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP)	\$0
Pre-82 Plan (Pre-82)	\$1,725,021
United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP) Lay	\$118,856
United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP) Clergy	\$0
Other Defined Contribution (DC) Obligations	\$0
Other Defined Benefit (DB) Obligations	\$7,650
Health—Active Participants	\$3,984,848
Health—Additional Sponsored Coverage	\$74,909
Post-Retirement Medical (PRM)	\$1,538,157
Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP)	\$501,000

Ongoing Funding Contributions

Pre-82 Plan (Pre-82)	\$0
Post-Retirement Medical (PRM)	\$1,482,306

Conference Benefit Officer (or equivalent)	Lonnie Chafin	12/02/2021
Conference Treasurer	Lonnie Chafin	12/02/2021
Conference Board of Pension Chair	Approved By E-Mail	12/22/2021
Council on Finance and Administration Chair		



Opinion on Northern Illinois Conference 2022 Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan

The funding plan meets the standards for a Pre-82 funding plan as established by Wespath Benefits and Investments and the favorable opinion requirements for a funding plan. Note: The statement above and any written opinion provided by Wespath do not imply any representation as to the ability or probability of the applicable plan sponsor to fulfill the obligations included in the funding plan.

*Wespath Benefits and Investments*

Wespath Benefits and Investments  
1901 W Chestnut Ave  
Glenview, IL 60025

**400.29 - United Methodist Foundation of the North Illinois Conference, Inc**

The Foundation was organized in 1949 and functions as an independent 501(c)(3) public charity with the mission of “multiplying resources for ministry in the Name of Jesus Christ” by “encouraging lifelong generosity with God’s abundance.” The Foundation carries out its mission by partnering with many individuals, churches, and organizations to provide several services:

- Investment Management
- Endowment Genesis and Growth
- Trustee & Custodial Services
- Planned Giving Programs
- Donor Consultation
- Stewardship Development
- Financial Best Practices
- Ministry Grants & Scholarships

According to the Foundation’s bylaws, “All corporate powers shall be exercised by, or under authority of, and the business and affairs of the Foundation shall be managed by, the Board of Directors.” Directors serve three three-year terms. The current Board of Directors with full voice and vote are the following 16 individuals:

- Ergeline Calimlim, First UMC of Chicago Temple
- Brad Colby, First UMC of La Grange, La Grange
- Rev. Kimberly Lewis-Davis, Chaplain
- Sach Diwan, Holy Covenant UMC, Chicago
- Rev. Jane Eesley, Christ UMC, Rockford
- David Foster, Irving Park UMC, Chicago
- Gill George, Barrington UMC, Barrington
- George Groves, Community UMC, Naperville
- Debbie Gruetzmacher, Faith UMC of Orland Park
- Denny Hackett, First UMC of Morris, Morris
- Rev. Violet Johnicker, Brooke Road UMC, Rockford
- Rev. Grace Oh, Englewood-Rust UMC & Thornton UMC
- Marta Rodriguez, Humboldt Park UMC, Chicago
- Jim Stoddard, Sycamore UMC, Sycamore
- Tom Sumner, St. Mark UMC, Chicago
- Eugene Williams, South Shore UMC, Chicago

According to the bylaws, there are three ex officio Board members (voice but not vote): the Foundation’s president, the resident bishop, and the conference treasurer.

The officers of the Foundation are:

- Board Chair, George Gill
- Vice Chair & Secretary, David Foster
- Treasurer, Sach Diwan
- President, Rev. Chris Walters

The full-time staff members of the Foundation are Rev. Chris Walters, President, and Carolyn J. Cook, Executive Assistant.

The Foundation offers three funds for long-term investment: Conservative, Moderate, and Aggressive (and three corresponding “Climate Solutions” funds that divest from public companies that own fossil fuel reserves). All portfolios are broadly diversified among major asset classes and all sectors of the economy but in different proportions to reflect each fund’s objectives. The Foundation retains SouthCoI Advisors, LLC as its investment consultant. The investment opportunities available through the Foundation offer churches and UMC-related organizations professionally managed, well-diversified accounts, invested according to the guidelines for socially responsible investing outlined in The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church. In addition to screening out objectionable companies, the Foundation also screens in companies that rate more highly than their peers in the areas of Environmental, Social, and Governance, always optimizing asset allocation and performance.

The investment policies of the Foundation provide for a disciplined approach and to meet a variety of investment objectives. Net of all fees, the returns of the three fund models are (up to the most recent reportable month, as of this historical report, March 31, 2022):

As of 3/31/2022	1 <sup>st</sup> Qtr 2022	Last 1 Year <sup>†</sup>	Last 3 Years <sup>†</sup>	Last 5 Years <sup>†</sup>	Last 10 Years <sup>†</sup>
Aggressive Fund	-5.92%	6.24%	13.51%	11.60%	8.92%
Agg. Climate benchmark*	-6.50%	5.13%	n/a	n/a	n/a
	-5.51%	5.14%	12.83%	11.23%	9.37%
Moderate Fund	-5.23%	3.20%	9.93%	8.73%	6.73%
Mod. Climate benchmark*	-5.34%	2.66%	8.24%	n/a	n/a
	-5.03%	2.57%	9.57%	8.68%	7.37%
Conservative Fund	-4.62%	-0.30%	5.75%	5.41%	4.61%
Con. Climate benchmark*	-4.51%	-0.13%	n/a	n/a	n/a
	-4.61%	-0.34%	5.83%	5.75%	5.16%

†The rates of return in these columns are annualized, net fees.

As of March 31, 2022, the Foundation had approximately \$94.5 million under management through nearly 700 accounts, owned by 120 local churches and several agencies and organizations. More than 200 of the accounts benefit several dozens of annuitants, trust income beneficiaries, and the charitable interests of donor advised funds.

Since 1999 the Foundation has provided several grants each year, totaling more than \$1,000,000.

The Foundation continues to participate in Dollars for Scholars (DFS), operated by the United Methodist Higher Education Foundation. DFS matches support from a student’s church, UMHEF, participating United Methodist-related schools, and participating Conference Foundations. By participating in this scholarship program, the Foundation completes the matching of some local church scholarships to magnify \$1000 into \$4000.

The Foundation also participated in the Excellence in Clergy Leadership Scholarship, operated by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. If an applicant receives matches from all five partners, they can receive \$12,500; the Foundation pledges to match up to five recipients for \$2500 each.

In the fall of 2021 and spring of 2022, the Foundation sponsored two “Cultivating the Craft of Asking” cohorts. Each cohort participated in five live interactive online workshops to equip pastoral and church leaders for the craft of cultivating financial support for mission and ministry. The cohorts raised tens of thousands of dollars for ministry and hundreds of thousands for capital campaigns.

Starting in 2022, the Foundation began sponsoring a “Fresh Expressions” field education cohort of five Garrett-Evangelical students to receive \$4500 each. Field education is a critical component of the students’ seminary degree requirements. Fresh Expressions church communities are filled with people who would not ordinarily find themselves in a traditional church setting.

Submitted by Rev. Chris Walters, President

**400.30 - United Methodist Women Historical Report 2021**

In 2020, the United Methodist Women in the Northern Illinois Conference experienced personal and organizational challenges. The excitement of new mission ideas and programming seemed lost before the first quarter ended. Yet, they persisted in learning about virtual meetings and reassessed their goals for 2021.

- On January 23, 2021, the Assistant Dean and committee opened the year with a one-day Winter Mission. The morning session began with Emily Jones, Executive for Racial Justice United Methodist Women, Inc, and Kristin J. Carothers, Ph.D. leading “Faith and the Prison Pipeline: Understanding and Interpreting the School-to-Prison Pipeline.” The afternoon discussion platforms included excerpts from «Faith Talks» and «response podcasts.»
- Several women across Northern Illinois joined sisters in the Illinois Great Rivers Conference (IGRC) to participate in the National Climate Justice Federal Legislative Day on April 14, 2021. Christina Krost, IGRC Vice President, was instrumental in organizing meetings with Senators Tammy Duckworth and Dick Durbin, and NIC women initiated meetings with their respective House Representatives.
- In May, the Spiritual Growth Coordinator invited us to “Celebrate and Participate” by sharing our spiritual journeys and diversity through word, art, dance, and music. Elgin District Superintendent Darneather Murph-Heath closed the afternoon by leading the Love Feast.
- Over one hundred women participated in our July Summer Mission (virtual) weekend. Friday night began with Bible Study and worship, ending with Rev Harriet Cross, FUMC of Wilmington, IL, leading the Love Feast. Saturday’s classes were Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools (led by Audrey Sherman & Leah Ostwald); Bearing Witness in the Kin-dom: Living into the Church’s Moral Witness through Radical Discipleship (English, led by Judith Siaba; Korean, led by Rev. Young-Mee Park, Hinsdale UMC; Spanish, led by Rosa Villarreal); Becoming Peacemakers in a Culture of Violence, a study for youth ages 12-17 (led by Diana Davis); and Responding to Violence, a study for children ages 5-11 (led by Rev. Harriett Cross). With the assistance of both Language Coordinators, courses were offered in three languages (English, Korean, and Spanish).
- The virtual Annual Celebration and Meeting, “Leaning on the Everlasting Arms: Listening, Transforming, Reaching Out,” was held on October 23, 2021. Bishop Hopkins offered morning greetings, and the speaker was Rev. Megan Dean Tobola, Lead Pastor of Wesley UMC in Naperville. Nichea Ver Veer Guy, Michigan Conference and National Racial Justice Charter Support Team member highlighted the Charter for Racial Justice. JAM (Jesus And Me), children’s choir from St. Andrew UMC in Carol Stream, provided music. During the business meeting, the body voted to go from six to five districts and make appropriate name changes. Each of the current districts shared a photo montage of memories, after which former National Director Marta Rodriguez installed 2022 Conference and District Officers. Those completing elected terms were honored with special recognition certificates and pins. Rev. Norval Brown, Cary UMC, ended the meeting with a short worship service and Love Feast.

Since the United Methodist Women is an autonomous organization (as of 2012), the officers and members chose to follow the Northern Illinois Conference District Realignment design for local churches. Therefore, all-district names and official business commenced on January 1, 2022.

May our mission, advocacy, and service continue for years to come!

Submitted by Lois Moreland-Dean, President, United Methodist Women, NIC (2018-2021)

### **400.31 - Africa University**

*You are the light of the world. A city on top of a hill can't be hidden. —Matthew 5:14 (CEB)*

This year, The United Methodist Church marks 30 years of vibrant, transformative ministry through Africa University (AU). Thank you, Northern Illinois Conference, for your faithfulness and generosity in bringing the dream of Africa University to life. In celebrating its 30th anniversary, Africa University is honoring the past and looking to the future, while remaining true to its mission as the cornerstone ministry for United Methodist-related leadership development in Africa.

Like the year that preceded it, 2021 affirmed that God's grace is sufficient in all circumstances. As the year unfolded, the coronavirus pandemic claimed more lives, restricted travel, and damaged livelihoods. Unable to be together on campus, the students, faculty, and staff grieved, pivoted, supported, and encouraged each other, and persevered.

Africa University found new opportunities for missional engagement in 2021. The year's highlights include:

- Effective online-only teaching, learning and student assessment: About 99 percent of students participated in online learning. Enrollment held steady at 3,060 students and more than 500 graduates from 24 African countries were awarded degrees in July 2021.
- The installation of AU's fifth Chancellor: Bishop Gaspar João Domingos of the Western Angola Episcopal Area was elected Chancellor following the death of Bishop John K. Yambasu of Sierra Leone.
- Research and community service:
  - AU researchers received US\$2 million in funding for regional initiatives to eradicate malaria, tuberculosis, and other communicable diseases. Africa University established a Malaria Institute to support efforts to eradicate malaria.
  - AU's students and graduates led, and showed their love of neighbor, with initiatives to feed hungry families, care for the environment, and improve the quality of life of legally blind parents and their children.
  - AU received the 2021 Jairos Jiri Humanitarian Award by the Government of Zimbabwe for its pandemic impact mitigation efforts.

Africa University is grateful to the Northern Illinois Conference for investing 100 percent of its budget commitment to the Africa University Fund (AUF) in 2021. Thank you for ensuring access to a life-changing higher education experience for Africa University students.

AU is part of the Northern Illinois Conference's story of restoring hope, equipping, and sending forth young leaders to shape an abundant life for themselves and for the communities they serve.

Thank you, Northern Illinois Conference, for letting your light shine for young women and men who would otherwise be left on the sidelines. "A city on top of a hill can't be hidden." Similarly, AU's current students and its more than 10,000 graduates to date are that metaphor made real. The Northern Illinois Conference walks alongside these young people as they hone their abilities, live fully into their purpose, and join in the work of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Submitted by James H. Salley, Associate Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement and President/CEO, Africa University (Tennessee) Inc.

### **400.32 - Boston University School of Theology**

I am profoundly grateful for your partnership, prayers, and support in these challenging times. A year like 2021 makes even more relevant BUSTH's historic and ongoing commitments to peace and justice in cultivating transformational leaders. We remain hopeful and vigilant in our continued partnership with you.

#### BREAKING NEWS:

- Return to Campus: Faculty, administrators, and library returned to in-person instruction and work in Fall 2021, with many events reaching hybrid audiences. Strict COVID-19 precautions continue to ensure the safety of students, faculty, and administrators.
- Students: Our Fall 2021 entering class was among our most diverse, with 108 new students enrolling in September.
- Faculty: In September we celebrated the appointment of Cristian De La Rosa as Associate Dean for Students and Community Life. Prof. Shelly Rambo leads the Lilly-funded project on "Trauma-Responsive Congregations," and two faculty members—Profs. Dana Robert and Wesley Wildman—were each honored with festschrifts. Prof. Jonathan Calvillo's book *The Saints of Santa Ana* received the HTI Book Award, and Prof. Choi Hee An published *A Postcolonial Leadership*. BUSTH is conducting two faculty searches with anticipation of welcoming new faculty in the fall.
- Launch of a New Online Degree: BUSTH's first fully online master's degree—the Master of Religion and Public Leadership (MARPL)—is currently enrolling students for its first cohort in fall 2022. MARPL seeks students who wish to be prepared for leadership roles that creatively engage the challenges of public life.
- Peale Foundation Grant: Prof. Steven Sandage and his research team were awarded a \$2.19 million, five-year grant by the Norman Vincent Peale Foundation for a project that fosters a network of communities for relational care and support to spiritual leaders and therapists to offer resources to reduce trauma risk and vocational burnout and foster flourishing.
- Scholarships: We continue to offer free tuition to UMC-registered candidates for ordained ministry and leadership fellowships that support students in ethnic, gender, and sexuality studies. New funds include the Sacred Worth Scholarship Fund and the Dean Thurman & Bishop Easterling Fellowship Fund.
- Online Lifelong Learning: BUSTH offers online workshops for professional and spiritual enrichment of religious leaders. Recent workshops include "Practices of Grief in a Time of Pandemic" and "Reflecting with Howard Thurman." To learn more, visit [bu.edu/sth/oll](http://bu.edu/sth/oll).
- Development: Recent accomplishments include endowing the Center for Global Christianity and Mission upon its 20th anniversary and new funding for student scholarships and academic programs.

#### COMMITMENT TO JUSTICE and COMPASSION:

- BUSTH's Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion offers webinars on timely inclusion efforts, such as "Increasing Participation of Students of Underrepresented Backgrounds."
- The 2021-22 Lowell Lectures are dedicated to cross-advocacy and intersectionality in racial justice efforts. This fall, Dr. Kwok Pui Lan advocated for broader understandings of political theology and greater awareness of anti-Asian sentiment and violence. A diverse panel response fostered rich conversation.
- Work continues to improve accessibility, sustainability, and responsible investing. BUSTH is the first certified Green School at BU and active in the Green Seminary Initiative.

Submitted by G. Sujin Pak, Dean

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**400.33 - Candler School of Theology**

Since 1914, Candler School of Theology at Emory University has lived into our mission, educating faithful and creative leaders for the church's ministries throughout the world. This year, as we leaned into this critical work and continued to adapt to a world changed by the coronavirus pandemic, we imagined new possibilities for students who are called by God to pursue serious theological study and preparation for ministry. For some, opening avenues to graduate theological education requires moving financial obstacles, and for others, geography or family responsibilities may be the barriers. Candler is committed to assisting students in removing these barriers and opening new pathways to ministry.

An official seminary of The United Methodist Church, Candler holds true to the Methodist value of ecumenical openness, enthusiastically welcoming students from 43 denominations, with 45% of MDiv students coming from the Wesleyan tradition. Our student body reflects the diversity and breadth of the Christian faithful, with an enrollment of 466 from 16 countries and 38 states, 45% persons of color (U.S.), and a median age of 28 among MDivs. This diversity is a blessing, enriching our students and our larger community and providing a "learning laboratory" for ministry in the 21st century—ministry that reaches across difference, works to resolve injustice, and embodies Christ's love in and among us.

Candler offers six single degrees (MDiv, MTS, MRL MRPL, ThM, DMin) and ten dual degrees. Our DMin is 90% online, so students can remain in their places of ministry while earning their degrees. Its high 87% completion rate illustrates both the quality of our students and Candler's commitment to their success. This year, we increased online offerings in other degrees as well. Now students can complete the Master of Religion and Public Life completely online; the Master of Religious Leadership with concentrations in Youth Ministry, Justice, Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation, or Wesleyan Leadership and Heritage in a hybrid format; and MDiv students can complete core classes online. Plus, our new Remote Teaching Parish (RTP) program allows MDiv students who have jobs in ecclesial settings far from our Atlanta campus to take core classes online and complete their contextual education requirements at their place of ministry, participating in mentor-led online groups with other RTP students.

Alleviating student debt through generous financial aid is a top priority. In 2020-2021, we awarded more than \$6.8 million in financial aid, with 100% of MDiv and 98.5% of all students receiving support. All MDiv students who are certified candidates for ordained ministry in the UMC receive full-tuition scholarships, and all MDiv, MTS, MRL, and ThM students who are enrolled part-time or more receive a scholarship covering at least 50% of tuition for the length of their program.

Hundreds of laity and theology students alike have joined in classes and events offered through The Candler Foundry, our innovative program to make theological education accessible to all. Through short and semester-length courses taught by Candler faculty, videos and discussion guides to spark conversation in groups or one-on-one, and online panel discussions, those who want to delve more deeply into theology and the Bible have the chance to do just that. View the latest offerings at [candlerfoundry.emory.edu](http://candlerfoundry.emory.edu).

Associate Dean of Methodist Studies the Rev. Dr. Anne Burkholder will retire from Candler at the end of the 2021-22 academic year. We are grateful to God for her energetic and skillful leadership in this vital area as she strengthened the connection between our students and conferences throughout the UMC, mentoring them as they discerned their call and navigated the ordination process.

Candler's ability to fulfill our mission to provide the church with the faithful and creative leaders it needs depends upon your prayers, partnership, and support. Thank you for the countless ways you advance this essential ministry in the life of our denomination. We invite you to visit us online at [candler.emory.edu](http://candler.emory.edu).

Submitted by Jan Love, Mary Lee Hardin Willard Dean and Professor of Christianity and World Politics Candler School of Theology, Emory University

**400.34 - Drew University Theological School**

In spring and fall of 2021, Drew Theological School began returning to its Madison, New Jersey, campus for some classes, meetings, and worship. As with many churches, in person events were held in spaces equipped for live-streaming or Zoom participation. The shift to remote learning during COVID-19 pandemic thus significantly expanded our online course offerings and accessible community events. Now, a number of students in Drew's masters programs will progress through their programs in U.S. and global locations far from New Jersey. This year, we welcomed 150 new students, again the largest class in a decade, and have a current enrollment of 376 students.

Drew cultivates pastors, preachers, deacons, activists, teachers, and thought leaders who are taking their place as the next generation of faith leaders and change agents. Diversity is a hallmark of our student body, including theological, vocational, age, and especially racial and national diversity both international—Asian, African, and South American and U.S.—black, white, Latinx, and Asian American—students. Our student body is truly global, with 35% of students from 21 different countries. For the first time in its history, Drew has an African student association, initiated by Drew Theological School students from 14 African countries, that is already contributing richly to the Drew community both on campus and online. We have welcomed new faculty in Latinx ministries and world Christianity. We have also seen an increase in United Methodist students particularly interested in the school's Gospel-inspired traditions of social justice advocacy and widely inclusive ministry. We are proud that many United Methodist Global Fellows have recently chosen to continue their journey in ministry at Drew. Our UMC graduates are serving in Greater New Jersey, Eastern Pennsylvania, and New York conferences as well as conferences across the country.

The faculty is committed to continuing to develop the curriculum in ways that take seriously the wide range of lived experience and calls to ministry of the students that gather in our global classrooms. All degree programs at the Theological School include interdisciplinary courses that demand out-of-the-box thinking, apprenticeship training that addresses real-world issues, and modes of learning that promote adaptability and innovation. Our MDiv and MATM degrees include a required gateway year, vocational pathways, and experiential learning that develops and deepens adaptive leadership skills. The curriculum features a team-designed and taught interdisciplinary sequence of core courses reflecting the integration of the theological disciplines and practices characteristic of the life of faith. The faculty have also



articulated shared values that are infused across the teaching and learning at Drew: a commitment to anti-racism; gender and sexual-identity equality; eco-sustainability and environmental justice; and interfaith understanding and cooperation.

Submitted by Melanie Johnson-DeBaufre, Interim Dean

### **400.35 - Duke Divinity School Historical Report**

Edgardo Colón-Emeric, the Irene and William McCutchen Associate Professor of Theology and Reconciliation and director of the Center for Reconciliation, began his two-year term as the dean of Duke Divinity School (DDS) on July 1. Colón-Emeric has been a member of the faculty since 2008. An ordained elder in the North Carolina Annual Conference, he directs the Central American Methodist Course of Study and the Peru Theological Initiative and serves on the United Methodist Committee on Faith and Order.

A new partnership with North Carolina Wesleyan College enables qualified undergraduates to take courses at DDS beginning in 2022. With the Duke Accelerated Pastoral Formation Program, funded by the Kern Family Foundation, select undergraduates can begin coursework toward Duke's Hybrid M.Div. or Master of Arts in Christian Practice (M.A.) degree while completing their baccalaureate degree. DDS launched the Asian House of Studies under the leadership of Sangwoo Kim, senior director of the Methodist House of Studies, and Jung Choi, senior director of Wesleyan Formation Initiatives.

Three new certificates were approved this year. The Certificate in Methodist/Wesleyan Studies is aimed at pan-Methodist/Wesleyan students to engage in robust training in Wesleyan theology and spiritual practice. In the Certificate in Latinx Studies, students will hone skills for ministry while becoming part of a learning community that is committed to and seeks to learn from Hispanic/Latinx traditions and cultures. The Certificate in Worship is designed to prepare students to engage in practical formation and theoretical reflection on worship in Christian congregations.

DDS announced 12 full-tuition fellowships supporting incoming residential M.Div. students who pursue a certificate in Black Church Studies or Latinx Studies. The Fellowships also provides mentoring opportunities and up to \$24,000 in stipend support and internships.

The Office of Wesleyan Engagement announced the "Rediscovering the Heart of Methodism" a missional initiative with the support of the Kern Family Foundation. It seeks to nurture leadership within the Wesleyan tradition as a constructive response to a turbulent ecclesial landscape.

Supported by a gift from the Duke Endowment, DDS launched "To Heal the Wounded Soul", a joint project of the Office of Black Church Studies and the Clergy Health Initiative to strengthen Carolina Wesleyan pastors who are Black, Indigenous, or people of color, including from the AME, AME Zion, CME, and UMC churches.

DDS welcomed the largest incoming class in school history, with 259 new students. The M.Div. program welcomed 133 students, including 52 Hybrid M.Div. students. The Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) welcomed 36 students, the Master of Theological Studies (M.T.S.) gained 33, and the M.A. gained 17. The Master of Theology (Th.M.) enrolled 12 students, and the Doctor of Theology (Th.D.) seven.

DDS hired three new faculty members in 2021. Polly Ha is an Associate Professor of the History of Christianity. Ronald K. Rittgers is the Chair in Lutheran Studies and Professor of the History of Christianity. Daniel Castelo is the William Kellon Quick Professor of Theology and Methodist Studies.

### **400.36 - Saint Paul School of Theology**

Educating tomorrow's leaders by offering on-campus, online, and hybrid learning courses at a FLEXible schedule, Saint Paul School of Theology is a seminary of the United Methodist Church committed to the formation of people for innovative, creative ministry. Grounded in the academic study of faith and ministry, theology is practiced in a traditional classroom and a contextual curriculum.

As the global pandemic continues to bring challenges to our daily lives, Saint Paul School of Theology began the 2021-2022 academic year, again offering students an option to attend courses via Zoom or on-campus while maintaining safety protocols. Our weekly chapel service continues to be available online, allowing staff and students to come together as one institution where all are invited to create a sacred atmosphere from wherever they are.

This year, we have had many faculty and staff changes. After many years of tremendous service to students and the Seminary, Dr. James Brandt and Dr. Hal Knight announced retirement plans effective at the end of the 2021-2022 academic year. In addition, Dr. Jeanne Hoeft will step down from her role as Vice President of Academic Affairs and Dean at the end of the academic year but will continue as faculty. New additions to Saint Paul include Dr. Joshua Bartholomew, Assistant Professor of Ethics, Church and Society; Dr. Tiffany Nagel Monroe, Executive Director of the Oklahoma Campus; Dr. Lucas Endicott, COS School Regional Director; and Rabbi Michael Zedek, Rabbi-in-Residence.

Saint Paul welcomed 45 new students for the 2021-2022 academic year. New student enrollment for the Fall semester increased by 44% (34 new students), with an overall increase for the year of 73%. Enrollment remained strong for the MDiv program with promising growth in our newly designed MATS and MACM programs. Saint Paul Course of Study (COS) School educated 228 individual students, 49 of which were new students, with approximately 550 registrations and offering a total of 50 courses. Serving 32 Conferences, 121 Full Time and 106 Part-Time Licensed Local Pastors comprised these registrations.

Our aim has always been to utilize technology as a conduit to bring faculty and students together regardless of whether they are on-campus or joining remotely through Zoom. All our classrooms began upgrades in Fall 2021 with offerings from Neat. Each smaller classroom added a 65" neat.board, a self-contained screen that functions as a full Zoom room, as well as an electronic whiteboard. We implemented neat.bars in other classrooms that connect to our classrooms' existing screens. We are currently implementing neat.bar pros, just released at the end of 2021, in each of our large classrooms. At Saint Paul School of Theology, we have always tried to be pioneers with distance-learning technologies.

Saint Paul School of Theology is blessed to be your partner in ministry and help those seeking to discover more and answer the call. May we continue to live into the call of Jesus Christ to be faithful witnesses for healing in these unsettled times and for generations to come.

### **400.37 - United Theological Seminary**

For the past 150 years, United Theological Seminary has educated men and women for Christian ministry within the historic traditions of the United Brethren, Evangelical United Brethren and United Methodist churches. On October 11, 1871, United Theological Seminary, then Union Biblical Seminary, held its first classes in Dayton, Ohio. From a starting class of 11 students, the seminary has grown to 488 students in its most recent academic year,\* representing 39 denominations, 11 countries, and 39 states. Today's seminary serves a diverse student body that is 53% African American.\*\*

On October 10, 2021, the seminary celebrated its 150th anniversary and burned the mortgage on its current campus facilities, freeing up \$400,000 annually to support student scholarships.

In 2021, United received a grant of \$1 million from Lilly Endowment Inc.'s Pathways for Tomorrow Initiative to expand the seminary's Houses of Study, which offer specialized master's tracks to equip students for the unique ministry needs of the communities, movements and denominations they serve. The seminary has introduced six Houses of Study, currently enrolling for 2022-23:

- Fresh Expressions, directed by Dr. Michael Beck;
- Mosaix, in partnership with Mosaix Global Network and directed by Rev. Chip Freed;
- Black United Methodist, directed by Dr. Vance Ross;
- Hispanic, 100% in Spanish for Spanish-speaking leaders, directed by Dr. Jorge Ochoa;
- Global Pentecostal, directed by Dr. Mark Chironna;
- Global Wesleyan, directed by Rev. Gregory Stover.

Because United believes so passionately in this initiative, the seminary has dedicated additional resources to offer half-tuition scholarships for inaugural students in its Houses of Study programs.

United also introduced the Academic Dean's Scholarship, which provides 50% tuition for the duration of a master's degree program, and the Presidential Scholarship, awarding up to \$5,000 per year to new students.

In honor of United's 150th anniversary year, a generous donor gifted \$2 million to help graduating students reduce their educational debt. Each graduate in the 2021-22 academic year will receive up to \$20,000 toward student debt from theological and previous academic studies.

As United looks forward to the next 150 years with gratitude and anticipation, the seminary remains committed to the preparation of faithful and fruitful Christian leaders to make disciples of Jesus Christ.

\* Student data represent 2020-2021 headcount enrollment.

\*\* Figure represents those who responded.

Submitted by Dr. Kent Millard, President