

BOOK OF REPORTS

243rd Session of the
Virginia Annual Conference



June 12-14, 2025
Roanoke, Virginia



2.0 version, updated
May 16, 2025

The 243rd session
VIRGINIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE
of The United Methodist Church

Roanoke, Virginia

June 12-14, 2025

BOOK OF REPORTS

2.0 version, updated

May 16, 2025

The Rev. Dr. Jonathan Page, Director of Connection and Innovation

Edited by

The Office of Communications

On the cover: The 2025 Annual Conference theme is
"Movement of the Heart".

IMPORTANT REGISTRATION INFORMATION

New Registration Procedure - Please Read Carefully

All members of the Virginia Annual Conference will have an issued badge that should be worn during the conference.

Clergy received hard badges at the last Annual Conference session. These badges can also be used year round as clergy identification in the community. (i.e. hospital visits) Clergy are expected to keep possession of this badge for use at subsequent Annual Conference session. If a hard badge is lost, clergy should contact Chris Malak, ChrisMalak@vaumc.org, for a replacement. There will be a \$10.00 replacement fee. Any changes to your address, contact information or appointment may be addressed separately. Clergy can go to <https://unity.vaumc.org> and update their information at any time. (You will need access to your Unity login information).

Lay members will receive their issued badges at the Registration Area when you arrive at the Annual Conference. It will not be sent to you prior to the Annual Conference. For any changes to lay member's information, please contact your local church or district (for at-large members) to ensure that the Unity System has your correct information.

Please follow the procedure below:

1. When you arrive at the Berglund Center, go immediately to the registration area located in the Exhibit Hall. All clergy, diaconal, and lay members will register there. The Registration Help Desk will also be there.
2. Go to either the clergy or lay registration area and give your name. Your badge and badge holder will be given to you, and a bar code on the badge will be scanned, registering your attendance at Annual Conference.
3. Persons who need special attention regarding registration will be asked to go to the Registration Help Desk. Here, name badge corrections, alternate/reserve registrations, and other such situations will be handled. You will receive your updated name badge, if necessary. Guest name badges may also be obtained at the Registration Help Desk.
4. This *Book of Reports* will be available online in May at <https://vaumc.org/AC2025/>. You may wish to print these documents ahead of time if you do not have access to them during conference.

ALTERNATES AND RESERVES

Alternates and Reserves who become the primary member AFTER MAY 31st should download an Alternate Member form, which needs to be completed and signed by the appropriate person before coming to Annual Conference. The form is available at www.vaumc.org/AC2025. Please be sure to download the appropriate form, either the Alternate Member Form for local church members or Alternate Member DISTRICT for District At-Large members. Bring your form directly to the Registration Help Desk. A new badge will be provided and scanned there.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Registration hours:

Wednesday, June 11: 12:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., Laity and Clergy Registration

Thursday, June 12: 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Laity and Clergy Registration

Friday, June 13: 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., Laity and Clergy Registration

Per Diem: By conference action, retirees, persons receiving their first appointment and selected others are authorized to receive reimbursement for expenses to attend Annual Conference. This reimbursement is not to exceed \$200 per night (\$600 maximum reimbursement, receipts required,) and is subject to the limitations of conference approved rates. Vouchers will be available online at www.vaumc.org/AC2025 and at the VUMPI display in the Hall and should be submitted to the Conference Treasurer's Office with appropriate receipts. The Conference Treasurer encourages all reimbursements to be made by direct deposit. Instructions will be attached to the vouchers to make provisions for direct deposit. **Vouchers will not be accepted after July 31st.**

Banquets: A list of banquets is available on the Annual Conference webpage at www.vaumc.org/AC2025. Other information may be obtained from the banquet host or from the information desk at the Berglund Convention Center.

Accessible parking: The Berglund Convention Center provides for ample parking. The parking lots have designated accessible parking spots. In addition, there will be a dedicated area exclusively for accessible parking.

Accessible seating: Each section of seating will have accessible (wheelchair/scooter) seating areas with clear sight view of the stage. The spaces will be clearly marked.

Access for those with hearing and vision challenges: Assisted listening receivers will be available with sign-out of the equipment at the Accessibility table (in the main plenary hall). American Sign Language interpreters will be provided for all sessions.

PRINTING THE BOOK OF REPORTS

If you'd like a printed version of the *Book of Reports*, you are free to do that on your own. For a "less formal" approach, simply print the file from your computer.

If you'd want something similar to how the *Book of Reports* was shared in the past, take the following steps:

Download the *Book of Reports* file from www.vaumc.org/ac2025.

- Visit the website of your preferred printing vendor. Some options include OfficeMax, FedEx Office, and Staples.
- Once on the website of choice, look for "document printing". From there, you'll be able to upload the Book of Reports file and select the kind of paper you'd like, the kind of binding you'd like, whether you prefer double sided printing, and if you'd like the document to be in full color or black and white.

NOTE: The least expensive option tends to be standard copy paper, spiral/wire bound, double sided, and black and white. This year's Book of Reports should cost between \$40-50 with those selections.

- Pay for your copy.
- If you have a store near where you live, you can opt to pick up your printed *Book of Reports* from that store. Otherwise, you would choose to have the printed *Book of Reports* shipped to you.

NOTE: Standard shipping times are usually around one week. We would recommend you have the Book of Reports sent for printing no later than June 1 to allow sufficient turnaround time to have it in hand before Annual Conference.



Friends of the Virginia Annual Conference,

Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ! I am joining you in anticipation of our upcoming Annual Conference session to be held June 12-14, 2025 in Roanoke, VA. This year our theme for Annual Conference is “Movement of the Heart”. Our focus, drawn from what we began last year with “A Conference in Three Movements”, is on the theological movement from prevenient grace to sanctification and perfection in love.

To emphasize this, we’ll be gathering for worship, teaching, business, and fellowship. I’ll be preaching our opening worship service on Thursday, June 12. I’m excited to welcome the Rev. Dr. Candace Lewis, Dean of Gammon Theological Seminary, who will be preaching the memorial service on Friday, June 13. And finally, on Saturday, June 14 my friend and colleague Bishop Ken Carter of the Charlotte episcopal area will be preaching the service of ordination and call. These will be moving times of worship that will grow us closer to God and one another.

We’re welcoming some fine teachers to guide our learning about the movement of the heart during Annual Conference. Rev. Dr. Lewis will lead our teaching session on Thursday afternoon. On Friday we’re welcoming Scott Erickson, known broadly on most corners of social media as “scottthepainter”. On Saturday we’ll be blessed to hear from Rev. Dr. Edgardo Colón-Emeric, Dean of Duke Divinity School. These are all excellent teachers who will bring great ideas to stir our hearts and conversations—those we will have in Roanoke and those we will carry home.

The business of this Annual Conference session will be critical as well. This year we’re voting on four constitutional amendments brought by the work of last year’s General Conference. These will shape the future of the church and it is important that all members cast their vote on these matters. We will be considering shifts in our Annual Conference budget, reviewing the ongoing work of leadership in the conference, and hear from a number of our vital ministry teams. We’ll also celebrate new buds of ministry taking shape around the conference, recognize retirees, longtime ministry partners and award recipients, and commit to the work of holy conferencing together.

All of this will take place in the backdrop of beautiful Roanoke, a great place to fellowship. I hope you will look at the list of banquets and celebrations as an opportunity to form community. Perhaps you’ll consider attending Thursday night’s “An Evening with Scott Erickson”. Or maybe you’ll find space to connect with friends new and old alike as you follow the leading of the Holy Spirit around some of the incredible places in Roanoke and the Valley Ridge district.

I believe God will be up to big things as we gather in Roanoke this June. I invite you to join me in praying over our gathering, that it would be a time of holy conferencing where everyone present can sense the moving of the Holy Spirit. I believe it will be a true movement of the heart, and I can’t wait to share it with you!

Blessings,



Bishop Sue Haupert-Johnson
Resident Bishop of the Virginia Annual Conference

AGENDA

243rd Session of the Virginia Annual Conference

June 12-14, 2025

Berglund Center

Roanoke, Virginia

Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson, Presiding

“Movement of the Heart”

Sunday Afternoon, June 8

4:00 p.m. Laity Session.....Zoom Webinar
Ms. Martha Stokes

Wednesday Evening, June 11

(Registration: 12:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.)

2:30 p.m. Clergy Session Performing Arts Center

Thursday Morning, June 12

(Registration: 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.)

9:00am Opening Worship Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson

10:15am Break

10:30am Morning Business Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson

Call to Order/Opening Prayer

Recognition of New Clergy

Welcome from the Mayor of Roanoke Mayor Joe Cobb

District Welcome and Organizing Motions Rev. Doug Forrester

Elections Rev. Claire Miller

Consecration of Conference Leadership..... Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson

Recognition of new clergy.....Rev. Jessie Colwell

Rules Committee Ms. Joelle Gotwals

Consent Agenda.....Rev. Claire Miller

United Methodist College Presidents President Robert Lindgren

12:00pm Recess

(Continued on next page.)

AGENDA

(Continued from previous page.)

Thursday Afternoon, June 12

2:00pm	Teaching Session.....	Rev. Dr. Candace Lewis
3:00pm	Break	
3:15pm	Afternoon Business.....	Bishop Sue Haupt-Johnson
	Prayer.....	Rev. Lan Davis Wilson
	UMFS 125 Year Recognition.....	Ms. Nancy Toscano
	Laity Address.....	Mrs. Martha Stokes
	Cabinet Report.....	Rev. Victor Gomez
	Extended Extended Cabinet Report.....	Mrs. Martha Stokes and Bishop Sue Haupt-Johnson
	Common Table Report.....	Mrs. Martha Stokes
	Delegation Report.....	Rev. Lindsey Freeman and Mr. Warren Harper
5:00pm	Report from Journey in Understanding Task Force.....	Rev. Mark Ogren

Friday Morning, June 13

(Registration: 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.)

9:00am	Morning Business.....	Bishop Sue Haupt-Johnson
	Prayer.....	David McAllister-Wilson
	Pensions Report.....	Mr. John Fuller
	Equitable Compensation Report.....	Rev. Tom Durrance
	Just Compensation Report.....	Rev. Jessie Colwell
	Treasurer's Report.....	Mr. David Dommissie
	CFA Report.....	Mrs. Angie Williams
10:45am	Break	
11:00am	Teaching Session.....	Mr. Scott Erickson
12:00pm	Recess	

(Continued on next page.)

AGENDA

(Continued from previous page.)

Friday Afternoon, June 13

(Registration closed)

2:00pm	Memorial Service.....	Rev. Dr. Candace Lewis
3:00pm	Break	
3:15pm	Afternoon Business.....	Bishop Sue Haupt-Johnson
	Prayer	Ms. Alison Malloy
	Voting on Constitutional Amendments	Rev. Matt Benton ...
	Time of Prayer	Bishop Sue Haupt-Johnson
	Recognizing New Faith Communities.....	Rev. Amanda Garber and Rev. Stephanie Parker
	Denman Award & One Matters Award	Rev. Robin BeMiller and Rev. Tim Hazlett
	Francis Asbury Award.....	Rev. AhnnaLise Stevens-Jennings
	Green Church Award.....	Mr. Brian Christoffersen
5:00pm	Recognition of Retirees	Rev. Jessie Colwell and Mr. John Fuller

Saturday Morning, June 14

8:00am	Morning Business	Bishop Sue Haupt-Johnson
	Prayer	Mr. Tony Clement
	Monitoring	Rev. Lauren Wright
	Resolutions	Rev. Drew Ens
	Unfinished Conference Business	Bishop Sue Haupt-Johnson
	Fixing of Appointments	Rev. Victor Gomez
9:45am	Teaching Session.....	Rev. Dr. Edgardo Colon Emeric
10:45am	Break	
11:00am	Service of Call and Ordination	Bishop Kenneth Carter
12:30pm	Conference adjourns	Bishop Sue Haupt-Johnson

Responsibility of the Clergy Members of the Annual Conference

Each clergy member has the responsibility to:

1. Ensure that lay members from your congregation are fully prepared to participate in the annual conference, including having access to the necessary equipment and internet service.
2. Attend the annual conference orientation session whether held in-person or virtually.
3. Attend all the sessions (in-person or virtual) of the annual conference and leave only under emergency conditions and with the knowledge of your district superintendent. Attendance is not optional. “Any such person unable to attend shall report by letter to the conference secretary, setting forth the reason for the absence.” (2016 *Book of Discipline*, ¶ 602.8.)
4. Become familiar with the organizational structure and existing programs of the annual conference, parliamentary procedure and the conference standing rules as provided in the 2024 *Book of Reports* and discuss with the lay member(s) from your charge.
5. Read pre-conference reports and become familiar with specific programs and items that might be presented during the sessions. Prior to annual conference, consult with your lay member(s) so that they might understand the various reports and their implication for the life of the Church. Keep in mind that the lay member(s) as well is/are obligated to express views and vote as each feels is best.
6. Participate fully at the annual conference and help in policy-making decisions.
7. Form your own opinions on issues and vote your convictions.
8. Serve as interpreter of the annual conference actions to your charge along with the lay member. (2016 *Book of Discipline* ¶ 251.2).

Responsibility of the Lay Members of the Annual Conference

It is an honor to be elected as a lay member to the Virginia Conference, one that comes with much responsibility. By virtue of this office, you are also a member of your church’s council (¶ 252.5.g), finance committee (¶ 258.4), and the pastor-parish relations committee (¶ 258.2.a) (2016 *Book of Discipline*).

Each member has the responsibility to:

1. Attend the annual conference orientation session whether held in-person or virtually.
2. Attend all the sessions (in-person or virtual) of the annual conference.
3. Become familiar with the organizational structure and existing programs of the annual conference, parliamentary procedure and the conference standing rules as printed in the 2024 *Book of Reports*.
4. Read pre-conference reports in the *Book of Reports* available to download and print from the conference website and become familiar with specific programs and items that might be presented during the sessions. Consult with the pastor and church lay leader. Dialogue with others ahead of time if there are issues for which you need additional information or insight.
5. Participate fully in the work of the annual conference policy-making decisions.
6. Form your own opinions on issues and vote your convictions.
7. Report back to your charge. This report may be presented through virtual opportunities available at each local church, newsletters, or other means. This report should be done “not later than three months after the close of the conference” (¶ 251.2, 2016 *Book of Discipline*). Consult with your pastor before conference about scheduling and expectations for reporting. The *Book of Reports*, the Virginia Conference web page (www.vaumc.org) and personal notes on the sessions can be used as a basis for the report. Be certain to mention major issues raised and any action that might affect the local church.

SPEAKING ON A MOTION/MAKING A MOTION

Many motions important to the Annual Conference operation and program are functional and are voted on as a matter of course. Other motions invite much debate. You may find you desire to speak on a motion or even introduce a motion concerning an issue on the agenda.

The proper way to speak on the floor of Annual Conference is as follows:

- Be recognized by the presiding officer (usually the bishop) by standing at your seat, raising your hand and holding up the brightly-colored half-sheet that you received at registration.
- When recognized, move to the microphone designated by the presiding officer.
- Give your name, identify your district and give the name of your local church.
- If you are making a motion in regard to a report on the floor (being discussed), state the motion with no verbal introduction. State, "If seconded, I would like to speak to it," and then when seconded give your comments and supportive details.

NOTE: Motions must be written out and turned in to the conference Secretary, even if not passed or seconded. If you are commenting on a report or motion on the floor (being discussed), then state if you speak in favor or opposition to the motion and make your comments (limit two minutes unless a shorter time has been established). If you desire to make a motion introducing a new issue or concept that is not part of a report presented to the conference, then you must write a motion.

GUIDELINES FOR THE NURSING ROOM

A designated room will be available at the Berglund Convention Center for nursing mothers. More information will be available on the Conference website.

STANDING RULES OF ORDER AND PROCEDURE

As Approved by The Virginia Annual Conference at its 2024 Session

The annual conference shall elect a Rules Committee as allowed by ¶604 of the *Discipline* and as set forth in ¶V.B.18 of the Standing Rules.

The Virginia Annual Conference Rules and Policies shall be those published in the *Journal of The Virginia Annual Conference United Methodist Church* of the preceding annual conference and shall be published in the *Book of Reports* of each annual conference.

The current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall apply to any and all situations not covered elsewhere by these rules.

I. THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

A. THE PURPOSE OF THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The purpose of the Virginia Annual Conference is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world by equipping its local churches for ministry and by providing a connection for ministry beyond the local church; all to the glory of God.

B. MEMBERSHIP

1. **Clergy Membership.** The clergy membership of the annual conference shall consist of deacons and elders in full connection, provisional members, associate members, affiliate members, and local pastors under full-time and part-time appointment to a pastoral charge.
2. **Campus Ministries.** Campus ministers, chaplains and Wesley Foundation directors shall be included in the annual conference composition. In districts where United Methodist laypersons serve as campus ministers/directors of Wesley Foundations, they shall be added as district-at-large lay members to the annual conference. In districts where United Methodist clergy who are members of the annual conference serve as chaplains, campus ministers, or directors of Wesley Foundations, the laypersons elected as their balancing counterpart shall be elected from and by either that campus ministry board of directors or the students from that ministry/foundation and their expenses paid by the district. Special consideration shall be given to the inclusion of United Methodist young adults who are active participants in campus ministry.
3. **Lay Membership.** All lay members of the annual conference shall conform to the requirements for membership of the 2016 *Book of Discipline* in ¶ 602.4, and consist of the following (or designated alternate), if lay persons:
 - a. a professing member elected by each charge; except that each charge served by more than one clergy member under appointment (including deacons in full connection for whom this is their primary appointment) shall be entitled to as many lay members as there are clergy members under appointment. (¶ 32, 2016 *Book of Discipline*)
 - b. diaconal ministers;
 - c. the active deaconesses and home missionaries under episcopal appointment within the bounds of the annual conference;
 - d. the conference president of United Methodist Women (hereinafter "United Women in Faith");
 - e. the conference president of United Methodist Men;
 - f. the conference lay leader;
 - g. district lay leaders;
 - h. the president of the conference young adult organization;

- i. a member of the conference youth organization;
 - j. the chair of the annual conference college student organization;
 - k. the conference secretary of global ministries;
 - l. the conference director of lay servant ministries;
 - m. one youth between the ages of 12 and 18 and one young adult between the ages of 18 and 30 from each district, to be selected as set forth in *2016 Book of Discipline*, ¶602.4.
 - n. at least three additional youth between the ages of 12 and 18 and at least three additional young adults between the ages of 18 and 30 from each district, to be selected by the District Council on Ministries or equivalent body..
 - o. the conference Treasurer;
 - p. the Chancellor(s) of the annual conference;
 - q. the Director of Connectional Ministries;
 - r. lay members of general boards, councils and commissions, and lay members who serve on agencies related to the general church and are mandated by the *Discipline* because of their office to serve on related annual conference agencies, who are members of such as of August 31 of the previous year;
 - s. district presidents of United Methodist Men;
 - t. district presidents of United Women in Faith;
 - u. conference Scouting coordinator;
 - v. the president or chairperson of the following annual conference agencies: Commission on Archives and History; Board of Church and Society; Church Development Team; Commission on Disabilities; Board of Discipleship; Commission on Equitable Compensation; Commission on Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy; Council on Finance and Administration; Missional Ministries Board; Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries; Board of Ordained Ministry; Rules Committee; Resolutions Committee; Site Selection Committee; Commission on Status and Role of Women; Virginia United Methodist Pensions, Inc.; Trustees of the Virginia Annual Conference, Inc.; and Virginia Conference Board of Communications and Virginia United Methodist Foundation.
 - w. And by annual conference formula to equalize the number of lay and clergy membership of the annual conference (¶ 32, *2016 Book of Discipline*) additional lay members to be elected by the lay members of the district conference of each district in such numbers as to provide that the total number of lay members from that district shall bear the same ratio to the total lay membership of the annual conference as the church membership of that district bears to the total church membership of the annual conference. Each district conference shall also elect alternates to those elected under this paragraph in number to equal at least one-third of the numbers provided under this subparagraph. The computations that form the basis for the determination of the additional lay membership to be elected by each district hereunder shall be based on the various membership categories as of the adjournment of the preceding annual conference. In making these computations, a lay person shall not be counted in more than one membership position. The Director of Connectional Ministries shall furnish to the Bishop by September 1 of each year the totals of each category of members together with the number of additional lay members to be elected by each district.
- 4. Members of Next Succeeding Annual Conference.** By the adoption of Paragraphs I.B.3.d-v, all lay persons holding the positions enumerated in those subparagraphs are elected as lay members of the next succeeding annual conference. In the event of a change in the persons holding a position in ¶ I.B.3. between sessions of the annual conference, the person holding the position at the time of the next succeeding annual conference shall be the member of the annual conference.
- 5. Expenses.** Unless otherwise covered by a local charge, expenses of attending annual conference shall be born as follows:

- a. By the districts:
 - i. two youth between the ages of 12 and 18;
 - ii. two young adults between the ages of 18 and 30;
 - iii. the district lay leaders;
 - iv. the district president of the United Methodist Men;
 - v. the district president of the United Women in Faith;
 - vi. additional district members at large;
 - b. By the annual conference:
 - i. the Director of Connectional Ministries
 - ii. the Conference Director of Lay Servant Ministries;
 - iii. the president of the conference young adult organization;
 - iv. a member of the conference youth organization;
 - v. the conference Treasurer;
 - vi. the conference Chancellor(s);
 - vii. lay members of general boards, councils and commissions, and lay members who serve on agencies related to the general church and are mandated by the *Discipline* because of their office to serve on related annual conference agencies, who are members of such as of August 31 of the previous year;
 - viii. the chair of the annual conference college student organization;
 - ix. the conference scouting coordinator
 - x. the chair of the Resolutions Committee
 - c. By annual conference boards or agencies:
 - i. the Conference Lay Leader
 - ii. the conference president of the United Methodist Men;
 - iii. the conference president of the United Women in Faith;
 - iv. the Conference Secretary of Global Ministries
 - v. the president or chairperson, of the following annual conference agencies: Commission on Archives and History; Board of Church and Society; Church Development Team; Commission on Disabilities; Board of Discipleship, Commission on Equitable Compensation; Commission on Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy; Council on Finance and Administration; United Methodist Foundation; Missional Ministries Board; Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries; Board of Ordained Ministry; Rules Committee; Site Selection Committee; Commission on Status and Role of Women; Virginia United Methodist Pensions; Inc., Trustees of the Virginia Annual Conference, Inc.; and Virginia Conference Board of Communications.
- 6. Right to Floor and Right to Vote.** With the exception of provisional members, associate members, and local pastors serving full time and part-time appointments, those members of the conference listed in ¶¶ I.B.1.,2., and 3. shall be full members of the conference with the right to the floor and the right to vote. Provisional members, associate members, and local pastors serving full time and part-time appointments have the right to the floor and the right to vote on all matters except the following:
- a. Constitutional amendments.
 - b. Matters of ordination, character and conference relations of clergy. These shall be the sole responsibility of clergy members in full connection.

For the election of delegates to the General and the Jurisdictional conference the following clergy are eligible to vote:

- a. Active and retired members (elders and deacons)
- b. Active and retired provisional members
- c. Active and retired associate members
- d. Part-time and full-time local pastors who have completed the educational requirements and have been under

uninterrupted appointment for two years (*2016 Book of Discipline* ¶316.6).

- e. Retired local pastors (including those under appointment) are NOT eligible to vote for the election of delegates (*2016 Book of Discipline* ¶320.5).

- 7. **Roll of Conference.** The roll of the conference shall be the official registration signed by the members of the conference.
- 8. **Privilege of Floor Without Vote.** The following shall be seated in the annual conference and shall be given the privilege of the floor without vote: official representatives from other denominations, especially from member churches of Churches Uniting In Christ, invited by the annual conference; missionaries regularly assigned by the General Board of Global Ministries and serving within the bounds of the annual conference; lay missionaries regularly appointed by the General Board of Global Ministries in nations other than the United States and certified lay missionaries from nations other than the United States serving within the bounds of the annual conference (quoting *2016 Book of Discipline* ¶ 602.9).

C. ANNUAL CONFERENCE OFFICIALS

- 1. **The Presiding Officer.** The resident Bishop of the conference shall preside at all sessions of the conference but shall have the privilege of appointing a presiding officer to preside in his or her stead in the event of illness or temporary absence from the annual conference floor.
- 2. **Annual Conference Secretary.** The secretary of the annual conference shall be elected quadrennially by the annual conference upon nominations arising from the floor at annual conference following each regular General Conference of The United Methodist Church. In the event a vacancy occurs between sessions of the annual conference, the Bishop, after consultation with the District Superintendents, shall appoint a person to act until the next session.
- 3. **Assistant Secretaries.** The secretary shall annually nominate a sufficient number of assistant secretaries who shall be elected by the annual conference to handle properly the work of the annual conference.
- 4. **Treasurer.** The annual conference Treasurer shall be nominated by the Council on Finance and Administration. He or she shall be elected by the annual conference at the first session of the annual conference following the regular General Conference. He or she shall be elected for the quadrennium or until his or her successor has been elected and qualifies. If a vacancy should occur during the quadrennium, the Council on Finance and Administration shall fill the vacancy until the next session of the annual conference.
- 5. **Statistician.** The annual conference statistician shall be elected by the annual conference on nomination by the Cabinet at the annual conference following each regular General Conference of The United Methodist Church. In the event a vacancy occurs between sessions of the annual conference, the Bishop, after consultation with the District Superintendents, shall appoint a person to act until the next session of the annual conference.
- 6. **Assistant Statisticians.** The annual conference statistician shall annually nominate a sufficient number of assistant statisticians who shall be elected by the annual conference for the annual conference year.
- 7. **Editor of the Annual Conference Journal.** The annual conference secretary shall nominate annually the editor of the conference *Journal*, who shall be elected by the annual conference for the next calendar year. He or she shall be responsible for editing and printing the *Journal of the Virginia Annual Conference* and shall be amenable to the conference secretary.
- 8. **Conference Parliamentarian.** The Bishop may appoint a conference parliamentarian whose duty shall be to advise and counsel concerning rules of order and procedure.

D. NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF BOARDS, COUNCILS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES

- 1. **The Conference Nominations Team:** There shall be a Conference Nominations Team. The team shall meet at least quarterly. The Director of Connectional Ministries and the Conference Lay Leader shall serve as co-chairs. The Conference Nominations Team shall consist of 18 members in addition to the co-chairs. Two members (one clergy, one lay) shall be appointed by the Bishop to ensure appropriate age, ethnic and gender representation on the Conference Nominations Team. The Bishop will make replacement appointments in a manner that continues

to ensure appropriate age, ethnic and gender representation and in a manner that maintains the clergy/laity balance on the Conference Nominations Team. Of the remaining 16 members, eight shall be clergy and eight shall be lay. Each district of the Virginia Annual Conference shall be represented. Representatives of the Commission on the Status and Role of Women, the Commission on Disabilities, and the Commission on Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy shall monitor and have voice at these meetings.

All persons shall serve terms of four years, and no person shall serve for more than four consecutive years. As terms of district representatives expire, each District Nominations Facilitation Committee will name one replacement individual to serve on the Conference Nominations Team, clergy to replace lay, lay to replace clergy. In the event that a member moves from the district, resigns, or dies during his/her term, a replacement shall be selected in the manner which was applicable to the departing member, with the replacement only serving until the end of the original term.

Each District Nominations Facilitation Committee shall designate one of its members as an alternate to its District Representative on the Conference Nominations Team.

2. **District Nominations Facilitation Committee.** There shall be on each district a Nominations Facilitation Committee composed of the District Superintendent as chair; the district lay leader; president of United Methodist Men; president of United Women in Faith; a representative of United Methodist Youth; a college chaplain or a campus minister (applies only to districts with Wesley Foundation or ecumenical campus ministry programs), the district representative to the Conference Nominations Team, plus one to three persons (lay and clergy) elected by the district council on ministries. The committee shall meet on the call of the chair at least twice a year between annual conference and March 1. The committee shall develop and maintain a talent bank of lay and clergy persons from the district who could be qualified nominees for the various boards and agencies of the annual conference. The committee shall prepare a profile on each person nominated and upon having a person nominated to a board or agency of the conference, will provide a copy of that profile, including address and phone number, conference boards or agencies the individual is already serving, and the person's willingness to serve, to the co-chairs of the Conference Nominations Team.
3. **Information to Be Furnished to Each District Nominations Facilitation Committee.** Each board, council, commission and committee of the annual conference shall furnish to the co-chairs of the Conference Nominations Team on a timely basis for the use of the District Nominations Facilitation Committees:
 - a. A summary of its responsibilities and the specific division/committee for which a vacancy exists;
 - b. A list of the gifts and talents desired;
 - c. Length of service expected;
 - d. Demographic information about its current makeup (e.g., number of men, women, ethnic representation, district representation, etc.); and
 - e. Schedule of times and locations of its meetings during the year.

It may also suggest names and profiles to the Conference Nominations Team through its co-chairs.

4. **When Conference Nominations Team Should Make Nominations.** The Conference Nominations Team shall annually or quadrennially, as set forth by Disciplinary provision or Virginia Annual Conference Rules and Policies, nominate the membership of the boards, councils, commissions, and committees of the annual conference. Nominees for boards and other agencies shall be published in the *Book of Reports*.
5. **Removal Due to Absences.** Any member of any board, council, commission or committee who is absent from two meetings of such board, council, commission or committee without excuse, or from three consecutive agency meetings for any reason, shall automatically cease to be a member of such board, council, commission or committee. The secretary of each board, council, commission or committee shall notify the co-chairs of the Conference Nominations Team of vacancies. Any vacancy shall be filled by action of the board, council, commission or committee until the next annual conference session, at which time the annual conference shall fill the vacancy.

6. **Request at Annual Charge Conferences for Names to be Given to District Nominations Facilitation Committee.** At each annual charge conference the elder presiding at the charge conference shall ask if the Lay Leadership Committee has any names to recommend for conference boards, councils, commissions or committees. Such names shall be given to the district Nominations Facilitation Committee.
7. **Multicultural Inclusiveness.** The Conference Nominations Team shall strive to insure multicultural inclusiveness.
8. **Normal Term Of Service Is Four Years.** Unless otherwise specified in these rules or in the *Book of Discipline*, a person elected to a board, council, commission or committee of the annual conference is elected for a four-year term of service and is eligible for re-election to an additional four-year term. However, if one is first elected to fill an unexpired term of two years or less, that person is eligible for re-election to two full terms. A person completing two consecutive full terms is eligible for re-election to that agency after an interim of one year. In the case of a board or agency with an eight-year term, members elected to fill unexpired terms of three years or less shall be eligible for re-election to one full term of eight years. Program boards and agencies other than the Board of Ordained Ministry may co-opt specific persons for specific projects for short periods of time as consultants, without vote. Any combination of continuous service as either a regular or co-opted member shall count on the eight-year time limit for consecutive service. The term of office of members of conference boards and agencies shall begin with the adjournment of the Annual Conference at which said members are elected and shall extend until their successors are elected.
9. **Ex-Officio Members.** Members of general boards or agencies shall be members ex-officio of the corresponding conference board or agency.
10. **Nomination or Election to Only One Board, Council, Commission, or Standing Committee with Limited Exceptions.** No person is eligible for nomination, election, or interim appointment to more than one board, council, commission, or standing committee, except where permitted by the *Discipline* and/or conference structure.
11. **District Superintendent Not Eligible to be Chairperson or President of Board, Council, Commission, or Standing Committee.** No District Superintendent shall be eligible to serve as a chairperson or president of any board, council, commission, or committee of the annual conference. The Bishop may appoint a representative of the Cabinet to any board, council, commission, or committee which is not program related of which a member of the Cabinet is not already an elected member. The appointment of District Superintendents to boards, councils, commissions, or committees which are program related shall be made annually.
12. **Officers of Quadrennially Elected Boards, Councils, Commissions or Committees.** Officers of boards, councils, commissions, and committees whose members are required to be elected quadrennially shall be elected by the representative agency at the session of the annual conference at which new members are elected or within ninety days after adjournment. Nominations shall come from a nominating committee appointed by the outgoing president of the agency and/or from the floor. The organizational or first meeting of each agency shall be convened by a person designated by the Bishop.
13. **Officers of Other Boards, Councils, Commissions and Committees.** Officers of other boards, councils, commissions and committees shall be elected by the representative agency at the agency's last regular meeting prior to each annual conference. Nominations shall come from a nominating committee appointed by the outgoing president of the agency and/or from the floor.
14. **Tellers.** For those sessions of the annual conference where there is no election of delegates to General Conference and the jurisdictional conference, the Conference Nominations Team shall, as necessary, appoint a chief teller, who shall be ineligible to serve again for a quadrennium. It shall additionally appoint a team of tellers composed of four persons, two clergy and two lay, from each district. Each time a count vote is called for in the annual conference session, the chief teller shall have the tellers ready to count the vote, having previously trained them to accurately and efficiently perform their duties.

II. REPORTS, PRESENTATIONS, PETITIONS, PROPOSALS AND CONSENT AGENDA

A. REPORTS

1. **Submission of Annual Reports and Publishing of *Book of Reports*.** Agencies shall submit annual reports to the designated person before the date set annually by the Common Table for Church Vitality. The Director of Connec-tional Ministries shall make available the *Book of Reports* to each clergy and lay member of annual conference at least 30 days before the opening session of annual conference.
2. **Reporting at Annual Conference.** For reports printed in the *Book of Reports*, verbal introductions shall not ex-ceed five minutes, and there shall be no further reading of reports or resolutions, unless requested for clarification or requested by a majority vote of the annual conference. The presiding Bishop may amend the Annual Conference agenda or schedule as needed.
3. **Amendments to be Submitted in Writing.** Persons proposing amendments to any report must submit them in writing to the secretary upon presentation to the annual conference.
4. **Submission of New Reports, Changes, or Additions to Printed Report.** Persons proposing new reports, changes or additions to the printed report of an agency in the *Book of Reports* must submit them in writing for delivery to members of the annual conference at or before the opening session, but not to be considered by the annual confer-ence before the morning session of the second day of annual conference, or at such time as directed by the resident Bishop or presiding officer for consideration.
5. **Presiding Officer of Agency giving Report has Privilege of Floor, without Vote, for that Report.** When the annual conference has before it the report of any agency, or a matter concerning any agency, the presiding officer of that group, if not a member of the conference, shall have the privilege of the floor, without vote, for that report.

B. RESOLUTIONS

1. **Resolutions.** Resolutions proposed for presentation to the annual conference shall be submitted to the Resolutions Committee no later than January 31 each year for consideration at that year's annual conference. The Resolutions Committee shall meet as necessary throughout the year in order to review and process submitted resolutions in a timely manner. All properly submitted resolutions shall be organized by the Resolutions Committee for submission to the Conference Secretary, or the Conference Secretary's designee, along with a Resolution Committee report, for publication in the *Book of Reports*.
 - a. The Resolutions Committee will determine if the below requirements under Rule II.B.2 and 3 have been met for any and all submitted resolutions. If a resolution is deemed to have been properly submitted, it will be further reviewed and prepared for presentation and consideration by the annual conference. If a resolution is deemed to not have been properly submitted under the below requirements, the Resolutions Committee shall timely return it to the person(s) who submitted it for revision; however, all revisions must be resubmitted by the January 31 deadline to be properly considered for presentation to the annual conference. Upon the January 31 final dead-line for submission, the Resolutions Committee shall meet within two weeks in order to review, process and, if necessary, refer a resolution to an appropriate board, agency or committee for consideration and input.
 - b. A resolution may be submitted for consideration after January 31 only if the resolution concerns an issue that has clearly arisen after the January 31 deadline. Such resolutions must be submitted to the Resolutions Com-mittee as soon as possible after the triggering event regarding the issue and no later than 14 days prior to the opening session of the annual conference.
 - c. The Resolutions Committee shall be the final arbiter to determine if the subject of the proposed resolution arose after the formal submission deadline. Such resolutions, if considered by the Committee, will be distributed via all conference e-mail groups, and the submitter of any such resolutions shall provide sufficient copies for all members attending annual conference, with the costs of such copies borne by the submitter, and submit such copies to the Conference Secretary for inclusion in the member packets prior to the opening session of the annu-al conference.

- 2. Who May Submit a Resolution.** The following persons and entities may submit a resolution before the annual conference:
 - a. Any conference board, agency or committee;
 - b. Any group of at least ten (10) conference clergy members (full connection, provisional, or local pastor, including retired pastors) and/or conference lay members; or,
 - c. Any layperson who is a member of a local church within the conference and whose church council, or equivalent governing body, has endorsed the resolution.
- 3. Submission of Resolutions.** To submit a resolution for consideration by the annual conference, the document must be properly formatted and submitted to the Resolutions Committee at an email address provided by the conference. The following process must be followed:
 - a. All resolutions shall be limited to one issue. If the *Book of Discipline* is affected, each resolution must address only one paragraph of the *Discipline*; except that, if two or more paragraphs in the *Discipline* are so closely related that a change in one affects the others, the resolution may call for the amendment of those paragraphs to make them consistent with one another (§507.2. *The Book of Discipline*);
 - b. All resolutions must be accompanied by a statement of: (i) any estimated financial impact; (ii) an estimate of any conference staff resources and time required; and (iii) the source(s) of funding required to implement its provisions, if any;
 - c. All resolutions are to be written in the following format: “Whereas, ... Whereas, ... Whereas, ... Therefore, be it resolved ,, Be it further resolved ...” structure;
 - d. All resolutions must be submitted electronically in Microsoft Word format, in 12 point, Times New Roman font, single spaced, with the following margins: top 1.25”; bottom 1”; left 1”; right 1.25”. Handwritten or submissions in .pdf format will not be accepted;
 - e. All resolutions shall be limited to no more than 1,000 words; and
 - f. Each resolution must be signed by the person(s) submitting it, and accompanied by appropriate identifying information, including the name(s), title(s), phone number(s), and email address(s) and conference district of the person(s) must be included with the resolution. Electronic signatures will be accepted in accordance with common business practices.
- 4. Committee Actions.** The Resolutions Committee shall meet as necessary throughout the year to timely take the following actions upon properly receiving and considering resolutions:
 - a. Accept the resolutions as presented with no changes and recommend it for consideration at annual conference;
 - b. Accept the resolutions after working with the submitter regarding formatting and to comply with the Standing Rules and the *Book of Discipline*, and recommend it for consideration at annual conference;
 - c. Refer a resolution to another annual conference board, agency or committee for consideration and possible inclusion in that body’s report if the subject of the resolution involves the work of that conference body. Should the board, agency or committee to which a resolution is referred choose not to include the resolution in its report, then the Resolutions Committee shall be timely informed of this decision so that resolution may be included in the Resolution Committee’s report.
 - d. Refer a resolution to the Council on Finance and Administration (CFA) for review and to obtain an opinion or comment when such a resolution has a potential financial impact on the conference; or,
 - e. Refer a resolution to the conference Chancellor for review and to obtain an opinion or comment when such a resolution has a potential legal impact on the conference.

5. Scheduling and Debate of Resolutions.

- a. The Resolutions Committee shall determine the order for debate of all properly submitted resolutions included in the Resolutions Committee report for consideration by the annual conference.
- b. For resolutions that have come from or been referred to a conference board, agency or committee, the chairperson of that body will be entitled to speak once before the annual conference (prior to floor debate) to share any comments of the board, agency or committee concerning the resolution. This speech will not count against any time limitations.
- c. For resolutions that have been referred to the CFA or the conference Chancellor, the chairperson of the CFA or the Chancellor will be entitled to speak once before the annual conference (prior to floor debate) to share comments germane to the financial or legal impact concerning the resolution. This speech will not count against any time limitations.
- d. Debate on each resolution will begin with the submitter, or a representative of the submitter if submitted by a group of individuals speaking for a maximum of two (2) minutes. The resolution shall then be subject to floor debate and the speaking limits set forth under Standing Rule VII.H. Two speeches for concurrence and two speeches for non-concurrence shall be permitted.
- e. After debate has concluded, and prior to voting, the submitter of the resolution may offer to modify the resolution as referenced in Rule 6.b, below, or may withdraw the resolution from consideration.

6. Voting on Resolutions.

- a. Voting on resolutions shall be on each individual resolution, not on a recommendation of any conference board, agency, committee, the CFA or the Chancellor to which a resolution may have been referred to for review. Submitters proposing resolutions may submit supporting documentation or rationale with the resolution, and appropriate conference boards, agencies, and committees, as well as the CFA and Chancellor may provide opinions or comments regarding the resolution.
- b. The annual conference shall vote on the resolution, including the “whereas” language. The “whereas” language is not amendable during debate, although the submitter of the resolution may modify or strike the language of any “whereas” statements at any time prior to a vote on the resolution or during the debate. Any such modifications will not be subject to further debate.
- c. As deemed necessary by the presiding chairperson during consideration of resolutions, if the outcome of any voice or standing vote on a resolution is deemed inconclusive, a recorded vote may be taken with the assistance of the Chief Teller. Every resolution upon which a recorded vote has been taken shall have the vote count attached to it in all distributions of that resolution.

7. **Time Limit of Resolutions.** Every resolution passed by the annual conference shall be valid for the lesser of one year, or until the resolution is specifically rescinded, amended, or superseded by action of subsequent session of the annual conference. If the intent of a resolution is to be binding upon the annual conference for more than one year, the resolution must provide the appropriate language to amend the Standing Rules to allow for the indefinite implementation of the resolution. Such indefinite implementation must pass by a separate 2/3 vote majority of the annual conference; failing such a vote the resolution shall be valid under the one year time limit.

8. **Conference Secretary Recordkeeping.** The Conference Secretary shall maintain a list of resolutions passed by the annual conference and the list shall be published in each year’s *Journal* and such other places as may be helpful.

C. PRESENTATIONS

Requests for inclusion of presentations for the annual conference agenda shall be submitted to the Director of Connec-tional Ministries by the due date for the publication of the *Book of Reports*. The author or originating agency must be identified if other than the submitter(s) of the proposal.

D. PETITIONS

An area designated by the annual conference planning committee shall be determined for receiving signatures for petitions.

E. PROPOSALS

- 1. Proposals Requiring Publication of Materials.** Proposed annual conference action that includes publication or dissemination of information shall be referred to the Print Media Committee of Virginia Conference Board of Communications for its consideration and report on the proposed action, including the financial consequences, prior to conference action. The committee may act through its chairperson, the Virginia Conference Director of Communications, or other representatives to make its report and recommendation.
- 2. Proposals Requiring Funding.** Proposals or amendments which may require expenditure of funds, which have not been considered by the Council on Finance and Administration (CFA), must be submitted by the conclusion of the afternoon session preceding the concluding day of annual conference, or at such time as directed by the resident Bishop, presiding officer, or the CFA. Such proposals of amendments which may require expenditure of funds shall be referred to CFA for its consideration and recommendation prior to final annual conference action.
- 3. Proposals Requiring Addition to Agenda.** During the first business session of annual conference, the agenda shall include time to introduce items in addition to the printed agenda. Any such items not referred to conference agencies under the preceding paragraphs shall be referred to the Rules Committee for its consideration and recommendation prior to adjournment of annual conference.
- 4. Proposals from the Floor.** A motion is a formal proposal. Anytime the Annual Conference is in session and there is no business on the floor of the Annual Conference, a proposal from the floor may be made. This proposal will need to be placed in writing and in conjunction with the rules as stated in VII K.

F. CONSENT AGENDA

Agenda items and reports not requiring action by the Annual Conference other than a vote to receive said items for publication in the Journal shall be placed on a Consent Agenda. For any item or report to be eligible for placement on the Consent Agenda, it must have been distributed in the pre-Conference materials. Determination of items to be placed on the Consent Agenda shall be made annually by the Bishop in consultation with the Consent Agenda Committee. This committee shall be composed of the Conference Secretary, the Conference Lay Leader, the Chair of the Conference Rules Committee, and the Director of Connectional Ministries. An individual item may be removed from the Consent Agenda at the request of no less than 30 members of the annual conference. The process for making that request will be determined by the Consent Agenda Committee, and the deadline for such requests will not be prior to ten minutes after the call to order of the annual conference session. The Consent Agenda will be made available electronically one week prior to the annual conference. When an individual item has been removed from the Consent Agenda, it shall be placed into the regular agenda.

III. ELECTION OF DELEGATES TO GENERAL CONFERENCE AND THE JURISDICTIONAL CONFERENCE

A. AN INCLUSIVE CHURCH

We are an inclusive church. We desire to have a delegation that will capably represent the annual conference. The delegation should be representative of the annual conference considering such factors as sex, age, race, disability, ethnic background, economic conditions and geographical locations.

B. ELECTION PROCEDURES

Clergy and lay delegates to General Conference and the jurisdictional conference shall be elected in a fair and open process at the session of the annual conference held not more than two years preceding the session of General Conference.

1. **Special Sessions.** Clergy and lay delegates elected to the preceding General Conference and the jurisdictional conference shall be the delegates to special sessions of the respective conferences.
2. **Number of Delegates.** The number of clergy and lay delegates to the General Conference and the jurisdictional conference shall be that number of delegates to such conferences respectively as furnished by the secretary of the General Conference.
3. **Election of General Conference and jurisdictional conference Delegates.** The number of General Conference delegates authorized by the secretary of the General Conference shall be first elected, followed by balloting on the authorized number of the jurisdictional conference delegates who shall be reserves to General Conference in the order of their election. After the authorized numbers of the jurisdictional conference delegates have been elected, 10 clergy and 10 lay reserve delegates to the jurisdictional conference shall be elected on a single ballot with the 10 persons receiving the greatest number of votes in each category being elected in the order of the number of votes received.
4. **Speeches/Printed Materials.** No speeches may be made or printed materials distributed at the site of the Annual Conference on behalf of any nominee.
5. **Nominee Participation.** Nothing herein shall prevent any nominee from
 - a. appearing and speaking, once recognized, for the purpose of conducting Conference business
 - b. fully participating in activities of the Conference including the debate over budgets, proposals or resolutions pending before the Conference. This shall include the right to bring petitions, amendments, or resolutions to the Conference and encourage votes for or against the same.
 - c. conducting one-on-one conversations about the election of delegates to the General Conference and the jurisdictional conference including how that nominee proposes to represent the Conference at such events. Nominees are reminded to respect the need of the Conference to conduct business and are asked to take such conversations off the floor of the Conference.

C. CLERGY NOMINATIONS

1. Eligibility

- a. **To be nominated.** All clergy members in full connection and those who are recommended by the Board of Ordained Ministry to full membership in the connection are eligible to be nominated (2016 *Book of Discipline* ¶35), except as provided in 2016 *Book of Discipline* ¶354.8.
- b. **To vote**
 - i. The following clergy are eligible to vote:
 - a) Active and retired members (elders and deacons)
 - b) Active and retired provisional members

c) Active and retired associate members

d) Part-time and full-time local pastors who have completed the educational requirements and have been under uninterrupted appointment for two years (2016 *Book of Discipline* ¶316.6)

ii. Retired local pastors (including those under appointment) are NOT eligible to vote (2016 *Book of Discipline*, ¶320.5).

2. Nomination Process.

- a. All eligible clergy have the opportunity to serve as delegates to General Conference and jurisdictional conference.** Clergy persons desiring nomination/election as delegates to General and jurisdictional must follow the process outlined below. No exceptions to the process, including deadline dates, will be granted except as mandated by changes in *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church* and/or the Annual Conference in changing these rules.

Those who consent to or desire nomination are asked to commit to the following expectations:

- 1) Pray for God's guidance in decision-making;
- 2) Commit the time needed to read and study the issues;
- 3) Attend the meetings of the Virginia Conference delegations;
- 4) Attend both General Conference and jurisdictional conference.

Each clergy nomination shall be submitted on a clergy nomination form. Clergy nomination forms will be posted on the conference web site in January preceding the Annual Conference session of delegate elections. The form shall include the names one clergy who is eligible to vote who is making the nomination. Alternatively, any clergy who desires nomination must complete a clergy nomination form. All nominations shall include the nominee's name, picture not to exceed 1 1/2" by 2 1/2" unless nominated from the floor of the Annual Conference, address, phone number, e-mail address if available, church, district, and should include a personal statement not to exceed 150 words in which may be indicated the nominee's experience, qualifications, and reasons for wanting to serve. There shall be a box to be checked stating: "Nominee is aware of nomination and agrees to serve if elected.", and a line for the signature of the nominee. The completed nomination form or facsimile thereof must be returned to the Director of Connectional Ministries no later than March 1 preceding the Annual Conference session of delegate elections. The deadline is non-negotiable.

- b. Clergy Nominations from the Floor.** After the convening of the Annual Conference session, prior to entering block voting, the presiding Bishop will ask for any nominations from the floor. Any nominations made from the floor must be made by eligible clergy (III.C.1.b.i) and the nominee must be present to accept or decline the nomination. Nominations from the floor shall be closed by the presiding Bishop.
- c. Clergy Nomination Review Committee.** The committee shall be composed of two persons appointed by the bishop plus one clergy member of the Rules Committee designated by that committee. The Director of Clergy Excellence shall serve as an ex-officio member. The committee shall review and compile all nomination forms alphabetically according to the last name of the nominee. This clergy nomination booklet will be available on the conference web site. Printed copies will be available at cost from the office of the Director of Connectional Ministries. An alphabetical listing will be included in the clergy *Book of Reports* packet. This committee will also be responsible for reviewing and validating any nominations made from the floor of the Annual Conference.

D. LAY NOMINATIONS

- 1. Lay Nominations from Districts.** Nominations for lay delegates to General Conference and the jurisdictional conference shall be made by the lay members of the district conference of each district from names submitted by the District Council on Ministries and/or from names of all persons given by any member of The United Methodist Churches of the district to the District Superintendent. These names shall be submitted by the superintendent to the District Conference. Additional nominations at the district conference may be made from the floor, provided that no nomination may be made without the agreement of the nominee to serve if elected. In the event of a tie for the final nominee(s), the nominee(s) shall be selected by lot.

Each district may nominate up to one person for each 2,000 members of The United Methodist Church or major fraction thereof in that district, based upon figures reported at the preceding annual conference. District nominees need not be from the district which nominates them.

2. **Agency Nominations.** The lay members of the following agencies of the annual conference may also nominate one additional lay delegate: Board of Church and Society; Commission on Disabilities; Board of Discipleship; Commission on Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy; Council on Finance and Administration; Missional Ministries Board; Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries; Board of Laity; Commission on the Status and Role of Women; United Methodist Men; United Women in Faith; Virginia Conference Board of Communications; and Virginia United Methodist Pensions, Inc. In addition to the aforementioned nominees, the Conference Council on Youth Ministries, and the Virginia United Methodist Student Movement each may nominate one delegate.
3. **Church Membership.** All nominees shall have been professing members of The United Methodist Church for at least two years preceding their nomination and must be members of churches in the Virginia Annual Conference and shall have been active participants in The United Methodist Church for at least four years preceding their election. They also must be active members within The United Methodist Church at the time of holding General Conference and jurisdictional conference. The four-year participation and two-year membership requirements may be waived for young persons under twenty-five years of age. Such persons must be members of The United Methodist Church and active participants at the time of election.
4. **Nomination Forms.** All nominations shall include the nominee's name, picture not to exceed 1½" x 2½" (unless nominated from, the floor of the Annual Conference), address, phone number, e-mail address if available, church, district, and should include a personal statement not to exceed 150 words in which the nominee may indicate his or her experience, qualifications and reasons for wanting to serve. There shall be a box to be checked stating: "Nominee is aware of nomination and agrees to serve if elected.", and a line for the signature of the nominee. The nominations shall be on a form or facsimile thereof furnished by the Director of Connectional Ministries. It is recommended that the nomination forms for persons to be voted upon by the district conference be circulated to the members of the district conference in advance of the district conference at which voting is to take place.
5. **Lay Nominations from the Floor.** After the convening of the Annual Conference session, prior to entering block voting, the presiding Bishop will ask for any nominations from the floor. Any nominations made from the floor must be made by lay members of the Annual Conference (I.B.3) and the nominee must be present to accept or decline the nomination. Nominations from the floor shall be closed by the presiding Bishop.
6. **Conference committee on lay delegate nominations.**
 - a. **Membership.** The committee shall be composed of two persons appointed by the Bishop plus one member of the Rules Committee designated by that committee.
 - b. **Function.** Each District Superintendent shall by January 15 of the year of election submit to this committee in care of the Director of Connectional Ministries completed forms for all nominees from the district. The committee shall then forward a list of all nominees to the agencies named in ¶ III.D.2. Each agency of the annual conference shall be responsible for forwarding to the committee any completed nomination form no later than March 1. The committee shall review and compile all nomination forms alphabetically according to the last name of the nominee. This lay nomination booklet will be made available on the conference website. Printed copies will be available at cost from the office of the Director of Connectional Ministries. An alphabetical listing will be included in the *Book of Reports*. This committee will also be responsible for reviewing and validating any nomination forms made from the floor of the Annual Conference.
 - c. **List of Nominees.** The lay nominees shall be those persons named on the nomination forms and nominated from the floor.

E. BALLOTING PROCEDURES

1. **Separate Voting Areas.** Following the convening of Annual Conference, clergy and laity will separate to elect General and jurisdictional delegates and alternates, allowing five (5) hours to complete the process.
2. **Ballots Shall be Counted Electronically.** The Rules Committee shall determine the electronic equipment and procedures to be used and shall do so in consultation with the chief lay and clergy tellers.
3. **Valid Ballots.** To be valid, a ballot:
 - (a) must be cast on the ballot bearing the number designated by the presiding officer for that particular ballot; and
 - (b) must be voted for the number of delegates and/or alternates to be elected on that ballot, no more and no less.
4. **Voting Area.** The presiding officer shall designate the areas for Lay and Clergy voting. Ballots shall be cast from only those present and seated within the voting areas of the annual conference and displaying the proper credentials.
5. **Ballot Reporting.** After a ballot has been counted, the chief teller, either clergy or lay, shall furnish a written report to the Bishop which shall contain (a) number of ballots cast; (b) number of invalid ballots; (c) number of ballots counted; (d) number of ballots necessary to elect; and (e) list of names of persons voted for, including the number of votes received by each, beginning with the largest number of votes.
6. **Conditions for a Revote.** After the ballots have been counted and reported, if the number of collective invalid ballots exceeds 15%, the Bishop shall declare the prior ballot invalid and shall order a revote.
7. **Majority Required for Election.** On every ballot, a majority of the valid votes cast shall be necessary for the election of a delegate, except on the ballot to elect reserve delegates to the jurisdictional conference.
8. **Reading or Distributing Names.** On the first ballot for General Conference, the presiding officer shall read or display all names receiving votes with the number of votes cast for each. After the first ballot, the 25 nominees receiving the highest number of votes shall be read or displayed, according to the highest number of votes received. In the event of a tie between two or more nominees for the last available position on the General or jurisdictional delegation, a run-off election will be ordered by the bishop to select the person to fill that position. Only the names of those in the run-off are open for votes. The names will be read in order of their election. The person with the highest number of votes cast will be seated with the appropriate delegation.

When all General Conference delegates have been elected, the same procedure shall be followed for jurisdictional conference delegates
9. **Handling of Ballots after Counting and Recording.** Upon completion of the counting and recording of a ballot, the chief teller shall seal the ballot results and deliver them to the annual conference secretary. The annual conference secretary shall retain all ballot results until the adjournment of the annual conference after which they shall be destroyed.

F. TELLERS

1. **Appointment of Chief Tellers, Assistant Chief Tellers and Tellers.** The Conference Nominations Team shall appoint a chief teller and an assistant chief teller for the clergy tellers and a chief teller and an assistant chief teller for the lay tellers. The chief tellers shall not be eligible to serve in the year of the next election of delegates to General Conference and jurisdictional conference. The Conference Nominations Team shall additionally appoint four (4) clergy and four (4) lay members of the annual conference from each district to form a pool of tellers from which as many teams shall be formed as the chief tellers deem advisable. One member of each team shall be designated as the captain for that team.
2. **Expenses for Balloting.** All expenses incident to the balloting for and election of delegates to General Conference and the jurisdictional conference shall be borne by the annual conference.

G. EXPENSES OF CLERGY AND LAY ALTERNATES

The expenses of two clergy and two lay alternates to General Conference and to the jurisdictional conference shall be borne by the annual conference. Such expense allowances shall not exceed the expense allowances, per diem and travel, as are paid to the regular delegates.

H. DELEGATES UNDER THE AGE OF 18

When a General Conference or jurisdictional conference delegate will be under the age of 18 at the time of General Conference and/or jurisdictional conference, the Virginia Conference Child Protection Policy will be observed for this person. The leader of the General Conference Delegation will be responsible for implementation of the Child Protection Policy.

IV. NOMINATIONS FOR EPISCOPAL ELECTION

At the annual conference immediately preceding the jurisdictional conference, nominations for the office of Bishop may be made by submitting the name of an elder and a biographical sketch of not more than 100 words to the secretary of the conference signed by not fewer than 50 members of the annual conference. To be eligible for nomination the person must not have attained his or her 68th birthday prior to the first day of the month in which the jurisdictional conference is held. Nominations shall cease at the close of the afternoon session of the first day of the annual conference.

The conference secretary shall cause copies of each sketch to be prepared and distributed to the members of the annual conference. Ballots shall be prepared containing the name of each nominee and, beside each name, a square followed by the word “yes.” The ballots shall be distributed to the members of the annual conference immediately before they are to be cast. A member of the annual conference may vote for one or more nominees, but not more than the number of episcopal vacancies to be filled, or may choose not to vote for any of the nominees. To be nominated to the jurisdictional conference, a nominee must receive an affirmative vote of not less than 60 percent of the total ballots cast.

V. ANNUAL CONFERENCE PROGRAMS — COMMON TABLE FOR CHURCH VITALITY, BOARDS AND AGENCIES

A. THE COMMON TABLE FOR CHURCH VITALITY. The Common Table for Church Vitality (“Common Table”) exists to resource mission and ministry to fulfill the conference mission and vision. As a diverse body of representatives, the Common Table coordinates with Boards and Agencies, assists in the disbursement of ministry and program grants, and oversees the personnel of the Annual Conference offices that are under its guidance. The Common Table supports the Director of Connectional Ministries to fulfill the requirements of Paragraph 608 in the *Book of Discipline*. The mission, values, membership, officers, committees, meetings, finances, as well as the responsibilities of the Director of Connectional Ministries are set forth in the Charter for the Common Table for Church Vitality. This Charter is an Appendix to these Standing Rules of Order and Procedure for ease of reference but is not incorporated into these Standing Rules.

B. BOARDS AND AGENCIES

The following are defined as program boards and agencies: The Board of Church and Society, the Church Development Team, the Board of Discipleship, the Missional Ministries Board, the Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries, and the Board of Laity. Each board and agency shall meet at least annually.

- 1. Membership.** All program board and agency members shall be elected for a four-year term by the annual conference. So far as possible, board membership shall be composed of an equal number of clergy and laity. No elected member may serve more than eight consecutive years except as authorized by the *Discipline* or in ¶ I.D.8 of the Virginia Annual Conference Rules and Policies. The bishop shall annually appoint for one year terms at least one District Superintendent to each board, agency or commission. Except for the Board of Ordained Ministry, the presiding bishop and the Director of Connectional Ministries are members of all boards, agencies and commissions with vote unless otherwise provided for by the *Book of Discipline*.

2. **Organization.** The boards shall organize in the several divisions or equivalent structure listed below to carry out their respective functions. Each member of a board shall serve on one division or equivalent structure. There shall be an executive committee of each board whose duties and responsibilities shall be determined by the board. A board may develop such additional structure, including the election of division members at large, as it deems necessary to discharge its assigned responsibilities, provided, however, that where additional funding is required for such structure, prior approval of the Common Table for Church Vitality shall be obtained by the board. Division members at large are not members of the board.
3. **Function.** The conference boards will provide consultative services and resources to the local church, the District Councils on Ministries, the annual conference and the Common Table for Church Vitality. Each board will make program recommendations to the Common Table for Church Vitality, will be responsible for the essential functions of the area of concern assigned by the Common Table for Church Vitality, or by the *Book of Discipline*, and will be related to the objectives and scope of work set forth by its General Board. Each board is amenable to the Common Table for Church Vitality.
4. **Responsibilities.**
 - a. **Church and Society.** The Board of Church and Society, in cooperation with the General Board of Church and Society and the Common Table for Church Vitality, shall develop programs on Christian social concern within the bounds of the annual conference. To discharge its responsibilities it shall divide its membership into committees, which so far as practical shall be patterned after the divisions of the General Board of Church and Society. The total membership shall be 20 (10 lay and 10 clergy).
 - b. **Church Development Team.** There shall be a Church Development Team dedicated to working on strategies for and implementation of church development and new faith communities in the annual conference. This team/board will consist of a minimum of 12 and up to 16 persons: six nominated by the bishop and Cabinet, six nominated by the Conference Nominations Team, and up to four additional persons who may be co-opted by the team for expertise and diversity. The membership of this team will be placed in four classes to ensure continuity. The team is amenable to the Common Table for Church Vitality.
 - c. **Discipleship.** The Board of Discipleship in cooperation with the General Board of Discipleship and the Common Table for Church Vitality shall create partnerships by providing a network of experience, knowledge and coaching through intentional connection to enhance or create effective disciple making processes. These partnerships are created by: (1) coaching at local levels and pulling in identified district and conference resources as needed, (2) training at district or regional levels, (3) drawing on best practices gathered locally, jurisdictionally, nationally and globally, (4) connecting mentor/resource churches with those who request assistance and information, (5) organizing in regional teams, and (6) raising vision, visibility and possibility during Annual Conference sessions and inviting people to connect with a congregational coach. The Board of Discipleship shall consist of a directing board to set the vision for disciple-making ministries in the annual conference and to support research on best practices, gathered and distributed by a Conference Awareness Team at events and through all other forms of communication.

The Directing Board will consist of the following eight (8) members: three officers (chair, vice-chair, and secretary) to be elected by the Annual Conference, the chair of the Disciple Resource Team, and four (4) Regional Network Leads. In addition, the Bishops' Foundation will be represented by one person with voice but no vote. The Directing Board will select individuals to serve as leads of the Regional Network Teams. The Regional Network Leads will be ex-officio members of the Directing Board with voice and vote.

The Disciple Resource Team will consist of eight (8) members, Four classes of two, one laity and one clergy per class. Members of the Disciple Resource Team will be nominated from the Conference Nominations Team (CLDDT) and elected by the Annual Conference.

Members of the Regional Network Teams will be selected by the Regional Network Leads, in consultation with the Directing Board, based upon best practices research.

Each age-level council will meet at least annually as the conference council for the respective ministry areas (with additional members as required by conference Rules and the *Book of Discipline*, if any) for: (a) sharing of the best practices in their regions, (b) training which will enhance their service to the faith communities within each region, (c) coordinating of conference programs and initiatives as appropriate, and (d) serving as resources to the Regional Network Teams.

The Youth Council and Young Adult Council (ages 18 – 35) will consist of members as mandated in the appropriate sections of *The Book of Discipline*.

The Youth Council shall have one youth representative (grade 7 – 12) elected by each District Youth Council or equivalent. Six adults shall be elected to the Youth Council: three adults elected by the Youth Council or equivalent and three elected by the Annual Conference.

The Young Adult Council shall have three additional young adult members at-large elected by the Annual Conference.

The Older Adult Council shall have six members elected by the Annual Conference.

- d. Missional Ministries.** The Missional Ministries Board in cooperation with the General Board of Global Ministries and the Common Table for Church Vitality shall develop programs to assist and invite districts and local churches to carry out all phases of the work of the church in mission and of church extension within the annual conference. The Associate Director of Serving Ministries shall serve as the Conference Secretary of Global Ministries (CSGM), fulfilling the responsibilities outlined in ¶ 633.3 of the 2016 *Book of Discipline*. To discharge its responsibilities it shall divide into three (3) mission teams: (1) Missional Discipleship and Engagement and (2) Missional Connection and (3) Partnership of Hope. The position of Conference Coordinator of Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns (CUIC) shall be appointed by the Bishop and shall be an ex-officio member of the Mission Connection Team of the Conference Missional Ministries Board, as outlined in ¶ 633.2 of the 2016 *Book of Discipline*.

The membership of the board shall be 20, with 6 or 4 persons (one-half lay and one-half clergy) elected each year to replace outgoing classes

- e. Higher Education and Campus Ministries.** The Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries in cooperation with the General Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries and the Common Table for Church Vitality, shall develop programs to provide for higher education and ministry objectives as set forth in ¶ 1405 of the 2016 *Book of Discipline*, and to perform the responsibilities in regard to education and professional campus ministries as set forth in ¶ 634 of the 2016 *Book of Discipline*.

Membership: With an effort to maintain a balance of clergy and laity, the Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries shall have 12 Conference elected members (placed in four classes): a current campus minister, a current Campus Ministry Local Board Chairperson, a current local church pastor with passion for campus ministry, a current United Methodist College or University President (or their designee), a young adult/student, a member with expertise in property management, and six general members (with a preference for expertise in executive leadership, finance, communication, and marketing). The member who has expertise in the area of property management shall also serve as the chairperson of the Conference Board of Property Managers of the Wesley Foundation, Inc. Ex officio members shall be: the Director of Connectional Ministries, a Liaison District Superintendent (liaison between the BHECM and the Cabinet), the Conference Treasurer, and any Virginia Conference member to the General Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries. The designated conference staff person will serve as a member with voice but no vote. The term for chairperson shall be four years and terms for members shall also be four years and follow section I.D.8 of the Conference Rules and Policies. Nominations and election of the chairperson shall follow section I.D.11 of the Conference Rules and Policies. The Executive Committee of the BHECM shall consist of the chairperson, the Liaison District Superintendent, the current campus minister, the member with expertise in property management and three general members.

Organization: The BHECM will meet a minimum of every other month. The Executive Committee will meet as

needed. The BHECM will also be responsible for a minimum of one annual meeting for the following: Effectiveness Training Forums for Local Campus Ministry Boards, Effectiveness Training Forums for Campus Ministers/Chaplains, and Effectiveness Discussion Forums for District Superintendents. The incorporated entities of the board are the Wesley Foundation, Inc., and Francis Asbury Loan Fund, Inc. The conference board of property managers is a sub-group of the Wesley Foundation, Inc. The Executive Committee of the Board shall function as the board of directors of both the Wesley Foundation, Inc., and Francis Asbury Loan Fund, Inc.

- f. **Laity.** The Board of Laity shall act as an advocate for the Virginia Annual Conference laity in all forums of the annual conference. The purpose of the Board of Laity is to fulfill the mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world; and carry out the vision of the Annual Conference. Membership of the Board of Laity shall be composed of the conference lay leader, four associate conference lay leaders, the Conference Director(s) of Lay Servant Ministries, the presidents of the conference organizations of United Methodist Men and United Women in Faith or their designees, Young People's Representative selected by the Youth or Young Adult Council, district lay leaders, one Connectional Ministries staff representative, one District Superintendent appointed by the Bishop, and the Bishop. No more than three clergy who model excellence in the lay-clergy partnership for ministry will be appointed by the Executive Committee. The Conference Director of Scouting Ministries is to be appointed by the President and approved by the Board with voice representation. The Board of Laity shall nominate to the annual conference for election a layperson to be the conference lay leader for the ensuing four (4) years. Any person elected to the office of conference lay leader shall not be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms, or a total of eight (8) years.

C. ADMINISTRATIVE AGENCIES

The following agencies having administrative responsibilities are grouped together under the general title "Administration" with duties and responsibilities as indicated.

1. **Archives and History, Commission on.** There shall be a Commission on Archives and History and a Virginia Conference Historical Society. The duties and responsibilities of the commission shall be as set forth in the 2016 *Book of Discipline* (See ¶ 641). Members of the annual conference shall be members of the Virginia Conference Historical Society, which will elect 48 members to the commission who will also serve as the directors of the Virginia Conference Historical Society. The officers of the commission and the society shall be the same.
2. **Bishops' Foundation.** There shall be a Bishops' Foundation whose purpose is to provide funding for leadership development of both lay and clergypersons of the Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church in the areas of evangelism and preaching in the Wesleyan spirit, and whose Board of Directors shall consist of nine (9) directors nominated by the Cabinet of the Virginia Conference and elected by the Annual Conference: five (5) clergy members and four (4) lay members serving for staggered terms of three (3) years after the initial term of 1, 2, and 3 years. The director of Connectional Ministries of the Virginia Conference or his/her designee will serve as an *ex officio* member of the Board of Directors.
3. **Communications, Virginia Conference Board of.** There shall be a Conference Board of Communications which is to serve all of the agencies of the annual conference in the area of communication. It shall be administratively related to and amenable to the Common Table for Church Vitality. The board and/or its subunits may be incorporated.
 - a. **Function:** The mission of Virginia United Methodist Communications is to assist faith communities in communications and related technologies, empowering their mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ.
 - b. **Membership:** Virginia Conference Board of Communications shall consist of 24 persons, 14 of whom (half lay and half clergy) shall be elected by the annual conference. The 14 members thus elected and *ex officio* members shall elect 10 additional members at large selected with regard to professional expertise, nonprofessional objectivity, and media representation. The *ex officio* members shall be the Director of Connectional Ministries, a Cabinet representative, Director of Communications for the Virginia Conference, the Conference Manager of Technology, and any member of United Methodist Communications, the United Methodist Publishing House, and any other general board or agency whose purpose or function is included with the purposes and functions of

this organization, or their successors, who is a member of a local charge in the Virginia Annual Conference or a clergy member of the Virginia Annual Conference. There shall be a president, vice president and secretary.

c. Organization: There shall be the following committees:

- i. *Executive Committee.* shall consist of the elected officers of the board, the conference Director of Communications and one additional member of the board. The non-officer member of the Executive Committee shall be elected quadrennially by the Board of Directors and shall hold office until the successor is elected and qualified. Vacancies may be filled at any meeting of the Board of Directors. All non-officer members of the Executive Committee shall be chosen from among the directors. The Executive Committee shall include both laypersons and clergypersons. The president shall act as chair of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall also serve as the committee on Nominations, with the board vice president overseeing the business of nominations. The Executive Committee shall review board membership annually and recommend changes in membership to the board.
- ii. *Project Committees.* As needs arise, project committees may be appointed by the president to function on behalf of specific projects or activities of the board. Any two (2) members of a project committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of the committee's business. The president shall be an ex-officio of all such project committees. It is strongly encouraged that all board members serve on a project.
- iii. *Finance.* The Director of Communications for the Virginia Conference shall be designated as the person who can authorize expenditures on behalf of the corporation under the direction of the Board of Directors.
- iv. *Budget.* The Director of Communications for the Virginia Conference, working closely with the board president, committee chairs, and communications staff will annually develop the various communication budgets and submit them to the board for approval and will regularly review expenditures to insure compliance with the adopted budgets. The Board of Directors, prior to the budget deadline of the annual conference Connectional Ministries office each year, shall recommend an income and expense budget covering all activities for the next fiscal year, including capital improvements or expenditures.

4. **Conference Nominations Team.** (See ¶ I.D.1. for composition and function of the Conference Nominations Team.)
5. **Disabilities, Commission on.** The commission shall consist of 18 members, half clergy and half lay. Membership shall include persons with physical disabilities and persons with intellectual disabilities. The Bishop may appoint to the commission a District Superintendent to serve as Cabinet representative with voice but not vote.
6. **Episcopacy, Committee on the.** There shall be a Committee on the Episcopacy, the membership and duties of which shall be as prescribed in ¶ 637 of the *2016 Book of Discipline*.
7. **Equitable Compensation, Commission on.** The Commission on Equitable Compensation shall be composed of an equal number of lay and clergy persons including at least one lay and one clergy from churches of fewer than 200 members who are nominated by the Conference Nominations Team and elected by the annual conference. In addition, one District Superintendent named by the Cabinet shall be a member. It shall perform the duties assigned to it by the *2016 Book of Discipline* (See ¶ 625). It shall receive all requests from or on behalf of all pastoral charges for aid to be used solely for clergy support. It shall administer the Equitable Compensation Fund and may employ money from other agencies, including those which may be granted by the Missional Ministries Board, as appropriate in each case, to meet these requests.
8. **Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy, Commission on.** There shall be a Virginia Conference Commission on Minority Concerns and Advocacy amenable to the Common Table for Church Vitality. The commission will provide for the functions as outlined in the current *Book of Discipline* for the Committee on Ethnic Local Church Concerns and Commission on Religion and Race. The membership of the commission shall consist of 10 clergy and 10 laypersons elected upon nomination of the Conference Nominations Team. A minimum of two members shall be youth and young adults between the ages of 12 - 35. The commission will be constituted so that two-thirds of the membership be representative of people from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. The presidents or chairs

of conference caucuses, fellowships, or associations for racial and ethnic constituencies shall be ex-officio members of the commission with voice but not vote. The bishop may appoint to the commission a district superintendent to serve as Cabinet representative with voice but not vote.

9. **Finance and Administration, Conference Council on.** There shall be a Conference Council on Finance and Administration elected and organized with responsibilities as set forth in the 2016 *Book of Discipline* (See ¶¶ 611-619), provided that membership of the council shall be composed of five clergy, five lay women, and five lay men nominated by the Conference Nominations Team.
10. **Foundation, United Methodist.** There shall be a United Methodist Foundation organized with responsibilities as set forth in the 2016 *Book of Discipline* ¶2513 and pursuant to the Foundation charter the directors elected by Annual Conference shall be no less than fourteen (14) or no less than 60% of the total Foundation Directors. As the total number of Foundation directors can fluctuate from year to year, the Foundation will confirm annually with the Director of Connectional ministries on the number necessary to meet the Annual Conference 60% requirement.
11. **Clergy Medical Leave, Joint Committee on.** There shall be a Joint Committee on Clergy Medical Leave consisting of two representatives from the Board of Ordained Ministry, two representatives from the Virginia United Methodist Pensions, Inc., one representative from the Cabinet and one representative of the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits. Their duties shall be as prescribed by the 2016 *Book of Discipline* (See ¶ 652).
12. **Investigation, Committee on.** There shall be a Committee on Investigation nominated, elected, and with duties as set forth in the 2016 *Book of Discipline* (See ¶ 2703.2).
13. **Minutes, Committee on.** There shall be a Committee on Minutes consisting of seven members nominated by the Cabinet for a term of eight years, provided that the terms of four members shall expire at the end of one quadrennium and terms of the other three shall expire at the end of the next quadrennium. At least three members shall be lay persons and at least three shall be clergy. The chair shall be designated by the Cabinet. The committee shall review the daily minutes of the annual conference proceedings and report at the next session. Within three weeks of the close of the annual conference session, the committee will meet with the conference secretary to review and correct the minutes of proceedings before submitting the same for printing in the conference *Journal*.
14. **Ordained Ministry.** The Board of Ordained Ministry in cooperation with the General Board of Higher Education and Ministries and the Common Table for Church Vitality, shall develop programs to assist districts and local churches in preparing and aiding persons to fulfill their ministry in Christ as historically understood by United Methodism. The Board of Ordained Ministry shall perform all the duties and functions as set forth in the *Book of Discipline* (2016 BOD ¶635.2) and shall be directly amenable to the annual conference. The Board of Ordained Ministry shall have no more than sixty-seven (67) persons nominated by the bishop, (2016 BOD ¶635.1a) in consultation with the Board Chair and Cabinet, and elected by the annual conference at the beginning of each quadrennium. The Board shall elect from its membership officers deemed necessary to fulfill its duties (2016 BOD ¶635 1c). The annual conference registrar and at least one District Superintendent appointed by the bishop shall also serve as members of the Board of Ordained Ministry. At least one person from each district shall be included on the Board. If during the course of the quadrennium a district loses its representation on the Board, an additional person shall be appointed ad interim to the Board by the bishop in consultation with the Board Chair and the Cabinet, ensuring inclusive representation from each district. Ad interim members will be voted on at the next annual conference
15. **Pensions and Related Benefits, Virginia United Methodist, Inc.** This agency, which is incorporated as Virginia United Methodist Pensions, Inc., shall be composed of twenty-four (24) members serving eight-year terms, and arranged into classes at the agency's discretion. It is recommended that all classes consist of one-third laywomen, one-third laymen, and one-third clergy. Any clergy member of the conference or lay member of a church within the conference who is a member of the Wespeth shall also be a member of the agency (2016 *Book of Discipline* ¶639.2a) If no District Superintendent is a member of this agency the Bishop may name one to represent the Cabinet. He or she shall have voice but not vote.

This agency shall perform the duties set forth in the 2016 *Book of Discipline* (see ¶ 639). In addition, it shall administer the conference program for participant supplemental benefits including the various insurance programs, shall study on a continuing basis the problems of participant disability, making recommendations relative to these problems as needed, and shall provide for a continuing pastoral ministry to disabled participants.

- 16. Preachers' Relief Society.** This is an incorporated body with invested trust funds, the income from which is used from time to time for the relief of needy members of the clergy and their families.
- 17. Professional Administrators of the United Methodist Connectional System.** There shall be a Chapter of the Professional Association of United Methodist Secretaries (VAPAUMCS), which is to provide church secretaries and other administrative professionals a supportive base for unity and fellowship so as to promote individual growth, professional development, continuing education, and spiritual enrichment. There shall be an Executive Committee consisting of a President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, Secretary, Membership Secretary, Treasurer and the Standing Committees Chairs. There shall be standing committees: Communications composed of five members; Finance composed of four members (the President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President and Treasurer); and Nominating composed of six members in classes of two for three-year terms.
- 18. Rules Committee.** There shall be a Rules Committee consisting of nine members elected by the annual conference on nomination of the Conference Nominations Team or from the floor for a term of eight years. The terms of four members shall expire at the end of one quadrennium and the terms of the other five members shall expire at the end of the next quadrennium. Five members of the committee shall be lay and four members shall be clergy. The chancellor(s) of the annual conference shall be ex officio members of the Rules Committee. The Rules Committee shall review the Virginia Annual Conference Rules and Policies between sessions of the annual conference, and make its recommendations to the annual conference. Proposed amendments to the Virginia Annual Conference Rules and Policies and any other matters of parliamentary order or procedure in the business of the annual conference shall be referred to the Rules Committee. All members of the Rules Committee are encouraged to take a basic parliamentary procedure course within 6 months of their election. However, those who wish to be parliamentarians of the Annual Conference must take a more advanced course at the approval of the Rules Committee Chair. The cost of these courses will be reimbursed upon the passing of the class.
- 19. Site Selection, Committee on.** There shall be a Committee on Site Selection consisting of four members, one half lay and one half clergy, elected on nomination of the Conference Nominations Team for a term of eight years. The committee shall be divided into two classes with the terms of one class to expire at the end of one quadrennium and the terms of the other class to expire at the end of the next quadrennium. This committee shall make arrangements for the meeting of the annual conference and shall recommend a location for the meeting of the annual conference a minimum of three years in advance.
- 20. Status and Role of Women in the Church, Commission on the.** There shall be a Virginia Annual Conference Commission on the Status and Role of Women in The United Methodist Church amenable to the Common Table for Church Vitality. The membership shall consist of up to two representatives from each district plus six persons at large elected by the annual conference. In addition, the conference United Women in Faith shall name one member. The Bishop may appoint to the commission a District Superintendent to serve as Cabinet representative with voice but not vote. The majority of the commission, including both lay and clergy, shall be women. The chairperson shall be a woman.
- 21. Trustees, Board of.** There shall be a Board of Trustees consisting of 12 members, elected by the annual conference, organized and with responsibilities as set forth in the 2016 *Book of Discipline* (¶¶ 2512-2517).

D. TASK FORCES

A task force may be established to accomplish a specific objective. If it is organized by direction of the annual conference, the authorizing legislation shall contain a termination date for the task force. Such task force desiring continuation beyond its termination date shall seek and receive their established termination dates (June or December). Task forces should not as a general rule exist beyond a four year term. Task forces may request funding for conference projects, but no task force shall disburse funds unless so directed by its parent board or requested to do so by the Common Table for Church Vitality and approved by the Council on Finance and Administration in its report to annual conference. A conference organized task force continuing beyond its first year shall annually request, in its report to annual conference, funding to cover operational costs in the succeeding year.

E. CHANGING STRUCTURE OF PROGRAM BOARD OR AGENCY

Any proposal to the annual conference to amend or change the structure of any program board or agency at the division level or above may originate (1) upon recommendation of the board or agency itself and shall be submitted to the Common Table for Church Vitality for its recommendation; (2) upon recommendation of the Common Table for Church Vitality, provided such proposal shall have been submitted to the board itself for its recommendation; or (3) on petition of a member or members of the annual conference if such a petition has been previously submitted to the Common Table for Church Vitality and the board or agency for their recommendations, or if not previously so submitted in time for consideration by these organizations, such petition shall be referred to the Common Table for Church Vitality and the board or agency for their recommendations prior to action by the annual conference. Internal change below the division level shall be the responsibility of each board.

F. MEETINGS OF THE COMMON TABLE, BOARDS, COUNCILS, COMMISSIONS, FOUNDATIONS AND COMMITTEES

For the Common Table for Church Vitality, and all District, Board, Council, Commission, Foundation and Committee sessions or meetings, the terms “meet” and “meeting” shall include meetings where members are physically present in one room or area (“in-person” meetings), and when deemed necessary by the presiding Chairperson, may also include meetings held through electronic means such as the Internet or by telephone.

VI. THE DISTRICT CONFERENCE

A. DISTRICT CONFERENCE SHALL MEET AT LEAST ONCE A YEAR

Each district within the Virginia Conference shall hold a session of the district conference in the manner designated by the District Superintendent at least once during the annual conference year (in accordance with the 2016 *Book of Discipline*, ¶658).

B. AGENDA

The district superintendent, in consultation with the district lay leader, shall set the agenda for the district conference. The agenda shall include a report from the district committee on ordained ministry.

Members of the district conference shall elect the district lay leader (¶660.2) to serve a four-year term, not to exceed two consecutive terms. The district conference shall also elect the committee on the district superintendency (¶669.1,2), the district trustees (¶2518.2) and such other officers as it deems appropriate. The district committee on ordained ministry (¶666.1) and the district board of church location and building (¶2519) are approved or elected by the annual conference.

C. MEMBERSHIP

The membership of each district conference shall be composed of the following: all ordained and commissioned clergy, licensed local pastors, lay supply pastors, certified lay ministers, diaconal ministers, and deaconesses and home missionaries related to that district; a church lay leader, chairperson of the church council*, church school superintendent, president of the United Women in Faith, and president of the chartered United Methodist Men from each local church in

the district; the district steward from each charge; the lay member of the annual conference from each charge; and three members at large, one of whom shall be a youth, elected by each charge conference.

District officers who are members of the district conference include*: the chairperson of the district Council on Ministries*, the district trustees, the district treasurer, the district lay leader and associate lay leaders, the president of the district United Women in Faith, the president of the district United Methodist Men, a representative of the district youth council*, the president of the district United Methodist Young Adults*, the district coordinators of children, youth, young adult, adult, and family ministries, other district coordinators and directors, five youth members elected by the district youth council and five young adult members* elected by the District Council on Ministries*. Special attention shall be given to inclusiveness. *Designates or equivalent body.

D. ELECTION OF DISTRICT LAY MEMBERS AT LARGE OF ANNUAL CONFERENCE

District members at large of the annual conference shall be elected by the lay members of the district conference. Nominations may be made in whatever manner the district determines, but provision shall always be made for nomination from the floor. Districts are encouraged to include members-at-large from non-chartered faith communities being served by clergy with voting rights at Annual Conference, provided that they meet the provisions of 2016 *Book of Discipline* ¶602.4. Election shall be by written ballot, and those nominees receiving the most votes shall be the members at large, and the rest shall be alternates in order of the votes received up to the number of members at large and alternates allotted to each district by the annual conference.

E. RECORD OF DISTRICT CONFERENCE

The secretary of the district conference shall keep an accurate record of the proceedings and send a copy to the secretary of the annual conference within 30 days following the district conference.

VII. RULES OF ORDER AND PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

A. RULES THAT APPLY WHEN THE CHAIRPERSON STANDS

When the chairperson stands and calls the conference to order, no member shall speak, address the chair, or stand while the chairperson stands.

B. VOTING AREA

The annual conference shall fix the voting area of the conference at the opening business session and voting on all annual conference matters must take place within the prescribed area. The voting area of the conference shall be separated from other areas at the meeting site. All entrances to the voting area shall be staffed by ushers and admission shall be by official badge only. All members of the conference within the voting area when the vote is taken shall be entitled to vote except such persons as otherwise are ineligible to vote.

C. SUFFICIENT SEATS SHALL BE PROVIDED

Sufficient seats shall be provided for all lay, clergy, provisional, and associate members and all youth members, members on special assignment, and all other persons entitled by the Virginia Annual Conference Rules and Policies to be within the voting area of the conference.

D. VOTERS TO DISPLAY PROPER CREDENTIALS

Members of the conference and others entitled to be seated within the voting area of the conference shall be furnished proper credentials as set forth in Appendix “A” (attached). During balloting, ballots will be distributed to and collected from only those persons displaying the proper credentials.

E. METHOD OF VOTING

Method of voting shall be determined by the presiding officer. A count vote may be ordered on call of any member supported by one third of the members present and voting, in which case the members shall arise as they are able from their seats and stand until counted.

F. ELECTRONIC VOTING PROCEDURE

Anytime the presider opens the floor, during an electronic meeting, whether for questions, discussions, motions, and/or amendments he or she shall wait at least 3 minutes before putting the question, motion, report or amendment to a vote.

G. EXCEPTIONS TO THE NO INTERRUPTION RULE

No member who has the floor may be interrupted except for a question on the matter under consideration, a breach of order, a misrepresentation, to direct the attention of the conference to the fact that the time has arrived for a special order, or to raise a very urgent question of high privilege.

H. LIMITS ON SPEAKING

No member shall speak: 1. more than once on the same question if any member who has not spoken desires the floor; 2. more than twice on the same subject under the same motion; 3. any longer than two minutes, unless this two minute period may be limited or extended by a two thirds vote of the conference.

I. HIGH PRIVILEGE

A member claiming the floor for a very urgent question of high privilege shall be allowed to indicate briefly the nature of the question, and if it be adjudged by the chair to be such, he or she may proceed until the chairperson judges that he or she has exhausted the privilege.

J. CALL FOR DIVISION OF ANY QUESTION

Before a vote is taken any member shall have the right to call for a division of any question, if it is subject to such division as he or she indicates. If no member objects, the division shall be made; but if there is objection, the chair shall put the question of division to vote, not waiting for a second.

K. MOTIONS TO BE PRESENTED IN WRITING

For the benefit of the secretary, and for the sake of clarification, motions, including amendments, shall be presented in writing. If an approved motion is requested to be sent to entities, the maker of the motion shall provide names and addresses to the Secretary of the Virginia Annual Conference.

L. MINUTES OF ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

The transcript of the video recording of the annual conference session shall serve as the official minutes of the annual conference session once it has been reviewed and approved by the Minutes Committee for accuracy.

M. SUSPENSION OF THE RULES

The operation of any of the provisions of the Virginia Annual Conference Rules and Policies or of these Rules of Order and Procedure may be suspended at any time by a two thirds vote of the conference.

N. CHANGE OR AMENDMENT OF THE RULES

The Virginia Annual Conference Standing Rules of Order and Procedure, including these Rules of Order and Parliamentary Procedure, may be amended or changed by a two thirds vote of the conference; provided the proposed change or amendment has originated in the Rules Committee, or has been presented to the conference in writing and referred to the Rules Committee, which committee shall report as soon as practicable taking into account all of the facts and circumstances of the proposed rule change.

O. ROBERTS RULES OF ORDER APPLIES

The current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall apply to any and all situations not covered elsewhere by these rules.

NAME BADGE COLORS

GREEN (lay vote with full lay voting rights, ¶602.4)

- Lay Members
- At-Large District Lay Members
- District and Conference Lay Leaders
- Conference President of United Methodist Men
- Conference President of United Women in Faith
- Conference Director of Lay Servant Ministries
- Conference Scouting Coordinator
- President or equivalent of Conference Young Adult Organization
- President of Conference Youth Organization
- Chair, Conference College Student Organization
- District Youth and Young Adult Members (one of each from each district)
- Diaconal Ministers
- Retired Diaconal Ministers
- Deaconesses (see also ¶1314.5)
- Home Missioners

WHITE (ordained deacons and elders in full connection with full voting rights, ¶602.1a)

- FE Elder in Full Connection (¶334.1)
- FD Deacon in Full Connection (¶329.2)

Note: Clergy on voluntary leaves of absence (personal, family, transitional) may vote for other clergy delegates to general or jurisdictional conferences and may be elected to serve as delegates themselves (¶354.7). Clergy on involuntary leave of absence may not vote on or be elected as delegates to general or jurisdictional conference (¶355.7).

- RM & RD Retired Full Member (¶602.1a)

WHITE (May vote on all matters except constitutional amendments and clergy matters)

- AM Associate Members (¶35 and ¶602.1c)
- PM Probationary Member under 1992 *Discipline* (¶413.2, 1992 *Discipline*)
- PD Provisional Deacon (¶35, ¶327.2 and ¶602.1b)
- PE Provisional Elder (¶35, ¶327.2 and ¶602.1b)
- EP Full member other denomination serving as a UM Provisional Elder (¶35, ¶347.3b, ¶327.2)
- DP Deacon recognized from other denomination serving as a UM Provisional Deacon (¶35, ¶347.3b and ¶327.2)
- RA Retired Associate Member (¶35, ¶602.1c)
- RP Retired Probationary/Provisional Member (¶35, ¶327.2)

And the following who have completed the educational requirements (Five Year Course of Study, equivalency for the Five Year Course of Study based on approval of GBHEM and VA Conference BOM, or an M.Div. from an approved seminary) and have been under uninterrupted appointment for two years at the time of voting (see ¶35 and Judicial Council ruling 1181):

- FL Full time Local Pastor (¶316.6 and ¶602.1d)
- PL Part time Local Pastor (¶316.6 and ¶602.1d)
- RL Retired Local Pastor serving an appointment (¶320.5 and ¶316.6)

WHITE (May vote on all matters except constitutional amendments, delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conference, and clergy matters)

- OF Full member of another denomination (¶346.2)

And the following who have not met the requirements in the section above:

NAME BADGE COLORS

FL	Full-time Local Pastor (§316.6 and §602.1d)
PL	Part-time Local Pastor (§316.6 and §602.1d)
RL	Retired Local Pastor serving an appointment (§320.5 and §316.6)

WHITE (voice but no vote)

AF	Affiliate Member, non-voting (§334.5)
RL	Retired Local Pastor (§320.5)
OE	Elder Member of other Annual Conference (§346.1)
OD	Deacon Member of other Annual Conference (§346.1)
OA	Associate Member of other Annual Conference (§346.1)
OP	Provisional Member of other Annual Conference (§346.1)
RAF	Retired Affiliate Member, non-voting (§334.5)

RED (no voice or vote)

SY	Lay Supply
LM	Certified Lay Minister
HL	Honorable Location (§359)
RHL	Retired – Honorable Location (§359.3)
MOD	Minister of Another Denomination Serving an Ecumenical Parish in VA
G	Official Guest
ROC	Retired full member, other annual conference

BROWN (not official)

All others

BUSINESS OF THE CONFERENCE



Proposed Constitutional Amendments

Approved by the 2020/2024 General Conference

To be canvassed for ratification by the Annual Conferences of The United Methodist Church

[The following proposed amendments to the Constitution of The United Methodist Church were approved by the 2020/2024 General Conference and must now be voted upon by the members of the annual conferences. It is required that each one must pass with an aggregate 2/3 approval from all voting members as canvassed by the Council of Bishops. The proposed changes are indicated by strike-through for deletions and underscore for additions.]

This document is a DRAFT to be utilized as an initial informational and educational resource. The final document is subject to editing and verification.]

Ratification Ballot #1	Calendar Item 22	Approved 586-164	April 25, 2024
	Committee Item ST29	Approved 29-0	April 22, 2024
	Petition 21039		

[Editorial Note: Numbering of paragraphs will be subject to the final editing of The Book of Discipline 2020/2024. The proposed changes in this calendar item are included for internal reference. Due to the length and complexity of this calendar item, the text and formatting from the Daily Christian Advocate is being used for context.]

AMEND ¶¶ 9, (which shall be renumbered ¶ 10), 10 (which shall be renumbered ¶ 9), 15, 16, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 38, 39, 40, 46, 49, 50, 52, 56, 61 and add new 13 as follows:

¶ 10-2. ~~Article III~~ Article II. - There shall be ~~central~~ regional conferences for the work of the worldwide Church outside the United States of America and, if necessary, provisional ~~central~~ regional conferences, all with such powers, duties, and privileges as are hereinafter set forth, provided that in The United Methodist Church there shall be no regional or jurisdictional conference based on any ground other than geographical division.

¶ 9 10. ~~Article II~~ Article III. - There ~~shall~~ may be jurisdictional conferences for the work of the Church in the United States of America, with such powers, duties, and privileges as are

hereinafter set forth, provided that in The United Methodist Church there shall be no jurisdictional ~~or central~~ conference based on any ground other than geographical and regional division.

(NEW - Renumber subsequent paragraphs) ¶ 13. *Article VI.*— The General Conference, regional conferences, jurisdictional conferences, and annual conferences shall have autonomy of action within the limits fixed by the Constitution, provided that any legislation enacted within the respective powers of a conference but overlapping with the powers of another shall not be rendered invalid, unless its purpose and substance are beyond the authority of the enacting body.

¶ 15. *Article III.* – The General Conference shall fix the ratio of representation in the General, ~~jurisdictional~~, and ~~central~~ regional conferences from the annual conferences, missionary conferences, and the provisional annual conferences, computed on a two-factor basis: (1) the number of clergy members of the annual conference and the missionary conference, and (2) the number of professing members in the annual conference and the missionary conference, provided that each annual conference, missionary conference, or provisional annual conference shall be entitled to at least one clergy and one lay delegate in the General Conference and also in the ~~jurisdictional or central~~ regional conference.

In a regional conference with jurisdictions, the regional conference shall fix the ratio of representation in its jurisdictional conferences from the annual conferences, missionary conferences, and the provisional annual conferences, computed on a two-factor basis: (1) the number of clergy members of the annual conference and the missionary conference, and (2) the number of professing members in the annual conference and the missionary conference, provided that each annual conference, missionary conference, or provisional annual conference shall be entitled to at least one clergy and one lay delegate in the jurisdictional conference and

further provided that all general and regional conference delegates will be members of their respective jurisdictional conferences.

¶ **16. Article IV.-** The General Conference shall have full legislative power over all matters distinctively connectional, subject to the limits fixed by the Constitution, and in the exercise thereof shall have authority as follows:

...

16.3. To define and fix the powers and duties of regional conferences, jurisdictional conferences, annual conferences, provisional annual conferences, missionary conferences and missions, and of central conferences, district conferences, charge conferences, and congregational meetings.

16.4. To provide for the organization, promotion, and administration of the work of the worldwide Church outside the United States of America.

...

16.10. To fix a uniform basis upon which bishops shall be elected by the jurisdictional conferences and to determine the number of bishops that may be elected by ~~central~~ regional conferences without jurisdictions.

...

16.12. To change the number and the boundaries of regional conferences and to change the number and the boundaries of jurisdictional conferences upon the consent of a majority of the annual conferences in each jurisdictional conference involved.

...

16.17. To legislate what is non-adaptable for regional conferences by a 60% majority vote, while respecting the powers given to regional conferences according to ¶31.5.

¶ 23. *Article I.* - The jurisdictional conferences shall be composed of as many representatives from the annual conferences and missionary conferences as shall be determined by a uniform basis established by the ~~General Conference~~ regional conference where jurisdictions exist, provided that no jurisdictional conference shall have fewer than 100 delegates. The missionary conferences shall be considered as annual conferences for the purpose of this article.

¶ 24. *Article II.* - All jurisdictional conferences shall have the same status and the same privileges of action within the limits fixed by the Constitution. The ratio of representation of the annual conferences and missionary conferences in the General Conference and the regional conference where jurisdictions exist shall be the same for all jurisdictional conferences.

¶ 25. *Article III.* - The ~~General Conferences~~ regional conference where jurisdictions exist shall fix the basis of representation in the jurisdictional conferences, provided that the jurisdictional conferences shall be composed of an equal number of clergy and lay delegates to be elected by the annual conferences, the missionary conferences and the provisional annual conferences.

¶ 26. *Article IV.* - Each jurisdictional conference shall meet at the time determined by the ~~Council~~ College of Bishops of the regional conference where jurisdictions exist or its delegated committee, each jurisdictional conference convening on the same date as the others and at a place selected by the jurisdictional committee on entertainment, appointed by its respective College of Bishops unless such a committee has been appointed by the preceding jurisdictional conference.

¶ 27. *Article V.* - The jurisdictional conferences shall have the following powers and duties and such others as may be conferred by the General Conferences:

...

4. To determine the boundaries of their annual conferences, provided that there shall be no annual conference with a membership of fewer than fifty clergy in full connection, except by the consent of the ~~General Conference~~ regional conference where jurisdictions exist.

5. To make rules and regulations for the administration of the work of the Church within the jurisdiction, subject to such powers as have been or shall be vested in the General Conference and in the regional conferences.

6. To appoint a committee on appeals to hear and determine the appeal of a ~~traveling preacher~~ clergy or lay member of that jurisdiction from the decision of a trial committee.

Section V. ~~Central~~ Regional Conferences

¶ 28. *Article I.*— There shall be ~~central~~ regional conferences for the work of the worldwide Church outside the United States of America with such powers, duties, ~~powers~~, and privileges as are hereinafter set forth, to be exercised equitably across the regional conferences, subject to limits fixed by the Constitution.

~~The number and boundaries of the central conferences shall be determined by the Uniting Conference. Subsequently the General Conference shall have authority to change the number and boundaries of central conferences. The central conferences shall have the duties, powers, and privileges hereinafter set forth.~~

1. Initially, the number and boundaries of the regional conferences shall be as follows:

a) There shall be a regional conference for the work of the Church in the United States of America that includes all of the areas that comprise the jurisdictional conferences identified in Division Two, Section VII, ¶ 37.

b) The central conferences or provisional central conferences which existed prior to the postponed 2020 General Conference shall become regional or provisional regional conferences.

2. The General Conference shall have the authority to change the number and boundaries of regional conferences and provisional regional conferences.

¶ **29. Article II.**– The ~~central~~ regional conferences shall be composed of as many delegates as shall be determined by a basis established by the General Conference. The delegates shall be clergy and lay in equal numbers.

¶ **30. Article III.**– The ~~central~~ regional conferences shall meet within the year succeeding the meeting of the General Conference at such times and places as shall have been determined by the preceding respective ~~central~~ regional conferences or by commissions appointed by them or by the General Conference. ~~The date and place of the first meeting succeeding the Uniting Conference shall be fixed by the bishops of the respective central conferences, or in such manner as shall be determined by the General Conference.~~

¶ **31. Article IV.**– The ~~central~~ regional conferences shall have the following powers and duties as the special conditions and the mission of the Church in the area require, subject to the limits fixed by the Constitution, and such others as may be conferred by the General Conference:

1. To promote the evangelistic, educational, missionary, social-concern, and benevolent interests and institutions of the Church within their own boundaries.

2 . In regional conferences without jurisdictions, ~~To~~ to elect the bishops for the respective ~~central~~ regional conferences in number as may be determined from time to time, upon a basis fixed by the General Conference; to fix the tenure of their bishops, the episcopal areas and residences, and to assign the bishops who are to reside in the respective regional conference to

their areas; and to cooperate in carrying out such plans for the support of their bishops as may be determined by the General Conference.

3. To establish and constitute such ~~central~~ regional conference boards as may be required and to elect their administrative officers.

4. To determine the number, names, and boundaries of the annual conferences in accordance with ¶ 40 ~~within their respective areas~~.

5. To ~~make such~~ legislate and make rules and regulations for the administration of the work within their boundaries including ~~such~~ changes and adaptations of the ~~General Discipline~~ *Discipline* as follows, ~~as the conditions in the respective areas may require, subject to the powers that have been or shall be vested in the General Conference while upholding the Constitution and the decisions of General Conference in accordance with ¶ 16.17:~~

a) To establish and publish a regional *Discipline* with legislation and provisions pertaining to the regional, annual, district, and charge conferences within its boundaries, including qualifications and educational requirements of clergy and specialized lay ministries, and forms of organization according to the laws of the country or countries.

b) To set standards of character and other qualifications for admission of lay members.

c) To acknowledge annual conferences as the basic bodies of the church (¶ 33) voting on all matters relating to the character and conference relations of its clergy members, and therefore considering the requirements set forth in a regional *Discipline* regarding specialized lay ministry and license, ordination, or conference membership, as minimum requirements.

d) To establish and publish a regional hymnal and ritual of the Church, including ecclesial acts of marriage and burial, subject to the limitations of the first and second

Restrictive Rules, but authorizing to interpret Article XXIII of the Articles of Religion so as to recognize the governments of the country or countries.

e) To allow the annual conferences to adopt structures adequate to their mission while upholding mandated structures.

When adapting the investigative and trial process, each Regional Book of Discipline shall guarantee confidentiality, protections of the accused, protection of the accusers along with the ability to adapt the process based on the legal system of each country.

6. To appoint a judicial court to determine legal questions arising from the rules, regulations, and such revised, adapted, or new sections of the ~~central~~ regional ~~conference~~ *Discipline* enacted by the ~~central~~ regional conference.

7. To adopt rules of procedure governing the investigation and trial of its clergy, including bishops, and lay members of the Church and to provide the necessary means and methods of implementing the said rules; provided, however, that the ordained ministers shall not be deprived of the right of trial by a clergy committee, and lay members of the Church of the right of trial by a duly constituted committee of lay members; and to make changes in the chargeable offenses and their penalties.

~~To~~ A regional conference or a jurisdiction, if a regional conference has jurisdictions, shall appoint a committee on appeals to hear and determine the appeal of a ~~traveling preacher~~ clergy or lay member of ~~that central~~ the respective conference from the decision of a committee on trial.

¶ **32. Article I.**– The annual conference shall be composed of clergy and lay members. The clergy membership shall consist of deacons and elders in full connection, provisional members, associate members, and local pastors under appointment. The lay membership shall

consist of professing lay members elected by each charge, the diaconal ministers, the active deaconesses, and home missionaries under episcopal appointment within the bounds of the annual conference, the conference president of United Methodist Women, the conference president of United Methodist Men, the conference lay leader, district lay leaders, the conference director of Lay Servant Ministries, conference secretary of Global Ministries (if lay), the president or equivalent officer of the conference young adult organization, the president of the conference youth organization, the chair of the annual conference college student organization, and one young person between the ages of twelve (12) and seventeen (17) and one young person between the ages of eighteen (18) and thirty (30) from each district to be selected in such a manner as may be determined by the annual conference. In the annual conferences of the ~~central~~ regional conferences outside the USA, the four-year participation and the two-year membership requirements may be waived by the annual conference for young persons under thirty (30) years of age. Such persons must be professing members of The United Methodist Church and active participants at the time of election. Each charge served by more than one clergy shall be entitled to as many lay members as there are clergy members. The lay members shall have been for the two years next preceding their election members of The United Methodist Church and shall have been active participants in The United Methodist Church for at least four years next preceding their election.

If the lay membership should number less than the clergy members of the annual conference, the annual conference shall, by its own formula, provide for the election of additional lay members to equalize lay and clergy membership of the annual conference.

¶ **33. Article II.**-The annual conference is the basic body in the Church and as such shall have reserved to it the right to vote on all constitutional amendments, on the election of clergy

and lay delegates to the General Conference and their respective regional ~~jurisdictional or central~~ conferences, as well as jurisdictional conference if its regional conference has jurisdictions, on all matters relating to the character and conference relations of its clergy members, and on the ordination of clergy and such other rights as have not been delegated to the General Conference under the Constitution, with the exception that the lay members may not vote on matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy except that the lay members of the conference board of ordained ministry and the committee on investigation may vote on matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy, with the further exception that lay members of the district committee on ordained ministry be full participating members of the district committee on ordained ministry with vote. It shall discharge such duties and exercise such powers as the General Conference under the Constitution may determine.

¶ **34. Article III.** -The annual conference shall elect clergy and lay delegates to the General Conference and to its ~~jurisdictional or central~~ respective regional conference as well as jurisdictional conference, if its regional conference has jurisdictions, in the manner provided in this section, Articles IV and V. Such elections shall include open nominations from the floor by the annual conference, and delegates shall be elected by a minimum of a simple majority of the ballots cast. The persons first elected up to the number determined by the ratio for representation in the General Conference shall be representatives in that body. Additional delegates shall be elected to complete the number determined by the ratio for representation in the ~~jurisdictional or central~~ regional conference, who, together with those first elected as above, shall be delegates in the ~~jurisdictional or central~~ regional conference. The additional delegates to the ~~jurisdictional or central~~ regional conference shall in the order of their election be the reserve delegates to the General Conference. The annual conference shall also elect reserve clergy and lay delegates to

the ~~jurisdictional or central~~ regional conference as it may deem desirable. These reserve clergy and lay delegates to the ~~jurisdictional or central~~ regional conferences may act as reserve delegates to the General Conference when it is evident that not enough reserve delegates are in attendance at the General Conference.

In regional conferences with jurisdictions, all general and regional conference delegates shall be delegates to the jurisdictional conference. Whenever possible, reserve delegates to the regional conference shall also serve in order of election as delegates to the jurisdictional conference, with any reserve delegates who cannot be seated as jurisdictional delegates becoming reserve delegates to the jurisdictional conference. As needed, additional delegates shall be elected to complete the number determined by the ratio for representation in the jurisdictional conference. The annual conference may also elect additional reserve clergy and lay delegates to the jurisdictional conference as it may deem desirable.

¶ **35. Article IV.**-The clergy delegates to the General Conference and to their respective regional and jurisdictional or central conference as well as jurisdictional conference, if its regional conference has jurisdictions, shall be elected from the clergy members in full connection and shall be elected by the clergy members of the annual conference or provisional annual conference who are deacons and elders in full connection, associate members, and those provisional members who have completed all of their educational requirements and local pastors who have completed course of study or an M. Div. degree or its equivalent in regional conferences outside of the USA and have served a minimum of two consecutive years under appointment immediately preceding the election.

¶ **36. Article V.**-The lay delegates to the General Conference and to their respective regional conference, and jurisdictional or central conferences as well as jurisdictional conference if its

regional conference has jurisdictions, shall be elected by the lay members of the annual conference or provisional annual conference without regard to age, provided such delegates shall have been professing members of The United Methodist Church for at least two years next preceding their election, and shall have been active participants in The United Methodist Church for at least four years next preceding their election, and are members thereof within the annual conference electing them at the time of holding the General Conference and ~~jurisdictional or central~~ regional conferences as well as the jurisdictional conferences, if its regional conference has jurisdictions.

[DELETE ¶ 38 and ¶ 39 and renumber all of the articles within its section and renumber all subsequent paragraphs of the Constitution.]

~~¶ 38. *Article II.*— The work of the Church outside the United States of America may be formed into central regional conferences, the number and boundaries of which shall be determined by the Uniting Conference, the General Conference having authority subsequently to make changes in the number and boundaries.~~

~~¶ 39. *Article III.*— Changes in the number, names, and boundaries of the jurisdictional conferences may be effected by the General Conference upon the consent of a majority of the annual conferences of each of the jurisdictional conferences involved.~~

~~¶ 40 *Article IV/II.*— The number, names, and boundaries of the annual conferences and episcopal areas shall be determined by the respective regional conferences or by the jurisdiction, if a regional conference has jurisdictions. ~~jurisdictional conferences in the United States of America and by the central conferences outside the United States of America according to the provisions under the respective powers and pursuant to the respective structures of the jurisdictional and the central conferences.~~ The authority of regional and jurisdictional and central~~

conferences provided herein is not circumscribed or limited by the authority provided to the College of Bishops to arrange a plan of episcopal supervision.

¶ 46. *Article II.*-The bishops shall be elected by the respective regional conferences or by the jurisdiction, if a regional conference has jurisdictions, jurisdictional and central conferences and consecrated in the historic manner at such time and place as may be fixed by ~~the General Conference for those elected by the jurisdictions and by each central~~ regional conference for those elected by such ~~central conference~~, provided that episcopal elections in ~~central regional~~ conferences without jurisdictions shall be held at a regular, not an extra, session of ~~the central~~ such regional conference, except in the case where an unexpected vacancy must be filled.

¶ 48. *Article IV.*-The bishops of each ~~jurisdictional and central conference~~ regional conference or jurisdiction, if a regional conference has jurisdictions, shall constitute a College of Bishops, and such College of Bishops shall arrange the plan of episcopal supervision of the annual conferences, missionary conferences, and missions within their respective territories.

¶ 49. *Article V.*-The bishops shall have residential and presidential supervision in ~~the jurisdictional or central conferences~~ their respective regional conference or jurisdiction, if a regional conference has jurisdictions, in which they are elected or to which they are transferred. Bishops may be transferred from one jurisdiction to another jurisdiction for presidential and residential supervision under the following conditions: (1) The transfer of bishops may be on either of two bases: (a) a jurisdiction that receives a bishop by transfer from another jurisdiction may transfer to that jurisdiction or to a third jurisdiction one of its own bishops eligible for transfer, so that the number transferred in by each jurisdiction shall be balanced by the number transferred out; or (b) a jurisdiction may receive a bishop from another jurisdiction and not transfer out a member of its own College of Bishops. (2) No bishop shall be transferred unless

that bishop shall have specifically consented. (3) No bishop shall be eligible for transfer unless the bishop shall have served one quadrennium in the jurisdiction that elected the bishop to the episcopacy. (4) All such transfers shall require the approval by a majority vote of the members present and voting of the jurisdictional committees on episcopacy of the jurisdictions that are involved. After the above procedures have been followed, the transferring bishop shall become a member of the receiving College of Bishops and shall be subject to residential assignment by that jurisdictional conference.

A bishop may be assigned by the Council of Bishops for presidential service or other temporary service in another jurisdiction than that which elected the bishop, provided that the request is made by a majority of the bishops in the jurisdiction of the proposed service.

In the case of an emergency in any ~~jurisdiction or central~~ regional conference or jurisdiction, if a regional conference has jurisdictions, through the death or disability of a bishop or other cause, the Council of Bishops may assign a bishop from another ~~jurisdiction or central~~ regional conference or jurisdiction, if a regional conference has jurisdictions, to the work of the said ~~jurisdiction or central~~ regional conference or jurisdiction, if a regional conference has jurisdictions, with the consent of a majority of the bishops of that ~~jurisdiction or central~~ regional conference or jurisdiction, if a regional conference has jurisdictions.

¶ 50. *Article VI.* - ~~The bishops, both active and retired, of The Evangelical United Brethren Church and of The Methodist Church at the time union is consummated shall be bishops of The United Methodist Church.~~
~~The bishops of The Methodist Church elected by the jurisdictions, the active bishops of The Evangelical United Brethren Church at the time of union, and b~~ Bishops elected by the jurisdictions of The United Methodist Church shall have life tenure. ~~Each b~~ Bishops elected by a

~~central~~ regional conference without jurisdictions of The United Methodist Church shall have such tenure as the ~~central~~ regional conference electing ~~him~~ them shall have determined.

The regional conference or the jurisdiction, if a regional conference has jurisdictions, ~~jurisdictional conference~~ shall elect a standing committee on episcopacy to consist of one clergy and one lay delegate from each annual conference, on nomination of the annual conference delegation. The committee shall review the work of the bishops, pass on their character and official administration, and report to ~~the~~ its respective regional conference or jurisdiction, ~~at conference if a region has jurisdictions,~~ its findings for such action as the conference may deem appropriate within its constitutional warrant of power. The committee shall recommend the assignments of the bishops to their respective residences for final action by the ~~jurisdictional~~ respective regional conference or the jurisdiction, if a regional conference has jurisdictions.

These provisions shall not preclude the adoption by the General Conference of provisions for the Council of Bishops to hold its individual members accountable for their work, both as general superintendents and as presidents and residents in episcopal areas.

¶ **52. Article VIII.** - The bishops of the several regional ~~jurisdictional and central~~ conferences shall preside in the sessions of their respective conferences. If a regional conference has jurisdictions, the bishops shall also preside in the session of their respective jurisdictional conference.

¶ **56. Article II.** - The Judicial Council shall have authority:

1. To determine the constitutionality of any act of the General Conference upon an appeal of a majority of the Council of Bishops or one-fifth of the members of the General Conference and to determine the constitutionality of any act of a regional or jurisdictional ~~or central~~ conference upon an appeal of a majority of the bishops of that regional or jurisdictional ~~or central~~

conference or upon the appeal of one-fifth of the members of that regional or jurisdictional ~~or central~~ conference.

...

4. To hear and determine the legality of any action taken therein by any General Conference board, ~~or regional, or jurisdictional or central~~ conference board or body, upon appeal by one-third of the members thereof, or upon request of the Council of Bishops or a majority of the bishops of a regional or jurisdictional ~~or a central~~ conference.

...

¶ **61. Article III.** - A regional or jurisdictional ~~or central~~ conference may by a majority vote propose changes in the Constitution of the Church, and such proposed changes shall be submitted to the next General Conference. If the General Conference adopts the measure by a two-thirds vote, it shall be submitted to the annual conferences according to the provision for amendments.

The ratification process by the annual conferences for the constitutional amendments in this petition shall begin no later than 30 days after the adjournment of the postponed 2020 General Conference.

[If ratified, the paragraphs would read as follows:]

¶ **9. Article II.** - There shall be regional conferences for the work of the worldwide Church and, if necessary, provisional regional conferences, all with such powers, duties, and privileges as are hereinafter set forth, provided that in The United Methodist Church there shall be no regional or jurisdictional conference based on any ground other than geographical division.

¶ 10. *Article III.* - There may be jurisdictional conferences for the work of the Church, with such powers, duties, and privileges as are hereinafter set forth, provided that in The United Methodist Church there shall be no jurisdictional conference based on any ground other than geographical and regional division.

¶ 13. *Article VI.*— The General Conference, regional conferences, jurisdictional conferences, and annual conferences shall have autonomy of action within the limits fixed by the Constitution, provided that any legislation enacted within the respective powers of a conference but overlapping with the powers of another shall not be rendered invalid, unless its purpose and substance are beyond the authority of the enacting body.

¶ 15. *Article III.* – The General Conference shall fix the ratio of representation in the General and regional conferences from the annual conferences, missionary conferences, and the provisional annual conferences, computed on a two-factor basis: (1) the number of clergy members of the annual conference and the missionary conference, and (2) the number of professing members in the annual conference and the missionary conference, provided that each annual conference, missionary conference, or provisional annual conference shall be entitled to at least one clergy and one lay delegate in the General Conference and also in the regional conference.

In a regional conference with jurisdictions, the regional conference shall fix the ratio of representation in its jurisdictional conferences from the annual conferences, missionary conferences, and the provisional annual conferences, computed on a two-factor basis: (1) the number of clergy members of the annual conference and the missionary conference, and (2) the number of professing members in the annual conference and the missionary conference, provided that each annual conference, missionary conference, or provisional annual conference

shall be entitled to at least one clergy and one lay delegate in the jurisdictional conference and further provided that all general and regional conference delegates will be members of their respective jurisdictional conferences.

¶ 16. *Article IV.*- The General Conference shall have full legislative power over all matters distinctively connectional, subject to the limits fixed by the Constitution, and in the exercise thereof shall have authority as follows:

...

16.3. To define and fix the powers and duties of regional conferences, jurisdictional conferences, annual conferences, provisional annual conferences, missionary conferences and missions, district conferences, charge conferences, and congregational meetings.

16.4. To provide for the organization, promotion, and administration of the work of the worldwide Church.

...

16.10. To fix a uniform basis upon which bishops shall be elected by the jurisdictional conferences and to determine the number of bishops that may be elected by regional conferences without jurisdictions.

...

16.12. To change the number and the boundaries of regional conferences, and to change the number and the boundaries of jurisdictional conferences upon the consent of a majority of the annual conferences in each jurisdictional conference involved.

...

16.17. To legislate what is non-adaptable for regional conferences by a 60% majority vote, while respecting the powers given to regional conferences according to ¶31.5.

¶ 23. *Article I.*-The jurisdictional conferences shall be composed of as many representatives from the annual conferences and missionary conferences as shall be determined by a uniform basis established by the regional conference where jurisdictions exist, provided that no jurisdictional conference shall have fewer than 100 delegates. The missionary conferences shall be considered as annual conferences for the purpose of this article.

¶ 24. *Article II.* - All jurisdictional conferences shall have the same status and the same privileges of action within the limits fixed by the Constitution. The ratio of representation of the annual conferences and missionary conferences in the General Conference and the regional conference where jurisdictions exist shall be the same for all jurisdictional conferences.

¶ 25. *Article III.* - The regional conference where jurisdictions exist shall fix the basis of representation in the jurisdictional conferences, provided that the jurisdictional conferences shall be composed of an equal number of clergy and lay delegates to be elected by the annual conferences, the missionary conferences and the provisional annual conferences.

¶ 26. *Article IV.* - Each jurisdictional conference shall meet at the time determined by the College of Bishops of the regional conference where jurisdictions exist or its delegated committee, each jurisdictional conference convening on the same date as the others and at a place selected by the jurisdictional committee on entertainment, appointed by its respective College of Bishops unless such a committee has been appointed by the preceding jurisdictional conference.

¶ 27. *Article V.* - The jurisdictional conferences shall have the following powers and duties and such others as may be conferred by the General Conferences:

...

4. To determine the boundaries of their annual conferences, provided that there shall be no annual conference with a membership of fewer than fifty clergy in full connection, except by the consent of the regional conference where jurisdictions exist.

5. To make rules and regulations for the administration of the work of the Church within the jurisdiction, subject to such powers as have been or shall be vested in the General Conference and in the regional conferences.

6. To appoint a committee on appeals to hear and determine the appeal of a clergy or lay member of that jurisdiction from the decision of a trial committee.

Section V. Regional Conferences

¶ 28. *Article I.*— There shall be regional conferences for the work of the worldwide Church with such powers, duties, and privileges as are hereinafter set forth, to be exercised equitably across the regional conferences, subject to limits fixed by the Constitution.

1. Initially, the number and boundaries of the regional conferences shall be as follows:

a) There shall be a regional conference for the work of the Church in the United States of America that includes all of the areas that comprise the jurisdictional conferences identified in Division Two, Section VII, ¶ 37.

b) The central conferences or provisional central conferences which existed prior to the postponed 2020 General Conference shall become regional or provisional regional conferences.

2. The General Conference shall have the authority to change the number and boundaries of regional conferences and provisional regional conferences.

¶ 29. *Article II.*— The regional conferences shall be composed of as many delegates as shall be determined by a basis established by the General Conference. The delegates shall be clergy and lay in equal numbers.

¶ 30. *Article III.*— The regional conferences shall meet within the year succeeding the meeting of the General Conference at such times and places as shall have been determined by the preceding respective regional conferences or by commissions appointed by them or by the General Conference.

¶ 31. *Article IV.*— The regional conferences shall have the following powers and duties as the special conditions and the mission of the Church in the area require, subject to the limits fixed by the Constitution, and such others as may be conferred by the General Conference:

1. To promote the evangelistic, educational, missionary, social-concern, and benevolent interests and institutions of the Church within their own boundaries.

2 . In regional conferences without jurisdictions, to elect the bishops for the respective regional conferences in number as may be determined from time to time, upon a basis fixed by the General Conference; to fix the tenure of their bishops, the episcopal areas and residences, and to assign the bishops who are to reside in the respective regional conference to their areas; and to cooperate in carrying out such plans for the support of their bishops as may be determined by the General Conference.

3. To establish and constitute such regional conference boards as may be required and to elect their administrative officers.

4. To determine the number, names, and boundaries of the annual conferences in accordance with ¶ 40 .

5. To legislate rules and regulations for the administration of the work within their boundaries including changes and adaptations of the general *Discipline* as follows, while upholding the Constitution and the decisions of General Conference in accordance with ¶ 16.17:

- a) To establish and publish a regional *Discipline* with legislation and provisions pertaining to the regional, annual, district, and charge conferences within its boundaries, including qualifications and educational requirements of clergy and specialized lay ministries, and forms of organization according to the laws of the country or countries.
- b) To set standards of character and other qualifications for admission of lay members.
- c) To acknowledge annual conferences as the basic bodies of the church (¶ 33) voting on all matters relating to the character and conference relations of its clergy members, and therefore considering the requirements set forth in a regional *Discipline* regarding specialized lay ministry and license, ordination, or conference membership, as minimum requirements.
- d) To establish and publish a regional hymnal and ritual of the Church, including ecclesial acts of marriage and burial, subject to the limitations of the first and second Restrictive Rules, but authorizing to interpret Article XXIII of the Articles of Religion so as to recognize the governments of the country or countries.
- e) To allow the annual conferences to adopt structures adequate to their mission while upholding mandated structures.

When adapting the investigative and trial process, each Regional Book of Discipline shall guarantee confidentiality, protections of the accused, protection of the accusers along with the ability to adapt the process based on the legal system of each country.

6. To appoint a judicial court to determine legal questions arising from the rules, regulations, and such revised, adapted, or new sections of the regional *Discipline* enacted by the regional conference.

7. To adopt rules of procedure governing the investigation and trial of its clergy, including bishops, and lay members of the Church and to provide the necessary means and methods of implementing the said rules; provided, however, that the ordained ministers shall not be deprived of the right of trial by a clergy committee, and lay members of the Church of the right of trial by a duly constituted committee of lay members; and to make changes in the chargeable offenses and their penalties.

A regional conference or a jurisdiction, if a regional conference has jurisdictions, shall appoint a committee on appeals to hear and determine the appeal of a clergy or lay member of the respective conference from the decision of a committee on trial.

¶ **32. Article I.**— The annual conference shall be composed of clergy and lay members. The clergy membership shall consist of deacons and elders in full connection, provisional members, associate members, and local pastors under appointment. The lay membership shall consist of professing lay members elected by each charge, the diaconal ministers, the active deaconesses, and home missionaries under episcopal appointment within the bounds of the annual conference, the conference president of United Methodist Women, the conference president of United Methodist Men, the conference lay leader, district lay leaders, the conference director of Lay Servant Ministries, conference secretary of Global Ministries (if lay), the president or equivalent officer of the conference young adult organization, the president of the conference youth organization, the chair of the annual conference college student organization, and one

young person between the ages of twelve (12) and seventeen (17) and one young person between the ages of eighteen (18) and thirty (30) from each district to be selected in such a manner as may be determined by the annual conference. In the annual conferences of the regional conferences outside the USA, the four-year participation and the two-year membership requirements may be waived by the annual conference for young persons under thirty (30) years of age. Such persons must be professing members of The United Methodist Church and active participants at the time of election. Each charge served by more than one clergy shall be entitled to as many lay members as there are clergy members. The lay members shall have been for the two years next preceding their election members of The United Methodist Church and shall have been active participants in The United Methodist Church for at least four years next preceding their election.

If the lay membership should number less than the clergy members of the annual conference, the annual conference shall, by its own formula, provide for the election of additional lay members to equalize lay and clergy membership of the annual conference.

¶ **33. Article II.**-The annual conference is the basic body in the Church and as such shall have reserved to it the right to vote on all constitutional amendments, on the election of clergy and lay delegates to the General Conference and their respective regional conferences, as well as jurisdictional conference if its regional conference has jurisdictions, on all matters relating to the character and conference relations of its clergy members, and on the ordination of clergy and such other rights as have not been delegated to the General Conference under the Constitution, with the exception that the lay members may not vote on matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy except that the lay members of the conference board of ordained ministry and the committee on investigation may vote on matters of ordination, character, and

conference relations of clergy, with the further exception that lay members of the district committee on ordained ministry be full participating members of the district committee on ordained ministry with vote. It shall discharge such duties and exercise such powers as the General Conference under the Constitution may determine.

¶ **34. Article III.**-The annual conference shall elect clergy and lay delegates to the General Conference and to its respective regional conference as well as jurisdictional conference, if its regional conference has jurisdictions, in the manner provided in this section, Articles IV and V. Such elections shall include open nominations from the floor by the annual conference, and delegates shall be elected by a minimum of a simple majority of the ballots cast. The persons first elected up to the number determined by the ratio for representation in the General Conference shall be representatives in that body. Additional delegates shall be elected to complete the number determined by the ratio for representation in the regional conference, who, together with those first elected as above, shall be delegates in the regional conference. The additional delegates to the regional conference shall in the order of their election be the reserve delegates to the General Conference. The annual conference shall also elect reserve clergy and lay delegates to the regional conference as it may deem desirable. These reserve clergy and lay delegates to the regional conferences may act as reserve delegates to the General Conference when it is evident that not enough reserve delegates are in attendance at the General Conference.

In regional conferences with jurisdictions, all general and regional conference delegates shall be delegates to the jurisdictional conference. Whenever possible, reserve delegates to the regional conference shall also serve in order of election as delegates to the jurisdictional conference, with any reserve delegates who cannot be seated as jurisdictional delegates becoming reserve delegates to the jurisdictional conference. As needed, additional delegates shall

be elected to complete the number determined by the ratio for representation in the jurisdictional conference. The annual conference may also elect additional reserve clergy and lay delegates to the jurisdictional conference as it may deem desirable.

¶ 35. *Article IV.*-The clergy delegates to the General Conference and to their respective regional conference as well as jurisdictional conference, if its regional conference has jurisdictions, shall be elected from the clergy members in full connection and shall be elected by the clergy members of the annual conference or provisional annual conference who are deacons and elders in full connection, associate members, and those provisional members who have completed all of their educational requirements and local pastors who have completed course of study or an M. Div. degree or its equivalent in regional conferences outside of the USA and have served a minimum of two consecutive years under appointment immediately preceding the election.

¶ 36. *Article V.*-The lay delegates to the General Conference and to their respective regional conference, as well as jurisdictional conference if its regional conference has jurisdictions, shall be elected by the lay members of the annual conference or provisional annual conference without regard to age, provided such delegates shall have been professing members of The United Methodist Church for at least two years next preceding their election, and shall have been active participants in The United Methodist Church for at least four years next preceding their election, and are members thereof within the annual conference electing them at the time of holding the General Conference and regional conferences as well as the jurisdictional conferences, if its regional conference has jurisdictions.

¶ 40 *Article II.*— The number, names, and boundaries of the annual conferences and episcopal areas shall be determined by the respective regional conferences or by the jurisdiction,

if a regional conference has jurisdictions. The authority of regional and jurisdictional conferences provided herein is not circumscribed or limited by the authority provided to the College of Bishops to arrange a plan of episcopal supervision.

¶ 46. *Article II.*-The bishops shall be elected by the respective regional conferences or by the jurisdiction, if a regional conference has jurisdictions, and consecrated in the historic manner at such time and place as may be fixed by each regional conference, provided that episcopal elections in regional conferences without jurisdictions shall be held at a regular, not an extra, session of such regional conference, except in the case where an unexpected vacancy must be filled.

¶ 48. *Article IV.*-The bishops of each regional conference or jurisdiction, if a regional conference has jurisdictions, shall constitute a College of Bishops, and such College of Bishops shall arrange the plan of episcopal supervision of the annual conferences, missionary conferences, and missions within their respective territories.

¶ 49. *Article V.*-The bishops shall have residential and presidential supervision in their respective regional conference or jurisdiction, if a regional conference has jurisdictions, in which they are elected or to which they are transferred. Bishops may be transferred from one jurisdiction to another jurisdiction for presidential and residential supervision under the following conditions: (1) The transfer of bishops may be on either of two bases: (a) a jurisdiction that receives a bishop by transfer from another jurisdiction may transfer to that jurisdiction or to a third jurisdiction one of its own bishops eligible for transfer, so that the number transferred in by each jurisdiction shall be balanced by the number transferred out; or (b) a jurisdiction may receive a bishop from another jurisdiction and not transfer out a member of its own College of Bishops. (2) No bishop shall be transferred unless that bishop shall have specifically consented.

(3) No bishop shall be eligible for transfer unless the bishop shall have served one quadrennium in the jurisdiction that elected the bishop to the episcopacy. (4) All such transfers shall require the approval by a majority vote of the members present and voting of the jurisdictional committees on episcopacy of the jurisdictions that are involved. After the above procedures have been followed, the transferring bishop shall become a member of the receiving College of Bishops and shall be subject to residential assignment by that jurisdictional conference.

A bishop may be assigned by the Council of Bishops for presidential service or other temporary service in another jurisdiction than that which elected the bishop, provided that the request is made by a majority of the bishops in the jurisdiction of the proposed service.

In the case of an emergency in any regional conference or jurisdiction, if a regional conference has jurisdictions, through the death or disability of a bishop or other cause, the Council of Bishops may assign a bishop from another regional conference or jurisdiction, if a regional conference has jurisdictions, to the work of the said regional conference or jurisdiction, if a regional conference has jurisdictions, with the consent of a majority of the bishops of that regional conference or jurisdiction, if a regional conference has jurisdictions.

¶ **50. Article VI.** - Bishops elected by the jurisdictions shall have life tenure. Bishops elected by a regional conference without jurisdictions shall have such tenure as the regional conference electing them shall have determined.

The regional conference or the jurisdiction, if a regional conference has jurisdictions, shall elect a standing committee on episcopacy to consist of one clergy and one lay delegate from each annual conference, on nomination of the annual conference delegation. The committee shall review the work of the bishops, pass on their character and official administration, and report to its respective regional conference or jurisdiction, if a region has jurisdictions, its findings for

such action as the conference may deem appropriate within its constitutional warrant of power.

The committee shall recommend the assignments of the bishops to their respective residences for final action by the respective regional conference or the jurisdiction, if a regional conference has jurisdictions.

These provisions shall not preclude the adoption by the General Conference of provisions for the Council of Bishops to hold its individual members accountable for their work, both as general superintendents and as presidents and residents in episcopal areas.

¶ **52. Article VIII.** - The bishops of the several regional conferences shall preside in the sessions of their respective conferences. If a regional conference has jurisdictions, the bishops shall also preside in the session of their respective jurisdictional conference.

¶ **56. Article II.** - The Judicial Council shall have authority:

1. To determine the constitutionality of any act of the General Conference upon an appeal of a majority of the Council of Bishops or one-fifth of the members of the General Conference and to determine the constitutionality of any act of a regional or jurisdictional conference upon an appeal of a majority of the bishops of that regional or jurisdictional conference or upon the appeal of one-fifth of the members of that regional or jurisdictional conference.

...

4. To hear and determine the legality of any action taken therein by any General Conference board, regional, or jurisdictional conference board or body, upon appeal by one-third of the members thereof, or upon request of the Council of Bishops or a majority of the bishops of a regional or jurisdictional conference.

...

¶ 61. *Article III.* - A regional or jurisdictional conference may by a majority vote propose changes in the Constitution of the Church, and such proposed changes shall be submitted to the next General Conference. If the General Conference adopts the measure by a two-thirds vote, it shall be submitted to the annual conferences according to the provision for amendments.

The ratification process by the annual conferences for the constitutional amendments in this petition shall begin no later than 30 days after the adjournment of the postponed 2020 General Conference.

Ratification Ballot #2	Calendar Item 240	Approved 607-67	May 3, 2024
	Committee Item GA11	Approved 48-2	April 26, 2024
	Petition 20240		

¶ 4. Article IV. Inclusiveness of the Church-The United Methodist Church is a part of the church universal, which is one Body in Christ. The United Methodist Church acknowledges that all persons are of sacred worth. All persons without regard to race, gender, ability, color, national origin, status,⁴ or economic condition, shall be eligible to attend its worship services, participate in its programs, receive the sacraments, upon baptism be admitted as baptized members, and upon taking vows declaring the Christian faith, become professing members in any local church in the connection.⁵ In The United Methodist Church no conference or other organizational unit of the Church shall be structured so as to exclude any member or any constituent body of the Church because of race, color, national origin, status or economic condition.⁶

4. Amended 1992.

5. Amended 2000.

6. See Judicial Council Decisions 242, 246, 340, 351, 362, 377, 398, 594, 601, and Decisions 4 and 5, Interim Judicial Council.

[If ratified, the paragraph would read as follows:]

¶ 4. Article IV. Inclusiveness of the Church-The United Methodist Church is a part of the church universal, which is one Body in Christ. The United Methodist Church acknowledges that all persons are of sacred worth. All persons without regard to race, gender, ability, color, national origin, status,⁴ or economic condition, shall be eligible to attend its worship services, participate in its programs, receive the sacraments, upon baptism be admitted as baptized members, and upon taking vows declaring the Christian faith, become professing members in any local church in the connection.⁵ In The United Methodist Church no conference or other organizational unit of the Church shall be structured so as to exclude any member or any constituent body of the Church because of race, color, national origin, status or economic condition.⁶

4. Amended 1992.

PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

5. Amended 2000.

6. See Judicial Council Decisions 242, 246, 340, 351, 362, 377, 398, 594, 601, and Decisions 4 and 5, Interim Judicial Council.

Ratification Ballot #3	Calendar Item 550	Approved 621-59	May 3, 2024
	Committee Item IC50	Approved 25-1	April 27, 2024
	Petition 20332		

¶ 5. Article V. Racial Justice-The United Methodist Church proclaims ~~the value of each person that from God's goodness and love, God created all persons as a God's unique and beloved children. child of God and commits itself to the healing and wholeness of all persons. The United Methodist Church recognizes that the sin of racism has been destructive to its unity throughout its history. Racism continues to cause painful division and marginalization. The United Methodist Church shall confront and seek to eliminate racism, whether in organizations or in individuals, in every facet of its life and in society at large. The United Methodist Church shall work collaboratively with others to address concerns that threaten the cause of racial justice at all times and in all places. Racism opposes God's law, goodness, and love and diminishes the image of God in each person. Fueled by white privilege, white supremacy, and colonialism, the sin of racism has been a destructive scourge on global society and throughout the history of The United Methodist Church. It continues to destroy our communities, harm persons, obstruct unity, and undermine God's work in this world. Racism must be eradicated. Therefore, The United Methodist Church commits to confronting and eliminating all forms of racism, racial inequity, colonialism, white privilege, and white supremacy, in every facet of its life and in society at large.~~⁷

7. Amended 2000

[If ratified, the paragraph would read as follows:]

¶ 5. Article V. Racial Justice-The United Methodist Church proclaims that from God's goodness and love, God created all persons as God's unique and beloved children. Racism opposes God's law, goodness, and love and diminishes the image of God in each person. Fueled by white privilege, white supremacy, and colonialism, the sin of racism has been a destructive scourge on global society and throughout the history of The United Methodist Church. It continues to destroy our communities, harm persons, obstruct unity, and undermine God's work in this world. Racism must be eradicated. Therefore, The United Methodist Church commits to confronting and eliminating all forms of racism, racial inequity, colonialism, white privilege, and white supremacy, in every facet of its life and in society at large.⁷

7. Amended 2000

Ratification Ballot #4	Calendar Item 555	Approved 547-99	May 2, 2024
	Committee Item OM153	Approved 39-4	April 27, 2024
	Petition 20070		

¶ 35. Article IV. The clergy delegates to the General Conference and to the jurisdictional or central conference shall be elected from ⁷⁴ the clergy members in full connection and shall be elected by the clergy members of the annual conference or provisional annual conference who are deacons and elders in full connection, associate members, and those provisional members who have completed all of their

educational requirements and local pastors who have completed course of study or ~~an M. Div.~~ Master of Divinity degree from a University Senate-approved theological school or its equivalent as recognized in a central conference and have served a minimum of two consecutive years under appointment immediately preceding the election. ⁷⁵

74. Amended 1996

75. See Judicial Council Decision 1181. Amended 2008.

[If ratified, the paragraph would read as follows:]

¶ 35. Article IV. The clergy delegates to the General Conference and to the jurisdictional or central conference shall be elected from ⁷⁴ the clergy members in full connection and shall be elected by the clergy members of the annual conference or provisional annual conference who are deacons and elders in full connection, associate members, and those provisional members who have completed all of their educational requirements and local pastors who have completed course of study or a Master of Divinity degree from a University Senate-approved theological school or its equivalent as recognized in a central conference and have served a minimum of two consecutive years under appointment immediately preceding the election. ⁷⁵

74. Amended 1996

75. See Judicial Council Decision 1181. Amended 2008.

[Editorial note: The proposed change of language in this paragraph related to central conferences would be changed to reflect the necessary updates should the Proposed Constitutional Amendment related to Regionalization be ratified.]

CONSENT AGENDA

Per parliamentary procedure, a consent agenda allows for the collection of several reports into a single agenda item. These reports are from mission and ministry groups that would often have time to speak to their report from the floor of Annual Conference, but are not able to due to time constraints.

This year, the following reports will be considered as a part of the consent agenda:

- v Board of Church and Society
- v Board of Communication
- v Board of Discipleship
- v Board of Trustees
- v Camps and Retreats
- v Campus Ministry Association
- v Church Development Team
- v Commission on Disabilities
- v Committee on Episcopacy
- v Committee on Status and Role of Women
- v Common Table for Church and Vitality
- v Conference Commission on Religion and Race
- v Missional Ministries Board
- v Site Selection
- v Statistician's report
- v Virginia Conference Historical Society
- v United Methodist Men
- v United Women in Faith

An individual item may be removed from the Consent Agenda at the request of no less than 30 members of the annual conference. A page with the name, church, district, clergy/lay identification, and signature of those 30 or more unique members must be submitted to the Conference Secretary, Claire Miller, via email (clairemiller@vaumc.org) no later than 10:45am on Thursday, June 12. The consent agenda will be voted on near the conclusion of the morning business session on Thursday, June 12.

CHARTER FOR THE COMMON TABLE FOR CHURCH VITALITY

Effective Jan. 1, 2006

Approved as Amended June 18, 2021

I. PURPOSE

The Common Table for Church Vitality exists to resource mission and ministry to fulfill the conference mission and vision. As a diverse body of representatives, the Common Table coordinates with Boards and Agencies, assists in the disbursement of ministry and program grants, and oversees the personnel of the Annual Conference offices that are under its guidance. The Common Table supports the Director of Connectional Ministries to fulfill the requirements of the *Book of Discipline*.

A. MISSION

The mission of the Virginia Annual Conference is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

B. VALUES

- v Integrity in the work.
- v Good communication.
- v Diversity of voices at the table.
- v Creative thinking to benefit the whole.
- v Advocate for justice and non-discrimination for all.

II. MEMBERSHIP

The Common Table provides spiritual leadership for the Conference to carry out the Purpose of this Charter. It is both desirable and consistent with our Conference values that the members of the Common Table represent the diversity of our Conference. The Common Table includes the following 12 voting positions and 3 non-voting positions:

A. VOTING MEMBERS

1. Presiding Bishop
2. Conference Lay Leader
3. Director of Connectional Ministries
4. Cabinet representative assigned by the bishop
5. Commission on Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy representative (in accordance with *The Book of Discipline*)
6. Chair of Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries (in accordance with *The Book of Discipline*)
7. Six at-large members equally divided between clergy and laity in annual classes, including two young adult/youth representatives, as elected in III

B. NON-VOTING MEMBERS

1. Representative from Council on Finance and Administration assigned by the Council on Finance and Administration
2. The elected Secretary of the Annual Conference shall serve as Secretary for the Common Table.
3. Representative from contributors such as the United Methodist Women to Grants committee only.

III. SELECTION OF AT-LARGE COMMON TABLE MEMBERS

All Members of the Common Table at-large (3 clergy and 3 laity) are nominated by the Conference Nominations Team

in consultation with the Bishop and elected by the annual conference. Two of these at-large members must be young adult/youth representatives.

IV. TERMS OF SERVICE FOR AT-LARGE MEMBERS

At-large members serve up to two four-year terms and are placed in annual classes. If a person is elected to fill an un-expired term of two years or less, that person is eligible for reelection to a full four-year term. In the event that a member resigns or dies during his/her term, a replacement shall be nominated by the Conference Nominations Team or the Bishop, according to method of nomination, and elected by the Annual Conference with the replacement serving until the end of the original term. Any at-large member of the Common Table who is absent from two meetings without excuse or from three consecutive meetings for any reason shall automatically cease to be a member of the Common Table.

V. MEETINGS

Common Table will prioritize the work that needs to be accomplished in a timely manner. We plan to meet as often as we need to complete this work, meeting at least quarterly. Quarterly meetings would include a time for team building and operational issues. Meetings shall be open, consistent with the provisions of *The Book of Discipline*. In the event it is determined that the Common Table will meet electronically, the Director of Connectional Ministries shall use all reasonable means to ensure the opportunity for participation by all interested individuals. Non-members of the Common Table may attend without voice and vote unless granted voice by the meeting presider.

The Common Table will move to closed executive meetings to discuss confidential information when deemed necessary by a majority vote of the Common Table. Approved Common Table minutes will be on the conference website for public viewing.

VI. OFFICERS

The Bishop, Conference Lay Leader and Director of Connectional Ministries will lead the Common Table in interpreting the Conference vision. The Director of Connectional Ministries is the Chairperson. The Conference Lay Leader is the Vice Chairperson. Meetings may be led by the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, or a designated meeting presider. The Secretary of the Annual Conference is the Secretary of the Common Table, without vote.

VII. COMMITTEES

A. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

The Common Table shall appoint a Personnel Committee annually from within its members to assist with the selection and employment of all Conference program staff, both lay and clergy. The Common Table shall appoint the chair of the Personnel Committee from within its members. The Director of Connectional Ministries shall serve as an *ex officio* member of this committee without vote.

B. GRANTS COMMITTEE

The Common Table may appoint a Grants Committee annually from among the members of the Conference to advise the Common Table on the following:

1. Grants for connectional ministries beyond the local level, funded through the Conference Benevolence apportionment, and
2. Program grants for local ministry projects funded through the Conference Benevolence apportionment, the United Methodist Women, and the Church Extension Fund.
3. Ministry programs that advance the conference vision, funded through Conference apportionment.

C. OTHER COMMITTEES

The Common Table may designate such other committees as are necessary for its functioning.

VIII. SELECTION OF DIRECTOR OF CONNECTIONAL MINISTRIES AND STAFF

- A. The Annual Conference shall elect annually upon nomination of the Bishop, and in consultation with the Common Table an executive officer to be known as the Director of Connectional Ministries. The Director shall serve a maximum tenure of eight years in keeping with the Appointive Cabinet practice. The responsibilities of the Director of Connectional Ministries shall be but are not limited to the following:
 - 1. To serve as the Chairperson of the Common Table and Co-chairperson, with the Conference Lay Leader, of the Conference Nominations Team.
 - 2. To be a communication link between the Conference program agencies and Jurisdictional and General Conference program agencies.
 - 3. To facilitate communication among the Conference program agencies, laity, clergy and the local churches.
 - 4. To serve as a resource person Virginia Conference Appointive Cabinet, Districts, clergy, laity, local churches and Conference ministries to include program planning, ministry evaluation and Conference vision implementation.
 - 5. To serve on other Conference agencies as determined by the Annual Conference, Bishop and/or by the Common Table.
- B. Each staff person shall be nominated annually by Common Table in consultation with the Bishop and appropriate resourced Boards and Agencies.
- C. The Business Manager/Treasurer of the Annual Conference shall serve the Common Table in direct support of their work and shall have oversight of financial operations of the Common Table. In that capacity, the Business Manager/Treasurer shall coordinate this work with the Director of Connectional Ministries.
- D. All Connectional Ministries program staff shall be employed by and amenable to the Common Table. The Director of Connectional Ministries shall be responsible for the oversight and supervision of the program staff.
- E. Administrative/Technical/Professional Staff of the Common Table shall be employed by the Director of Connectional Ministries. The Director of Connectional Ministries will give oversight to and supervise the Administrative/Technical/Professional staff in accordance with the personnel policies and the staff manual.

IX. FINANCES

The Common Table shall present a budget to the Council on Finance and Administration to cover the expenses for the work of the Common Table and the boards and agencies, committees, commissions, task forces and other groups for which it is responsible. The right of the Annual Conference boards and agencies to be heard by the Council on Finance and Administration shall not be denied, as provided by *The Book of Discipline*.

X. MEETINGS OF BOARD AND COMMISSION CHAIRS

Semi-annual (or as often as necessary) meetings of Chairs (or designated representatives) of Conference Program Boards and Commissions that are under the oversight of Common Table will be held for the purpose of aligning conference program and mission with the vision of the Conference. A report of the Chairs' meetings will be provided to Common Table to assist in its responsibilities for its purpose of coordinating and prioritizing the ministries and resources of the Virginia Conference. The boards and commissions that are amenable to Common Table are:

- v Board of Church and Society
- v Board of Communications
- v Board of Discipleship
- v Board of Global Ministries
- v Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries
- v Board of Laity
- v Church Development Team

- v Commission on Disabilities
- v Commission on Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy
- v Commission on Status and Role of Women

OTHER ATTENDEES

- a. Conference Staff serving as primary staff resource to these boards and commissions will attend these meetings with voice but without vote.
- b. The Presidents (or designated representatives) of the Conference United Methodist Men and United Methodist Women will be encouraged to participate in these meetings.
- c. Chairs (or designated representatives) of Conference Administrative Boards that are not under the purview of the Common Table will be encouraged to participate in these meetings.

The Director of Connectional Ministries shall chair these meetings.

XI. AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the charter not in conflict with *The Book of Discipline* may be made by a majority vote of the Annual Conference and originate as follows:

1. upon recommendation of the Common Table, or
2. upon petition of a member of the Annual Conference at least 60 days prior to the next annual conference session.

The Common Table shall review the petition(s) and submit its recommendations to the Annual Conference together with the proposed amendment.

XII. EFFECTIVE DATE OF CHARTER

The Charter for the Common Table for Church Vitality shall become effective June 18, 2021.

COMMITTEE ON RULES

The Rules Committee of the Virginia Annual Conference met several times this year to make both technical corrections and clarifications, as well as substantive changes, to the Virginia Conference Standing Rules of Order and Procedure. This year's proposed amendments and the rationale for each amendment follow:

RECOMMENDATIONS

Proposed amendments to the Standing Rules of Order and Procedure as recommended by the Rules Committee:

- **Rule V.B.4.c – insert the phrase “(3) celebrating churches and individuals whose discipleship is a model for the Annual Conference; and (4) organizing regional support” immediately after “(2) training at district or regional levels;” and strike “drawing on best practices gathered locally, jurisdictionally, nationally and globally, (4) connecting mentor/resource churches with those who request assistance and information, (5) organizing in regional teams, and (6) raising vision, visibility and possibility during Annual Conference sessions and inviting people to connect with a congregational coach.”**

Add the following language after to describe the Board's composition:

Consistent with each of these functions the Board of Discipleship shall consist of four Teams: (1) an Operations Team; (2) Equipping Team; (3) Celebration Team; and (4) Regional Cultivator Team. The Operations Team will (a) provide clarity for disciple-making ministries in the Annual Conference; and (b) support research on best practices, gathered and distributed by Equipping, Celebration, and Regional Cultivator Teams. Membership of the Board shall include the members of the Operations Team, and additional at-large representatives from the Equipping, Celebration, and Regional Cultivator Teams, as determined by the Leader of each Team. Composition of all Teams shall seek to balance representation of laity and clergy, with additional attention to gender and ethnic representation.

The Operations Team shall consist of the following members, to be nominated by the conference Nominations Team: the chair of the Board of Discipleship; the Team Leaders of the Equipping, Celebration, and Regional Cultivator Teams; and the Team Leader of the Operations Team. The conference staff person for the Board of Discipleship serves ex officio. The Operations Team will select individuals to serve as leads of the other Teams (Equipping, Celebration, and Regional Cultivator)."

Strike everything after “The Board of Discipleship...”

As a result, the proposed new text for Rule V.C.8 is:

c. Discipleship. The Board of Discipleship, in cooperation with the General Board of Discipleship and the Common Table for Church Vitality, shall create partnerships by providing a network of experience, knowledge and coaching, through intentional connection, to enhance or create effective disciple-making processes. These partnerships are created by: (1) coaching at local levels and pulling in identified district and conference resources as needed; (2) training at district or regional levels; (3) celebrating churches and individuals whose discipleship is a model for the Annual Conference; and (4) organizing regional support.

Consistent with each of these functions the Board of Discipleship shall consist of four Teams: (1) an Operations Team; (2) Equipping Team; (3) Celebration Team; and (4) Regional Cultivator Team. The Operations Team will (a) provide clarity for disciple-making ministries in the Annual Conference; and (b) support research on best practices, gathered and distributed by Equipping, Celebration, and Regional Cultivator Teams. Membership of the Board shall include the members of the Operations Team, and additional at-large representatives from the Equipping, Celebration, and Regional Cultivator Teams, as determined by the Leader of each Team. Composition of all Teams shall seek to balance representation of laity and clergy, with additional attention to gender and ethnic representation.

The Operations Team shall consist of the following members, to be nominated by the conference Nominations Team: the chair of the Board of Discipleship; the Team Leaders of the Equipping, Celebration, and Regional

Cultivator Teams; and the Team Leader of the Operations Team. The conference staff person for the Board of Discipleship serves ex officio. The Operations Team will select individuals to serve as leads of the other Teams (Equipping, Celebration, and Regional Cultivator).

Rationale: This change to the section describing the Board of Discipleship was brought to the Committee by the Board and the co-DCM. The proposed language mirrors the Board's actual and functional structure and makeup for many years in the Virginia Annual Conference. This rule change is recommended so that the Rules' description of the Board reflects its current form and operation.

Proposed amendments to the Standing Rules of Order and Procedure as recommended by the Rules Committee, after consultation with the Resolutions Committee, to further clarify the process of resolutions:

- **Rule II.B.1.a.:** strike the language that states "If a resolution is deemed..." through "however," add "The final version of all resolutions," strike the words "all resolutions," and the prefix "re" on submitted, and modify "two weeks" to "30 days."

Thus, this section would read:

a. The Resolutions Committee will determine if the below requirements under Rule II.B.2 and 3 have been met for any and all submitted. The final version of all resolutions must be submitted by the January 31 deadline to be properly considered for presentation to the annual conference. Upon the January 31 final deadline for submission, the Resolutions Committee shall meet within 30 days in order to review, process and, if necessary, refer a resolution to an appropriate board, agency or committee for consideration and input.

Rationale: This change was requested by the Resolutions Committee to streamline the explanation of the resolutions' submission process. The Resolutions Committee plans to hold training sessions to review the technical components of the resolutions themselves, but sought a more straightforward rule for submission. The proposed amendment makes the process clearer, both for the Committee and those submitting resolutions.

- **Rule II.B.2.b:** Modify the rule by striking the word "conference" and add the phrase "of the Annual Conference;" before the final "or." Thus, the rule would read: "Any group of at least ten (10) conference clergy members (full connection, provisional, or local pastor, including retired pastors) and/or lay members of the Annual Conference; or"

Rationale: This is a technical change to clarify the lay members who may submit resolutions. The language reflects the intent of the Rules Committee upon drafting the rule last year, and the amendment is designed to make that intent clearer.

- **Rule II.B.2.c:** Modify the rule by inserting "member of the Annual Conference" after "Any lay" and striking "person who is a member of a local church within the conference and." Add the following language after "endorsed the resolution": "in a duly-called church council (or equivalent governing body) meeting. For purposes of this section, a meeting shall be considered duly-called if notice of time and place of the meeting are provided (i) at least ten (10) days in advance; and (ii) by two or more of the following: from the pulpit of the church, in its weekly bulletin, in a church publication, or by mail."

Thus, this section would read:

c. Any lay member of the Annual Conference who is a member of a local church within the conference and whose church council, or equivalent governing body, has endorsed the resolution in a duly-called church council (or equivalent governing body) meeting. For purposes of this section, a meeting shall be considered duly-called if notice of time and place of the meeting are provided (i) at least ten (10) days in advance; and (ii) by two or more of the following: from the pulpit of the church, in its weekly bulletin, in a church publication, or by mail.

Rationale: The first amendment tracks the change to II.B.2.b. and is intended to just increase precision. The second

proposed amendment is suggested to ensure transparency and clarity in the process by which an Annual Conference lay member may get a resolution endorsed by their church council. The current version of the rule does not explain how a lay person should seek endorsement of their church council, leaving it open to interpretation. After much discussion, the Rules Committee recommends adding the condition of a “duly-called” council meeting, and an explanation of what constitutes “duly-called.” The requirements of “duly-called,” as articulated in the proposed amendment to this rule, mirror the notice requirements for a Charge Conference from the *Book of Discipline* (§246.8).

- **Rule II.B.3: Modify the rule to insert a subsection c that reads “For those resolutions submitted by a lay member and endorsed by a church council (or equivalent governing body) pursuant to II.B.2.c., a copy of the minutes of the meeting endorsing the resolution must accompany the submission;” and re-letter the subsequent subsections from c through f to d through g.**

Rationale: This insertion into the rules accompanies the change to II.B.2.c., and is part of the effort to clarify how a resolution may be endorsed by a church council. As noted in the rationale for II.B.2.c above, the current version of the rule leaves open to interpretation how a lay person in the Annual Conference may get a resolution endorsed. This change is intended to increase transparency and consistency in the resolution process. The re-lettering is a technical change required by the insertion.

- **Rule II.B.3.d.: Strike everything after “single spaced” and insert a hyphen in the words “single spaced” to read “single-spaced.” The rule would thus read “All resolutions must be submitted electronically in Microsoft Word format, in 12 point, Times New Roman font, single-spaced.”**

Rationale: This is a technical change that was requested by the Resolutions Committee, to simplify the formatting of the resolutions and remove extraneous requirements.

- **Rule II.B.3.e.: Insert, after “words,” the phrase “including any rationale or further documentation (to the exclusion of meeting minutes required in II.B.3.c).”**

Rationale: This change (other than the parenthetical) was requested by the Resolutions Committee, to reduce the volume of materials produced along with resolutions. The Rules Committee added the parenthetical to the inserted language to clarify that resolutions submitted with Church Council meeting minutes would not have to count those minutes against the total word count permitted.

The final version of Rule II.B.3 would thus be:

3. Submission of Resolutions. To submit a resolution for consideration by the annual conference, the document must be properly formatted and submitted to the Resolutions Committee at an email address provided by the conference. The following process must be followed:

a. All resolutions shall be limited to one issue. If the Book of Discipline is affected, each resolution must address only one paragraph of the Discipline; except that, if two or more paragraphs in the Discipline are so closely related that a change in one affects the others, the resolution may call for the amendment of those paragraphs to make them consistent with one another (§507.2. The Book of Discipline);

b All resolutions must be accompanied by a statement of: (i) any estimated financial impact; (ii) an estimate of any conference staff resources and time required; and (iii) the source(s) of funding required to implement its provisions, if any;

c. For those resolutions submitted by a lay member and endorsed by a church council (or equivalent governing body) pursuant to II.B.2.c., a copy of the minutes of the meeting endorsing the resolution must accompany the submission;

d. All resolutions are to be written in the following format: “Whereas, ... Whereas, ... Whereas, ... Therefore, be it resolved,,, Be it further resolved ...” structure;

e. All resolutions must be submitted electronically in Microsoft Word format, in 12 point, Times New Roman font, single-spaced.

f. All resolutions shall be limited to no more than 1,000 words, including any rationale or further documentation (to the exclusion of meeting minutes required in II.B.3.c); and

g. Each resolution must be signed by the person(s) submitting it, and accompanied by appropriate identifying information, including the name(s), title(s), phone number(s), and email address(s) and conference district of the person(s) must be included with the resolution. Electronic signatures will be accepted in accordance with common business practices.

- **Rule II.B.5. Modify the rule to insert a subsection f that states “f. Prior to any floor debate on a resolution, the presiding chairperson may entertain a motion to table the resolution without debate. This motion may come from any full member of the conference, requires a second, and must be approved by a majority vote.”**

Rationale: This proposed amendment is to articulate clearly that, as with any other business before the Conference, resolutions may also be subjected to a Motion to Table prior to debate. Though Motions to Table are permitted generally under Roberts Rules of Order, the Rules Committee recommends, for consistency and clarity, that the Rules expressly state their applicability to resolutions’ debate.

- **Rule II.B.6.a. Strike everything after “for review.” Thus, the rule will now read “Voting on resolutions shall be on each individual resolution, not on a recommendation of any conference board, agency, committee, the CFA or the Chancellor to which a resolution may have been referred to for review.”**

Rationale: This is a technical change that was requested by the Resolutions Committee, as this requirement is stated elsewhere in the rules governing resolutions. This amendment removes language that is duplicative and therefore unnecessary.

—Scott Diamond, Chair

MINUTE QUESTIONS 10-13

Part II: Organized And Closed Churches

10. List local churches which have been:

- a) Organized or continued as New Church Starts (§259.1). Continue to list congregations here until listed in questions 10. c, d, e, or f. Only add church type if blended congregations, new expressions, new faith community or other established type.

GCNO	Church Name	District	Mailing Address	Physical Address	Phone Number	Date Founded	Church Type
411675	Impact	Coastal Virginia	1200 Chesapeake Ave., Chesapeake, VA 23324	1200 Chesapeake Ave Chesapeake, VA 23324-2304	757-545-7481	7/1/2020	New Faith Community
475051	Journey	Living Waters	PO Box 190 Jetersville, VA 23083	19210 Patrick Henry Hwy Amelia Court House, VA 2300	804-307-0369	2011	New Faith Community
140393	Hope UMC	Northern Virginia	1014 Country Club Road NE, Vienna, VA 22180	1014 Country Club Drive NE Vienna, VA 22180	703-309-1329	7/1/22	New Faith Community
140943	Nooma	Northern Virginia	1428 N Jackson St Arlington, VA 2220	Virtual Church	251-586-3019	1/1/25	New Faith Community

MINUTE QUESTIONS

b) Organized or continued as Mission Congregations (§259,1-4 continue to list congregations here until listed in questions 14.c, d, e, or f)

GCNO	Church Name	District	Mailing Address	Physical Address	Phone Number	Date Founded
41186	Bloxom Mission	Coastal Virginia	25585 Shoremain Dr., Bloxom, VA 23308	25585 Shoremain Dr Bloxom, VA 23308	757-894-0880	Continued
140312	The Gathering @ Washington St.	Living Waters	225 Claremont St., Petersburg, VA 23805	225 Claremont St. Petersburg, VA 23805	804-631-3335	Continued
411254	Accotink Cana (Mission)	Northern Virginia	9043 Backlick Road, Fort Belvoir, VA 22060	9043 Backlick Road, Fort Belvoir, VA 22060	703-447-9677	Continued
41178	Ghana Wesley (Mission)	Northern Virginia	1400 G Street, Woodbridge, VA 22192	1400 G Street, Woodbridge, VA 22192	703-494-1588	Continued
470311	Rising Hope	Northern Virginia	8220 Russell Rd., Alexandria, VA 22309	8220 Russell Rd Alexandria, VA 22309-8218	703-360-1976	Continued (with designation as mission congregation 2016)
410842	First Vietnamese American	Northern Virginia	4701 Arlington Blvd. Arlington, VA 22203	4701 Arlington Blvd Arlington, VA 22203-2706	703-465-8505	Continued
480742	Belmont	Three Notch'd	3510 Broad Rock Blvd., Richmond, VA 23224		804-275-6336	Continued
41047	People United in Christ	Valley Ridge	2446 Sycamore Ave., Buena Vista, VA 24416		540-319-4009	Continued

MINUTE QUESTIONS

- c) Organized or continued Satellite Congregations (§247.23). Continue to list here until listed in questions 10.a, d, e, or f:

GCNO	Church Name	Parent Church	District	Mailing Address	Physical Address	Phone Number	Date Launched
	Love Your Neighbor Network	Ebenezer Stafford	Mission Rivers	161 Embrey Mill Rd. Stafford, VA 22554	161 Embrey Mill Rd. Stafford, VA 22554	540-659-1349	7/1/21
095651	The Chapel at Landsdowne Woods	Galilee UMC	Northern Virginia	45425 Winding Road, Sterling, VA 20165	19375 Magnolia Grove Sq Lansdowne, VA 20176-5180	703-430-2203	2007
471452	Bristow Revive House Church	Gainesville UMC	Northern Virginia	13710 Milestone Court., Gainesville, VA 20155	None	703-754-4511	7/1/17
140393	Hope UMC	Ghana Wesley UMC	Northern Virginia	1014 Country Club Road NE, Vienna, VA 22180	1400 G Street Woodbridge, VA 22191	703-494-1588	7/1/22
140353	edges	Blacksburg UMC	Valley Ridge	706 Harding Ave, Blacksburg, VA 24060	706 Harding Ave, Blacksburg, VA 24060	540-552-5424	9/9/12
140949	New Song Church: King William	New Song	Three Notch'd	7450 Colts Neck Rd., Mechanicsville, VA 23111	7450 Colts Neck Rd., Mechanicsville, VA 23111	804-559-6064	7/1/24

- d) Organized as Chartered (§259.5-10)

GCNO	Church Name	District	Mailing Address	Physical Address	Phone Number	Date Chartered
411937	Restoration (Reston)	Northern Virginia	1612 Washington Plaza N, Reston, VA 20192	11400 South Lakes Drive, Reston, VA 20191	703-955-9888	6/8/25
	Common Table	Three Notch'd	901 S. Harrison St. Richmond, VA, 23220	901 S. Harrison St. Richmond, VA, 23220	434-569-5713	5/4/25

MINUTE QUESTIONS

e) Merged (§2546, 2547)

(1) United Methodist with United Methodist

GCNO	Name of First Church	GCNO	Name of Second Church	New GCNO	Name of Merged Church	District	Date Merged	Merger Type
484044	Jollivue	484146	St. John's	484146	St. John's	Valley Ridge	11/3/24	Consumed
481531	Laurel Park	480924	Greenwood	480924	Greenwood-Laurel Park	Three Notch'd	7/1/23	Consumed
471862	Hinton Avenue	471480	First	471862	Charlottesville First	Three Notch'd	7/1/23	Consumed
473325	Irisburg UMC	471576 472445	Carroll UMC Beckham UMC	473325	Axton	Mountain View	7/1/25	Consolidated
470322	New Life International	304316	Saint Andrews	470322	New Life International at Saint Andrews UMC	Northern Virginia	9/29/24	Consumed
421311	Verona UMC	004758	Aisle 7 Fellowship	421311	Verona UMC	Shenandoah River	7/1/2025	Consumed

(2) United Methodist with Interdenominational. The newly merged church will receive a new GCNO:

GCNO	Name of First Church	Name of Second Church	Denomination	Name of Merged Church	District	Date Merged	Merger Type

f) Discontinued, abandoned, withdrawn, unreported disaffiliated 2023 action's (§641), separated, exigent circumstances or financial. Include the reason for closure for each church listed.

(1) New Church Start (§259.1)

GCNO	Church Name	District	Charge	Location	Date Closed	Reason for Closure
140439	Provision Church	Northern Virginia	Provision	P. O. Box 6400 Alexandria, VA 22306	4/25/25	Exigent Circumstances

(2) Mission Congregation (§259.1a)

GCNO	Church Name	District	Location	Date Closed	Reason for Closure

MINUTE QUESTIONS

(3) Satellite Congregation (¶249.22)

GCNO	Church Name	District	Location	Date Closed	Reason for Closure

(4) Chartered Local Church (¶259.5)

GCNO	Church Name	District	Charge	Location	Date Closed	Reason for Closure
483825	McDowell	Valley Ridge	McDowell	8995 Highland Tpke Mc Dowell, VA 24458	8/15/2024	Exigent Circumstances
483858	McKendree	Valley Ridge	McDowell	166 Church Hill Rd Doe Hill, VA 24433	8/15/2024	Exigent Circumstances
483871	Totten Chapel	Valley Ridge	McDowell	4396 Black Thorn Rd Sugar Glove, WV 26815	8/15/2024	Exigent Circumstances
483836	Doe Hill	Valley Ridge	McDowell	7617 Doe Hill Rd - Rte 654 Doe Hill, VA 24433	8/15/2024	Exigent Circumstances
484011	Mountain Valley	Valley Ridge	Epworth Mountain Valley	4905 Rich Patch Rd Covington, VA 24426	6/30/2024	Exigent Circumstances
483927	Humphries Chapel	Valley Ridge	Potts Valley	15997 Paint Bank Rd, Paint Bank, VA 24131	1/28/2025	Exigent Circumstances
484055	Pinnell Chapel	Valley Ridge	Potts Valley	205 Summit Drive, Covington, VA 24426	10/24/2024	Exigent Circumstances
484077	Persinger Memorial	Valley Ridge	Potts Valley	3707 Llama Drive, Covington, VA 24426	10/24/2024	Exigent Circumstances
482466	Mays Memorial	Valley Ridge	Mays Memorial	1121 Oddfellows Rd Vinton, VA 24179-5893	6/30/2025	Church Vote

MINUTE QUESTIONS

482364	Goodwin Memorial	Valley Ridge	Goodwin Memorial	5791 W River Rd Salem, VA 24153-8208	6/30/2025	Church Vote
483756	Ashwood	Valley Ridge	Hot Springs	5674 Sam Snead Hwy Hot Springs, VA 24445	6/30/2025	Church Vote
472833	Mt. Horeb (Amherst)	Three Notch'D	Mt. Pleasant	12368 Mount Horeb Rd., Amherst, VA 24521.	11/30/2024	Exigent Circumstances
475756	Trinity UMC	Living Waters	West Buckingham	13463 W. James Anderson Hwy. Buckingham, VA 23921	12 13/ 2024	Abandoned
475723	Fairview UMC	Mountain View	Fairview (Lynchburg)	3041 Campbell Ave Lynchburg, VA 24501-4635	3/1/25	Exigent Circumstances
471645	Cascades UMC	Mountain View	Cascades	6540 Cascade Mill Rd Cascade, VA 24069	10/1//24	Abandoned
476716	St. Andrew's UMC	Mountain View	St. Andrews	10164 E Gretna Rd Gretna, VA 24557-4842	12/31/24	Abandoned
476671	Providence UMC	Mountain View	Providence	568 Ty Valley Ln Glade Hill, VA 24092	12/31/24	Exigent Circumstances
484795	Old Bethel	Shenandoah River	Old Bethel-Welltown-Rest Cooperative Parish	560 Old Bethel Church Road, Winchester, VA 22603	04-30-25	Church Vote
485232	Asbury	Shenandoah River	Warren	7973 Stonewall Jackson Highway, Front Royal, VA 22630	12-20-2024	Exigent Circumstances
476625	Epworth	Coastal Virginia		124 W. Freemason Street, Norfolk VA 23510	1/6/25	Church Vote

MINUTE QUESTIONS

- g) Readmission of Disaffiliated Church to the UMC (§2553). Churches will receive a new GCNO for the newly admitted church:

Church Name	District	Old GCNO	Charge	Mailing	Address	Physical Address	Date Readmitted

- h) Moved physical location and indicate new address:

GCNO	Church Name	District	Mailing Address	Physical Address	Date Relocated

- i) Changed name of church – For example, “First” to “Trinity”:

GCNO	Former Name	New Name	Physical Address	District	Effective Date
480924	Greenwood Laurel Park	Greenwood	10040 Greenwood Rd, GlenAllen, VA 23060	Three Notch'D	3/19/25

- j) Transferred this year into this conference from other United Methodist conference(s) and include membership (§42, 260)

GCNO	Parish Name	Charge Name	Church Name	District

- k) What cooperative parishes in structured forms have been established (§206)

GCFA Parish Number	Local Parish Number	Parish Name	GCNO	Church Name	District

- l) Organized or continued as Wesley Foundations:

GCNO	Church Name	District	Mailing Address	Physical Address	Phone Number	Date Founded

11. List all Ecumenical Shared Ministries in the conference (§207, 208)

- a) Federated church

GCNO	Name	District	Other Denomination(s)

MINUTE QUESTIONS

b) Union Church

GCNO	Name	District	Other Denomination(s)
482318	Shiloh	Valley Ridge	Union
492694	Stonewall	Valley Ridge	Church of the Brethren
470856	United Christian Parish	Northern Virginia	Disciples of Christ, Presbyterian USA, United Church of Christ

c) Merged Church

GCNO	Name	District	Other Denomination(s)

d) Yoked Parish

GCNO	Name	District	Other Denomination(s)

12. What changes have been made in districts and charge lines. Please list the GCNO beside each church name.

GCNO/Church (1)	GCNO/Church (2)	GCNO/Church (3)	Old Charge	New Charge	Old District	New District

a) District Move Changes

GCNO Number	Church Name	Old District	New District

b) Alignment/Charge Line Changes

Coastal Virginia

Lower Shore Charge: Cheriton (473928) - Capeville (473883) – Trinity (473861) from 100% to 75%
Covenant (479537) from 100% to 75%
Oak Grove (477004) Associate pastor from 50% to 100%
Haygood (476421) Associate pastor eliminated
Wesley Grace (476966), from 50% to 75%
Dissolve New Hope Charge (50%) (Mears Memorial (Keller) (474136) and Harborton (474400).
Harborton (474400) becomes station at 50%.
Mears Memorial (474136) becomes station at 25%.
Christ UMC (Norfolk) (476580) from 100% to 50%
The Garden UMC (476647) from 100% to 50%
Ghent UMC (476705) from 100% to 75%

Living Waters

Nottoway-Lunenburg Charge (Laurel Hill (475233), St. Marks (475244), Thrifts Chapel (475255)
Discontinue Charge (Thrifts Closed 4/27/2025)
Nottoway-Lunenburg Charge (Laurel Hill (475233), St. Marks (475244) move to 50%
West Buckingham Charge (Mt. Tabor (475734), Trinity (475756), Woodland (475778)
Discontinue Charge (Trinity Closed 12/13/2024)
West Buckingham Charge (Mt. Tabor (475734), Woodland (475778) move to 25%
Sycamore UMC (Prince George) (479138) move to 75%

Mission Rivers

Hopewell Caroline (480753): Reduce from 100% to 50%
Woodland (479743): Increase from 25% to 100%
Andrew Chapel Westmoreland (480640) Reduce from 100% to 25%
Andrew Chapel Westmoreland (480640) joins the Montross Charge (Lebanon 480662, Providence 480673,
Andrew Chapel Westmoreland (480640)

Mountain View - 2025

Pleasant Grove (473507) from 100% to 50% appointment -
First Martinsville (473223) added 50% associate appointment
Bethlehem in Moneta (475938) Associate went from 75% to 100%

Northern Virginia

Andrew Chapel (470402) part-time associate pastor eliminated
Aldersgate (470218) 50% part-time associate to full time associate
Mount Olivet (47068) 25% part-time new associate to 50% part-time associate
Aldie (485117)- Arcola (470446) Cooperative Parish is dissolved
Cameron (47207)- reduced to 75% part-time, joined in Cooperative Parish with Bruen Chapel (471188)
at 25% part time
Warrenton (471521) Associate pastor eliminated
Old Bridge (470754) part-time associate pastor eliminated
Floris (470435) associate pastor eliminated
The Vine (470275) associate pastor eliminated

Shenandoah River

Bennets Chapel (485254)-Asbury (485232)-Bethel (421594): discontinue charge (Asbury closed)

Bennets Chapel (485254)-Bethel (421594): new charge 100% time

Rest (485334)-Old Bethel (484795)-Welltown (484671): discontinue charge (Old Bethel closed)

Rest (485334)-Welltown (484671): new charge 100% time

Three Notch'd District

Ginter Park (481462): Decrease from 100% to 75%

Greenwood Laurel Park (480924): Increase from 75% to 100%

Central (481382): decrease from 100% to 50%

Christ (481405): decrease from 75% to 50%

Reveille (481622): increase associate from 50% to 100%

New Song (480822): adding a 25% associate

Valley Ridge

Bonsack (482147) decrease from 100% to 50%

McDowell Charge (McDowell 483825, McKendree 483858, Totten Chapel 483871, Doe Hill 483836)

Churches closed under exigent circumstances.

Potts Valley Charge (Pinnel Chapel 484055, Persinger Memorial 484077, Humphries Chapel 483927)

Discontinue charge. Pinnel Chapel and Persinger close. Humphries Chapel becomes 100% station church.

West End (482945) move from 75% to 50%

Woodlawn (Roanoke) (482980) move from 100% to 50%

Rockingham Court (482843) move from 100% to 50%

Mt. Pleasant (Roanoke) (482808) move from 75% to 50%

Epworth-Mountain Valley Charge (Epworth 484000 and Mountain Valley 484011) Discontinue charge

Bonsack (482147) increase from 50% to 100%

Fairview (482706) move from 75% to 50%

Hot Springs Charge (Ashwood 483756 and Emory 483472) Discontinue charge

Marquis Memorial (484124) move from 100% to 75%

**DISTRICT COMMITTEES ON ORDAINED MINISTRY
2025-2026**

COASTAL VIRGINIA DISTRICT:

Beth Givens (C), Barbara Campfield (L), Clark Cundiff (C), Beverly Gatbonton (L), June Kernutt (L), Sarah Locke (C), Scott Rimer (C), Ann On-Lin Tang (C), Amanda Weber (C), Sandra Chandler (L), Greg Duncan (C), Tammy Estep (C), Jennifer Hume (L), Randy Timmerman (C), William McClung (C), Brenda Laws (C), Gary Miller (C), Carrie Talbott (L), Judy Worthington (C)

LIVING WATERS DISTRICT:

Jay Carey (C), Tim Beck (C), Jacob Sahms (C), Michael Teixeira (C), Glenn Riggs (C), Lindsie Blakely (C), Stan Hargraves (C), Margaret Kutz (C), Alan Layman (C), Rich Meiser (C), Richard Speirs (L), Susie Thomas (C), Virginia Jones (L), Brian Posey (C), Jesse Moffitt (C)

MISSION RIVERS DISTRICT:

Lindsey Baynham Freeman (C), Beth Glass (C), Nancy Barchus (L), Renae Bea (L), Linda Canty (L), Blair Ellis (L), David Hindman (C), David Magruder (C), Debbie McDaniels (L), Mark Miller (C), Sarah Newton (L), Rebecca Rumburg (C), Brian Sixbey (C), Marcus Stallworth (C), Byun Chul Sung (C), Mina Sumpter (C), Eric Vadt (C), Nancy Yarborough (L)

MOUNTAIN VIEW DISTRICT:

Sarah Calvert (DS), Dawn Compton (C) Chair, Clyde DeLoach (C) Registrar, Leigh Anne Taylor (C) BOM Rep, Bryan Buckles (C) Mentor Coordinator, Tim Barth (C), Mary Hancock (L) Pat Robinson (L), Liz Ecklund (C), Andrew Labar-Dietz (C), Nancy Johnson (C), Yusang Chung (C), Ben Horrocks (C), Keith Vernon (C), Faith Weedling (C), Maegan L. Mitchell (L)

NORTHERN VIRGINIA DISTRICT:

Matt Benton (C), Chair, Sara Keeling (C), Team Lead, Mary Ann Kral (L), Emmanuel Nkrumah (C), John Meeuwissen (L), Drew Colby (C), Mike Plasters (C), Bill Gray (L), Matthew Smith (C), William Chaney (C), Katie Phillips (C), Barbara Miner (C), Team Lead, Neal Wise (L), Registrar, Janine Howard (C), Matthew Sergent (C), Michelle Holmes Chaney (C), Secretary, Mentor Coordinator, Keith Lee (C), Mary Beth Buchholz (L), Melissa Porter-Miller (C), William “Mac” McKenney (C), Kirk Nave (C), Keon Huh (C)

SHENANDOAH RIVER DISTRICT:

Kyungsuk Cho (C), Daniel Wray (C), Andy Brock (C), Heather Wray (C), Bertina Westley (C), Sandra Plasters (C), William Braddy (L), Eduardo Carrillo (C), Michael Reaves (C), Debbie Powell (C), Adam Blagg (C), Joel Robinette (C), Barbara Phillips (L), Mary Dadisman (C), Al Tuten (C), Amy Pannell (C)

THREE NOTCH'D DISTRICT:

Hyo Lee (C), Yoon-Seok Choi (C), Beth Downs (C), Chip Giessler (C), Amy Grant (C), Carol Hampton (L),
Glen Hart (L), Chad Herndon (C), Gil Lee (C), Lauren Leggett (L), Laura Loper (L), Mike Mayton (C),
Josh Munnikhuysen (C), Judy Oguich (C), Frank Osburn (L), Sarah Sealand (C), Dave Stoakley (L), Laura Stratton (C),
Owen Taylor (C), Tim Worley (C)

VALLEY RIDGE DISTRICT:

J Douglas Forrester (C), Brenda Brooks (L), Tim Craft (C), Doug Paysour (C), John Hemming (C), Jeff Wilson (C),
Charlotte Keagy (L), Craig Newman (C), Hyeon Ho Lee (C), Marion Sortore (L), Peter Baesick Cho (C) Tom Davis
(L), Leigh Iberg (L), David Vaughan (C), Jonathan Greer (C), Eileen Gilmer (C), Hung Su Lim (C), Karen Davis (L)

**DISTRICT COMMITTEES ON
CHURCH BUILDING AND LOCATION
2025-2026**

COASTAL VIRGINIA DISTRICT:

Beth Givens (C), Stephanie Parker (C), Valerie Byron (L), Gary Chivarotti (L), Tim Craig (C), Greg Duncan (C), Marilyn Lipieko (L), Tom Mercer (C), Kelvin Pettit (L), Bob Talbott (C), Peggy Wilson (L),
Jon Woodburn (C)

LIVING WATERS DISTRICT:

Jay Carey (C), Debbie Baugham (C), Rennie Bridgman (L), Joe T. Carson (C), Rich Meiser (C), Proctor Peebles (L),
Betty Forbes (L), Lane Spigener (C)

MISSION RIVERS DISTRICT:

Lindsey Baynham Freeman (C), Justin Williams (C), Kristie Askew (C), Robert Burch (L), Chris Czubowicz (L),
Jeffery R. Harrison (C), Carl Perez (C), Nancy Ransome (L), Tom Tipton (C), Kristina Williams (L)

MOUNTAIN VIEW DISTRICT:

Sarah Calvert (DS), Connie Coleman chair (L), Leigh Anne Taylor (C), Lynn Watson (L), Susan Hughes (C),
Ryan Ware (C), Keith Vernon (C), Jeff White (C), Robert Hardy (C), Anita Nelson (L), Mark Tucker (L),
Nancy Dickison (L), Tara Ferris (L), Garland Harper (L), Steve Weedling (C)

NORTHERN VIRGINIA DISTRICT:

Jeff Haugh (C), Marjorie Hobart (L), Karen Hunt (L), Bill Logan (L), James Henry (C), Gene Cross (L),
Marti Ringenbach (C), Larry Miller (L), Pat Sawhney (L), Kirk Nave (C)

SHENANDOAH RIVER DISTRICT:

Kyungsuk Cho (C), Linda Hudgings Breeden (C), Sarah Stelzl (L), Bob Riggles (C), John Stelzl (C), Clarissa Byrd (L),
Mary Madden (L), Sue MacTavish (C), Chad Hrbek (C), Al Irving (C)

THREE NOTCH'D DISTRICT:

Hyo Lee (C), Laura Maher (L), Jim Mallon (L), Matt Seaton (C), Diana Foster (C), Katie Frooman (L), Kelly Weiss (L),
Mike Mayton (C), Bessie Owens (L), Kip Robinson (L)

VALLEY RIDGE DISTRICT:

J Douglas Forrester (C), Debbie Brown (L), Doug Mitchell (C), Joanna Paysour (C), Patsy Sparks (L), Don Witt (L),
Cynthia Martin (L), N.L. Bishop (L), Peggy Rosen (L), Rex Buel (L), William Bushman (L), Doug Urbaniak (L),
Becky Grandle (L), Brian Boettcher (C)

REPORTS



CABINET REPORT

Coastal Virginia District – Rev. Beth Givens, Superintendent

The Coastal Virginia District in this conference year has worked to deepen connectional ties by dividing into 8 regional community cohorts and recruiting associate lay leaders for each of those cohorts. We have eight churches in a discernment group learning about Simplified Accountable Structure. We have been thrilled to hold our first in person training events since the pandemic, with over 150 people attending training weekend, and another 75 a few weeks later for an event resourced by the Edges faith community. We continue to support and empower the ministry of local churches on both sides of the Chesapeake Bay.

Living Waters District – Rev. Jay Carey, Superintendent

The LW District welcomed Rev. Thomas Wynn as District Youth Coordinator and held 2 District Youth Retreats! 2024 Regional Charge Conference offerings for District Youth Ministry totaled \$10,000! 200+ persons attended seven different leadership classes led by Conference/District leadership at 2025 EMPOWER District Training at Crenshaw UMC in January. 200+ Flood Buckets were collected for the hurricane Helene Response. A Cameron Foundation Grant was awarded to the Ettrick Project. Southside Gleaning Ministry supported record numbers of families with harvests of produce, fruit and firewood. In just 3 years, District Developer, Rev. Tim Beck has worked with 60+ churches.

Mission Rivers District – Rev. Dr. Charles Ledlum-Bates, Superintendent

The Mission Rivers District aims to foster shared ministry between laity and clergy beyond local churches, promoting collaboration and connection for community transformation. The Board of Directors is improving communication and supports multi-congregation efforts. The District Training Director provides lay training. A successful training day was held in January. A new District Youth Coordinator position was established to connect with youths throughout the district. The Missions Committee approved nearly \$67,000 in grants for community support, and the Trustees Committee recommended almost \$100,000 for facility repairs. The Heartwood Seed Project is starting a community garden. Overall, the district's finances are stable, with high apportionment receipts.

Mountain View – Rev. Dr. Sarah Calvert, Superintendent

In 2024–25, the Mountain View District lived into this year's theme—Go! Make Disciples! Transform the World!—by deepening connections between clergy, churches, and communities across our district. Guided by our vision to Lead in Love, we embraced tools like the 3 Practices process, in-depth outreach using MissionInsite data, and StrengthFinder-based clergy training to foster understanding, resilience, and growth in polarizing times. By God's grace, our clergy community groups were energized and equipped to faithfully engage their diverse contexts with clarity and compassion, and our new structure now includes three co-lay leaders to help strengthen connections across the district. We are also doing some amazing work with missional grants to foster relationships with communities in need.

Northern Virginia District – Rev. Kirk Nave, District Superintendent

The Northern Virginia District partners with, equips, and resources the local church to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. We celebrate the 25 participants and trainers who spent the year participating in Go! a new lay-equipping and empowering initiative. We opened our annual District Training Day to the entire Annual Conference and focused on making disciples with keynotes from Bishops Sue Hauptert-Johnson and Ken Carter as well as Rev. Michael Beck. Our clergy heard from Bishop Tom Berlin for stewardship training and from a panel of pastors reaching their communities in new and innovative ways. The District awarded \$2 million in infrastructure grants to churches, supporting their efforts to care for their spaces while also moving forward with fruitful ministry in their communities. Through strategic training and financial support, we continue to equip leaders, strengthen churches, and make disciples.

Shenandoah River District – Rev. Dr. Victor Gómez, Superintendent

The Shenandoah River District is always striving in making disciples of Jesus Christ. We partner with Just Neighbors, which provides high-quality immigration legal services to low-income immigrants, asylees and refugees in Harrisonburg

and Winchester. We have been working with churches to discern a simplified accountable structure. In addition, Mission Central and Equipment for Caring combines the resources of the churches of the District to serve the families of the Shenandoah Valley. In two locations, Mission Central offers clothing for children and the lending of medical equipment. Throughout the year, the District hosts sessions for leaders to learn more about the different committees and leadership positions. We are blessed to have great staff, lay leadership and clergy. Let us continue to make disciples of Jesus Christ.

Three Notch'D District – Rev. Dr. Hyo Lee, Superintendent

In 2024-25, the Three Notch'D District focused on disciple-making by launching a new congregation at New Song's second campus, supporting 13 cluster groups in mutual learning and collaboration, and fostering revitalization through initiatives such as SAS, Shift, NLI, the Global Leadership Summit, Mission Insite, and clergy coaching. Additionally, we helped 40 churches create updated and inviting websites to enhance their outreach.

In the coming year, we will continue supporting local churches and clergy in bearing kingdom fruit by offering prayers and practical resources for church renewal.

Valley Ridge District – Rev. Douglas Forrester, Superintendent

We have continued our work creating strategic community partnerships to help the most vulnerable amongst us with our Embrace Centers for Community in Waynesboro and Covington. In both areas, we have been working to obtain training for our leadership in community health work and asset-based community development so that we can be effective catalysts for positive change by investing in the communities we serve. Through the excellent work of our staff and lay servant ministries team, the Valley Ridge District now has 120 lay servants/lay speakers working alongside our clergy and lay supply. In March, district leadership partnered with Main Street UMC in Waynesboro to develop and host our Faith in Troubled Times symposium with Amanda Held Opelt as our keynote speaker and local clergy and laity as our workshop leaders. In April, we hosted our Faithfully Embracing Symposium at Calvary UMC in Stuarts Draft with Alexandra Jackman as our keynote speaker at an event that was co-designed and co-led by persons from the autistic community. It is our belief on the Valley Ridge District that ministry to historically marginalized people compels us into the world, and that our compassion will be our visible witness to Christ in the world.

–Victor Gomez, Dean

SITE SELECTION COMMITTEE

The Site Selection Committee is responsible for making the arrangements for the meeting of the Virginia Annual Conference. By Annual Conference rules, the Committee recommends the location for the Annual Conference three (3) years in advance. The Annual Conference Session date is set by Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson.

By previous Annual Conference action, the following locations have been approved for the site of the Annual Conference:

Harrisonburg

June 17-20, 2026

Harrisonburg

June 16-19, 2027

The Site Selection Committee recommends the 2027 Virginia Annual Conference be held in:

Harrisonburg

June 14-17, 2028

The Committee, along with the Director of Connection and Innovation and the Annual Conference Event Planner, continues to consider locations for holding Annual Conference across the Commonwealth. After careful evaluation of venues around Virginia, we are pleased to recommend holding the 2028 Annual Conference at the Atlantic Union Bank Center at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia.

For your reference, the following criteria is used in evaluating potential Annual Conference sites:

- Venue to accommodate 3,000 people
- 1,300 to 1,500 hotel rooms in the area
- Headquarters hotel in close proximity to Conference site
- Parking for 2,000 cars
- Meeting space for the Clergy Session of 1,500 people
- Meeting space for the Laity Session of 1,500 people
- Additional meeting spaces adjacent to the Conference floor
- Two (2) banquet areas to accommodate 500 people each
- Additional banquet locations accessible from the Conference (hotels, restaurants & churches)
- Restaurants to accommodate 2,500 patrons within 1½ - 2 hour timeframe
- 10,000 sq. ft. of special events space to accommodate Displays and mission opportunities

–Neal E. Wise, Chair

RECOMMENDATION:

The Site Selection Committee recommends that the 2028 Virginia Annual Conference be held at the Atlantic Union Bank Center at James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA, June 14-17, 2028.

EQUITABLE COMPENSATION COMMISSION

In 2024, the Equitable Compensation Commission continued to provide financial aid to those churches requiring supplementation to strengthen their ministries in the communities in which they are located and to provide minimum salary or salary supplementation for the pastors. Equitable Compensation support in the amount of \$128,956 was provided to 22 charges in 2024.

There were 14 charges receiving salary support in 2023 that did not require salary support in 2024. These charges are New Beginnings (CV), The Garden (CV), Wesley Chapel (CV), Pender (NV), Christ Community Fellowship-Fairview (MV), Jackson Street (MV), Wesley Chapel-Rock Springs (MV), St Marks (NV), Warren Charge (SR), Enon (TN), Walmsley Boulevard (TN), Bath Charge (VR), John Mann-Wesley Cooperative Parish (VR) and Saint Paul Roanoke (VR).

Beginning on January 1, 2025, the Equitable Compensation Commission in partnership with the Cabinet and Church Development Team (CDT) determined that salary funding and other support related to strategic appointments would come from a CDT grant and be overseen by the Cabinet.

The Equitable Compensation Commission continues to focus on two primary areas:

1. Recommending the Minimum Compensation Schedule for full-time clergy each year
2. Providing salary support for full-time clergy who are experiencing a compensation arrearage, not related to church closures

2026 Minimum Compensation Schedule Recommendation	2026 Proposed	2025 Approved
a. Full Connection Pastors (FE/FD)	\$48,800	\$47,400
b. Associate Members	\$46,000	\$42,700
c. Provisional Members (PE/PD)	\$44,000	\$42,700
d. Local Pastors (completed Course of Study)	\$42,400	\$40,200
e. Local Pastors	\$41,400	\$40,200

—Rev. Tom Durrance, Chair

JUST COMPENSATION TASK FORCE REPORT FOR ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2025

Last year, the VAUMC Annual Conference voted for the Just Compensation Task Force to continue its work, focusing on “studying salary statistics, including documented inequities regarding clergy status, district, gender, race, ethnicity, and years of service.” Rev. Mike Nelson made a motion to also include parsonage standards. The motion was seconded and added to the task force’s work.

This year, we enlisted the help of Dr. Kwang Yoon, a statistician, to review the Virginia Conference United Methodists’ 2024 salary data starting on July 1, 2024, for full-time clergy statistics relating to:

- 1) Gender
- 2) Race/Ethnicity
- 3) District
- 4) Status (FL, PE, PD, AM, FE, FD)
- 5) Years of Service

We did not include deacons in this study, which we assumed would have skewed the results.

Dr. Yoon studied these statistics using multiple regression analysis. This statistical evaluation tool measures how “two or more external variables affect the value of the dependent variable” (Multiple Regression Analysis: Definition, Formula and Uses from <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/multiple-regression-analysis-definition>). Through studying these statistics, Dr. Yoon identified 16 variables that influence clergy compensation, in addition to commonly considered factors such as gender, race/ethnicity, clergy status, and years of service. The analysis also ranks the relative significance of these variables and presents key findings.

The most important findings made by Dr. Yoon included the following:

- 1) **Gender Gap:** On average, female pastors received \$1,774 less annually than their male peers.
- 2) **Race/Ethnicity Gap:** Too few Hispanic and multi-racial pastors were represented in the VAUMC dataset, so a new categorical variable was created by combining these two minority groups for data analysis purposes, resulting in four race/ethnicity groups.
African American pastors received, on average, \$797 more than their white peers, while Hispanic and multi-racial pastors received \$4,637 less than their white counterparts.
- 3) **Years of Service:** Accounting for other factors, on average, pastors were paid \$217 more for each year of service.
- 4) **By District:** Among the eight districts of VAUMC appointments, the Northern Virginia (NoVA) district outpaced all other districts in its salaries. The unadjusted mean salary difference between NoVa and other districts was \$18,727. However, considering all variables, the adjusted mean difference shrank to \$4,193.
- 5) **Limited Itinerary:** Those pastors who chose the limited itinerary option were paid \$1,088 less than their counterparts.
- 6) **Average Worship Attendance:** The results of multiple regression analysis show that average worship attendance strongly affects pastor salaries; that is, for each worship attendee, the salary increases by \$28. For example, if the average worship attendance increases from 100 to 200 members, the pastor’s salary would increase by \$2,800.

To review a more in-depth breakdown of this information and see supporting material, go to: <https://vaumc.org/jctfreport2024/>

After reviewing the VAUMC 2024 statistics, our committee found that:

- a) According to statistics provided by Wespeth in 2025, the Virginia Conference has the second-lowest compensation for clergy in the Southeastern Jurisdiction (SEJ), following the Central Appalachian Missionary Conference.
- b) We found that age is not a good predictor of clergy salary, but the length of service is.

Implications:

This study used regression modeling and statistical analysis to examine clergy compensation. Its findings offer valu-

able insights into how various factors collectively impact pay across churches. While it reveals certain disparities, the complexity and number of influencing variables highlight the importance of ongoing monitoring. A multi-year comparative analysis will be necessary to understand trends and to assess whether these gaps reflect deeper concerns related to equity or fairness in clergy compensation. At this stage, it is too early to draw definitive conclusions.

Celebrations:

- 1) Based on the task force's findings, the Equitable Compensation Commission will add new categories to their recommendation for minimum salaries, including the differentiation of Licensed Local Pastors based on their education and the new category of associate members placed above provisional members due to their lifetime status.
- 2) Following discussions in the Just Compensation Task Force spearheaded by the Parsonage Sub-Committee, the Cabinet is updating its policy on "Minimum Standards for a Parsonage." Updates in this policy include required measures to be taken to be proactive about safety and health hazards, technology needs, heating and air conditioning, and maintenance. See the updated policy here: <https://vaumc.org/cabinetpolicies/>

Read the report on the Parsonage Sub-Committee in the Book of Reports for more information.

See the list of what has been added and changed here: <https://vaumc.org/jctfreport2024/>

- 3) The task force celebrates the statistical services of Dr. Kwang Yoon, a lay member of Korean United Methodist Church of Greater Washington (within the Virginia Conference UMC). He graciously donated his time and expertise for this important work.

Recommendations:

- 1) We recommend retaining Dr. Kwang Yoon's statistical services for the next four years so that the Annual Conference can do a comparative statistical analysis annually. We estimate this service would cost up to \$5,000.
- 2) We recommend dissolving the Just Compensation Task Force and entrusting this work to the Director of Belonging and Advocacy of the Virginia Conference UMC, who will work alongside the Virginia Conference's boards and agencies as related to this work. These groups would continue to study the statistics of the Virginia Conference clergy annually, focusing on clergy status, district, gender, race, ethnicity, disability, and years of service. We ask that they present any recommendations to the 2026 Annual Conference.
- 3) We recommend that the Director of Belonging and Advocacy (as a member of the Cabinet), in consultation with the Order of Deacons, study and establish a just salary policy for deacons serving full-time within the local church. This statistical study would include years of service, housing allowance, and salaries based on deacons' education and clergy status.
- 4) We recommend that the Committee on Finance and Administration, in consultation with the Office of Pensions and Benefits, study the possibility of creating a system in which the Virginia Conference UMC would administer payroll processing and tax-related reporting for all clergy appointed to local churches within the VAUMC. We ask that they present any recommendations to the 2026 Annual Conference.
- 5) We recommend that the Equitable Compensation Commission research models of minimum base compensation based on status, education, years of service, and economic variables, including cost of living (i.e., the Western North Carolina Conference UMC; you can find a copy here: <https://vaumc.org/jctfreport2024/>). We ask that they present any recommendations to the 2026 Annual Conference.
- 6) We recommend that the Cabinet use findings from this report to inform their conversations about setting clergy salaries with Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committees.

The Just Compensation Task Force: Rev. Timothy Barth, Rev. Eduardo Carrillo, Rev. Jessie Colwell, Rev. Bill Davidson, Rev. Jenny Day, Mr. David Domisse, Rev. Tom Durrance, Rev. Brad Duty, Rev. Tammy Estep, Rev. J. Douglas Forrester, Mr. John Fuller, Rev. Christy Haga Turner, Rev. Hungsu Lim, Mr. Chris Malak, Ms. Cindy Martin, Rev. Mike Nelson, Rev. Laura Stratton, Rev. Dr. Steve Summers, Rev. George Warner

PARSONAGE SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE JUST COMPENSATION TASK FORCE

The 2024 Annual Conference approved an amendment to the Just Compensation Task Force “to study and consider adding to the Minimum Standards for Parsonages and Annual Parsonage Review regular standardized professional inspection of health hazards, including but not limited to mold, mildew, lead paint, asbestos, and radon.” In response, the Just Compensation Task Force created the Parsonage Subcommittee consisting of Rev. Ryan Ware (clergy), Marilyn Lipieko (lay), and Rev. Dr. Michael Lee Nelson (clergy/chair).

The subcommittee thoroughly reviewed existing VAUMC Parsonage and Housing policies, relevant guidelines from other annual conferences within the Southeast and South Central Jurisdictions, and The Clergy Housing Handbook: Parsonages, published by the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women. We aimed to ensure a clear understanding of current VAUMC standards and identify opportunities to enhance health and safety protections for parsonage families.

Following discussion and input from the Just Compensation Task Force, the Cabinet received the recommendations and implemented many in the new Minimum Parsonage Standards. These updates promote the safety and well-being of parsonage families and affirm the shared responsibilities of local churches/charges and clergy families.

In summary, the changes to the Minimum Parsonage Standards are:

Added “Section I. G. Health and Safety” (This whole section is new for 2025)

- o The church/charge is responsible for regular inspections of the parsonage for health and environmental hazards such as radon, mold, asbestos, lead paint, water cleanliness, carbon monoxide, mercury, electrical hazards, etc.
- o The church/charge is responsible for remedying all health and safety hazards at the parsonage. If a church is unwilling to meet inspection standards, they must rent out parsonage and pay a housing allowance.
- o For second-story bedrooms, the church must provide a fire escape ladder.

II. B. Rooms

- o Changed from 1.5 baths to 2 baths.

II. C. Housing Necessities

- o Added “Adequate outdoor lighting”
- o Added “A garbage disposal and dishwasher must be provided, except for in situations where a dishwasher would be incompatible with, for example, a septic system.”
- o Added “Hard surface flooring preferable to carpet.”
- o “Added Maintenance service contracts for all major appliances are recommended.”
- o Added “Wherever reasonably available, the church must allow internet access at the parsonage. In situations where the only office for the pastor is in the parsonage, the church must supply internet access to the house.”
- o Added “If the parsonage is in an area with poor cell coverage, the church shall provide a landline telephone.”

II. D. Furnishings and Maintenance

- o Removed wall-to-wall carpet requirement.

II. E. Exterior

- o Added “Cutting of the lawn and trimming of the shrubs is the responsibility of the parsonage residents, except for situations where there is not a resident in the parsonage who is physically able to cut the lawn/trim. In these cases, it shall be the responsibility of the church to make provisions for these services.”

We are deeply grateful to the Virginia Annual Conference, the Just Compensation Task Force, and the Cabinet for supporting this work to better protect the health and safety of parsonage families.

—Dr. Michael Lee Nelson

VIRGINIA UNITED METHODIST PENSIONS, INC.

Section I: Reports

Report 1: Role & Responsibilities of Virginia United Methodist Pensions, Inc.

Virginia United Methodist Pensions, Inc. (“VUMPI”) is the Virginia Conference’s agency that is charged with administering Conference-sponsored clergy benefit programs and denominational pension and welfare plans.

VUMPI, in conjunction with Wespath (formerly the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits), develops and administers the employee pension and benefit plans sponsored by the Virginia Conference. Some plans are employer-paid, while others are voluntary and 100 percent participant-paid:

VUMPI Plans	Wespath Plans
Medical	Ministers Reserve Pension Fund (Pre-82)
Prescription	Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP)
Dental	Clergy Retirement Security Program – Defined Benefit (CRSP-DB)
Vision	Clergy Retirement Security Program – Defined Contribution (CRSP-DC)
Supplemental Life	Compass (effective January 1, 2026)
Voluntary Life	United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP)
Healthcare Flexible Spending Account	Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP)
Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account	

Report 2: CLERGY BENEFITS TASK FORCE

In early 2024 a new task force was formed and led by personnel from VUMPI, the Virginia Conference Center for Clergy Excellence and the Virginia Conference Treasurer’s Office. The Task Force was established to review various aspects of the Virginia Conference’s clergy benefit programs, and to evaluate potential program changes that would lead to greater effectiveness, administrative improvements and cost optimization.

The task force was co-led by John Fuller, VUMPI’s Executive Director, Rev. Jessie Colwell, Director in the Center for Clergy Excellence, and David Dommissie, the Virginia Conference’s CFO and Treasurer. Additional task force membership included leadership representing various entities across the Virginia Conference:

Rev. Matt Benson	Ken Peterson
Rev. Jay Carey	Rev. Steve Summers
Rev. Tammy Estep	Bill Talley, IV
Rev. Nancy Johnson	Rev. Ed Walker
Rev. Mark Ogren	Rev. Andrew Ware
Rev. Jonathan Page	Rev. George Warner

Upon conclusion of the task force’s work, several recommendations were released. One recommendation involved the replacement of the Active Clergy Health Apportionment with a new direct bill structure in which churches and Conference-controlled extension ministries will be billed a flat amount each month for each health plan-eligible clergyperson. Following deliberation by the Virginia Conference’s Council on Finance and Administration, the recommendation was adopted, and the new direct bill arrangement for the Conference-sponsored health plan will be implemented in January 2026. For 2026, the monthly direct bill amount will be \$1,660.

The task force presented several additional recommendations for consideration by the VUMPI Board of Directors. Following review, the following task force recommendations were adopted for recommendation by VUMPI, and are being presented at the 2025 Annual Conference for the Conference’s consideration:

- Adopt the Via Benefits retiree medical insurance program, which has partnered with Wespath, beginning in 2026. This recommendation includes the grandfathering of eligibility for the current Conference-sponsored retiree medical program for all clergy who retired prior to 2026. This recommendation is being presented as VUMPI's Recommendation 1.
- Eliminate eligibility for the Conference-sponsored retiree medical and supplemental life insurance programs for retired clergy who withdraw from The United Methodist Church (UMC) after the end of 2025. This recommendation was based on a review of several administrative considerations associated with those benefit plans, and is not a retroactive recommendation. If approved, this would only apply to retired clergy who withdraw from The UMC in 2026 or thereafter. This recommendation is being presented as VUMPI's Recommendation 2.
- Close the PPO 500 health plan to new membership beginning in 2026. The PPO 500 health plan is only made available to clergy receiving Comprehensive Protection Plan disability and surviving spouses and children of clergy. The PPO 500 health plan was originally established as a slightly more generous plan design. However, the task force learned that members newly enrolled in the PPO 500 health plan are often financially disadvantaged by the existence of separate medical and prescription drug deductibles within the plan. In addition, the administrative process of transferring payments toward the plan deductible from a different plan mid-year often results in administrative confusion and adverse member impact. Accordingly, the task force recommended that eligibility for those currently enrolled in the PPO 500 health plan be grandfathered, with ongoing participant contributions subject to Annual Conference approval, but that the PPO 500 plan be closed to new membership in 2026. Any clergy receiving CPP disability benefits, along with any newly eligible surviving spouses and children of clergy, remain eligible to enroll in the Conference-sponsored health plans for active clergy at active clergy participation contributions beginning in 2026. This recommendation is being presented as VUMPI's Recommendation 3.

Finally, a question was received during VUMPI's report at the 2024 Annual Conference regarding the potential to extend eligibility for the Conference-sponsored health plan to clergy serving in 75% appointments. That question was referred back to the Clergy Benefits Task Force for consideration and response. Following deliberation, the task force elected not to recommend the expansion of eligibility guidelines for the Conference-sponsored health plan to include clergy serving in 75% appointments. That recommendation is based on several factors, including the cost associated with such an eligibility expansion and dynamics around the appointment-making process. Accordingly, eligibility for the Conference-sponsored health plans will continue to be limited to clergy serving full time appointment, include those serving multiple appointments that aggregate to 100%.

n Report 3: VIRGINIA CONFERENCE-SPONSORED HEALTH PLANS

VUMPI administers health plans for full time clergy of the Virginia Conference, as well as retired clergy who meet eligibility requirements based on years of ministry in the Virginia Conference. Details of the Conference-sponsored health plans follow:

Active Clergy Health Plans

Health plans recommended to be made available in 2026 are unchanged from the plans offered in 2025. Health plans available to clergy serving in full time appointments in the Virginia Conference include the following:

- **PPO Core:** \$1,000 individual deductible, \$2,500 family deductible, 20% coinsurance
- **PPO Buy-Up:** \$750 individual deductible, \$1,875 family deductible, and 20% coinsurance
- **HSA plan:** a plan with a higher deductible (\$2,250 individual, \$4,500 family) as required by Internal Revenue Service rules for HSAs, a Conference contribution to the Health Savings Account (\$750 for individual tier enrollees, \$1,500 for all other tier enrollees), 20% coinsurance

A fourth PPO health plan with a \$500 deductible, the PPO 500 plan, is made available only to clergy on medical leave with CPP disability benefits and surviving spouses and children of clergy. That plan will continue to be maintained in 2026, with no plan design changes, for members enrolled in the plan as of the end of 2025. As noted in Report 2 above,

and detailed in VUMPI's Recommendation 3, VUMPI recommends that the PPO 500 plan be closed to new membership beginning in 2026, with those who would have been eligible for the PPO plan prior to 2026 remaining eligible for the Conference-sponsored health plans for active clergy at active clergy participant contribution rates.

The two dental plan options currently administered by VUMPI will also continue to be offered in 2026 with no plan design changes.

The vision plan will continue to be offered in 2026, with no changes in the plan design.

Retired Clergy Health Plans

VUMPI administers health plans for eligible retired clergy of the Virginia Conference. The eligibility requirements are based on years of full time ministry in either Virginia Conference church appointments or Extension Ministry appointments with enrollment in the Conference-sponsored health plans.

Plans made available to eligible retirees are coordinated with Medicare eligibility, with separate programs made available to retirees who are not yet eligible for Medicare and for those who are Medicare eligible.

Retirees who are eligible to enroll in the Conference-sponsored retired clergy health plan but who are not yet eligible to enroll in Medicare may enroll in the self funded PPO Core or PPO Buy-Up plans administered by VUMPI. Pre-Medicare-eligible retirees may also enroll in the self funded dental insurance program and the fully insured vision program made available to active clergy. The majority of the cost of the health plans made available to Virginia Conference clergy is funded through a Conference apportionment, which is detailed in the Council on Finance and Administration's report, with the remainder of the cost of the plans funded by participant contributions that are based on retiree health plan years of ministry credit, as described in Recommendation 4.

Medicare-eligible retirees who retire prior to 2026 and who are eligible to enroll in the Conference-sponsored retired clergy health plan have two options for retiree medical coverage.

The first option is the Group Plan, which is a group Medicare Advantage plan created specifically for Virginia Conference retirees. The Group Plan integrates the retiree's Medicare benefit and includes prescription drug coverage. The majority of the cost of the Group Plan is funded through a Conference apportionment noted above, with the remainder of the cost funded by participant contributions as described in Recommendation 4.

The second option currently made available to eligible retirees who are enrolled in Medicare is the Connector option. Under the Connector option, Medicare-eligible retirees are able to select any Medicare Supplement plan or Medicare Advantage plan, and any Part D prescription drug plan, offered by United Healthcare. The Conference will provide funding through a Retiree Reimbursement Account ("RRA"), and those funds can be used to partially or fully offset the cost of the coverage elected through the Connector option. The RRA funding for retirees who elect coverage through the Connector option, which is based on the retiree's health plan years of ministry credit, is detailed in Recommendation 4. The remainder of the cost of the elected health plan coverage, if any, is paid by the retiree directly to United Healthcare.

All retirees who retire from the Virginia Conference prior to 2026 will remain eligible for the retiree health program for Medicare-eligible retirees as described above. A new retiree medical program is being recommended for implementation for clergy who retire after 2025. The recommended program, Via Benefits, has partnered with Wespath to make the program available to Annual Conferences who elect to adopt it for their Medicare-eligible clergy. As indicated in Report 2 above, the Clergy Benefits Task Force reviewed the Via Benefits program in detail, and recommended that the VUMPI Board of Directors consider its adoption. Following review, VUMPI is recommending the Via Benefits program for adoption in the Virginia Conference, with eligibility extended to all current and future retirees based on years of full time ministry in the Virginia Conference. In order to reduce the member disruption that would result from requiring all currently retired clergy and spouses to transition from the current Conference-sponsored retiree health plan to Via Benefits, VUMPI is recommending that eligibility for the current plan be grandfathered for all clergy who retired prior to 2026. While not required, those clergy will be eligible to elect new coverage through the Via Benefits program beginning in 2026.

The Via Benefits program, which has been adopted by 28 other Annual Conferences, makes available Medicare supplemental coverage from a range of insurance carriers nationwide. The program includes Medicare Supplement, Medicare Advantage, Part D prescription drug, dental, vision and hearing plans. The choice of plans made available in the Via Benefits program was a significant factor supporting its recommendation, as the absence of dental coverage options in the current Conference-sponsored health plan for Medicare-eligible clergy has been identified as an area of weakness. The

Via Benefits plan is also more insulated from spikes in program costs, as there is a much more expansive range of plan options made available each year. The recommended Virginia Conference subsidy provided to eligible retirees who elect coverage through the Via Benefits program is detailed in Recommendation 4. The recommended subsidy amounts are intended to reflect the average Virginia Conference subsidy that has been provided through the current Conference-sponsored retiree medical program for Medicare-eligible retirees.

Report 4: Pension Plan Structure

The denominational pension and retirement savings program in The United Methodist Church includes several distinct plans, as follows:

- The “Pre-82” Plan for benefits accrued prior to 1982
- The Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP) for service accrued from 1982 through 2006
- The Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) for service accrued from 2007 through 2025

Pursuant to the approval of the General Conference held in 2024, a new denominational retirement savings program is being launched by Wespeth in January 2026. The new plan, called Compass, is a new defined contribution retirement plan for eligible UMC clergy.

In developing the Compass retirement savings plan, Wespeth prioritized the ability of clergy to accumulate adequate retirement assets, along with long term sustainability and affordability of the plan for churches and annual conferences. As is the case with the current CRSP plan, clergy serving active ministry appointments of at least 50% will be eligible for participation in the Compass plan.

The structure of the Compass plan includes the following components:

- Automatic 3% contribution of clergy total plan compensation, which includes base salary, housing allowance, and a 35% parsonage factor for clergy living in parsonages
- \$150 flat monthly contribution, which is prorated by appointment percentage
- Matching contribution of up to 4% of total plan compensation, with the opportunity to receive the matching contribution based on qualifying student debt repayments

The Compass plan also includes automatic features, with automatic enrollment and automatic contribution escalation each year. VUMPI is recommending specific automatic enrollment and automatic escalation features as detailed in Recommendation 7.

Report 5: Welfare Plans Structure

The welfare plans made available to Virginia Conference clergy include the Comprehensive Protection Plan (“CPP”) sponsored by Wespeth, as well as supplemental benefits sponsored independently by VUMPI.

The CPP disability benefits are as follows:

- For Clergy disabled on or after Jan. 1, 2002, the CPP disability benefit equals 70 percent of Plan Compensation, with compensation capped at 200 percent of the Denominational Average Compensation “DAC.”
- For Clergy disabled prior to Jan. 1, 2002, they will continue to receive the same CPP disability benefit per the plan document in-force at the time their disability claim originated.

The following generally describes the death benefit amounts payable under the CPP to eligible participants and their beneficiaries:

Active Participant Death Benefits: payable upon the death of an eligible active CPP participant, as follows:

- Participant: \$50,000
- Spouse of active participant: \$16,000
- Surviving spouse of active participant: \$12,000
- Child of active participant: \$8,500

Retired Participant Death Benefits: payable upon the death of an eligible retired CPP participant, as follows:

- Participant: \$24,000
- Spouse of retired participant: \$16,000
- Surviving spouse of retired participant: \$12,000
- Child of retired participant: \$8,500

To be eligible for death benefits in retirement, a clergyperson must have been covered in CPP for a specified number of years. The 2012 General Conference approved a change to the CPP program which increases the length of service requirement for retirees. Retirees with 25 or more years of enrollment in CPP are eligible for the death benefits in retirement, and the eligibility criteria for those with fewer than 25 years in CPP was phased in with one-year increments, as detailed in the table below:

Retirement Year	CPP Enrollment Requirement for Death Benefit Eligibility
2013	6 of last 10 years
2014	7 of last 10 years
2015	8 of last 11 years
2016	9 of last 12 years
2017	10 of last 13 years
2018	11 of last 14 years
2019+	12 of last 15 years

VUMPI administers a supplemental life insurance benefit for active and retired clergy that is paid in addition to the CPP life insurance benefit. The Conference Supplemental Death Benefit for active clergy under episcopal appointment, who are enrolled in CPP, is \$25,000. The Conference Supplemental Death Benefit for retired clergy, who are eligible for a CPP death benefit and who continue to be members of The United Methodist Church, is \$5,000. The beneficiary will receive the Conference Supplemental Death Benefit payable in one lump sum.

Gift Benefit

VUMPI currently elects to provide a one time \$1,500 gift at the time of retirement or disability (once awarded disability benefits under the Comprehensive Protection Plan) to each clergyperson who has served at least ten years of service in a full-time Virginia Annual Conference episcopal appointment in the Virginia Conference with pension credit. Further, a gift to the family of each clergyperson meeting the eligibility criteria above who dies in active service is paid in the same amount as the gift to retired or disabled clergypersons.

Report 6: Denominational Average Compensation

Several of the pension and welfare plans incorporate the Denominational Average Compensation (“DAC”) into the formula for determining the plan benefit. The formula VUMPI uses for funding those plans relies on the DAC, as well.

As reported by Wespeth, the DAC is projected to increase from 2025 to 2026 as follows:

Denominational Average Compensation	
2025	2026
\$80,003	\$81,603

Section II: Recommendations for Annual Conference Approval

Recommendation 1: Adopt the Via Benefits program for Medicare-eligible retired clergy

As detailed in Report 2 above, VUMPI is recommending the adoption of the Via Benefits program, which has partnered with Wespath, for the Virginia Conference's Medicare eligible retirees in 2026. The Via Benefits program is designed to help eligible retirees and spouses select and pay for Medicare supplemental coverage, with the option also to elect coverage such as dental, vision and hearing coverage. Via Benefits licensed benefit advisors guide eligible retirees through the process of evaluating and selecting coverage options, and also provide ongoing support after enrollment.

VUMPI is recommending that coverage through Via Benefits be made available to all Virginia Conference Medicare-eligible retired clergy, including those who are current in the retired status. However, VUMPI is recommending that all clergy who retired prior to 2026 have grandfathered eligibility for the current Conference-sponsored retiree health plan through United Healthcare. While the expectation is that all current retirees would be able to elect comparable coverage through the Via Benefits program, VUMPI is recommending the grandfathering of current retirees in order to minimize the disruption that may occur if all current retirees and spouses were to be required to select a new health plan.

The Conference subsidy toward the cost of coverage through the Via Benefits program will be made available through Health Reimbursement Accounts (HRAs). Consistent with the current Conference-sponsored retiree medical program for Medicare-eligible retirees, the Conference subsidy amounts will be based on the retiree's health plan years of ministry credit. VUMPI's specific recommendation for HRA funding for retired clergy who elect coverage in 2026 through the Via Benefits program is detailed in Recommendation 4.

Recommendation 2: Retired Clergy Benefit Program Eligibility for Clergy Who Withdraw From The United Methodist Church

As indicated in Report 2 above, the Clergy Benefits Task Force recommended the termination of eligibility for the Conference-sponsored retiree health plan and the Conference supplemental life insurance plan for retired clergy, including Retired Local Pastors, retired ordained clergy and retired associate members, who withdraw from The United Methodist Church in 2026 or thereafter. Following review and discernment, VUMPI is now making that recommendation for Annual Conference approval. This recommendation is based on administrative considerations which were determined to have the potential to create unknown liabilities for VUMPI and the Virginia Conference, and is not intended to be punitive. This recommendation is also not retroactive, and would have no adverse impact on benefit program liability for retired clergy who withdraw from The UMC prior to 2026.

Recommendation 3: Close the PPO 500 Health Plan to New Enrollment in 2026

Following a review of the considerations identified in Report 2 above, VUMPI is recommending that the PPO 500 health plan, which is currently only made available to clergy receiving CPP disability benefits and surviving spouses of clergy, be closed to new enrollment beginning in 2026. This recommendation is made with the recognition that the PPO 500 health plan, which was intended to offer a slightly more generous plan design, actually results in adverse financial impact for some newly enrolled members. VUMPI's recommendation is to close the plan to new enrollment while grandfathering current PPO 500 health plan membership. Beginning in 2026, newly eligible clergy receiving CPP disability benefits and surviving spouses and children of clergy will remain eligible for the health plans made available to active clergy at active clergy participant contribution rates.

Recommendation 4: 2026 Health Plan Participant Contribution Recommendations

In administering the Conference-sponsored self-insured health plans, an element of VUMPI's strategy is to maintain plans that are similar to national average employer-sponsored health plans. In addition, VUMPI recommends participant contributions that are similar, as a percentage of the total health plan cost, to national employer-sponsored plan averages. For 2026, VUMPI is recommending an increase of approximately 5% across each of the Conference-sponsored medical and dental plans for active clergy. No changes are recommended in the Conference-sponsored vision insurance plan.

Following are the 2026 participant contribution recommendations for the Conference-sponsored health plans:

Active Clergy:

	Medical Plans			Dental Plans		Vision
	PPO Core	PPO Buy-Up	HSA	Core	Major	
Employee Only	\$115	\$150	\$90	\$15	\$35	\$8.34
Employee + Spouse	\$345	\$410	\$290	\$40	\$100	\$15.05
Employee + Child(ren)	\$350	\$415	\$295	\$45	\$105	\$15.05
Family	\$365	\$450	\$310	\$55	\$115	\$24.19

Clergy on Voluntary Leave, Sabbatical, or Retired Under ¶358.2.a (With Twenty Years of Service) or ¶358.3 (Prior to Age 62 With Fewer Than Thirty Years of Service):

	Medical Plans		Dental Plans		Vision
	PPO Core	PPO Buy-Up	Core	Major	
Employee Only	\$700	\$815	\$30	\$65	\$8.34
Employee + Spouse	\$1,560	\$1,745	\$55	\$130	\$15.05
Employee + Child(ren)	\$1,695	\$1,890	\$60	\$135	\$15.05
Family	\$2,175	\$2,425	\$70	\$140	\$24.19

PPO 500 Plan for Grandfathered Clergy on Medical Leave with CPP Benefits & Under Age 65 Surviving Spouses of Clergy

	Medical Plans	Dental Plans		Vision
	PPO 500	Core	Major	
Employee Only	\$125	\$15	\$35	\$8.34
Employee + Spouse	\$190	\$40	\$100	\$15.05
Employee + Child(ren)	\$190	\$45	\$105	\$15.05
Family	\$205	\$55	\$115	\$24.19

Retired Clergy Under Age 65 – Retired Under ¶358.1, ¶358.2b, ¶358.2c, or ¶358.3

Years of Qualifying Virginia Conference Service	Medical Plans			
	PPO Core		PPO Buy-up	
	Retiree	Family	Retiree	Family
10-14	\$725	\$1,800	\$840	\$2,205
15-19	\$640	\$1,460	\$785	\$1,785
20-24	\$490	\$1,115	\$600	\$1,365
25-29	\$340	\$775	\$415	\$945
30+	\$190	\$430	\$230	\$525

Years of Qualifying Virginia Conference Service	Dental Core		Dental Major	
	Retiree	Family	Retiree	Family
10-14	\$30	\$65	\$60	\$140
15-19	\$30	\$65	\$60	\$140
20-24	\$30	\$65	\$60	\$140
25-29	\$30	\$65	\$60	\$140
30+	\$30	\$65	\$60	\$140

	Vision
Employee Only	\$8.34
Employee + Spouse	\$15.05
Employee + Child(ren)	\$15.05
Family	\$24.19

Retired Clergy Age 65 or Over – Retired Under ¶358.1, ¶358.2b, ¶358.2c, or ¶358.3

As detailed in Recommendation 1 above, VUMPI is recommending the adoption of the Via Benefits retiree medical program for all Medicare-eligible retirees beginning in 2026. Monthly Health Reimbursement Account funding from the Virginia Conference in 2026, which is based on the retiree’s health plan years of ministry credit, is recommended for all retirees who elect coverage through the Via Benefits program in 2026:

Years of Ministry	VA Benefits Funding
15-19	\$100
20-24	\$150
25-29	\$200
30+	\$250

The above funding amounts are intended to replicate the average Conference subsidy that has been provided to retirees in the current retiree medical program through United Healthcare. The above amounts will be provided to both the retiree and eligible spouses who enroll in coverage through the Via Benefits program.

The HRA funding amounts will be prorated for qualifying retirees and/or spouses of qualifying retirees who gain Medicare eligibility or otherwise gain eligibility for retiree coverage within a calendar year. Any HRA funds remaining at the end of a calendar year will roll over into the subsequent year for use by the enrolled retiree and/or spouse for qualifying medical expenses.

As noted in Recommendation 1 above, the Conference-sponsored medical plan through United Healthcare that is currently in place for Medicare-eligible retirees of the Virginia Conference will continue to be made available to clergy who retire prior to 2026, along with their eligible spouses. For those retirees and spouses who wish to remain enrolled in the current program, there will continue to be two coverage options, as described below.

Group Plan Option: The group plan is a group Medicare Advantage plan. The group plan has a required participant contribution based on full time years of service in the Virginia Conference. The recommended 2026 participant contributions for the group plan coverage option are as follows:

Years of Service	Retiree Only	Retiree & Spouse
10-14	\$415	\$830
15-19	\$345	\$690
20-24	\$270	\$540
25-29	\$200	\$400
30+	\$130	\$260

Connector Option: The Connector option allows qualifying clergy to select any available Medicare Supplement or Medicare Advantage plan, and any Part D prescription drug plan, offered by United Healthcare. Retirees eligible to select coverage through the current retiree medical program through United Healthcare and electing coverage through this option receive Retiree Reimbursement Account (“RRA”) funding, which can be used to offset the cost of the selected coverage. VUMPI recommends 2026 monthly RRA funding based on qualifying years of Virginia Conference service as follows:

Years of Service	Retiree Only	Retiree and Spouse
20-24	\$150	\$300
25-29	\$200	\$400
30+	\$250	\$500

The RRA funding amounts will be prorated for qualifying retirees and/or spouses of qualifying retirees who gain Medicare eligibility or otherwise gain eligibility for retiree coverage within a calendar year. Any RRA funds remaining at the end of a calendar year will roll over into the subsequent year for use by the enrolled retiree and/or spouse for qualifying medical expenses.

General Virginia Conference Health Plan Information

For participants enrolled in the Anthem health plans, either as active clergy or as a retiree not yet eligible for Medicare, 2026 health plan selections will be made during the open enrollment period in the fall of 2025. If an eligible clergyperson does not elect coverage options during the annual open enrollment period, the default enrollment option is the prior year’s plan selections (except for Flexible Spending Account or Dependent Care Spending Account contributions), and enrollees will be subject to the associated individual personal contribution rates.

If not selected during the open enrollment period, no Flexible Spending Account contributions can be made during 2026, in accordance with federal laws.

All who are eligible to enroll in a Virginia Conference health plan are strongly encouraged to participate in online open enrollment in the fall of 2025.

Virginia Conference clergy members earn a year of service towards his or her Total Years of VAUMC Service as indicated in the coverage options above for each year that Virginia Annual Conference health plan eligibility is met.

Virginia Conference clergy on approved leave or serving in an Extension Ministry appointment earn credit towards retiree medical plan eligibility only if enrolled in the Conference-sponsored health plan while on leave or while serving an Extension Ministry appointment.

Recommendation 5: 2026 Pre-82 Pension Past Service Rate

The Pre-82 pension provides a benefit to all eligible clergy who have served in the Virginia Conference prior to 1982. This program pays the greater of the following:

- An annual benefit equal to the Past Service Rate (PSR) times years of pre-1982 service, or
- An annuity amount based upon the participant's cash balance in his or her Defined Benefit Service Money Account

The Virginia Annual Conference establishes the PSR each year. For 2025, VUMPI recommends that the PSR be increased from \$626 to \$659.

Recommendation 6: 2026 CPP/Supplemental Plan Funding Recommendations

VUMPI recommends that local churches and salary-paying units with CPP-eligible clergy be billed 4.4% of total plan compensation (base salary plus housing allowance or parsonage factor, up to 200% of the Denominational Average Compensation) in order to fund the Virginia Conference's CPP and supplemental life insurance program premiums.

The recommended CPP and supplemental life insurance plan funding billing rate is consistent with the billing rate that has been in place for more than a decade.

Recommendation 7: Compass Automatic Features

Report 4 above reviewed several components of Compass, the denominational retirement savings plan being launched in 2026. As is indicated in that report, Compass includes automatic enrollment and automatic contribution escalation features, with specific automatic features to be approved by each annual conference.

VUMPI is recommending the Virginia Conference's approval of the following Compass automatic features:

- Automatic enrollment at 4% of total plan compensation
- Automatic escalation of 1% of total plan compensation in January of each year, with a cap of 10% on automatic escalation

If approved, clergy who are eligible for Compass and who are currently contributing less than 4% of compensation to the United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP) will be automatically enrolled in Compass consistent with the above features.

Clergy currently contributing more than 4% of compensation to UMPIP will be enrolled in Compass at the current contribution level.

Clergy currently contributing to UMPIP using multiple contribution strategies, such as both traditional and Roth contributions, will be automatically enrolled at the current contribution percentages, and will not be subject to the 4% automatic enrollment or automatic escalation features. VUMPI encourages any clergy who will be enrolled on this basis, and who are currently contributing less than 4% of compensation to UMPIP, to consider increasing contributions in Compass in order to ensure eligibility for the full Compass matching contribution.

Any clergy contributing above the automatic escalation cap of 10% will be able to continue to do so. Contributions are limited only by Internal Revenue Code limitations on tax-advantaged retirement savings plan contributions.

Clergy will have the opportunity to opt out of automatic enrollment and/or automatic escalation. Information will be made available in the fall of 2025 for how to opt out of those automatic features.

Recommendation 8: Compass Billing

Consistent with Wespeth's recommendation to all annual conferences, VUMPI is recommending the adoption of a Compass billing methodology that includes precise billing with full 4% match. The precise billing methodology indicates that VUMPI will bill the church or salary paying unit the automatic 3% of compensation, the actual clergy contribution election, and the monthly flat dollar \$150 contribution, prorated for appointment percentage. VUMPI will also bill the full 4% match, even in cases in which the Compass participant elects to contribute less than 4% of compensation. This recommendation is intended to eliminate any potential incentive for clergy not to contribute to Compass in order to reduce the matching contribution that will be paid by the church, and to support the objective of helping our conference's clergy prepare adequately for retirement.

Recommendation 9: 2026 Housing Allowance/Exclusion

**Resolutions Relating to Rental/Housing Allowances for Retired, Disabled, or
Former Clergypersons of the Virginia Conference**

The Virginia Conference (the “Conference”) adopts the following resolutions relating to rental/housing allowances for active, retired, terminated, or disabled clergypersons of the Conference:

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

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

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

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

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT an amount equal to 100% of the pension, severance, or disability payments received from plans authorized under *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church* (the “*Discipline*”), which includes all such payments from Wespeth Benefits and Investments, during the period January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2026 by each active, retired, terminated, or disabled Clergyperson who is or was a member of the Conference, or its predecessors, be and hereby is designated as a rental/housing allowance for each such Clergyperson; and

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

NOTE: The rental/housing allowance that may be excluded from a Clergyperson’s gross income in any year for federal (and, in most cases, state) income tax purposes is limited under Internal Revenue Code section 107(2), and regulations thereunder, to the least of: (a) the amount of the rental/housing allowance designated by the Clergyperson’s employer or other appropriate body of the Church (such as this Conference in the foregoing resolutions) for such year; (b) the amount actually expended by the Clergyperson to rent or provide a home in such year; or (c) the fair rental value of the home, including furnishings and appurtenances (such as a garage), plus the cost of utilities in such year. Each clergyperson or former clergyperson is urged to consult with his or her own tax advisor to determine what deferred compensation is eligible to be claimed as a housing allowance exclusion.

– Nancy Johnson, Chair and John Fuller, VUMPI Executive Director

EXTENDED EXTENDED CABINET UPDATE

Last year, at the direction of Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson, members of the cabinet and conference leadership came together to form an “Extended Extended Cabinet”. Over their months of meeting, this group worked to develop a document that was shared at the 2024 Annual Conference session called “The Next Faithful Step: A Quadrennial Focus”.

As a reminder, that document included the underlying principle of our life together as the Virginia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church (VAUMC): **“At God’s initiative, the Virginia Annual Conference exists to support the transformation of lives by facilitating Christ-centered connections between individuals, local churches, communities, and across the wide array of God’s creation.”**

The team discerned that this quadrennium, the VAUMC needs to make two pieces a priority:

1. Make time to grow in relationship with God and neighbor.
2. Define the practical roles of the Annual Conference, the District, and the Local Church within VAUMC.

Additionally, there was hope that the VAUMC would work to become an Annual Conference that:

- Embodies the fruits of the Spirit to live a transformed life.
- Follows Jesus in a way that leads to disciple-making.
- Practices extravagant inclusivity.

Since the 2024 Annual Conference, the Extended Extended Cabinet has not continued to meet, but the benchmarks they identified that could assist the Annual Conference in living out our ministry life together have been a central focus of the work of the Annual Conference in the last year. Those benchmarks are included below along with some updates of progress seen since we gathered in Hampton.

- **Developing a comprehensive leadership framework**
 - The Connectional Table model, shared on pages 96-98, is meant to be a step in this direction. Additionally, Bishop Sue has offered some organizational models within the conference office that can assist with staffing alignment to the ministry and missional assets of the Annual Conference.
 - Moving forward, living into the Connectional Table model will allow for the emerging of structured workflows and opportunities to refine our shared, comprehensive leadership framework.
 - Additionally, Conference and District staff members have had opportunities to meet together for times of collaboration, shared learning, and discernment around shared possibilities.
- **Engaging a culture of call**
 - In partnership with the Board of Laity, the Call & Candidacy committee of the Board of Ordained Ministry held the first Discernment Day in March 2025. This day provided safe space for those who are exploring a call to serve in their local churches, communities, as missionaries, and to the set apart ministry of the licensed and ordained. We anticipate more Discernment Days will be offered throughout the coming year.
 - The 2024 Youth Fall Retreat was centered on a culture of call with the theme, chosen by the Conference Youth Council, being “Called to Lead”. The retreat focused on equipping youth with tools to return to their local communities and congregations to serve in the ways that God is leading them.
- **Build a narrative budget**
 - The Council of Finance and Administration, the office of Communications, and the office of Connection and Innovation have worked together to create a narrative budget for 2026 that can be found on page 146-149 of the Book of Reports. This narrative budget, alongside the numerical budget, is meant to assist with telling the story of how finances contribute to the mission and ministries of the Annual Conference.

- **Tell great stories**

- The Office of Communications has been working within the Annual Conference office, with districts, and with local churches to cultivate the stories of how God is moving in and through the VAUMC. Those stories have come this year primarily in three forms:
 - The weekly Advocate newsletter provides subscribers with a weekly update on the news and stories driving the VAUMC.
 - Bright Spots video clips provide short multimedia engagements that give a window into the work of the local church around the Annual Conference.
 - A new quarterly publication, known as the “Q Source”, offers a window into the connectional work taking place in the conference office and in districts around the Annual Conference, giving local churches an opportunity to discern how to live in connection.

- **Emphasize a United Methodist “catechesis”**

- In the last year, Bishop Sue and Martha Stokes have convened a monthly Soul Feast webinar that offers direction and imagination around spiritual practices.
- As we anticipate the 2026 Annual Conference session, which will focus on the historical movement of Methodism, a new monthly webinar series will be forthcoming beginning this fall called “Wesleyan Ways: Exploring our Methodist Roots”. This series will offer participants the opportunity to explore our United Methodist heritage through the webinar conversations and additional reading resources that will be offered throughout the year.
- Efforts are ongoing to create an Advent curriculum for 2025 that will be available (but by no means required) for use conference-wide.

Connectional Table Experiment

Out of a desire to create a model for conference leadership that can be nimble, collaborative, and strategic, Common Table is considering an experiment with a new Connectional Table model. Since its inception, the goal of the Common Table has been to create strategies and plans that benefit the work of the local churches and of our connection. Despite our best efforts, conference programs across boards and committees can be piecemeal and siloed. The new model will seek to develop a more strategically focused centralized team which will work in collaboration with sub-teams grouped by disciplinary responsibilities and missional outreach. The model has the following features:

- A centralized team, referred to as the “Connectional Table” (CT), that has three sub-teams, referred to as the “Operations Team” (OPS), the “Leadership Development Team” (LD), and the “Church and Community Engagement Team” (CCE).
- This model is not meant to get in the way of the autonomy of boards; rather, it’s about finding the space for collaboration, prioritization, and strategy development around the Annual Conference.

The Connectional Table (CT) replaces the “Common Table”, mirroring the denominational leadership table. It would:

- Meet approximately 4-6 times per year
- Look at big picture, strategic vision and decision making that impacts the whole VAUMC
- Be a catalyst for the strategic and cooperative function of Conference boards
- Be shaped by a common covenant and practices of shared spiritual formation
- Membership would include:
 - Bishop
 - Conference Lay Leader
 - Assistant to the Bishop/Chief Operating Officer
 - Director of Belonging and Advocacy (clergy or lay)

- Operations convener (clergy or lay)
- Church and Community Engagement convener (clergy or lay)
- Leadership Development convener (clergy or lay)
- Clergy representative
- Lay representative
- District Superintendent representative
- Facilitator, Director of Connection and Innovation (clergy or lay)
- Conference staff and other experts as needed (non-voting)

The three sub-teams of the Connectional Table would:

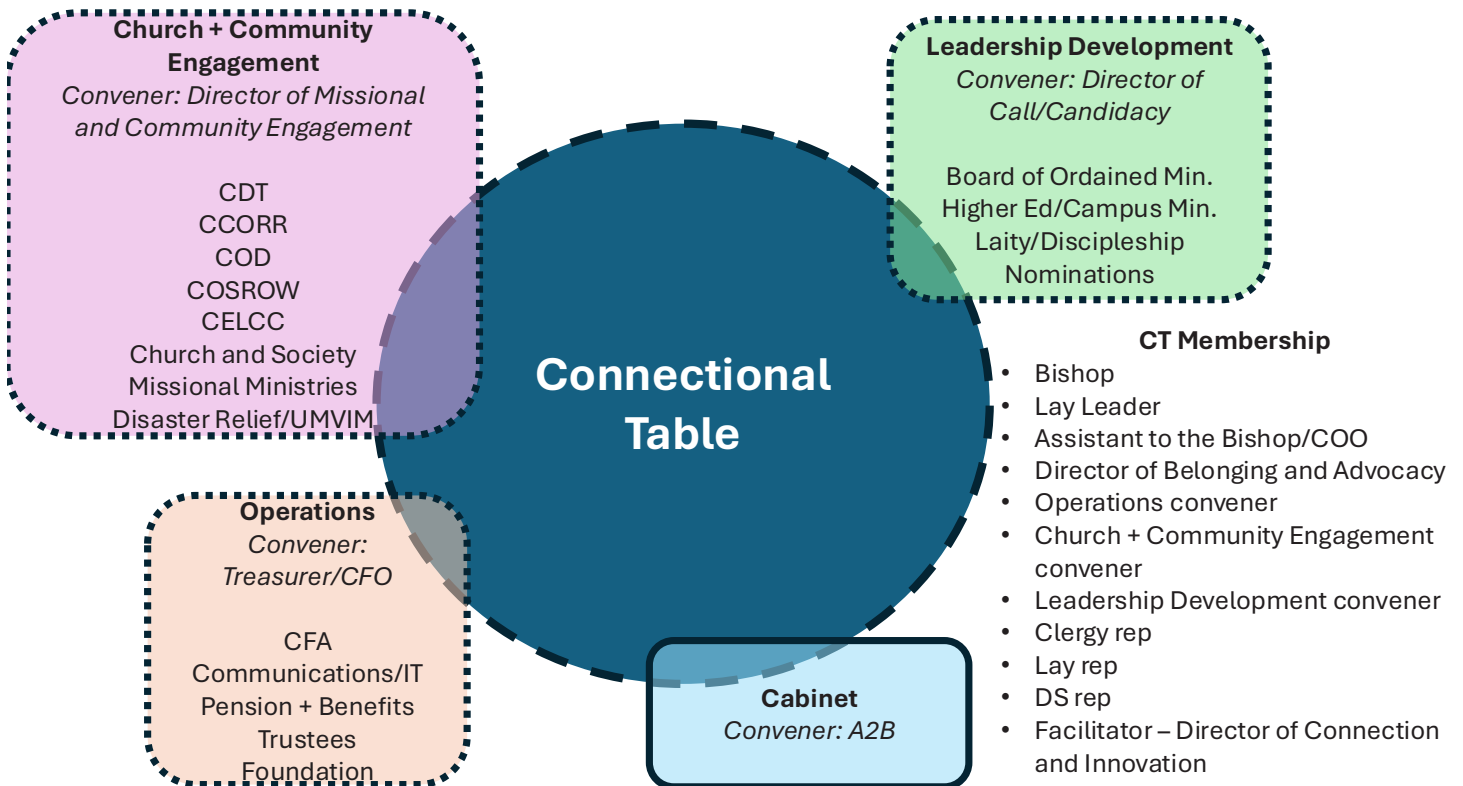
- Meet approximately 6-8 times annually
- Look at shared spaces for collaboration that are often strategic, occasionally tactical, and which impact broad population groups of the Annual Conference
- Be shaped by a common covenant and practices of shared spiritual formation
- Membership would include a staff representative and board representative from the following groups:
 - Operations
 - Convener – Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer
 - Council on Finance and Administration
 - Board of Pension and Health Benefits
 - Trustees
 - Virginia United Methodist Foundation
 - Communications/Information Technology
 - Leadership Development
 - Convener – Director of Candidacy and Call
 - Board of Ordained Ministry
 - Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries
 - Board of Laity
 - Board of Discipleship
 - Conference Nominations Team
 - Church and Community Engagement
 - Convener – Director of Missional and Community Engagement
 - Church Development Team
 - Commission on Religion and Race
 - Commission on Disabilities
 - Commission on the Status and Role of Women
 - Commission on Ethnic Local Church Concerns
 - Board of Church and Society
 - Missional Ministries Board
 - Disaster Relief
 - United Methodist Volunteers in Mission

The newly formed Connectional Table will seek to live into this model for the 2025-26 appointment year. There would be intentional reviews in late fall 2025 and mid-spring 2026. Modifications to the team, sub-teams, and scope of work could come with those reviews. A proposal for a more permanent model would be created and shared with the Annual Conference for approval in June 2026 with total implementation scheduled for January 1, 2027. This planned proposal

would include necessary revisions to the Charter for the Common Table for Church Vitality and Conference Standing Rules.

A visual model of this Connectional Table experiment is included below.

—Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson and Martha Stokes, Conference Lay Leader



COMMON TABLE FOR CHURCH VITALITY

This past conference year has been an active season for the Common Table for Church Vitality as we seek to fulfil our charge “to resource mission and ministry to fulfill the conference mission and vision.” (Virginia Conference Standing Rule V.A)

The Common Table spent significant time and energy in the last conference year working on...

- **...resourcing the local church.** The Common Table is especially thankful for all the staff who serve under the leadership umbrella of the Common Table. Our staff is composed of dedicated, faithful individuals who bring a wealth of talent and abilities to ministries that support the entire Virginia Conference. They are a passionate, strong presence working to bring about transformation in individual lives, in the local church, across our districts, and throughout the conference. Two new areas of ministry resourcing should be noted: (1) the *Hatching Faith Cohorts* initiative funded through a \$1.25 million grant from the Lilly Endowment Inc. is aimed toward helping congregations more fully and intentionally engage children in intergenerational corporate worship and prayer practices and (2) Growing Young which focuses on six key principles for churches that seek to more successfully engage young people in their ministries and church leadership.
- **...a vision of collaborative grantmaking in closer partnership with the districts, Church Development Team, Virginia United Methodist Foundation, and United Women in Faith.** Increased communication, greater accountability, and additional resources to assist local churches with opportunities and help applying for grants of all types demonstrates connectionalism at its best and can have a greater transformational impact in local communities.
- **...camping and outdoor ministries.** Much work has been done to equip specialized ministry camps – Camp Rainbow Connection and All God’s Children’s Camp – to meet ever changing needs and demands. Utilizing consultants with experience working with other Annual Conferences, a task force was organized to seek greater clarity around and strengthen the conference relationship with district camping and retreat ministries. This work is on-going.
- **... effective ministry systems that address new realities.** Working within the framework of *The Next Faithful Step: A Quadrennial Focus* affirmed by the 2024 Annual Conference, the Common Table has begun to address a comprehensive leadership framework to meet current needs. The Charter for the Common Table was first presented to the 2004 Virginia Annual Conference Session and became effective on January 1, 2006. In the proposal for moving from the old Council on Ministries to this new structure, the Common Table Task Force noted that this action would create “...a Common Table for Church Vitality that will provide vision, guidance and leadership in setting the ministry priorities for the Conference” in a “creative forum for leadership and strategic planning to equip and assist the ministry of the local church.” Much has changed since the original charter was adopted and even greater strategic alignment and innovation are called for as we look to the future. To this end, conference boards, committees, and commissions have been engaged in strategic discussions as to how best to resource the local churches and to strengthen engagement in missional engagement and community outreach for this time. Out of a desire to create a model for conference leadership that can be more nimble, collaborative, and strategic – twenty years after the adoption of the Charter for the Common Table for Church Vitality, the Common Table will experiment during the coming year with a new Strategic Leadership Team model and bring a proposal for a more permanent model to the 2026 Annual Conference with implementation scheduled for January 1, 2027.

As the Common Table, we joyfully share that our work has been filled with a deep sense of hope for all that is to come for the Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church.

Martha Stokes, Conference Lay Leader

Rev. Dr. Jonathan Page, Director of Connection and Innovation

Dwayne Stinson, Director of Discipleship and Congregational Vitality

RECOMMENDATIONS

On behalf of the Missional Ministries Board:

That the Relationship Agreements as presented to the Conference Missional Ministries Board between the Virginia Conference and Heart Havens, Inc.; Pinnacle Living; UMFS; and Wesley Housing Development Corporation, be continued.

BOARD OF CHURCH AND SOCIETY

The conference Board of Church and Society is organized into 3 committees: 1. Peace and Non-Violence, 2. Creation Justice, 3. Ending Poverty and Protecting Civil Rights. These 3 follow the framework of the United Methodist Bishops' Letter to the Church in 2009 which called the Church to organize its social and ecological justice work along those lines,

We also partner with United Women in Faith to help members of the Annual Conference to meet with their Senators and Delegates in the General Assembly.

We submit this report to help the conference join with us in all this important work.

— Jaydee Hanson, Lay Co-Chair, Ellen Comstock, Clergy Co-chair,

Peace & Non-Violence (P&NV) Committee

Julianne Paunescu, Chair

Our vision: a world of peace that practices war no more, that turn swords into plowshares and guns into garden tools. The P&NV team supports initiatives and equips congregations to work for peace and end violence in our communities, country, and world. Our priority focus areas encompass Refugee & Immigration Response and Gun Violence Prevention (GVP).

Following God's call to welcome the stranger and love our neighbor, P&NV seeks to be a resource to the Virginia Conference and its congregations as they welcome, minister to, and advocate for refugees and immigrants. In light of recent government actions and mass deportation measures, we are planning ways to assist congregations as they respond to help our immigrant neighbors in this time of fear. Activities include:

- Sharing educational and advocacy resources in coordination with the General Board of Church and Society and its Migrant Accompaniment guidance, and in accordance with the UMC Social Principles and United Methodist Council of Bishops Pastoral Letter
- Advocating to end the suspension of the historic U.S. Refugee Admissions Program
- Introducing a resolution at Annual Conference opposing mass deportation of migrants and advocating for comprehensive immigration reform
- Advocating for legislation that helps immigrants and refugees on Methodist Day at the General Assembly
- Supporting Know Your Rights and Family Preparedness Planning events and access to toolkits and support resources for immigrants facing potential ICE actions, and for immigrant allies.

Following the Social Principles, P&NV supports common sense solutions for Gun Violence Prevention (GVP). Nearly 47,000 US residents died because of gun-related injuries in 2023, and there have been scores of mass shooting in the United States in 2025. Nevertheless, GVP measures work and have significantly reduced homicides in the last two years. Activities include:

- Virginia United Methodists for Gun Safety, a network for sharing information, resources, an advocacy opportunity (Information: speicherak@gmail.com)
- Encouraging learning about and responding to the gun violence crisis - UMC resource: Kingdom Dreams Violent Realities, bible study addressing gun violence as a spiritual and moral issue
- Advocating for passage of GVP legislation on Methodist Day at the General Assembly
- Participating in nationwide UMC GVP Network, sharing legislative updates, events, and activities.

Peace With Justice Special Sunday and Grant Program

Kenn Speicher, Peace with Justice Coordinator

June 15 2025 is Peace with Justice (PWJ) Sunday. This Church-wide Special Offering arrives at a critical moment. As wars, violence, and terror continue to plague our world, government programs for peacemaking and reducing violence are being eliminated. Christ's calls us to be peacemakers. Our Social Principles call us to seek justice and serve as reconcilers of conflict. This is why all United Methodists are encouraged to support Peace with Justice Sunday.

Contributions support programs that witness to God's demands for a faithful, just, disarmed, and secure world. 50% of the funds raised on PWJ Sunday stay within our Annual Conference to enhance and support local social justice ministries, which have included refugee response, education, and climate justice. The other 50% supports national and international peacemaking ministries and grants, encompassing issues such as Israel and Palestine, gun violence prevention, peace in Korea, nuclear abolition, and protecting social support programs.

Thirteen PWJ Grants were awarded in 2024 by the General Board of Church & Society. The 2025 grant process will be announced in July. Congregations can also apply for social justice projects through the VAUMC Board of Church and Society. Contact Jaydee Hanson or Kenn Speicher (PWJ Coordinator) for information.

Creation Justice Committee

Brian Christoffersen, Caretaker of God's Creation Coordinator

The 14-member Creation Justice team celebrates the opportunities God has given us over the past year to honor, protect, and advocate for the beauty and integrity of God's creation.

1. Recognized five VAUMC congregations with the Green Church (GCA) and Sustaining Green Church (SGCA) Awards at Annual Conference from 4 Districts. Future action: Support the Green Church award on all Districts. Process to become a Green Church is displayed at <https://vaumc.org/creationjustice/>
2. Actively supported Local Congregations and participated in congregational events including: creating backyard and church wildlife sanctuaries and events to provide knowledge, actionable tools, and foster deeper engagement in Creation Justice. Congregational leaders expressed gratitude for the Creation Justice team's presence and support and looked forward to future collaboration. Future Action: We remain committed to growing and strengthening Green Church District Teams across the conference while advocating for communities impacted by environmental injustices.
3. VAUMC Climate Summit: On March 8, VAUMC Climate Summit: Hope in Action for Creation Justice was offered at Randolph-Macon College and Duncan Memorial UMC. The event gathered stakeholders at Conference, District and local church levels to pray, listen, discern, and learn together with worship, a World Café small group conversation, keynote address by Michele Roberts (Environmental Justice Health Alliance for Chemical Policy Reform and Coming Clean) and twelve workshop offerings. Additional workshops encouraged youth participation.

The event explored our unique role as United Methodists in advancing creation care and environmental justice. <https://vaumc.org/event/vaumc-climate-summit-hope-in-action-for-creation-justice/> Future Action: assist Conference actions to honor its commitment to have a net-zero impact on the climate by 2050 and increase advocacy for environmental justice across the Conference.

End Poverty and Support Civil Rights

Rev. Archana Samuel (interim chair)

During this year, our committee has been challenged by the huge job that we have and are working to discern where we focus in the coming year that will make the most difference. We want to focus on how we best serve poor people and immigrants in Virginia and defend the rights of Black, Brown, Asian, Native American and LGBTQI people at time that they are being attacked by some politicians.

United Methodist Day at General Assembly

Karen McElfish, co-chair

On January 30, 2025, over one hundred United Methodists from throughout the Virginia Conference met at the Pace Center on the campus of Virginia Commonwealth University, to spend the day learning about social justice issues and meeting with their legislators.

Co-hosted by United Women in Faith and the Virginia Board of Church and Society, this annual event has been ongoing for more than 30 years.

History: In the early 1990s a member of United Methodist Women, serving as Mission Coordinator of Christian Social Involvement, and a member of the Virginia Conference Board of Church and Society formed the Conference Monitoring Team, to monitor bills and inform others in the Conference. Initially they organized a phone tree to encourage United Methodists to call their legislators and voice their opinions, to advocate for or against bills. Ultimately that phone tree became a daylong event in person in Richmond, with the first United Methodist Day at General Assembly held in 1993. The monitoring team became the Conference Legislative Network, with members from both United Women in Faith and Church and Society.

Current Structure: The team partners with the Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy (VICPP), Virginia Interfaith Power and Light (VAIPL), and the Virginia Poverty Law Center (VPLC). These partner organizations provide guidance on current issues and legislation before the General Assembly. Staff members from each organization educate the gathered participants on the current bills before the legislature, as well as procedures and processes of law-making in Virginia. Each year the team picks several issues and related bills to follow, and with help from the partner organizations, develops a packet of fact sheets on the bills to distribute before the daylong event, allowing participants time to prepare for advocacy efforts. The choice of issues/bills to follow is influenced by guidance from our Social Principles, expressed interest of United Methodists in the Conference, and the ability to potentially affect passage of bills.

January, 2025: Bills followed included affordable housing, paid sick days, eviction protection, and incorporating community health and environmental justice in comprehensive planning for communities. The event started with an opportunity for more in-depth discussion led by staff of the partner organizations on potential bills the evening prior to United Methodist Day at General Assembly. Participation via in person or Zoom. The actual lobby day began early with a briefer version of the overview of bills and welcome addresses. Constituents of legislators were grouped together, with a guide to facilitate getting to offices and provide suggestions for effective meetings with the legislators. Appointments were made with senators and delegates, or their legislative aides.

After spending the morning at the General Assembly, participants returned to the Pace Center to debrief on the meetings with legislators. This time is also important for the partner organizations, who can then follow up with legislators with additional information.

Bishop Hauptert-Johnson addressed the participants on the importance of and call to deeper involvement in current-day social justice concerns. Sheila Herlihy Hennessee of the Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy guided the group in ongoing advocacy opportunities throughout the year that participants should engage in. After the conclusion of United Methodist Day at General Assembly, participants have opportunities to engage further with the partner organizations such as serving as congregational liaisons, meet with legislators in their district offices, and conduct efforts in voter engagement.

The event was a success, with positive feedback from participants. Many thanks to the members of the Conference Legislative Network team who worked tirelessly to host the event.

THE CHURCH DEVELOPMENT TEAM

The Church Development Team (CDT) has entered a time of deep listening and discernment, as our mission has been to fulfill the All Things New vision of the Virginia Annual Conference. During the Annual Conference of 2008 members voted to begin 250 new faith communities in 30 years, the All Things New Vision. Using Conference resources, CDT has provided grants, guidance, and accountability to new faith communities and supports leadership opportunities that disciple more people, more young people, and more diverse people for Jesus Christ in Virginia United Methodism.

Recognizing that the world has changed since 2008, and have decided to enter a season of intentional discernment. During this time, we are inviting the Holy Spirit to guide us to what does CDT look like in 2025 and beyond. We will be conducting deep listening across our connection to learn what is working and how others are adapted to our changing world. We recognize almost every church is trying to do more with less, how can we best equip our churches to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

This year CDT is supporting Appomattox United Methodist Church and Nooma with a new faith community grant. CDT is supporting Restoration: Reston with a 2nd Mile Grant as they charter as an independent United Methodist Church.

This year CDT was a part of the Conference Grant making cooperative that included several funding partners. We are excited about the wonderful ministries who were selected to receive support who are working in cooperative ways with other ministries and churches.

This year CDT and the Cabinet partnered in providing Strategic Salary Support. The Cabinet recognized several churches have the potential for revitalization, and this Strategic Salary Support will provide funding and CDT will partner this year with additional resources to support these pastors and churches as they do the hard work of revitalization and reaching out once again to their community.

I want to thank the talented and gifted clergy and laity who serve on CDT. Their experiences and passion for church development will continue to bear fruit in the Virginia Conference. Additionally, I want to thank our Conference staff person, Rev. Amanda Miller Garber, Director of Missional Engagement, for her leadership and support this past year. Amanda brings her church planting experience to the Annual Conference staff and to the work of CDT. Finally, I want to thank all the local churches in the Conference. Apportionments paid through the sacrifices of local United Methodists provides the funding that makes great things happen with Church Development in Virginia.

—Stephanie Kimec Parker, Chair

THE BOARD OF COMMUNICATIONS

At first glance, the title “Board of Communications” might suggest a team that’s been quiet this past Conference year. In many ways, that’s true. And yet, beneath the surface, we’ve been working to lay the groundwork for meaningful change—change that we hope will lead to more effective, vibrant communication within, among, and around the Virginia Annual Conference.

Historically, the Board of Communications has served as a catch-all body, with its role often confused with that of our talented Conference Communications staff. This overlap has sometimes led to ambiguity and a lack of focus. Over the past year, however, we’ve sought to reimagine our identity—not simply as a group that completes tasks, but as a team that builds connection throughout the Virginia Conference.

Our process began with a conversation between me and our Conference Director of Communications, Madeline White. We discussed Bishop Sue’s call for all Boards and Agencies to take an inventory—to clarify their identity, evaluate their purpose, and discern how they can best serve as a resource to local churches and Conference bodies.

With that charge in mind, our Executive Team developed a plan for listening, reflection, and visioning. We named what many of us had long felt: that the Board often moved from task to task without taking the time to pause, reflect, and truly consider how we might serve the Conference more effectively.

We resolved to change that.

Through this season of discernment, we identified both our strengths and our growing edges. We’ve provided valuable training and facilitated resource connections, such as the T-Mobile 5G Business Internet Initiative. But we also recognized

a need to deepen relationships—particularly with local churches and districts—to better understand and respond to communication needs on the ground.

As we listened, we came to a difficult but important realization: our current structure was not vital in facilitating the kind of work we have been called to do. Too often, our systems kept us stuck in cycles of irrelevance rather than empowering us to lead meaningful, forward-looking communication efforts across the Conference.

In response, we've turned our attention to restructuring—starting with an examination of our bylaws and the standing rules that guide our work. At our May meeting (which as of this writing is yet to happen), the Board will vote on a new set of bylaws that will potentially transition us into a more adaptive model: a Communications Advisory Team. This structure is designed to position us not as an administrative board, but as a resource hub—ready to advise, train, and collaborate with churches and organizations across the Conference on effective communication strategies.

Though there is still work to do, we're already seeking a move in this direction by voting on our new bylaws and beginning to make necessary changes. We're committed to expanding our network and fostering a culture of shared responsibility and collaboration across the Annual Conference, and not just with those who are members of the Board or Team. We recognize that questions abound around communications in the church—from social media to live-streaming, newsletters to crisis messaging—and we want to be equipped to help churches navigate the hows of those questions with clarity and confidence.

This isn't about placing more responsibility at the top—it's about empowering more people across the Conference to engage in meaningful communication work. We want to remove barriers, reduce bureaucracy, and cultivate a network of communicators who are equipped, encouraged, and connected, so that we make better communicators of all who boldly proclaim the Gospel of Christ.

In short, we are in a season of transition—but it is one filled with hope. By taking this year to reflect deeply and chart a new path forward, we believe the Board of Communications can become a more vital, responsive, and effective partner in ministry for the Virginia Conference.

—Andrew Ware, President

DELEGATION TO THE GENERAL AND JURISDICTIONAL CONFERENCES

After a very full season of holy conferencing, your Delegation to the General and Jurisdictional Conferences have taken some time to renew. And still the work continues!

Since our last annual conference, the delegation has attended the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference at Lake Junaluska, NC. With no election of bishops, there was a lot of space in the schedule for conversation and connection across conferences. Claire Bowen led us through 3 Circles Practices around conversations of race, diversity and inclusion. This work came out of the 2022 November conference and a desire to make our work of holy conferencing more mindful around equity. While it was unique to not elect bishops, the gift of time allowed for continued work across conference lines as well as to celebrate the work of the worldwide church.

One major body of work that came out of the 2020/2024 General Conference (apart from a new *Book of Discipline*!) were four proposed amendments to the constitution. We will be voting on each of these proposed amendments at this annual conference. One of the proposed amendments pertains to Worldwide Regionalization.

Your delegation strongly supports this proposed amendment and the goal of moving towards regionalization. The primary purpose of regionalization is to allow for contextual ministry in every culture. Regionalization would provide equity across the globe rather than privileging one region over and against any other regions. Regionalization decentralizes the U.S. and allows for continued contextual ministry across the connection.

To support this proposed amendment is to affirm our Theological Task and Doctrinal Standards. The beliefs of the United Methodist church are not changing. If anything, this will allow for expansive ministry and continued partnerships around the world.

We, as your delegation see this as a means of moving forward and de-colonizing our denomination so that there is equity in our representation as well as our leadership.

Lastly, we would offer the following updates in regards to our work. In lieu of a General Conference in 2026, there

will be a Leadership Conference with 3 representatives from every Annual Conference as well as 50+ leaders from across the connection. We will continue to serve as your delegation until 2027.

Thank you for engaging us in prayer, holy conversations, questions, and the holy work before us. We are honored to serve in this way and we give thanks to God for the opportunity to lead.

–Rev. Lindsey Baynham Freeman & Mr. Warren R. Harper

BOARD OF DISCIPLESHIP

The Board of Discipleship spent the last year defining its purpose and clarifying its mission by responding to the following five questions:

Why do we exist?

How do we behave?

What do we do?

How will we succeed?

And what is most important now; that is, over the course of the next twelve months?

Using a Working Genius assessment and other tools to guide us through this process of discernment we were able to ascertain the following:

- Our mission (the reason for why we exist) is to equip and celebrate discipleship in local churches.
- Our core values (how we behave) includes being authentic, transparent, and open. We are also committed to building accountable relationships, yielding to God, and living into the Kingdom with preparedness and confident hope.
- What we do is to develop and recognize deeply formed spiritual leaders.
- How we will succeed will be measured through the following three anchors: resourcing/equipping, collaboration, and celebration.
- And finally, we determined that what was most important now was to empower local churches in their call to foster and nurture discipleship. We will meet this objective by collaborating experimentally with the Living Waters District on how best to equip churches for discipleship that transforms.

We will also continue to collaborate with the Board of Laity as we seek new structures and models for facilitating discipleship that is transformational. We are also committed to work at increasing the awareness of the One Matters and Denman Awards.

I would personally like to thank the members of the Board of Discipleship for their continued enthusiasm and zeal as the board and the denomination have weathered some very challenging times. It has been a pleasure serving as the board's chairperson for these last several years.

– Dr. Timothy D. Hazlett, Chair

CONFERENCE MISSIONAL MINISTRIES BOARD

General:

The VAUMC Missional Ministries Board (MMB) serves alongside the Conference's Missional and Community Engagement Ministries Office in resourcing and facilitating mission opportunities for district and local churches in serving together for the Kingdom of God. The MMB is currently structured into three teams – Missional Discipleship and Engagement, Missional Connection, and Partnerships of Hope. However, during the past conference year in “**doing mission**,” it has become more & more evident that the theology of mission has to encompass social and justice issues. More on this later in the report.

2024-25 Conference Year Ministries:

In last year's report, the MMB's planned near-term focus was to center on the following:

- Continue to support our missional partnerships
- Continue to plan for greater district and denominational mission impact
- Assess missional needs within communities, districts, our conference, and the world
- Go forth in missional ministry to the glory of God

I'm happy to report that working with the gifted leadership of the Missional and Community Engagement Office (Revs. Miller-Garber and Batteiger, and Ms. Lorelike); the MMB was able to support partnerships, plan for greater impact, and assess needs all while doing missional ministry to the glory of God! This all started with the introduction of the Lunch Labs initiative at AC2024. What better place to grab lunch and find out about innovative missional opportunities and learn from others – over 400 Annual Conference attendees did just that.

The MMB for years has had programs/agreements entitled Partnerships of Hope (POH) and Relationship Partners. During the past year, it was agreed to begin assessing our Partnerships of Hope countries/initiatives (Brazil, Cambodia, Haiti, Mozambique, Native American, and Vietnam) and develop general guidelines in addition to discernment processes when it came to finances. In line with this effort, the MMB recently met with our Relationship Partners (Heart Havens Inc., Pinnacle Living, United Methodist Family Services, and Wesley Housing Development Corp.) to further explore the need for collaborative opportunities in service.

Additional 2024-25 conference year highlights included:

- In-Person/Hybrid/Korean/Spanish/Youth Mission Encounter offerings
- Hurricane Helene relief and recovery efforts – assembling and shipping flood/cleaning buckets as well as deploying Early Response Teams (ERTs)
- Increased ERT Certification Trainings and United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM) Leader Trainings
- UMC Giving Sundays and Virginia Advance Specials
- Directed Missionary Support
- Various Refugee response efforts
- Climate Summit participation

2025-26 Conference Year Focus/Plan:

As a result of our efforts and initiatives during the past year, and examining other Conferences' missional alignments; the MMB is ready to explore a possible collaborative space which includes mercy, justice, and mission. Such an endeavor would not be an immediate change and would not forgo the basic tenets of missional ministries, but would afford our churches, districts, and conference an avenue to explore social holiness and impactful mission work.

Where to Find Additional Information:

Contact our Conference's Missional and Community Engagement Ministries Office at <https://vaumc.org/missions/> to find Community-wide, State-wide, or World-wide mission opportunities. Learn all about the following missional ministries:

Mission Encounter	Disaster Response	Relationship Partners
Advance Specials	Camps	Partnerships of Hope
Missionaries	Gen Bd Global Ministries	United Methodist Committee on Relief
Ukraine Support	Global Mission Fellows	Mission Volunteers
You can even upload and share local church mission trip adventures & opportunities!!		

PARTNERSHIP REPORTS

Heart Havens

Our Continuing Mission

Heart Havens remains steadfast in its mission, established over 25 years ago with the support of the Virginia United Methodist Conference: **to empower adults with developmental disabilities to live and thrive in their community.** We provide more than just housing; we foster family-like environments where individuals make personal choices, achieve their goals, and contribute meaningfully to the wider community. Our commitment is to ensure each person we serve finds a supportive, forever home with us.

Current Operations and Activities

Heart Havens currently operates eight four-bedroom group homes across Virginia and offers sponsored residential services, resembling a foster-family setting. These programs provide safe, nurturing environments and round-the-clock support where needed.

February was designated “Heart Havens Month” by the Virginia Conference, providing a valuable opportunity to share our mission and celebrate the individuals we serve. As a Virginia Conference Advance Special Mission, Heart Havens does not receive apportionments and relies entirely on the generous donations and engagement from churches, groups, and individuals like you. Your support during Heart Havens Month and throughout the year is vital.

Our volunteer program continues to thrive, with workdays held at each home in the spring and fall. We are grateful for the many United Methodist Churches, community neighbors, and local companies whose hands-on work helps maintain our homes beautifully.

Strategic Vision: Moving Forward (2025-2028)

In late 2024 and early 2025, Heart Havens undertook a comprehensive strategic planning process, facilitated by The Spark Mill, involving extensive input from stakeholders, staff, and the Board of Directors. This resulted in a three-year strategic plan centered on achieving our vision: **People with disabilities are successfully woven into the fabric of everyday life.**

The plan focuses on three primary goals:

1. **Expand and Diversify Housing and Services:** Support individuals through personalized life planning, develop new homes in varied communities (rural, urban, etc.), and innovate service offerings (like respite or apartment living) to meet diverse needs, including exploring support for individuals without DD waivers.
2. **Catalyze Widespread Community Inclusion:** Deepen residents’ community involvement, build strategic partnerships for needed services, and serve as a resource hub for information on community support.
3. **Drive Sustainable Quality:** Diversify funding streams, enhance operations and staffing to prioritize individual needs, strengthen board governance, create comprehensive training for support professionals, and invest in staff development and well-being.

We believe achieving these goals will provide individuals with more choice, reduce isolation, foster greater inclusion and acceptance, and ultimately lead to a higher quality of life.

New Initiative: Virginia Beach Men’s Home Expansion

Stemming from our strategic goals and a direct community need, Heart Havens is planning to open a new home for men in Virginia Beach. Currently, our residences there exclusively support women. This initiative was sparked by a request from a local family whose son, deeply integrated into the Virginia Beach community through work, peer groups, and Special Olympics, wishes to live in a Heart Havens home. Recognizing this opportunity to fulfill our mission and support individuals within their established communities, we are moving forward with this expansion. We are actively seeking partnerships and funding for the necessary down payment, home repairs, furnishings, and initial supplies.

Gratitude and Call to Partnership

Heart Havens is profoundly grateful for the foundational and ongoing support of the Virginia Annual Conference and its members. Your financial gifts, volunteer engagement, and advocacy make our mission of empowerment possible, enabling

residents to live vibrant, independent lives. We invite your continued partnership:

- **Schedule a Speaker:** Share the Heart Havens message with your church or groups.
- **Plan a Heart Havens Sunday:** Utilize our available resources.
- **Donate:** Support our mission directly or through the Conference.
- **Volunteer:** Participate in workdays or explore other opportunities.
- **Partner:** Help us fundraise for specific initiatives like the new Virginia Beach home.

Your support ensures that Heart Havens continues to be a place where individuals with developmental disabilities are empowered to thrive.

—Rebecca Huff, CEO

Pinnacle Living

The old campfire song goes, “It only takes a spark to get a fire going and soon all those around can warm up in its glowing.” This is exactly what happened in the 1930s as churches who had previously been associated with the Baltimore Conference found themselves in the Virginia Conference. They brought with them love and concern for elders, and when in the Baltimore Conference, they had come to support and be excited about ministry with a Methodist home in Maryland. Through their call for support for seniors, a special committee was appointed, including the Executive Committee of the Conference Board of Hospitals and Homes, to study the matter. This special committee submitted its report to the 1944 Annual Conference meeting in Lynchburg, asking Bishop William Walter Peele to appoint a committee with authority to incorporate a board for the “Home for the Aged” and to seek out gifts, bequests, and offerings to support this mission.

Over eighty years since that Annual Conference vote. No one could have imagined at that time what senior living would be like today. Pinnacle Living continues this longstanding Wesleyan based tradition of Enriching Life’s Journey for seniors by the provision of housing, healthcare, and financial security at six communities in Virginia: Hermitage Deep Run, Hermitage Richmond, Hermitage Roanoke, Hermitage Three Chopt, Cedarfield and WindsorMeade. A keystone of our service is the Pathways to Wellness Program which focuses on ten domains of healthy living including a healthy body, creative expression, intellectual growth and spirituality. To learn more about the Pathways to Wellness, please download our latest Impact Report found at <https://www.pinnacleliving.org/about>.

Along with six senior living communities, Pinnacle Living manages the separate faithbased not-for-profit provider - Retired Clergy Housing Corporation—which provides attractive, affordable housing for clergy with residential needs.

Pinnacle Living remains committed to honoring our heritage and building upon our strong foundation as we create new opportunities for adults to age faithfully and well. A few of our significant accomplishments during the past year include: •

- More than 412 volunteers gave over 19,567 hours of service to engage with residents, community outreach, and organizational support. The number of volunteers and their gifts of time continue to rebound following the pandemic. If you and/or your church would be interested in connecting with one of our communities, you can find contact information for Volunteer Coordinators on the Pinnacle Living website at <https://www.pinnacleliving.org/volunteer>.
- Residents, community volunteers, and team members in partnership with 131 local organizations continued to do amazing work which impacted the broader community. To highlight just a few community connections, Cedarfield residents were involved with new intergenerational partnerships as they engaged with students from St. Christopher’s School’s Community Engagement Class. Residents at Hermitage Richmond loved connections through music and drama performances from Barack Obama Elementary School, Wesleyan Youth Choir, Veritas Lower School, and VCU Notes of Kindness. Hermitage Roanoke continued the resident-led “Hermitage Helping the Hungry” project to donate food to people who are unhoused in Roanoke. WindsorMeade continues to work with The Arc for on-site job coaching and placement for adults with disabilities.
- Pinnacle Living communities offered supervised internships, onsite training, and career exploration opportunities to 180 students last year, making a tremendous impact on the future workforce needed for aging services.
- Our Richmond communities—Cedarfield and Hermitage Richmond—along with the Pinnacle Living office were

recognized for the seventh year in a row as one of the Top Workplaces in the large size company category in the Metro Richmond Region. The Richmond area program is sponsored by the Richmond Times Dispatch.

- WindsorMeade was named a top workplace in the midsize company category for the third year through the Hampton Roads Inside Business Top Workplaces initiative.
- Efforts continue to enhance support for those living with Alzheimer's and other dementias and 194 new Dementia Friends were made in Virginia and four new Dementia Friends Champions trained.

A primary commitment to Pinnacle Living residents is the Samaritan Program. This program offers support to those Pinnacle Living residents who have been blessed with longevity and have outlived their financial resources. We extend our deepest appreciation to all local churches that included the Samaritan Program in your second mile giving. Each year we recognize the Virginia Conference top ten giving churches as Samaritan Award Churches. For Fiscal Year 2024, we are pleased to acknowledge the following congregations.

1. Trinity UMC, Richmond, Three Notch'd District
2. Reveille UMC, Three Notch'd District
3. Rocky Mount UMC, Mountain View District
4. New Hope UMC, Mission Rivers District
5. Fairmount UMC, Three Notch'd District
6. Saint Mark's UMC, Daleville, Valley Ridge District
7. Walker Chapel UMC, Northern Virginia District
8. Fairfax, Northern Virginia District
9. Trinity UMC, Lexington, Valley Ridge District
10. Westover Hills UMC, Three Notch'd District
11. Gum Spring UMC, Three Notch'd District
12. Duncan Memorial UMC, Three Notch'd District

Pinnacle Living is proud to be carrying on the tradition of advocacy and support for older adults that the Methodists of Virginia began discussing at Annual Conferences in the 1930s. We ask for your continued advocacy for the needs of older adults in your local community and across the Commonwealth. Our desire is to be the senior resource you turn to when you have any questions about aging issues or want to know more about what is available for seniors today. Together, as relationship partners in the mission outreach of the Virginia Conference, we can enhance health, wellness and faithful aging for all people as we strive for a culture in which age does not define the person. Thank you for your continued trust, hard work, prayer and generosity in support of the work of Pinnacle Living.

– Christopher P. Henderson, President and CEO

– Charles W. Wickham, Director of Donor Development

2025 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PINNACLE LIVING

We recognize these recommendations are the responsibility of the Missional Ministries Board and are traditionally included as part of the Common Table report and Council on Finance and Administration report. However, we do not want them to be forgotten.

1. The Relationship Agreement between the Virginia Annual Conference and Pinnacle Living be continued.
2. The period between Mother's Day and Father's Day be designated in support of the Pinnacle Living Samaritan Program, and each church promote an offering during this time dedicated to this purpose.

UMFS - United Methodist Family Services of Virginia

In 2024, UMFS continued to live out our mission as unwavering champions for high-risk children and families, collaborating with communities to help them reach their full potential. We serve children in foster care and children struggling with mental health and behavioral challenges through foster and adoption programs, specialized education schools, and residential mental health treatment programs. In 2024 we served 2,986 children and teens. We strive to support the entire family, helping us touch the lives of 10,004 individuals in 204 communities.

Since our founding in 1900, the churches of the Virginia Conference have partnered with us as advocates for high-risk children and families across the state. Churches help recruit and support foster and adoptive families, serve as volunteers in UMFS programs, provide much-needed financial support, and donate countless gifts-in-kind. Church partners and the UMFS Auxiliary are critical resources for the children and families at UMFS and have helped us touch the lives of countless children and families over the past 125 years.

As we celebrate a major milestone anniversary in 2025, we continue to pave the way for our ongoing legacy of care. This year, we have made strides towards renovating our gymnasium and recreational center to provide more opportunities for healing through movement and play for the students and residents on our Richmond campus. We have also expanded our Food Forest, an edible landscape at our Charterhouse School run by students and volunteers and aiming to provide opportunities for us all to practice generosity and connect more with the food we are eating. Lastly, we have expanded our Generosity Collective initiative, leaning on our 125-year legacy of generosity in our community to fuel our growing partnerships in the community.

We have continued to form deeper partnerships with grassroots organizations who share our mission of empowering high-risk children and families to achieve a brighter future, providing collaborative environments for us to thrive together. Our Generosity Partners include these organizations: Caring Closet, Fit4Kids, Happily Natural, Methodist Ministries Newtwork, Rise Above, Shalom Farms, VAISEF, Virginia Kids Belong, Voices for Virginia's Children, Work of Art, and Worthdays. These organizations can operate rent-free on our Richmond campus, reaching more individuals and extending their mission. There is power and strength in partnership.

We are grateful for the support of the Virginia Conference and for your partnership with us as unwavering champions for high-risk children and families. It's partnerships like yours that have allowed us to serve Virginia children and families for 125 years, and we are excited to build on this legacy and partnership as we approach the next 125 years of impact. We ask for your continued advocacy for high-risk children, youth, and families. Together, we can create a world where care, opportunity, and generosity are passed on from generation to generation, empowering all children to contribute to society as engaged citizens.

– *Kate Ockerman, Director of Philanthropy and Volunteerism*

Wesley Housing

Wesley Housing's (WH) vision is that everyone in Virginia and Washington, DC has a safe, quality, affordable home, serving as a foundation to thrive, and has a place of value in the community. This guides our mission of building up the lives of our most vulnerable community members by creating and operating healthy, inclusive, stable, affordable housing communities and providing supportive resident services. For more than 50 years, we have been building, managing, and maintaining high quality affordable housing for over 35,000 residents. We currently own 42 communities serving 4700+ residents throughout Virginia and Washington, DC. We also manage 14 Community Resource/Support Service Centers that offer a full range of crucially needed programs and services to support children, adults, older adults, those with chronic disease, and those with disabilities to regain their dignity and renew their lives.

REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT

WH currently has 850+ affordable housing units in the pipeline, including new construction, acquisitions, and renovations. Recent updates include:

- In January, **Beacon Landing** (54 units, Fairfax), a permanent supportive housing community in partnership with nonprofit homelessness services provider The Lamb Center, was awarded a \$1M Affordable Housing Program General Fund award from the Federal Home Loan Bank of Atlanta. The community for previously homeless individuals

expects to break ground in Summer 2025.

- **Kindred Crossing** (95 units, Falls Church), in partnership with First Christian Church of Falls Church, was awarded \$7.9M and 37 Project Rental Assistance Contract (PRAC) units through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Section 202 funding in January. The new independent living community will ensure older adults with low incomes have access to safe, affordable housing and supportive services.
- In March, the **Melwood-Wesley Inclusive Community** (105 units, Arlington) in partnership with Melwood, a leading employer, advocate, and preferred provider of services for people with disabilities, received site plan approval to transform Melwood's current building into a five-story mixed-used development with a large portion of units providing preference for people with disabilities. The property will also feature 17,000 SF of ground-level space for Melwood Community Services' programming.
- **One Hawaii** (70 units, Washington, DC [Ward 5]) continues making construction progress with anticipated completion at the end of 2025. The multifamily community is replacing the former 34-unit apartment building and will offer a safe and affordable place to live for households earning between 30 and 80 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI).
- In October 2024, The U.S. Department of the Treasury's Community Development Financial Institutions Fund awarded WH \$3.75M through the fiscal year 2024 round of the **Capital Magnet Fund**. WH will leverage these funds to support the early-stage financing of at least 365 units across its housing portfolio, including new construction and rehabilitation.

RESIDENT SERVICES

- **Housing Stability Initiative:** In 2024, 1,351 households accessed linkage and referral services (connections to community resources). Through the work of our resident services team, 286 evictions were prevented, 18 residents received new or more gainful employment with the help of our employment specialists, 346 residents participated in health and wellness offerings, and 1,884 residents received material assistance (i.e. food/hygiene items). This summer, we served 85 youth through our *Quest* summer enrichment program, and successfully launched our *Odyssey* initiative for older adults, engaging 180 participants. In addition, through our annual *Supplies for Success* program, 455 K-12 students received new backpacks filled with supplies, and 600+ residents received holiday assistance through our annual *Holiday Help* campaign.
- **Volunteerism:** Over the last year, 76 volunteers provided 5,300 hours of service by helping with food security initiatives, afterschool programs, board service, summer camp, photography, capacity building as graduate-level interns, and more.

OPERATIONS AND ADMINISTRATIVE

- WH leadership in collaboration with strategic planning consultancy, The Spark Mill, finalized a new strategic plan for 2025-2029.
- In March 2025, WH completed its merger with Virginia United Methodist Housing Development Corporation (VUMHDC) expanding our footprint through southern and southwest Virginia and increasing our portfolio by over 30 percent.
- WH concluded its 50th anniversary in 2024 and was recognized by the Virginia General Assembly with a commending resolution on February 7, 2025.

RESOLUTIONS OR RECOMMENDATIONS: None

—Kamilah McAfee, President/CEO

CAMPUS MINISTRY ASSOCIATION

Community College Ministries

Community College Ministries was formed in 1984 to create an ecumenical witness to Christ's love, mercy, and hope among students in the emerging network of community colleges from the far southwest to central Virginia. Today, that witness encompasses 10 campuses in partnership with dozens of congregations. Community College Ministries is all about empowerment—of African American students embarking on inspiring educational and career opportunities, of students coming from foster care settings, of students seeking retreat and renewal, of partnerships for home repair in Appalachia, and of single parents all making a new life with love, mercy, and hope. Contact Rev. Steve Darr at stevedarr@vaumc.org or board president Sandy Saunders at sandysaunders589@gmail.com for more information.

Where would you contact high school seniors preparing for classes at New River Community College this fall? Community College Ministries in Christiansburg. Where would you find a 32-year-old single mother after work behind a row of computers learning cyber security technology so she could get a better paying job? Community College Ministries, her source of encouragement. Where would you find an 18-year-old who dropped out of school sitting at a donated laptop applying for his GED so he could attend the community college? Community College Ministries. Where would you find Ms. Angie with two girls, ages 12 and 13, both terribly despondent and anxious and worried and angry and crying and pregnant? Community College Ministries, a source of hope in coming years. Where would you find a 24-year-old young father who spent his life in foster care and now commuting between two jobs, church, and the community college? Community College Ministries. Where would you find Jamesia when she's not working with United Methodist Family Services? Community College Ministries in Lynchburg. Where would you find Ty after he visited the White House with Community College Ministries? You would find him on the school board. Where would you find the first community college food pantry? Community College Ministries in Dublin. Where would you find a group of 10 tired, sweaty, hungry students on a late November afternoon in a struggling coal town? With their professor of construction and campus minister building an accessible ramp for a 92-year-old resident who had repeatedly fallen outside her place in Trammel. Where would you find a group of students from the Wesley Foundation at the College of William & Mary listening first-hand to an eye-witness history of the Civil Rights Movement in southern Virginia? Community College Ministries in Danville. Where would you find 22 African American youth and pastors talking about their faith in the Chapel and watching basketball in Cameron? At Duke hosting Community College Ministries. Where would you find students on a hot weekend in June reaching out to street kids in Memphis? Community College Ministries. Where would you find a campus ministry group from Tech on a beautiful fall Saturday? Hosted by Community College Ministries floating the scenic New River in Giles County. Half of all college students in Virginia attend a community college. Some go on to other studies. Some get jobs. Our mission is to share Jesus with current and future community college students and make Disciples. These community college Disciples are walking the path, carrying the load, sharing the Word, and witnessing to love and justice in the name of our Lord. The campus minister is Steve Darr. The board president is Sandy Saunders. The board vice president is Muriel Mickles. We love to tell the story.

— Steve Darr

Farmville Wesley

The Wesley Foundation at Longwood University and Hampden-Sydney College works to be a place where college students can come and just be. We have spent the last year focusing on the mental health of our college students. Like most of the world our college students are struggling to navigate this world and add in the pressures of college, we have spent the year giving our students a place to explore their faith in a safe place. Wesley has become a place where students can come and rest and recharge. We continue to find that something as simple as a home cooked meal around a table with other students allows them to be reminded they are not alone in this journey. We have also worked to strengthen our relationship with the United Methodist churches around us. The student lead, student focused food pantry for Longwood continues to be a place where Wesley is providing a safe space for students to meet the very simple needs of college life. We appreciate all the support we receive from the conference, Living Waters district, and our local churches. We could not do what we do without this support. We are looking forward to a strong finish to this school year and the year to come.

— Justin Hicks

Flourish

Flourish CNU continues to be the only fully-inclusive campus ministry among a dozen different Christian campus ministries on a largely traditionalist campus of ~6000 students. We offer a safe and supportive space for those who have been made to feel unwelcome either at home, church, among their classmates, and even other campus ministries. Fittingly, most of our students are LGBTQ+ and/or neurodivergent.

This year, we were invited to CNU's second-annual LGBTQ+ Resource Fair. We were the only faith-based organization represented. It was great exposure and also a wonderful opportunity to network with the faculty Affinity group.

We maintain an active pastoral presence on campus, with a Tabling Ministry on Wednesdays and Thursdays in the Student Union available for students not only to take information (and cool stickers, buttons, etc), but also as a "listening post" for anyone who could use a sympathetic ear. Each Wednesday evening students are welcome to come and relax in a room full of coloring books, art supplies, and unguided but surprisingly deep conversation at our "Create Space" art therapy event.

Our Weekly Gathering, which is a service of Word and Table offered every Thursday evening, is our best-attended event and offers a peaceful and reflective alternative to the more common praise-and-worship services offered by the campus's other ministries. This is especially appreciated by our neurodivergent students.

Our Exam Snacks Ministry, our longest-running ministry, allows our local partner churches to take shifts coming onto campus during Finals Week giving out snacks, drinks, and exam supplies (scantrons, blue books, pencils and pens) to stressed-out students. The week before Finals each semester, our students take a trip to the local Cat Café for a decompression session with the kitties.

Also worthy of note: this year, we celebrate our alumna Jonelle Brown (BA '20, MAT '21), who has been involved with Rev. J.J. Warren's Young Prophets Collective for some time, but who has now taken on a position as Secretary of the Board of Directors of that wonderful organization!

We remain committed to making and holding space for those whom the world considers "the least of these," especially as the dehumanization and demonization of these beloved human siblings deepens.

— Michael Burnett

Pace

The Pace Center is the Wesley Foundation at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). Pace believes the Kingdom of God is a reality to be experienced by all and that all are created to live in deep relationships with one another, not in isolation.

Pace empowers students to create and lead community-building events that focus on the gifts of the VCU community and the Richmond community. In 2024, the Pace Center hosted an average of 20 student-led events each week. We engaged with 1,098 unique students. Our core community of regularly engaged students grew from 265 students in 2023 to 365 in 2024. Pace's Faith-based offerings also expanded. In 2024, we began a new student-led worship service with VCU's Black Awakening Choir as a partner.

Pace serves a high-needs population of VCU students, many of whom are low-income and food-insecure. In order to better accommodate the 100+ meals served at Pace each week, we fundraised over \$20,000 to purchase a commercial dishwasher, refrigerator, and kitchen island.

Pace partnered with Belmont Community Resource Services and churches in Downtown Richmond to engage 120 unique student volunteers to serve in their food ministries. Pace adds a reflection component to each service opportunity to ask students where they saw God's gifts reflected in the Richmond community. To quote one volunteer during our summer Youth Servant Leadership camp: "God was working through everyone around us. Even when someone was struggling to survive, there was beauty in their talent and beauty in how they expressed themselves."

— Katie Gooch

William & Mary

Finishing my first year as the Wesley Foundation Director at William & Mary has been a joy and gift! Despite the inherent challenges of a transition season, our student leadership team stepped forward in incredible ways in the fall. Our Sunday night programs are growing more robust, with meals provided by local church partners and a program on the intersection of faith and various topics. This year, topics included resisting Christian Nationalism, the revised United Methodist Social Principles, reclaiming a healthy relationship between mental health and faith, and an LGBTQ+ clergy panel sharing stories of call and vocation.

We traveled to Arlington during fall break to work with Northern Virginia Family Services' Head Start program. Spring break Staycation focused on local outreach opportunities while addressing limited accessibility to dining options for students remaining in town that week.

With several of our incoming students longing for more spiritual formation, we launched weekly worship and communion with student-led music.

Our residential community is fostering more intentional rhythms together through dinners and game nights. We are excited to share that the Wesley House will be at capacity for the 2025-2026 school year, as we had many applications!

I write this with deep gratitude for our local board and new development team, who are leading an amazing annual campaign as we share the Wesley at W&M story. I have great hope, knowing that despite the myriad challenges the denomination has endured in recent years, students long for a place to belong.

—Ryan LaRock

Wesley Westminster Campus Ministry at Norfolk State University

Wesley Westminster Campus Ministry at Norfolk State University is an ecumenical ministry that offers a sense of family, support, and purpose. This is exhibited through discipleship, Bible Study, providing food for the food insecure and participating in community service endeavors. I have been told that we are known for our parties and for our cookouts. Many students who participate have not had church or youth group experiences. So, we have an exceptional opportunity to provide a place to grow in faith as a new believer. At least 5 students committed their lives to Christ this past semester. We journey in faith, supporting one another, all while cultivating new friendships and taking on leadership roles.

Together we celebrated the graduation of 4 of our student leaders in December. We hosted more than 120 students for our end of the year celebration. As a ministry we have planned events to address mental health needs, connect students with therapists and mentors, as well as provide grief support. There is no campus ministry like our campus ministry. We love to have a good time. Celebrating Black History Month, enjoying glow parties, and expressing ourselves during Paint and Praise are just a few of our highlighted activities.

—Joy Carrington

Wesley at Old Dominion University

The Wesley Foundation at Old Dominion University, also known as Wesley ODU seeks to explore faith alongside the students, faculty, and staff of ODU, providing a welcoming space where individuals are encouraged to be authentically themselves. WesleyODU

One of the ways WesleyODU seeks to be in service to those on campus is our Tuesday Free Lunches, held every Tuesday, offering students a chance to enjoy a complimentary meal often provided by local congregations. We saw a dramatic increase in participation averaging more than 30 students each week and are so thankful for the many local churches who brought delicious meals.

Last fall our student leadership had a desire to grow beyond just our small group to having consistent worship. We host worship services every other Wednesday night. These services include fellowship, praise, and a brief message, often followed by activities such as making s'mores. Additionally, our weekly small group happens every Thursday night at 7:30 PM, featuring devotion and discipleship discussions aimed at deepening our faith as we journey together.

One recent grad had this to say about WesleyODU "I decided to join WesleyODU because I was looking for a home

away from home and had been searching for a church family. I grew up in the United Methodist Church and knew that was something I wanted to find during my time on campus. WesleyODU has given me great leadership experience and helped me make new friends.”

None of this would be possible without the generous support of donors, local churches, and our conference/district apportionment funds. Wesley also wouldn't be where it is without the diligent work of the local board. For more information or to get involved please visit our website www.wesleyODU.org or you can contact Wesley ODU via email at TheWesleyODU@gmail.com.

—Joshua McCauley

Campus Christian Community at the University of Mary Washington

This past year at the Campus Christian Community (CCC) has provided many aspects of growth, discipleship, and fellowship. We are thankful for the continual support of the BHECM as well as our many other supporters that continue to see the importance of investing in Campus Ministry. The Board of Directors continues to work to lead the CCC and invest in the lives of the students.

This past year we have seen an increase in student desire to learn more about the Bible, spiritual disciplines, and peace and justice ministries. This has provided many opportunities for conversations about various topics and how faith intersects.

We have continued our Faculty and Staff “get togethers” to bring together faculty and staff that are connected to the supporting churches of our ministries. This has been such a joy and blessing to create space for them to come and talk about faith, vocation, and other connections they have as employees of the university.

We continue to encounter new students and find ways to connect on campus with various groups and organizations. This past year we have studied the prophets and the book of Revelation in our Bible Study. Bible Study is a great time for students to have conversations and ask questions about faith and life as we encounter God through scripture.

One of our most attended weekly events is Table Talk on Thursday evenings. We gather for dinner, conversation and then either worship or an activity. This past year we have been so thankful to bring back in our supporting churches to come and provide the meals for students! This is a great opportunity for students to meet congregants of the supporting churches and also for the congregants to get to spend time getting to know the college students!

Overall, we are thankful for the support of many and are excited to see where God leads us in the upcoming year!

—Elizabeth Snader

Wesley at UVA

Wesley at the University of Virginia is a community on the edge of Grounds (the UVA term for campus) where students are seen, welcomed and valued, nurtured as leaders who make a difference in the world, invited to be curious and share authentically, and can find the pastoral support and faith formation that they are longing for during their time in college and graduate school.

During the 2024-2025 academic year, Wesley at UVA focused on expanding our outreach. We hosted invitational events such as a Welcome Bonfire and Cookout where we met over 120 students on the day before classes. Listening to what students needed led us to launch a brand-new First Year (freshmen) Small Group. We also partnered with faith communities across Grounds for larger events like Friendsgiving and sharing flowers on Valentine's Day. We supported the Muslim community in finding a chaplain and they identified Wesley as a safe space which led to them launching the new Center for Muslim Life at UVA in our building. We partnered with them on our 2nd annual Interfaith Iftar in March, exploring our faiths' traditions of fasting during Lent and Ramadan, hosting over 80 students in the Wesley and Muslim faith community.

Our student leaders noticed a rise in peers who are religiously curious, interested in faith but reluctant to walk into a church building for a variety of reasons. During the spring semester, we organized a forum series of speakers to explore some of their questions. We kicked this off with a forum on faith and science in one of the Pavilions (faculty housing on UVA's Lawn) and continued in conjunction with our Tuesday night dinners.

To quote one of our first year students, “Wesley is another home for me, a place I have found community!” Thank you for all the ways that you support Wesley at UVA and make all that happens here a reality.

—Devon Maust Earle

RISE

RISE is a ministry rooted in God's risk-taking love, life-changing grace, passionate outreach and open-armed acceptance. As one of the only openly affirming campus ministries at James Madison University we seek to be a welcoming space for all. Everyone is welcome and, Everyone means EVERYONE.

The 2024-25 academic year brought in some major changes for RISE! Our founding Pastor moved on to a new chapter of her ministry and we welcomed Alexis as our new Campus Minister. We moved locations and now have the opportunity to share space with John Wesley UMC, which has been such a blessing! By allowing us the space to use the fellowship hall at JWUMC, we were able to expand our worship offerings for students from our usual Sunday morning experience to incorporating a Wednesday evening dinner church as well.

A core value at RISE is "God gives to us, so we give back". Just like many of the other campus ministries, we focus a lot of time and energy on leadership development. Our hope is that we are able to launch our students into the world and hopefully back into your churches as leaders who are well equipped to contribute in a variety of ways. One of our graduating seniors said, "This is the place I have come to call home and a family I have come to love. As I'm preparing to graduate and move onto another city, I hope to create honest communities like RISE everywhere I go. As hard as it will be to leave, I can be RISE to those who may never walk through their doors. I can show the authentic love of God, I know I am a gift to this world and one by one we are working to mend it together." This is why it is important to continue to support our UMC campus ministries. The future of our church depends on young adults having the opportunity to see and experience the value of a community of faith.

—Alexis Ward Owens

BOARD OF LAITY

A task group was formed within the Board of Laity in 2023 to evaluate the role and work of the District Lay Leader and Associates as we seek to meet emerging lay leadership needs. With the number of districts declining but the geographic area of the Virginia Annual Conference remaining the same, changing the priorities of the District Lay Leader and recruiting and empowering Associate District Lay Leaders has become urgent. A final report and recommendations from the work group were affirmed at the September 2024 meeting of the Board of Laity. The vision is for the District Lay Leader(s) and the District Superintendent to work together to divide each district geographically into smaller community clusters or cohorts. These "clusters" would be small enough that an Associate District Lay Leader (ADLL) could develop a vital relationship with each Local Church Lay Leader (LCLL) and other laity in the churches. The ADLL would serve as the point of contact and communication from the district level and a resource to the LCLL of these churches. But just as important, the "clusters" would be set up with the intent that these churches would begin to work together in mission and ministry to meet the discerned needs of their shared geographic area based on community engagement. The Board of Laity (BOL) will use the next conference year to begin living more fully into this model before bringing recommendations to the 2026 Annual Conference for formal revisions to the structure of the board.

The Board of Laity has traditionally met in-person twice a year. For this year, the BOL agreed to add virtual 1-hour monthly learning and information sharing meetings during the fall, winter and spring. Bishop Hupert-Johnson joined the meetings in February and April. Other monthly meetings included a listening session with the Young Adult Council, a training on the *Growing Young* research from Fuller Youth Institute, and an orientation for new District Lay Leaders and Associates.

One of the areas of work for the Board of Laity and a benchmark of the *Next Faithful Step Quadrennial Focus* affirmed at the 2024 Annual Conference is strengthening the culture of call for the laity. As part of this focus, the BOL worked in partnership with the Office of Clergy Excellence and Office of Discipleship and Congregational Vitality to offer the first Discernment Day for laity on March 15, 2024. Twenty-six individuals gathered at Ebenezer UMC in Stafford to learn more about a range of opportunities for ministry, from serving as a leader in the local church to Certified Lay Ministry, from justice work and global missions to ordination and licensing as clergy.

Successful Conference Lay Servant Academy sessions were held in August 2024 and February 2025. District Lay Servant training sessions are active and ongoing. Certified Lay Ministry training offered by our conference has grown

significantly, with the fifth cohort of students starting this spring. Nineteen participants in CLM Cohorts 2 and 3 will be recognized as Certified Lay Ministers at this Annual Conference. Twenty-five students are participating in Cohorts 4 and 5. The Virginia Conference has partnered with the New York Conference to offer the Certified Lay Ministry modules for their laity. As part of this collaboration, subject area experts from both Virginia and New York have been invited to deliver guest lectures. It is exciting to note that six current participants in our CLM module training are from the New York Conference. In addition to our conference cohorts, individuals will be recognized at our Annual Conference who have CLM received training through BeADisciple.com.

The focus of Lay Servant Ministry training opportunities is on helping laity discern their call to share the Gospel and God's Word with people they encounter, to help each person identify their spiritual gifts, and enhance their skills in leading, caring and communicating ministries. Now – more than ever - is the time to get involved, to make a difference in the life of your church and your community. God is calling you. How will you respond? To explore Lay Servant Ministry, including Certified Lay Ministry, visit the Lay Servant Ministry pages of the VAUMC website or reach out to Richard Speirs, Director of Lay Servant Ministries at richardspeirs@vaumc.org.

The vision for Scouting Ministries is to build a bridge of understanding, enablement, encouragement, and service between the Virginia Conference and Scouting America, Girl Scouts, Camp Fire, and Big Brothers Big Sisters. Five goals have been established for our conference Scouting Ministries:

1. Develop an understanding of the current state of the relationship between the civic youth service organizations and the Virginia Conference. An initial survey was sent to clergy about relationship with these organizations in April. The information gathered will help us understand the current level of engagement between local churches and the civic youth organizations.
2. Improve relationships with the youth organizations in Virginia by better understanding the expectations and needs of youth organizations as we seek to build and enhance healthy, positive relationships with key leaders. Introduction meetings with the senior leadership of all the Scouting America councils in Virginia have taken place this year.
3. Create a foundation of support for Scouting Ministries across the conference, strengthening the relationship with the United Methodist Men and building deeper relationships with District Superintendents and District Lay Leaders as we seek to educate clergy and laity on Scouting Ministries.
4. Help youth grow in their faith through Christian education within the youth organizations.
5. Build connections and relationships with other Methodist Scouters and The UMC United Methodist Men's Foundation Office of Civic Youth-Serving Agencies/Scouting Ministries.

For additional information about Scouting Ministries, contact Alan Webber, Conference Director of Scouting Ministry, at aewebber33@gmail.com or visit the Scouting Ministry pages of the Conference website.

God has called each and every one of us to be ambassadors of the Gospel message in the world today – to share our own faith experiences and to be examples of Christ's love to the world through our everyday living. Sometimes we think that receiving a call from God is only for those who go on to set-apart ministry of the licensed and ordained. But no, God calls each of us by virtue of our baptism to ministry. On behalf of the Board of Laity, thank you for the many and varied ways you live out your baptismal vows, equipped by the Holy Spirit in the work of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

– Martha E. Stokes, Conference Lay Leader

UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

Faith, hope, and love in action – United Women in Faith!

Our purpose states: “United Women in Faith shall be a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.” Our actions are guided by this purpose.

To know God, to grow in faith, we encourage the practice of spiritual disciplines. We pray for one another, for mission workers and mission projects. We participate in programs on spiritual growth and discipleship. We host district and conference **Spiritual Life Retreats**.

To experience freedom as whole persons, to grow in hope, we work on our social justice priorities, which include ending mass incarceration of people of color and climate justice. We cohost **United Methodist Day at General Assembly**, advocating for justice for our neighbors. We respond to United Women in Faith Action Alerts. We utilize our “13 Steps to Sustainability” principles to guide event planning. We implement the **Charter for Racial Justice** policies, hosting racial justice events.

To develop a creative, supportive fellowship, to grow in love, we gather virtually and in person, at our local units, in our districts and at the conference. We host a **Young Women’s Event**. We attend **United Women in Faith Day at Ferrum College**, which we helped to found. We gather for our **Annual Meeting**, to do the business of the organization and most importantly celebrate the work we accomplish. We attend our United Women in Faith national **Assembly**.

To expand concepts of mission, to grow in love, we read from **response** magazine and books on our reading program, to understand the missional needs of the world. We host **Mission u**, our school of Christian mission, educating to transform the world. We support mission projects globally and locally, including the **National Mission Institutions** of United Women in Faith. We hold hands-on missions and put together UMCOR kits. We pledge our financial support of mission work at home and abroad.

Join us in our local units, as a district at-large member, or as an All-Access member through the national website.

Join us in our two social justice campaigns: **Ending the School-to-Prison Pipeline** and **Just Energy for All**.

Join us at our events (go to our website for more information vauwf.org):

Pre-Annual Conference Zoom Tea and Talk	June 7, 2025
Mission u	July 25-27, 2025
Young Women’s Event	September 19-20, 2025
Annual Meeting	October 25, 2025
United Methodist Day at General Assembly	January 29, 2026
Spiritual Life Event	April 17-18, 2026
United Women in Faith Assembly	May 15-17, 2026

United Women in Faith – we believe faith, hope, and love in action can change the world!

–Karen McElfish, President

UNITED METHODIST MEN

The Virginia Conference UMM (VAC UMM) are excited to report on our ministry Objectives and Goals. This is our major accomplishment this year! Each objective has a goal as to how we plan to accomplish the objective followed by an action plan with a timeline. Our six objectives are:

1. Encourage individual spiritual development
2. Encourage and support women clergy
3. Improve race relations
4. Engage with campus ministries and younger men
5. Embrace Scouting
6. Advocate for environmental issues and creation care

We will be working alongside each district to ensure that they establish the same objectives just as we established our objectives handed down by the Southeast Jurisdiction (SEJ) UMM.

We support ten ministries within our 2025 budget and strive to have advocates from most ministries on our Cabinet. The ten ministries we support are:

1. Heart Havens
2. All God's Children Camp
3. Scouting
4. Camp Rainbow
5. Society of St. Andrew's
6. Grace Inside
7. Black Methodists for Church Renewal
8. Asian American Ministries Association
9. Native American Caucus
10. Latino/Hispanic Caucus

To help fund these ministries, a \$10 Campaign is in place. Each man in the Virginia Conference is asked to donate \$10 per man per year to support these ministries. Donations can either be made by check or through our electronic giving option. A UMM Give Day is set for Tuesday, June 17, 2025.

Donations: UMM Support | VAUMC

The VAC UMM seeks for each district within the VA Conference to have a Point of Contact. Their role is to promote Objectives and Goals within their district and promote VAC UMM events and ministries. A contact person is needed for the:

- Northern Virginia District
- Mountain View District
- Coastal Virginia District
- Living Waters District
- Shenandoah River District
- Valley Ridge District

We gratefully have Points of Contact for the Mission Rivers District and the Three Notch'd District.

The VAC UMM sends out The Beacon, our quarterly newsletter. To keep communication going in-between editions, we submit periodic events and announcements to be included in The Advocate and VA Conference UMC emails. The Beacon Signup: Subscriptions | VAUMC

The VAC UMM support Knees@Noon: a prayer initiative where men stop and pray each day at noon. Then, each Friday at noon, we have a Zoom prayer meeting, "15 minutes max." We pray for Bishop Sue and her Cabinet, for District Superintendents and Clergy, and for personal joys and concerns. Men and women are welcome to join us any Friday! The Zoom link is: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82873870973?pwd=AcGMK2suuFPnmugJl7F7cba4LKeQTQ.1>

The General Commission on United Methodist Men (GCUMM) are having the Men's and Scouting National Gathering, July 31 - August 3, 2025, at Epworth by the Sea on St. Simons Island, GA. The topic is Traveling with YOUR Why? and Tavis Tinsley, youth pastor at Central United Methodist Church in Atlanta, will be speaking. All men within the United Methodist Church and beyond are invited to attend.

Conference Registration: <https://whova.com/portal/registration/Q@cbgdUOYj4RtLfM3zWb/>

Room and Meals Registration: <https://fs21.formsite.com/Epworthssi/ukvjvkqcc8/index>

The VAC UMM are having their Annual Breakfast and Meeting at Greene Memorial UMC in Roanoke, Friday, June 13, 2025, at 7:00 AM. Rev. Jay Carey is the District Superintendent for the Living Waters District and is our speaker. We look forward to a delicious breakfast and great time of fellowship! Breakfast Registration (open through June 9, 2025): <https://signup.com/go/UaztXya>

—David J. Collins, President

OLDER ADULT COUNCIL

The Older Adult Council continues to be a vital council whose purpose is to provide a place of welcome, spiritual nurture, discipleship, and empowerment in ministry to, for, by, and with older adults. We seek to be aware of the needs of older adults in the congregations and communities of our annual conference as we continue to offer resources through the VAUMC website, through District and Conference Lay Servant training events, as well as by partnering with other ongoing ministries within the conference.

Recently we have offered our support to the Children's Ministry initiative and to the Journey to Understanding Task Group. Our goal is to become more aware of ways that older adults engage in multigenerational ministry and in ways that older adults may need information about LGBTQ+inclusion in our churches and in our communities as well as the ways older adults may be able to help enhance the journey to inclusion.

During the past year we have added to our membership by inviting persons who serve in ministry in areas that often impact older adults. We have included a hospice chaplain, a local church older adult ministry staff member and a hospital chaplain.

We also continue to support the annual event at Lake Junaluska, The Festival of Wisdom and Grace. The festival will take place on August 18-22, 2025, and will feature speakers and workshops geared to enhancing Older Adult Ministry.

The Council also seeks to be a resource to congregations and/or pastors and/or staff that may have a particular desire to offer vital older adult ministries. Our display table offers shareable resources as congregation continue seek to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. We, as Older Adults, seek to continue to be part of that mission.

—Denise M. Childers and Louise Miller, co-chairs

YOUTH COUNCIL

The Virginia UMC Conference Youth Council has flourished in its 2024/2025 season. Comprising 14 youth and 6 adults, our council has become quite the group. Our biggest achievement this season was holding our first Conference-wide youth retreat since 2019. While the Youth Council existed on paper during COVID, it had not met in person since before the pandemic.

The Youth Council Youth Service Fund Team awarded 4 YSF Grants, a total of \$6,400, for various ministries across the conference that will engage youth in service. YSF applications will open back up in January 2026.

Looking back on our retreat, it's clear that this was something special. Every youth and adult in attendance engaged in a leadership track which gave them the tools to dive deeper into their gifts and interests in ministry. The goal of the leadership tracks was for every participant to leave the retreat feeling equipped and empowered to lead in their local community and congregation. Worship and Leadership Track labs truly made an impact on the youth, creating moments of reflection, growth, and connection. Seeing so many churches come together, not just to attend but to genuinely engage with one another, was a reminder of why we do this. Fellowship wasn't just a word—it was happening in real time, across different communities, and that's something to celebrate.

From start to finish, the retreat ran smoothly, with a real sense of unity among both the youth council and those attending. The way leadership and participation intertwined showed just how much this generation is capable of stepping up and supporting each other. Even the adults took notice, with most of their feedback centering on how powerful the worship service was—a great sign that what we're building here matters.

The next conference-wide youth retreat, "Called to Be UMC," is scheduled for November 14-16, 2025 at Rappahannock Camp and Retreat Center. The 2026 retreat is scheduled for November 13-15, 2026 and the 2027 retreat is scheduled for November 12-14, 2027.

Other events to be aware of are the Global Young People's Convocation (7/7/26-7/11/26) and the YOUTH27 national event (7/11/27-7/14/27). The Youth Council hopes to be able to support youth that are interested in these denominational events.

—Jesse Burdette, Conference Youth Council Member

COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

The Commission on Disabilities advocates for the church's responsibility to be in ministry with and alongside all persons, regardless of physical, sensory, intellectual, neurological, or mental health conditions. Our newly revised social principles acknowledge and express regret for the church's historical complicity in the stigmatization and discrimination against people with disabilities. This legacy has manifested itself in many forms, ranging from harmful theological interpretations of the scriptures to the imposition of negative labels, excluding individuals from church life, and misinterpreting terms such as "blind," "lame," and "deaf" in derogatory ways. Consequently, individuals with disabilities and their gifts for ministry have often been dismissed or undervalued within the church.

Part of the challenge lies with the term "disability." Disabilities manifest in many forms, many of which are not immediately apparent. Countless individuals live with invisible or poorly understood conditions.

Our call as the United Methodists is to foster a culture of access and inclusion where our differences are not just tolerated but valued. As Disability Awareness Sunday approaches on July 27th, the prayer of the Commission on Disabilities is that each congregation within our conference takes this opportunity to celebrate the joy, resilience, and giftedness of people with disabilities in our midst. May this be a time not only for learning, but for honoring the ways disability ministry enriches the church's life and calls us all to a fuller vision of beloved community.

– Timothy Joseph Barth, Chair

THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS AND ROLE OF WOMEN (COSROW)

The Commission on the Status and Role of Women (COSROW) remains steadfast in our commitment to advocacy for all women in the Church, clergy and lay, at every level. As we continue this vital work, we recognize that gender justice cannot be separated from the wider call to embrace diversity, practice equity, and cultivate truly inclusive communities.

We urge clergy and lay leadership in each local church to reflect intentionally on the diversity of their congregations. Who is present (and who is missing) from leadership roles such as Church Council, Finance, Trustees, Lay Leadership Development, and SPRC? Are women, especially those from underrepresented racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds, being empowered and invited into these spaces?

In worship and service, are women represented equitably as scripture readers, ushers, counters, and greeters? Are we using small group and Bible study materials written by women, particularly women of color, LGBTQ+ women, and women with disabilities? (For suggested resources, visit our booth in the display area!) For our male colleagues: have you considered the impact of inviting female clergy or lay servants (especially those from diverse backgrounds) to preach and lead in your churches? As we continue to cultivate a culture of calling, representation matters.

COSROW also encourages awareness around language and representation, both at Annual Conference and in the local church. Language shapes our theology, our imagination, and our systems. We continue to lift up the work of one of our own, Allison Hickey, who has developed an incredible Doctor of Ministry project focused on inclusive language and best practices. We invite you to explore this important work at our display area and join us in shaping a more inclusive and just church.

We continue to affirm and support the work of the Annual Conference in addressing places of disparity, including the work of the Just Compensation Task Force. This is a meaningful step toward economic justice and equitable treatment across gender and race.

For individuals or local churches seeking further resources or best practices for building equity and inclusion into the life of the Church, we invite you to visit our website (vaumc.org/COSROW) or connect with us on Facebook (search for 'Commission on the Status and Role of Women – VA United Methodist Conference'). COSROW is also honored to be a resource to any woman in the annual conference in need of support – contact our co-chairs, Rev. Jenny Day (JennyDay@vaumc.org) or Rev. Lauren Wright (LaurenWright@vaumc.org) if you are in need.

– Jenny Day & Lauren Wright, Co-Chairs

CONFERENCE COMMISSION ON RELIGION AND RACE REPORT

Members: Judy Diggs, David Jimenez, Sara Keeling, Minoo Kim, Hungsu Lim, Victor Neal, James Page (Chair of ELCC), Mansoor Yagoub

The Conference Commission on Religion and Race (CCORR) was reinstated during the 2024 Annual Conference, in accordance with the current *Book of Discipline*. Since then, CCORR has realigned its mission with that of the General Commission on Religion and Race: to challenge, lead, and equip the Virginia Conference to become interculturally competent, ensure institutional equity, and facilitate vital conversations around religion, race, and culture. As part of this work, CCORR has reviewed past initiatives related to equity, including efforts focused on cultural understanding and intercultural competency.

CCORR has established a collaborative partnership with the Conference Commission on Ethnic Local Church Concerns (formerly the Commission on Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy). Both commissions have designated 2025–2026 as a transitional period dedicated to discerning optimal organizational structures, defining shared strategic goals, and identifying areas for joint ministry. This year, CCORR played a supportive role in the establishment and recruitment of the Director of Belonging and Advocacy. The commission looks forward to working closely with this new staff member, who will bring valuable expertise and resources to advance the Conference’s work on religion, race, and culture.

CCORR has also been actively developing relationships with the General Commission on Religion and Race (GCORR) and other connectional partners involved in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives. In April, representatives from CCORR and ELCC attended GCORR’s Train-the-Trainer Immigration Summit and plan to facilitate learning opportunities in the near future.

In its advocacy efforts, CCORR has addressed urgent immigration and visa-related issues facing clergy, while also raising awareness within the Conference about the gifts of immigrant clergy.

CCORR celebrates and affirms the diverse gifts these clergy bring to enrich the life and mission of the Church. As part of its ongoing commitment to growth and justice, CCORR engaged in a Lenten study centered on reconciliation principles and practices.

Finally, CCORR remains committed to creating safe spaces for conversations around religion and race. We invite you to share your stories and experiences as we journey together toward a more equitable and inclusive Conference—where all are truly welcomed, valued, and empowered.

—Written by Hungsu Lim, Chair

SOCIETY OF ST. ANDREW

Over the last 45 years, the Virginia Conference has been an important partner in the work of the Society of St. Andrew. In that time, you’ve helped SoSA grow from a home-based intentional Christian community to a nation-wide gleaning and food recovery network that has engaged more than a half million volunteers in simple hands-on service to feed hungry neighbors. Thank you for being part of this ministry from its inception, for sharing with us a vision for a world without hunger, in which faith and stewardship meet God’s abundance—and good food is shared with people in greatest need every day.

In 2024, the Society of St. Andrew shared its one billionth pound of food, and marked this milestone with a “Thanks a Billion” celebration, honoring all who have been part of this ministry.

In 2024, 138 Virginia congregations provided financial support to the Society of St. Andrew. 20 congregations and more than 1,100 Virginia United Methodists took part in crop drops or field gleaning.

Through the Virginia Gleaning Network, the Potato & Produce Project, 294 feeding agencies (soup kitchens, shelters, emergency food assistance programs, food pantries, and large food banks), including 13 at United Methodist Churches across the state received more than two million pounds of nourishing food to share with their clients—providing 8.25 million servings of health and hope to our hungry brothers and sisters. The Seed Project (a “hand up” endeavor that provides seed potatoes and vegetable seeds to poor, land-owning Appalachian families) shared an additional 3 million

servings of good food with hungry Virginians. All this is work made possible because you care.

Nationwide, 21.7 million pounds of food (86.8 million servings) reached millions of hungry Americans in 2024 through the work of the Society of St. Andrew, through crops donated by 794 farmers/producers and through the gleaning and volunteer efforts of 22,170 individuals. The Board of Directors is actively working to build the capacity in both funding and partnerships with farmers and feeding agencies to expand SoSA's work into new areas over the next few years. United Methodist congregations across the United States will be integral to SoSA's growth, and the Virginia Conference has paved the way for relationships that now extend across the continent.

We're grateful for all the Virginia Conference congregations that join with the Society of St. Andrew through its spiritual life programs, including seasonal devotional materials, Vacation Bible School curriculum, and Bible studies. In 2022, 20 Virginia congregations participated in SoSA's "Abundance Orchard" VBS; 255 congregations used SoSA's Advent devotional resources, and 267 congregations utilized SoSA's Lenten devotions.

SoSA's longstanding Harvest of Hope mission workcamp program welcomed 114 participants to events at Occohanock on the Bay and Lynchburg, VA, where 38,968 pounds of vegetables were gleaned for hungry Virginians. Christ UMC Chincoteague, Franktown UMC, Grace UMC Parksley, Epworth UMC Exmore provided meals to Harvest of Hope participants, and Chester UMC, Bridgewater UMC, Providence UMC, Burke UMC, Korean UMC McLean, Korean UMC of Koinania, Rocky Mount UMC sent participants to 2024 Harvest of Hope events.

The Society of St. Andrew's mission fields are just that, fields and orchards. The need for volunteers throughout the year is great, and the opportunities are plentiful. Congregations that partner with SoSA have found the partnerships transformative, spurring deeper faith, greater support for local missions, and an abiding concern for those our Savior called "the least of these." With approval from the Annual Conference, the board nominates Sloan Lott, Steve Moore, and Houston Hemp to the Class of 2028.

—Lynette Johnson

THE CHILDREN AND FAMILY MINISTRY COUNCIL

After discerning the need to more fully equip, empower, and resource ministry leaders related to children and family ministries, the Children & Family Ministry Council was formed in the fall of 2024. The council began its work in early 2025 by collaborating with a ministry coach to discern the vision of the council and its immediate and long-term goals. This work of discernment is continuing as the council narrows down its scope of ways to support the ministry of local churches and leaders.

The Children & Family Ministry Council has discerned the following areas of focus: curriculum resources, volunteer training materials and workshops, recruitment strategies and templates, parent and caregiver resources, inter-church partnerships, coaching and mentorship programs, and ministry sustainability.

—Reneé Delgado, Children & Family Ministry Council Member

v v v

THE CONFERENCE NOMINATIONS TEAM

Chair:

Martha Stokes, Conference Lay Leader

Conference Leadership:

Dwayne Stinson, Director of Discipleship and Congregational Vitality

Jonathan Page, Director of Connection and Innovation

Monitors:

James Page, CELLC (Committee on Ethnic Local Church Concerns (formerly CEMCA))

Karen Robison, Commission on Disabilities

Lauren Wright, COSROW

District Representatives:

Albert Weal, Coastal Virginia District

VACANT, Living Waters District

Angie Hoen, Mission Rivers District

Bonnie-Karen Byrne, Mountain View District

Tarah Lee, Northern Virginia District

Jessica Jarrell, Shenandoah River District

Scotty Doyle, Three Notch'd District

Jonathan Greer, Valley Ridge District

Doris Douglas, At Large

The goal of the Conference Nominations Team is to carefully discern over individuals who can provide leadership and diverse skills to our boards. While discerning, the Conference Nominations Team must consider the needs of the boards to ensure that boards are properly filled, and representation is taken into consideration. This year, the Nominations Team has lifted up the following names for approval from the Annual Conference.

Church Development Team

Stephen Poore

Bayo Ogungbade

Kameron Wilds

Audrey Smith

Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries

Janet Henke

Missional Ministries Board

Ann Klotz

Board of Communications

Hung Su Lim

Brian Bachrach

Devon Earle

Bill McClung - Re-elect

Commission on Disabilities

Esther Agbosu
Gretchen Ward
Jair Serrano
Steven Greer

Council on Finance and Administration

Kelly Weiss

Committee on Rules

Tim Hazlett
Carlos Liceaga

Conference Trustees

JP Hong

Commission on Religion and Race

Anjana DePrewitt
Heather Gomez
Talina Beck
Lynda Moore
Heather Wray

VAUMC Foundation Board

Adam Greene
Angeline Hoen

BOARD OF ORDAINED MINISTRY

The work of the Board of Ordained Ministry (BOM) is guided by our three core values:

- 1. The Holy Spirit is at work in our practice of discernment**
- 2. The Whole Person is considered in our work with the candidates and clergy**
- 3. In A Rapidly Changing World, effective ministry leadership is needed in the pulpit and far beyond it.**

In July, the Center for Clergy Excellence welcomed Rev. Dr. Jason Stanley as the Director for Call and Candidacy. Under his leadership, the BOM held a training for all District Committees on Ordained Ministry and the first Discernment Day to engage a culture of call for lay and clergy ministry in the Annual Conference. In August, Officers of BOM traveled to Atlanta for training with other BOM leaders from across the denomination. The BOM Ethics Committee updated its Social Media Policy for Clergy, and the Conference staff developed a Social Media Policy for local churches and Preschools.

The Spiritual Vitality Committee worked with Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson in offering two Clergy Days Apart, one in the fall and one in the spring. BOM continues to offer scholarships for those seeking ordination as deacon or elder in the conference as well as for Course of Study and Continuing Education opportunities. New this year, Clergy Development Funds are available to support work with a certified spiritual director or coach.

This quadrennium, BOM downsized from 60 members to 40 members. After revising the Associate Membership process, BOM is excited to welcome two new Associate members at this annual conference. BOM continues to offer Simple Presence, a 20-minute contemplative prayer experience on Zoom at 6 am Monday through Friday, where the VA Conference, laity, clergy, cabinet, and staff are prayed over. Laity and clergy are welcome to join us.

BOM often receives questions from conference members regarding the process for credentialing clergy. This process is spelled out by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry and *The 2020/2024 United Methodist Book of Discipline*. BOM's task is not to vet candidates but to discern if their Divine calling is to ministry in The United Methodist Church. This process is not an easy one for two reasons: pastors are entrusted with people's lives at their most vulnerable moments and are ordained for lifelong service in the church, just as a professor is tenured. BOM members take their responsibility of credentialing as a holy privilege and calling as they serve you, the VA Conference, with prayer, faithfulness, and amazing grace. BOM continues to be amazed at the way God works in and through all involved in this credentialing process, and we give God all the glory.

We offer thanks for the hard work of the 8 dCOM members, BOM members, and the Center for Clergy Excellence, which supports and undergirds all our work. Thank you to Rev. Jessie S. Colwell, Rev. Dr. Jason Stanley, and Rev. Lyn Harding.

– Rev. Tammy L. Estep, Chair

Members of the Board of Ordained Ministry

3rd Quadrennium

David Bonney
 Alan Combs
 Blair Ellis (lay)
 Tammy L. Estep
 Stan Hargraves
 Marilyn Heckstall
 Shawn Kiger (lay)
 Mikang Kim
 Sarah Dumas Locke
 Lynda Moore
 Leigh Anne Taylor
 David Vaughan
 Neal Wise

2nd Quadrennium

Esther Agbosu
 Tracy Bass
 Adam Blagg
 Brian Brown
 Debbie Cali (lay)
 David Edinger (AM)
 Amy Grant
 Grace Sun-khil Han
 Teer Hardy
 Chad Herndon
 Janine Howard
 Keon Huh
 Seungsoo "RJ" Jun
 Michelle Kim
 Lauren Leggett (lay)
 Cynthia Lopynski (lay)
 Craig Newman
 Camille Pentsil
 Nancy Robinson
 Patty Slattum (lay)
 Bill Slingerland (lay)
 Jae Song
 Laura Stratton
 George M. Warner, Sr.
 Sarah Wastella
 Heather Wray

1st Quadrennium

Lisa McGehee
 Ryan LaRock
 Nathan Decker
 Morris Fleischer

COMMITTEE ON EPISCOPACY

The Committee on Episcopacy (COE) is responsible for the review and evaluation of the resident bishop as required by the **2020/2024 Book of Discipline** paragraph 636. A process for this review has been created and is used by all Conference COE's in the Southeastern Jurisdiction (SEJ). The Virginia Conference COE has met with Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson three times this year to engage in conversation around this process and discuss matters present in the Virginia Annual Conference and larger connection. The COE communicates parts of the results and insights of this review with the SEJ COE for use in their assignment process for 2025 - 2027.

The COE is focused on how we, with Bishop Sue and the Annual Conference move forward re imagining connectivity with clergy and laity together. We need to trust the Holy Spirit as we find new ways of doing church.

The Virginia COE is pleased with Bishop Sue's leadership and forward thinking and we are looking forward to another fruitful year of ministry and mission here in Virginia with Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson.

– Rev. Lindsey Baynham Freeman & Mr. Warren R. Harper, Chairs

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

During this past Conference year, The Board of Trustees undertook an initiative to centralize the management of properties in which the Conference has an interest. As a result, titles to closed churches and certain other properties that were held by old District entities, or in some cases still titled in the name of the trustees of the closed church, have been transferred to the Conference Trustees. Since the start of this initiative, and as of the end of April 2025:

- v Thirty-four properties have been transferred, valued at \$27,871,226.
- v Ten properties have been sold to third parties, generating proceeds of \$1,174,000.
- v As of the date of this report, we still have 33 additional properties that are in the queue to be transferred to the Trustees, having a total assessed value of \$22,884,260.00. Of these properties, 9 (having a total assessed value of \$12,436,320.00) are in the later stages of transfer to the Trustees.

We anticipate that by the date of Annual Conference most of these remaining properties will be transferred.

Each property that is received by the Board of Trustees is inspected and research is done to determine the value of the property and the market conditions in the surrounding area. Some of these properties have the potential to provide the Annual Conference with significant revenue streams. In those cases, we take full advantage of those opportunities. If a property does not have the opportunity to provide substantial income but may be able to address mission and ministry needs within the community, the Trustees will work closely with the Property Advisory Team (PAT) headed up by Rev. Amanda Garber, Director of Missional and Community Engagement. The PAT group will provide the Trustees with critical insights about missional opportunities for these properties.

If it is found that these properties have neither revenue producing potential nor mission/ministry uses, the Board of Trustees will then work with Wesley Community Development to sell these properties to third parties.

All proceeds from either revenue producing properties or the sale of properties will be managed by CFA. CFA has developed a policy of 80% of this income going toward building the Conference reserves and reducing the apportionment burden on our local churches. The remaining 20% will go toward providing grants to groups within the Annual Conference to develop missions and ministries throughout the Conference.

Given the substantial increase in real estate transactions, the Trustees now conduct monthly meetings, in addition to certain specially called meetings to deal with more urgent matters. Previously, we scheduled only two meetings per year. With the real estate services of Wesley CDC, the law firm of Williams Mullen, and new Trustees who add significantly to our real estate expertise and much more frequent meetings, we believe the Board of Trustees is equipped to manage its increased workload in a professional and efficient manner. The Board of Trustees takes very seriously our responsibility to be good stewards of the resources with which we have been blessed.

UNITED METHODIST-RELATED SCHOOLS

Ferrum College

Ferrum College was founded over 112 years ago by the Women’s Home Mission Society of the Virginia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church in rural Franklin County, nestled in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. The College prides itself on fostering personalized learning and close student-faculty relationships, providing an optimal environment for students to engage deeply with their studies and community.

The College offers a variety of undergraduate degrees in liberal arts and sciences, as well as select advanced degrees, and certifications in Career and Technical Education (CTE). Guided by its motto of “Not Self, But Others,” Ferrum College provides accessible and transformative educational opportunities to students who “enter with promise and leave with purpose.” Among our students, 62% are male, 86% are Pell Grant eligible, 98% receive tuition assistance, 34% are minority students, and 48% are the first in their families to pursue higher education.

Demonstrating its continued commitment to innovation, in February 2025, the College received approval for provisional membership in NCAA Division II, making Ferrum College the only institution to undergo an expedited membership process that typically spans multiple years. This achievement allows Ferrum College’s student-athletes to receive athletic scholarships, marking a new chapter for the College’s athletics program starting in fall 2025. As part of this transition, the Panthers will join Conference Carolinas, whose philosophy: “Champions in Body, Mind, and Soul,” promotes academic achievement and spiritual growth as well as athleticism, bolstering the College’s commitment to providing balanced, holistic opportunities for all students.

Ferrum College is also home to the only private liberal arts program in Virginia offering a four-year degree in Agricultural Sciences and teaching licensure in vocational agriculture. The College’s working farm, which includes livestock, allows students to gain hands-on experience that is invaluable for those pursuing veterinary or other advanced degree programs. Our agricultural programs in crop science, horticulture, and animal science, as well as our long-standing water quality monitoring project on Smith Mountain Lake, provide students with practical, real-world experiences that set them apart in their careers.

Among Ferrum College’s proudest achievements are its unique, comprehensive offerings for students. Our Crime Scene House and Wet Cadaver Lab give criminal justice and biology students direct access to industry-level training, preparing them for careers in forensic science and healthcare. Additionally, Ferrum College’s Environmental Science and Sustainability Programs, the second the oldest in the country, provide students with extensive hands-on research opportunities.

In addition to academic excellence, Ferrum College takes great pride in its commitment to mental health and wellness. As a JED Campus, Ferrum College offers a robust set of mental health resources, including counseling and student engagement programs, to help students build resilience and thrive academically and personally. Our innovative nursing program also admits students directly into the program, eliminating the stress of reapplication and offering supportive pathways to degree completion.

Ferrum College’s academic programs are complemented by a thriving arts and culture scene, with our Orchestra Appalachia and Bluegrass Brass Band offering students unique opportunities to engage with the arts and music of the region. These programs are part of Ferrum College’s broader commitment to preserving the Blue Ridge region’s heritage, particularly through the Blue Ridge Institute and Museum, which houses the Virginia State Center for Blue Ridge Folklore and hosts the annual Blue Ridge Folklife Festival during the fourth weekend in October.

The College remains an economic, cultural, and academic pillar in the Franklin County community, providing essential educational opportunities for the next generation of leaders. Through initiatives like the Panther Promise, which offers free tuition to Virginia residents from households with less than \$65,000 income, and our Earn-to-Learn Matched Savings Scholarship, Ferrum College continues to expand access to higher education for students who might otherwise face financial barriers.

As Ferrum College moves into a new era of NCAA Division II athletics and continues to expand its unique, hands-on academic offerings, the College remains steadfast in its mission to serve not just the students it educates, but the broader community it enriches. The College's commitment to providing a well-rounded education grounded in faith that balances academic rigor, community service, and personal development will remain its guiding principle for years to come.

Mirta M. Martin, Ph.D., President

Randolph-Macon Academy

Randolph-Macon Academy holds the unique status of being the only United Methodist affiliated secondary school in the Virginia Conference. Consistent with our 133 years of commitment to developing young people in mind, body, and spirit to lead and positively impact the world they inhabit, R-MA continues to evolve and adapt for modern world realities while standing on the unchanging foundation of God and holding fast to our covenant with the United Methodist Church.

In a boarding school environment, we are uniquely equipped to share all aspects of life together, including academic and spiritual formation, intergenerational relationships, sports, clubs, meals, prayers, worship, community, and fellowship.

This year, 275 students plus 60 faculty and staff attended chapel service every week. Scripture reading, proclamation, song, prayer, and sacraments are part of the regular formative practices. 35-40 students voluntarily lead and/or attend weekly Bible study. 45 students are enrolled in World Religions class. 25 students and adults participated in a retreat and service project at Camp Highroads that has resulted in deepening relationships.

In the interfaith arena, 15 Muslim students were actively supported and accommodated during the holy month of Ramadan. Muslim students also participated in weekly Isha prayers and helped educate non-Muslim students about their faith practices. Approximately 5% of R-MA's student body is Jewish, Buddhist, or Hindu. The community held educational and ceremonial events for Diwali, Holi, and Bodhi Day. Our Jewish students observe Yom Kipur and Passover with a local Jewish congregation, and also educate non-Jewish students on other holy days, observances, and faith practices during our weekly chapel services. Participating in interfaith dialogue is a regular part of campus life.

Academically, 100% of our students were accepted into college or university, to include 14 appointments to military academies. Our students are globally, racially, socioeconomically, ethnically, and religiously diverse, representing 18 countries and every major world religion. Academic and spiritual formation, along with character and leadership development are embedded into the fabric of R-MA. Similar to our United Methodist roots, we understand that formation must always be intentional, relational, and immersive. As such, we create structures and rhythms to ensure that happens. We believe the United Methodist Church should enhance its support for mission and ministry at R-MA, as R-MA commits fully to our covenant, discipleship, academic excellence, and fruitful ministry.

—David C. Wesley, President, Brigadier General, USAF, Retired

Randolph-Macon College

In our 195th year, Randolph-Macon College in Ashland, Virginia, just north of Richmond, remains steadfastly committed to a mission of “developing the minds and character of each student,” with rigorous academics, opportunities for learning beyond the classroom, and advantaged by an exceptional faculty and staff.

The College welcomed our largest freshman class ever last fall. The 2024-25 academic year opened with nearly 1650 undergraduates and 44 graduate students, also an RMC record. About 80% of RMC students live on-campus, and we maintain a student-faculty ratio of just over 10 to 1 with an average class size of 16 students. This scale affords our students remarkable personal attention, paired with an intentional career pathways program. RMC has earned a strong reputation for excellent career preparation, including a national top 20 ranking for career services by the Princeton Review for four years in a row.

The year has been a busy one, including RMC's search for our 16th president, who will succeed me after my retirement this summer. We are pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Michael Hill, who will join RMC after he concludes his service as President of the Chautauqua Institution, the amazing community/organization in western New York that cele-

brates, encourages and studies the arts and humanities, treating them as integral to all of learning. A haven for learning, reflection, and connection, its offerings include a wide variety of services of worship and programs that express Chautauqua's Christian heritage as well as its interfaith commitment. Of interest, Chautauqua too has Methodist roots as a one-time teaching camp for Sunday School teachers. Dr. Hill brings to RMC a wealth of non-profit experience both inside and outside higher education.

In anticipation of leadership change, the College engaged in two important planning efforts this year focused on our future. One is an agile strategic plan, which aims to help strengthen our historic focus on the post-graduate outcomes of our students. Several programs are in development as part of that effort, including a new major in data science which was announced this winter. We are completing a refresh of our 2009 Campus Master Plan, which outlines our vision for our campus buildings and facilities. The latter effort is especially significant given our significant increase in enrollment.

We certainly value our relationship with the Virginia UMC and demonstrate this commitment in many ways: Foremost is our pre-ministerial program, anchored by our generous A. Purnell Bailey Scholarships for those students discerning a call to Christian ministry. We are also honored to be home to a significant part of the Va UMC Conference Archives in our library. Indeed, we invite interested parties to visit these Archives and discover many amazing historical pieces. We also value two special programs for high school students that continued during the summer of 2024: Convergence: A Youth Theology Institute on Faith and Science and Pathways to Science. Convergence helps teens explore how Christian faith and the sciences can inform and inspire one another while Pathways provides opportunities for rising sophomore Hispanic girls to meet scientists and explore STEM related activities.

Duncan Memorial UMC is located immediately adjacent to our campus and serves as our College Chapel. Duncan offers a number of worship, service, and leadership opportunities to our campus. The Church hosts the weekly RMC Student Fellowship, visits our college cafeteria following worship once a month, and invites students to join in opportunities such as the twice weekly Child Watch for adult English classes, service projects at Westview on the James, Rise Against Hunger, and more. A dedicated group of RMC students and DMUMC members also regularly visit the local nursing homes monthly to lead Bingo Games and social time together. We also visited on Christmas Morning to walk the halls and sing Christmas Carols. Duncan Memorial has also re-started their Duncan Buddies program which matches RMC students to individuals/families in the church for monthly activities and a supportive relationship.

As the oldest continuously operating Methodist college in America, Randolph-Macon College greatly appreciates our historic and ongoing relationship to the Virginia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church and the mutual resources and support that we offer one another. Moreover, this important relationship has been of significant value to me in my RMC presidency, a position I have been deeply honored to hold for 19 and ½ years.

— Robert Lindgren, President

Trustees of Randolph-Macon College, Ashland, VA

As of May 1, 2024

Erica Glasper Andrews, Laurel, MD
 Desmond A. Baker, Wilmington, DE
 Reginald M. Barley, Richmond, VA
 Everett B. Birdsong, Suffolk, VA
 J. Haywood Blakemore IV, Charlottesville, VA
 Gilbert T. Bland, Virginia Beach, VA
 Yvonne W. Brandon Ed.D, Richmond, VA
 Macon F. Brock, III, Newport Beach, CA
 L. Preston Bryant, Jr., Richmond, VA
 Grace Burke Carroll, Oakton, VA
 J. Scott Colley, Charlottesville, VA
 William A. Davis, Jr. Rev., Richmond, VA
 Kelly K. Domson, M.D., Ashburn, VA
 Malinda E. Dunn, Alexandria, VA

Alice Collins Fruth, Richmond, VA
F. Gillis Green, Esq., Towson, MD
Richard M. Hamrick III, M.D., Richmond, VA
Thomas M. Hubbard, M.D., Ashland, VA
Dexter C. Hurt, Richmond, VA*
R. Earl Johnson, Henrico, VA
Yancey S. Jones, Ashland, VA*
William B. Kilduff, Esq., Richmond, VA
Sabra L. Klein, Ph.D., Washington, DC
Robert B. Lambeth, Jr., Forrest, VA
Robert R. Lindgren, Esq., Ashland, VA
Stephen P. Long, M.D., Richmond, VA
David G. Meleski, Manakin Sabot, VA
Thornton C. Melton, III, Richmond, VA
Thomas L. Millner, Monticello, GA
R. Geoffrey Neville, Jr., Atlanta, GA
Allison M. O'Brien, Richmond, VA
Annette C. Paul, Ashland, VA
John B. Peters, Charlottesville, VA
Susan P. Quinn, Richmond, VA
Graham B. Rashkind, Richmond, VA
Mary Lynn Reed, Washington, DC
Louis E. Renjel, Jr., Washington, DC
Michael R. Roberson, Richmond, VA
Susan D. Schick, Marion Station, PA
J. Edward Spence, Chapel Hill, NC*
Linwood A. Staub, Doylestown, PA
Cindy Szadokierski, Southport, NC
R. Randolph Weis, Henrico, VA
R. Douglas White, Richmond, VA
Katherine G. Whitehead, Richmond, VA

**New board members-need to be confirmed at Annual Conference*

Shenandoah University

Shenandoah University is celebrating its SESQUICENTENNIAL, and we are larger and stronger than ever! After 150 years of impact, our mission at Shenandoah remains steadfast: “Shenandoah University educates and inspires individuals to be critical, reflective thinkers; lifelong learners; and ethical, compassionate citizens who are committed to making responsible contributions within a community, a nation and the world.”

Our budget and enrollment continue to be strong and growing amid the shifting financial and political landscape. In 2024, Shenandoah welcomed its largest freshman class and its largest entering class of graduate students ever. As well, this year SU received its largest and second largest gifts ever (\$20million and \$10million); we are so grateful for the support for our students and our mission!

At SU, we take pride in our alumni who run local non-profit organizations that serve people experiencing poverty and housing insecurity; perform regionally and nationally on Broadway and at other venues; and serve as bankers, pharmacists, clergy, nurses, teachers, therapists, information technology specialists, cybersecurity analysts, and all manner of professionals across our world - many of whom are also caring for their children, parents and community. Shenandoah's six schools, in a distinct variety of fields, continue to equip our students to meet the needs of today while empowering them to shape the

future. Our newest programs are an undergraduate Engineering major and two master's programs: one in Speech Language Pathology and the other in Clinical Mental Health Counseling.

The Hub for Innovators, Veterans, and Entrepreneurs (HIVE) has transformed Winchester's historic Hazel-Pruitt Armory into a cutting-edge technology hub and innovation accelerator for tech startups, business expansion, and relocation. It aims to drive economic development in the Northern Shenandoah Valley, supply a well-trained workforce, and establish the region as a leading center for emerging technologies like augmented and virtual reality. When exploring the halls and rooms of the HIVE, expect to encounter students who have served our country in the armed forces alongside those whose adult lives are only beginning to take shape. The HIVE provides an exciting atmosphere in which all work together to create a brighter future for people near and far.

Shenandoah's unique Global Citizenship Project (GCP) is 20 years old this year! Thanks to a special bequest from Dr. Nancy Larrick Crosby, this program was created to remove the top three barriers to international travel: financial resources, time off to travel, and anxiety over leaving the country. GCP has sent hundreds of students, staff, faculty, and trustees to destinations on six continents to create relationships across difference while learning about the local culture. We are honored to hear all of the stories of our travelers, especially those whose financial situations would have prevented them from such adventures as those facilitated by GCP.

The Center for Civic Engagement (CCE) registered 167 people, mostly students, to vote ahead of the 2024 election. CCE then provided transportation for 65 to vote on Election Day. In cooperation with the Office of Spiritual Life, supported by other campus offices and Professor Emeritus, Rev. Dr. John Copenhaver, a group of students attended the Virginia Inter-faith Center for Public Policy's Student Advocacy Day in Richmond. They spoke with legislators and attended information sessions about issues facing Virginians while learning about the legislative process and their places within it. The Office of Spiritual Life is launching a monthly evening Christian worship service in addition to its myriad opportunities for spiritual growth and connection among those of varying backgrounds.

I remain grateful for the support and prayers for Shenandoah University from the Virginia Annual Conference, along with its districts and congregations. We are the "Big Little University Rising," with a passion for education and service rooted in our shared Wesleyan heritage. It's a great day to be a Hornet!

—Tracy Fitzsimmons, President

Virginia Wesleyan University

VWU continues to garner national recognition as one of the most innovative National Liberal Arts Colleges in the country. As a proud member of the highly selective New American Colleges and Universities (NACU) collaborative, VWU participates in initiatives such as the Washington Internship Institute, providing students with exceptional experiential learning opportunities in the nation's capital. In 2024, total enrollment across all programs and locations—from Virginia Beach to Tokyo, Japan—reached 5,075 learners, including 1,674 students on the traditional Virginia Beach campus. Despite national trends of declining enrollments and rising higher education costs, Virginia Wesleyan's resilience remains unwavering, reaching more students than ever before through a combination of traditional, non-traditional, and international programs. Affordability remains a top priority, with the University's multi-faceted approach including multiple years of frozen tuition costs, expanded donor-funded Work & Learn opportunities, a fifth-year tuition guarantee, and new concurrent enrollment programs with Virginia's community colleges. Under the leadership of President Scott D. Miller, one of the nation's longest-serving college presidents, Virginia Wesleyan has continued to demonstrate remarkable creativity and growth despite regional and demographic challenges.

Virginia Wesleyan's national reputation for excellence was reaffirmed this year with multiple accolades. VWU has been designated as a national liberal arts college and a "Higher Access" institution, honoring our commitment to student success, access, and opportunity in the Carnegie Classification. The University again earned the prestigious Tree Campus Higher Education recognition from the Arbor Day Foundation and was named one of the Top Green Colleges by *The Princeton Review*. *Washington Monthly* ranked VWU among the top liberal arts colleges in the nation, recognizing its contributions to the public good, Pell Grant performance, and service commitment. VWU was also included in The Princeton Review's Best 389 Colleges list and *U.S. News & World Report's* rankings of Top National Liberal Arts Colleges. Additionally, Virginia Wesleyan was designated a Voter Friendly Campus for 2025–26, further affirming its commitment to civic engagement and student

leadership.

Innovation in academic programming continues to distinguish Virginia Wesleyan. The University has launched major new initiatives including The Athenaeum in the H.C. Hofheimer II Library, a reimagined academic hub set to open summer 2025, and the Jane P. Batten and David R. Black School for International Studies, a partnership with Lakeland University and Lakeland University Japan offering dual degrees and globally focused leadership training. In collaboration with the Urban League of Hampton Roads, VWU established the Center for Urban Leadership Education, which houses the Incarcerated Persons ReEntry Program, aimed at reducing recidivism by providing degree-seeking opportunities for incarcerated individuals. Virginia Wesleyan has also joined the American Association of Colleges and Universities' Institute on AI, Pedagogy, and the Curriculum, positioning the University at the forefront of addressing artificial intelligence's evolving role in higher education. Expanding graduate offerings, VWU launched a fully online Master of Arts in Applied Psychology, a flexible 30-credit-hour program designed to equip students with real-world psychological insights for careers in nonprofits, corporate human resources, and government agencies.

New partnerships, such as the collaboration with Virginia Christian College to provide online general education classes, further expand VWU's impact on degree completion for a broad range of students. Virginia Wesleyan has also become a member of the Council of Independent Colleges' Network for Vocation in Undergraduate Education (NetVUE), strengthening its commitment to helping students discover purposeful career pathways. The University continues to expand non-degree and professional development offerings through its Global Campus, with low- and no-cost workshops developed in partnership with Virginia Beach Economic Development. In collaboration with WHRO and the Batten Environmental Education Initiative, VWU launched *ENVS 103 Introduction to the Environment: Virginia*, an online course available at no cost for incoming first-year students. This no-cost course helps VWU fulfill its mission to foster the next generation of environmental stewards. VWU's new Navy ROTC program adds to its growing portfolio of leadership and service opportunities for students.

Campus enhancements this year include the dedication of G. Robert Aston, Jr. Hall at Chesapeake Bay Academy (CBA), further strengthening the long-standing partnership between VWU and CBA, and the naming of The Honors Village Residence Hall in honor of Anne B. Shumadine, recognizing her lasting contributions to the University. Construction is advancing on the Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art (Virginia MOCA) at Virginia Wesleyan, with completion expected by January 2026. Together with the Susan S. Goode Fine and Performing Arts Center, Susan T. Beverly Hall, and Louise Eggleston Hall, Virginia MOCA will complete the David R. Goode Arts Complex. This monumental addition further establishes Virginia Wesleyan as a cultural and educational leader in the region.

The Robert Nusbaum Center, a national niche program of VWU, continues to serve as the hub for civil dialogue, civic learning, and community engagement. Through programs designed to cultivate mutual understanding, build civic skills, and empower individuals to become agents of positive change, the Center remains vital to VWU's mission of preparing students for leadership in a complex world.

Religious life on campus is vibrant as Campus Ministries serves students of all faiths, interests, and backgrounds. VWU students, faculty, and staff are active members both on campus and at our partner congregation, Haygood United Methodist Church. The donor-funded Boyd Fellows program provides opportunities for student leaders to assist with the administrative, visionary, and programmatic aspects of religious life. Early assurance agreements with the Boston University School of Theology, Candler School of Theology at Emory University, and the Duke University Divinity School offer pathways for students pursuing careers in ministry.

—Dr. Scott D. Miller, President

SCHOOLS OF THEOLOGY

Candler School of Theology

Since 1914, Candler School of Theology at Emory University has educated faithful and creative leaders for the church's ministries throughout the world. An official seminary of The United Methodist Church, Candler holds true to the Wesleyan value of ecumenical openness, welcoming students from more than 40 denominations. Our student body reflects the diversity and breadth of the Christian faithful, with an enrollment of 416 from 13 countries, 41 states, 32 annual conferences, and 43% persons of color. We see this diversity as a blessing, enriching our life together and providing the perfect context for training for relevant ministry in the 21st century—ministry that cultivates community across difference, welcomes all to contribute and belong, and embodies Christ's love in and among us.

Candler offers six degrees (Master of Divinity, Master of Theological Studies, Master of Arts in Religion and Leadership, Master of Religion and Public Life, Master of Theology, Doctor of Ministry), most of which are available in hybrid or online formats. Response to our hybrid-format Master of Divinity, blending online classes and in-person intensives, continues to be strong: 63% of 2024's MDiv entering class chose the hybrid model. Nearly a quarter of MDiv students participate in Candler's Teaching Parish program, earning contextual education credit by serving as student pastors in local churches. And our proven DMin program—with a near 90% completion rate—is 90% online. These flexible options along with Candler's recognized academic excellence and hands-on learning opportunities are opening possibilities for more people to follow God's call to ministry.

Generous financial aid is a top priority for Candler. In 2024-2025, we are on track to award nearly \$6.5 million in scholarship support across all degree programs. All MDiv students receive scholarship support, and those who are certified candidates for ordained ministry in the UMC receive full-tuition scholarships. Plus, a remarkable gift this year of \$20 million from the O. Wayne Rollins Foundation promises to have a transformative impact on the school and future students alike, fueling a considerable expansion of our scholarship program and reducing financial barriers to high-quality theological education.

Several programs beyond our formal degrees make Candler a hub of Christian learning for an expanding audience. Those who are not seeking a graduate degree can engage in learning through The Candler Foundry, which offers in-person and online short courses, events, and certificate programs; the United Methodist Course of Study for educating licensed local pastors; the Candler Center for Christian Leadership for refining business skills of United Methodist leaders; and La Mesa Academy, offering a graduate certificate in theological studies via a two-year hybrid program with courses in Spanish, English, and Korean.

Candler continued to strengthen the already robust United Methodist presence among our faculty with four key appointments this year: Geordan Hammond, associate professor of Methodist and Wesleyan studies; Soren Hessler, assistant professor in the practice of leadership and administration; Jennifer Quigley, assistant professor of New Testament; and Bishop Hope Morgan Ward, who joined us as bishop-in-residence following the retirement of Bishop Larry Goodpaster.

Jonathan Strom became dean of Candler in August 2024, when former dean Jan Love returned to the faculty. Strom has served on Candler's faculty since 1997 as professor of church history, with nearly a decade as senior associate dean of faculty and academic affairs, and a number of years as director of international initiatives. He is committed to nurturing the school's deep connection with The United Methodist Church.

Candler is strengthened by your prayers, partnership, and support. Thank you for the countless ways you advance this vital ministry in the life of the church. We invite you to visit us online at candler.emory.edu and follow us on social media to stay informed of all we offer throughout the year.

—Office of Communications, Candler School of Theology, Emory University

Duke Divinity School

Through God's sustaining grace and faithfulness, Duke Divinity School continues to welcome students from across the nation and around the world to be trained for ministries ranging from rural church pastorates to hospital and prison chaplains to community service leaders to theological educators. In 2024, we were joined by 224 students from 41 U.S. states and the District of Columbia as well as new students who hold either primary or secondary citizenship in 11 other countries. The Master of Divinity program gained 108 new students, including 62 residential students (up from 54 the year before) and 46 in the hybrid program. The Master of Arts in Christian Practice enrolled eight new students; the Doctor of Ministry, 39 (up from 22 last year); Master of Theology, 10; Master of Theological Studies, 27; the Doctor of Theology welcomed five new students to campus. The Certificate in Theology and Health Care welcomed five residential students to campus and 21 to the hybrid program.

This has been a year of centennial celebrations for Duke University and The Duke Endowment. DDS was honored to participate in a Founders' Weekend chapel service, held in Duke Chapel, in which both United Methodist Church bishops in North Carolina (Bishop Connie Shelton and Bishop Ken Carter) participated in leading the service, along with Dean Colón-Emeric. Divinity students and alumni contributed prayers and music, and of particular note were three women in our Master of Theology program who offered prayers in Mandarin, Hindi, and Korean.

Duke Divinity School continues to invest in ways to support Methodist leadership and pastoral formation. Our D.Min. program welcomed two new cohorts, one in Traditional Leadership and one in Missional Leadership, with support from the Parish Ministry Fund and The Duke Endowment. These 39 students are strengthening their capacity for leadership, establishing new faith communities, and meeting the challenges confronting churches and communities.

Master of Divinity students in the UMC had the opportunity in the spring 2024 semester to enroll in a course designed to prepare them to be observers at the UMC General Conference. Students met weekly with DDS faculty who are ordained elders in the UMC and nearly half a dozen bishops and denominational leaders. As one student said: "It is a time when we hold fast to our convictions and identify what is unique to the United Methodist Church. What is our role, currently and in the future? It's amazing: our mission is to make disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. I am excited about my ministry journey and the future of the UMC."

Duke Divinity continues to build on our connection to Methodist churches around the world through a formal partnership with Methodist Theological University in Seoul, South Korea. This agreement, signed on Sept. 21, 2024, supports the creation of pathways for the exchange of students, faculty, and academic programming.

Two scholars joined our faculty this year: Aaron Griffith, assistant professor of American church history, and Kevin Hart, Jo Rae Wright University Distinguished Professor, with a joint appointment in the Duke University department of English. William Turner Jr., James T. and Alice Mead Cleland Professor Emeritus of the Practice of Preaching, received the Duke University Medal for Distinguished Meritorious Service, the highest honor bestowed by the university.

Duke Divinity commemorated the 50th anniversary of the Women's Center at the school with a guest preacher and celebration dinner. With a \$5 million gift from The Duke Endowment, we are strengthening our Office of Black Church Studies through recruiting a senior scholar and supporting academic, theological research. A \$1.25 million grant from Lilly Endowment Inc., part of their Nurturing Children through Worship and Prayer Initiative, will help launch a Duke Divinity program, "Let the Children Come," to study how congregations more fully and intentionally engage children in intergenerational corporate worship and prayer practices.

Duke Divinity School continues to be grateful for our ongoing participation in The United Methodist Church and partnership with this annual conference. We look forward to our ongoing work with you as we join the leading of God's Spirit in the task of preparing people for Christian ministry. To learn more about Duke Divinity School, please visit our website at www.divinity.duke.edu.

– *Edgardo Colón-Emeric, Dean of Duke Divinity School*

Gammon Theological Seminary

GAMMON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY is the only Historically Black Theological Institution (HBTI) of The United Methodist Church. Gammon's Mission is to help prepare for the practice of Christian ministry and public leadership individuals who understand their vocation as working in partnership with God in forming a just and generative world for all.

GTS is currently an "extended unit" of the Interdenominational Theological Center. As a constituent member of the ITC who is accredited through the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), GTS has conferred degrees in partnership with the ITC for Gammon Theological Seminary graduates since 1959. Gammon Theological Seminary seeks separate accreditation through SACSCOC and the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada (ATS).

We are excited to share Academic and Operational updates for 2024.

- v In June 2024, we hired a world-renowned theologian and scholar, Dr. Renita J. Weems, as our Chief Academic Officer.
- v This Fall 2024, we launched state-of-the-art renovations to the Gammon building. The renovations transformed the facility into a place for four in-person class sessions, upgrading all meeting spaces with state-of-the-art technology and furnishings.
- v In September 2024, the Board of Trustees of Gammon Theological Seminary approved the submission of our application to begin the SACSCOC Accreditation process. This historic decision included Gammon launching our Independent MDIV degree program in September 2024.

Here are a few of this year's ministry and fund development highlights.

- v In Spring 2024, Gammon hosted our 2nd Annual Student Scholarship Fundraiser Golf Tournament, which received \$70,000 in donations toward the scholarship fund.
- v The Rev. Walter H. McKelvey Endowed Scholarship The fund, which was launched by Dr. Loretta F. McKelvey (wife of the late Rev. McKelvey) and Dr. Walter Kimbrough, continues to grow with matching gifts in partnership with the South Carolina United Methodist Foundation.
- v In June 2024, the Florida Conference's Rev. Geraldine McClellan Endowed Scholarship Fund, which is now fully endowed at the Florida United Methodist Foundation, continued to grow with donations for 2024. Now, the fund balance exceeds \$130,000.00, and Dr. Geraldine McClellan was honored at our 2024 Founder's Day/Pastors and Leaders Conference Gala banquet with our Icon of Excellence Award.
- v Gammon hosted the Ebony Exploration Event for 75 young adults under the age of 35. The students explored their sense of call and vocational discernment.
- v In December 2024, Gammon celebrated our 141st Founder's Day and Pastors and Leaders Conference. We hosted over three hundred people attending workshops (in person and virtual) and our Scholarship Gala Dinner at IMPACT Church in Atlanta, GA.
- v Gammon received two \$10,000 donations for two new endowed funds from Dr. James H. Salley, in honor of his parents in the South Carolina Conference, and from Rev. Dr. Michael McQueen, District Superintendent for the North Georgia Central North District.

—Dr. Candace M. Lewis, President | CEO

Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary

Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary continues to live into its mission of *Forming courageous leaders in the way of Jesus to cultivate communities of justice, compassion, and hope...for the thriving of the Church and the healing of the world.* We do this work in partnership with the annual conferences of the United Methodist Church and other partners who share our values. Now in our 172nd year of ministry to the church, the academy, and the world, Garrett is a strong, growing, thriving community of faith and learning that represents the fullness of the global church's witness.

During this past academic year, Garrett welcomed its largest entering class in over a decade for a fifth straight year, with 135 new students, and a current enrollment of 324 students representing 38 states and 24 nations from across the globe. We continue to see growth in our student body from Asia, Africa, and Latin America, adding to an already richly diverse student body. While our denominational diversity also continues to grow, we also proudly welcomed growth in our United Methodist students who constitute more than half of our student body. Our faculty also reflect this regional and global diversity, with fully half originating from nations outside the United States.

Our growth in recent years continues to reflect patterns seen across theological education, mainly in distance and on-line learners. For the first time in our history, distance learners in the entering class outnumbered residential students. This has allowed for truly global learning spaces that have enriched our conversations and our overall learning environment. We're blessed to have the world represented in our classrooms, which also impacts how our faculty teach, what they research, and for whom.

Over the last year Garrett has also been blessed by multiple major grants to fund faculty research and institutional priorities. A major grant is funding the work of our Center for Ecological Regeneration, allowing the seminary to partner with local congregations in the Midwest to equip them to respond to climate change in their communities and the disproportionate impact it tends to have on the poor and local economies. Another major grant is funding work in our Centro Raíces Latinas to strengthen Hispanic-Latiné pastoral leaders and congregations, helping clergy and communities build institutional capacity and expand their ministries. Yet another grant is helping to expand the reach and impact of our Garrett Collective, our lifelong learning and resource platform that seeks to make theological education accessible and affordable to a significantly broader audience.

Garrett's world-class faculty continue developing curricular innovations that are responsive to the church's growing needs, while also contributing a significant body of scholarly work to their respective fields. They are also partnering with annual conferences and local churches in delivering much needed programming for leadership development and faith formation, an expanding focus of our Strategic Initiatives and Partnerships division. Garrett is proud to be a United Methodist institution, and proud to continue to deepen its partnership and programming with annual conferences around the globe.

RETIRED CLERGY HOUSING CORPORATION

The Virginia Annual Conference in 1932 took to heart Galatians, 6:10 "So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith." The Conference realized that many of our retired clergy needed attractive, affordable housing and Retired Clergy Housing Corporation was established. Through the years, the number of properties has changed but the mission is still the same "to provide attractive, affordable housing to the needful retired clergy of the Virginia Annual Conference who qualify."

Due to the great work of the conference pension program, the RCHC Board has expanded the definition of needful to include financial, physical and emotional support. The majority of our 19 properties are accessible to people with disabilities. Therefore, this ministry has opened itself to retired clergy families dealing with accessibility-related housing needs.

The Shepherd's Fund assisted one home in North Chesterfield to be renovated in order to accommodate the needs of its new residents. With assistance from the Association of Retired Ministers and Spouses (ARMS) and the Shepherd's Fund, we were able to replace carpeting in one residence with flooring. This will provide greater mobility and a sense of stability for one resident who now depends on a rolling walker. In addition, our resident, Rev. Laughton Corr, earned his heavenly

reward. Our thoughts and prayers continue to be with his wife, Ruby.

The RCHC budget is a faith budget. The rental income does not cover our budget. We depend on donations from individuals, churches, and organizations. This is why I am asking you to participate in our Covenant of Gratitude.

The Covenant of Gratitude requests a commitment of a \$1 minimum per commissioned Provisional Elder and Deacon at this Annual Conference session. With the ever-increasing cost of providing support, I am asking you to consider a gift of \$10 per commissioned Provisional Elder and Deacon at this Annual Conference. Your ongoing support is important to meet the needs of those we serve.

I also invite you to make RCHC a part of your estate planning. If you are interested in learning more about how to support this mission, please contact Rev. Charles Wickham at 804 474 8724 or email him at cwickham@pinnacleliving.org and he will be happy to meet you.

On behalf of the RCHC Board of Directors, I thank you in advance for any assistance you give. All the hard work is so worthwhile when you hear a resident say, “Thank you for the blessing of this wonderful home!” Our clergy and their families have given themselves to the service of God and what an honor to now help support them with housing.

—Mahood Fonville, RCHC Board of Directors, Chair

PREACHERS’ RELIEF SOCIETY

The Preachers’ Relief Society has been a ministry to the clergy of the Virginia Annual Conference since 1870. The sole purpose is to assist clergy families who are facing emergency financial needs.

If in need, clergy, retired and active, their widows and widowers should apply for help through their District Superintendent. The Superintendent will forward the request to the Society with a recommendation as to how large a grant should be awarded. Each request is responded to immediately in what the Society believes is appropriate after it has carefully evaluated the crisis and also considered the financial resources of the Society. All grants given are confidential. The recipients, of course, are free to disclose whatever they wish.

The Society welcomes contributions. In recent years these have been small in number. Fortunately, the Society’s ability to provide grants has been sustained by the returns on its investments. The Mercadante Riggan Wealth Management Group of Davenport and Company currently serves as the Society’s investment advisors. Those wishing to contribute to this ministry may contact our treasurer, Katherine Kidwell at kbkidwell@msn.com.

The current directors of the Society are: Robert F. Cofield, Jr., president; Edward D. Lilly, vice-president; Clark D. Cundiff, secretary; Katherine Kidwell, treasurer; Esther Agbosu; Gary Chiaverotti; Peter Griffin, Scott M. Rimer and James S. Mathews.

—Robert F. Cofield Jr., President

ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED MINISTERS (ARMS)

ARMS is a fellowship for clergy (including deacons and local pastors,) spouses, widows, and widowers of ministers in their retired years. But don’t be fooled. ARMS members are not rocking away their retirement years. We want to uplift pre-retirees, empower their ministries, and share institutional memories of the Virginia Conference.

For the newly retired, we would be delighted if you attended our Fall 2025 retreat. We will be at the lovely Eagle Eire Retreat Center near Lynchburg, Virginia, this year. We are grateful to the Virginia Conference Board of Pensions for offering financial support to ARMS. We would be delighted for suggestions for future events, such as learning events, mission projects, storytelling festivals, and how to widen the circle of fellowship.

—Dorothy McNeer O’Quinn

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The History Update Committee is continuing its work on preparing an updated history of the Virginia Conference focusing on the last 70 years. A committee of some 15 persons and other volunteers have been drafting chapters on selected topics important for telling the story. Some drafts are completed and our goal is to complete all drafts by November 25, 2025. We will be looking for editorial review by persons familiar with the respective topics and the assistance of a general editor yet to be identified. We expect that our project will be digital in format so as to allow for flexibility in content together with the possible publication of an abbreviated print version. Some funds have been made available to help with the financing of the project.

– Jim Atheran, *Chairman*

Nominations for 2025 Annual Conference Virginia United Methodist Conference Historical Society Trustees 2025-2026

Officers for 2025-26

President: Mike Browder
Secretary: Barbara Lewis
Historians: Stephanie Davis and Laurie Preston

Vice President: David Meyers
Treasurer: Wayne Snead
Nominations Chair: Jim Smith

CLERGY	LAITY
Evelyn Archer-Taminger	Mary Ashton Athearn
W. James Athearn	Robert S. Brock
Mark Brown	Ann Callendar
Michael Browder, President	Thelma Crowder
Carlton Casey	Mark Day
Linda E. F. Crabbs	Linda Ennis
Roger Dowdy	Jesse Fanshaw
Raymond Edmonds Jr.	Nina Frederick
Carl Ennis	Gerald Gordon
Dwala Ferrell	Ann Keeling
Kendra Grimes	Jack King
Jerry John	Audrey Lewis
Bruce Johnson	Myra P. Lindsey
Seonyoung Kim	David Meyer
Barbara Lewis	Brenda NeSmith
Samuel NeSmith	Kait Priest
Patrick Pillow	Laurie Preston
Wayne Rickman	Marilyn Riddle
James (Jim) Smith, Nominations Chair	JoEllen Fulk Smith
Arthur (Art) D. Thomas	Betty Ann Spiers
William (Bill) Wade	Bobby Spiers
Daniel Wray	Jon D. Vrana
Cabinet Representativ	Kathi Hughes Wise
	Neal Wise

Stephen Mansfield, Emeritus

Ex-Officio: Foundation Presidents/Heritage Editor and Conference Archivist

The William Watters Foundation

The William Watters Foundation is responsible for preserving and interpreting the William Watters Gravesite, United Methodist Historic Site No. 7, located in McLean, Virginia.

William Watters was the first American-born Methodist itinerant preacher to be officially appointed to a circuit at the first Methodist Conference held in America, in Philadelphia in 1773.

In fall 2024, the Virginia Conference Historical Society granted the William Watters Foundation a generous allotment of funds from an endowment made by the estate of William “Bill” Arthur Olson. The foundation has several projects in mind for using the money: performing ground penetrating radar of the cemetery to find unmarked graves, repairing the driveway’s erosion damage, and installing a fence along the wooded side of the driveway to prevent pedestrians from crossing the property and trespassing on neighbors’ lawns.

David Worthington, the Global Ambassador of Methodist Heritage Sites for the United Methodist Church, visited the William Watters Gravesite on October 9, 2024. Members of the foundation board welcomed Mr. Worthington to the site, showed him around the property and discussed the significance of William Watters’ ministry in American United Methodist history. Worthington, in turn, advised us to strive to tell the story of William Watters by emphasizing historical events that were occurring at the time of his ministry. We then assisted Mr. Worthington to the next stop on his journey, the Old Stone Church Site in Leesburg.

—Myra P. Lindsey, President

The Old Stone Church Foundation

It is true that *The Old Stone Church* site in Leesburg, VA is not as well known as some historical sites. While Leesburg and its environs in Northern Virginia are steeped in the early history of our nation, they are equally steeped in the early history of Methodism on this continent.

Having mostly recovered from its Covid-induced inactivity, the *Old Stone Church Foundation* intends to vigorously Promote *The Old Stone Church* site to an expanded set of persons and churches to the end that the site become better known and visited by persons and churches throughout Virginia. In addition, the Foundation intends to expand its membership list, engage in cooperative work with other history-oriented organizations, and improve our attention to administrative and operational obligations and details.

With the recent receipt of funds from the Historical Society and the revival of a beautifully inspiring Old Stone Church Prayer Walk project, *The Old Stone Church Foundation* finds itself at a tipping point wherein it can now strongly support its Promotion, Preservation and Interpretation efforts and initiatives. With this in mind, the Foundation is undertaking the following efforts for 2025:

1. |Increase the Foundation mailing list toward a year-end goal of 400 electronic and USPS addresses and \$4K annual membership income.
2. |Find the door key to the Old Stone Church that was unearthed by the archeological dig of the site in the 1960’s.
3. |Follow the lead of the VA Conference and modify By Laws, Job Descriptions, organization and operational/fili procedures to provide improved guidance to future Directors/Officers of the Foundation.
4. |Join with the local Morven Park social justice initiative to document the history of enslaved people of the United States.
5. |Encourage real and/or virtual pilgrimage to *The Old Stone Church* site by generating and publishing (in hard copy and digitally) resource packages for Confirmation Classes and Methodist History curricula.

On the 4th point above, the joint effort has benefits to both Morven Park and *The Old Stone Church Foundation*. The Foundation has 19th century Old Stone Church documents that record church-related activities of local enslaved people.

The documents are helpful to the Morven park initiative, a feature of which is the digitization of relevant records. Digitization of the records will be beneficial to *The Old Stone Church Foundation* at no cost to the Foundation.

On the 5th point above, the combination of the Prayer Walk project, an academic monograph in the files of the VCHS (Leesburg's Old Stone Church 1766), and The Old Stone Church video form a strong, academically sound, resource package for real or virtual classroom use or pilgrimage. Achieving prime time readiness of these packages may require funds for publication and possible copyright permissions. If so, *The Old Stone Church Foundation* will either apply funds it has or seek grant funding.

The Old Stone Church Foundation is dedicated to Promoting, Preserving, and Interpreting The Old Stone Church site to the benefit of an expanding population of real and virtual visitors.

—Jack E. King, President

Virginia United Methodist HERITAGE

The objective of Virginia United Methodist *HERITAGE*, first published in 1973, has always been to carefully document, then tell the stories of our rich Virginia United Methodist history. Virginia United Methodist history enthusiasts prepare the stories of this bi-annual scholarly journal.

Last fall's issue of *HERITAGE* featured *Charles Wesley: Sweet Singer of Methodism*, an insight into the life of Charles Wesley and his contributions to early Methodism. David Covington, the Global Ambassador of Methodist Heritage Sites, gave the speech at the Virginia Conference Historical Society meeting in October.

The issue also included the eponymously-named *The Rev. Dr. Robert Roszel Stephen Hough: A Life in Ministry*.

The Spring 2025 issue presented *An Essay in Mud*, a speech given by the venerable Raymond Fitzhugh Wrenn to the Old Stone Church Foundation in 1993. The story focused on two rescued ledgers of old district conference records covering the years 1885-1925. The records gave excellent insight into the goings-on of Northern Virginia Methodist Episcopal, South churches of that day.

The issue also included a story about William Watters, the first American-born Methodist Itinerant preacher called *Billie Watters Makes a Decision*, written by Fern C. Stukenbroeker.

Many Churches' Mini-Histories, a feature begun in Spring 2024 *HERITAGE*, continues to give the individual church the opportunity to stand out by discussing something unique in that church's history. Our Saddlebags segment continues to tell of the day-to-day experiences of circuit riders. Our Foundations features updates on the activities of the society's three foundations: The Old Stone Church Foundation, The William Watters Foundation, and the Old Brunswick Circuit Foundation.

—Myra Lindsey, Editor

JOURNEY IN UNDERSTANDING – FROM TENT TO TABLE

Members: David Edinger, Hung Su Lim, Kay Nicholas, Alton Keel, Darcey Johnson, Jill Gaynor, Gennie Bowles, David Jimenez, Margie Hernandez, Claire Kent, Mark Ogren.

A tent narrows toward the center, pulling some close while others linger at the edges, a round table invites a different kind of gathering. It offers no hierarchy, no hidden corners, only the open grace, where each person finds a seat and a voice.

Introduction

At the 2024 General Conference, delegates removed language condemning homosexuality, lifted bans on ordaining LGBTQ+ clergy, expanded marriage to include a man and a woman or two consenting adults, and set up processes to reinstate pastors disciplined over their sexual orientation. The Judicial Council confirmed that local boards of trustees can decide whether to host same sex weddings and disaffiliation clauses gave way to reaffiliation policies across annual conferences. In response, bishops issued letters assuring congregations and pastors that no one would be forced against conscience to live out their faith.

Background on the Group's Formation, Naming, Purpose, and Guidance

Born out of a narrowly divided vote on whether to apologize to the LGBTQ+ community, the Virginia Annual Conference 2024 formed a commission that brought together clergy and laity from LGBTQ+, progressive, centrist, and tradi-

tionalist perspectives, united by a shared desire to move beyond voting. Moving from an emphasis on fault and reparations to a reconciliatory approach, the name of a “Journey in Understanding” was adopted. Acknowledging their mandate “to pursue a more excellent way” the group committed to creating “a sacred space to listen, hold, and begin to heal the harms” experienced during long standing denominational discord. Throughout this unfolding process, two facilitators—Rev. Mark Ogren (providing spiritual formation and group structure) and Rev. Dr. Gary Mason (a renowned international expert and key figure in peacebuilding and conflict transformation, particularly in the Northern Ireland peace process)—helped orient the work.

The Group’s Approach: “Intentional Holy Listening”

Rejecting adversarial debate and recognizing that reconciliation is the work of the Holy Spirit, the group embraced **Intentional Holy Listening**—an active, non-judgmental practice of asking open-ended questions and bearing witness to each story. Over four listening sessions, invited voices were given three framing questions and uninterrupted time to speak. Although not every invitee participated, those who did found a rare space to be heard (some for the first time!), whether to recount deep wounds or to share hopes for the future. By creating “safe, holy spaces” and encouraging a posture of continuous learning, the group modeled an approach that could begin to bring reconciliation and true healing.

Findings: Stories That Opened Our Eyes

LGBTQ+ Voices

Many participants shared stories of exclusion that echoed patterns of trauma, including one who described experiencing “PTSD as a result of harm experienced...in the church,” where each new pastoral appointment brought renewed fear that their place in the community might once again be at risk. Others spoke of being “kicked out” once their sexuality was known, or even feeling “still half a member” when marriage and ordination were denied. A United Methodist pastor’s child recalled being warned not to “come out” for fear it would threaten their parent’s current job and future appointments. Yet amid the pain emerged hope—for belonging, for full recognition in marriage rites, and for ministries that “bring us together.”

Progressive and Centrist Voices

Progressives ranged from those eager to focus on what is next for our church to a call for unity. Doubts lingered about whether the middle could hold, yet many affirmed the metaphor of a big tent. “If we cannot think alike, can we not love alike?” quoted one guest, invoking Wesley’s enduring challenge. Allies celebrated that post GC24 they felt freer to share their identity, with one pastor noting she could finally post family photos without fear. Others lamented the loss of potential leaders who left seminary or were ordained elsewhere before reforms took hold.

Traditionalist Voices

Traditionalists voiced fear and anxiety: “Will I be forced to go against my theological beliefs?” they asked. Anxiety over pastoral appointments and fear of ostracism by progressive colleagues ran deep. Yet many longed for a “big tent” that could hold divergent convictions. One contributor noted that “diversity in unity is a big strength in the UMC,” and urged mutual respect across the spectrum. The repeated refrain was a desire for trust and safe expression of conscience.

Through these dialogues, the group witnessed hearts soften and trust begin to form, as “intentional holy listening” opened space for genuine connection—fostering collaboration across deeply held differences. Participants on all sides expressed sincere empathy upon hearing personal stories—a clear sign of the Holy Spirit at work.

Recommendations

To sustain faithful discernment grounded in grace and the Spirit’s relational work, we propose shifting from the metaphor of a big tent to sacred table spaces to foment healing across the Virginia Conference. We recommend:

- Moving from voting to reconciliation and transformation through relationships founded on God’s love and grace as heard in Jesus’ words: love God and your neighbor as yourself.
- Engaging in *intentional holy listening* that is appropriate in your local context.

The *Journey in Understanding* work has already softened hearts and opened new paths toward reconciliation—fruit that voting alone cannot yield. As we present this report, we honor our true diversity, deepen our community bonds, and witness to Christ’s reconciling love at His shared table.

—David J. Jimenez

VIRGINIA UNITED METHODIST FOUNDATION, INC.

Virginia United Methodist Development Company, LLC

Since 1971, the Virginia United Methodist Foundation has supported the churches and ministries of the Virginia Annual Conference by promoting faithful stewardship and providing resources to strengthen long-term ministry. Over the past 15 years, the Foundation has launched several strategic initiatives to deepen its mission impact.

The first initiative was the engagement of professional financial advisory services to manage endowments and investment accounts for the Foundation, local churches, and related agencies. The Kelly-Nagel Group, an institutional investment consulting team within Merrill Lynch's Global Institutional Consulting Group, brings deep experience in serving nonprofit, faith-based organizations. As a result, the Foundation's assets under management have grown from approximately \$28 million to more than \$110 million as of December 31, 2024.

In 2014, the Foundation created the Virginia United Methodist Development Company, LLC—a wholly owned subsidiary—to provide loans for ministry expansion projects. These loans are made possible through investments from individuals, churches, and United Methodist agencies. Now celebrating its tenth year, the Development Company manages over 650 investment accounts and has made more than \$40 million in loans to over 40 churches across Virginia.

In the fall of 2023, the Foundation gathered leaders from the Conference, Wespeth, and Methodist-affiliated universities to discern new ways of supporting churches and ministries in today's changing context. Broad input identified key areas of need, including grant writing, fundraising support, and creative approaches to funding new ministries.

In response, the Foundation has launched a new Office of Philanthropy and Development to focus on these emerging priorities. By mid-2025, the Foundation will be fully staffed for this expanded vision, including a new Vice President of Philanthropy and Development. We trust this next chapter will build on our history of service and continue to meet the evolving needs of our churches and ministries across the Conference.

—David Dommissie, President

REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE STATISTICIAN

	Total Professing Members at Beginning of Year	Received and Restored on Profession of Christian Faith	Net Transferred in (out) from other United Methodist Churches	Net Transferred in (out) from non-United Methodist Churches	Removed by Charge Conference action and prior year corrections	Withdrawn from Professing Membership	Removed by death	Total Professing Members at End of Year	Net Change in Membership	Percent Change	Average attendance at all weekly worship services	Number of Persons Baptized
Coastal Virginia	31,336	209	-51	14	480	101	335	30,592	-744	-2.4%	10,765	144
Living Waters	20,287	93	4	14	122	36	249	19,991	-296	-1.5%	6,380	78
Mission Rivers	35,612	221	18	-58	232	172	385	35,004	-608	-1.7%	9,756	161
Mountain View	14,035	49	16	-19	183	54	178	13,666	-369	-2.6%	4,988	23
Northern Virginia	61,523	627	-4	38	1,401	262	305	60,216	-1,307	-2.1%	17,139	409
Shenandoah River	24,099	105	-1	-60	651	91	246	23,155	-944	-3.9%	6,101	77
Three Notch'd	44,170	322	-199	-14	192	118	363	43,606	-564	-1.3%	12,107	251
Valley Ridge	26,217	120	-294	-54	1,114	170	335	24,370	-1,847	-7.0%	8,226	137
Totals for 2024	257,279	1,746	-511	-139	4,375	1,004	2,396	250,600	-6,679	-2.6%	75,462	1,280

COUNCIL ON FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION NARRATIVE BUDGET 2026

For 2026, CFA is presenting a budget in two forms: a narrative budget and a numerical budget. The narrative budget, presented below, is an attempt to walk through the development of the budget, outline the key principles and highlights of the budget, and answer some questions about the budget and apportionments connected to the budget. The numerical budget, which follows the narrative budget, is an effort to show the clear allocation of apportionment collections and spending plans for the Annual Conference in 2026. Following these two items, you'll find a summary of the CFA policies for 2026.

WHY WOULD WE DO THIS?

- ▶ Imperative of the Extended Extended Cabinet
 - In 2024, during the “Extended Extended Cabinet” process, the team discerned a narrative budget process would allow the Annual Conference to see more clearly the missional outputs of income and spending. Now CFA, in consultation with ministry offices around the Annual Conference, established this new methodology for budgeting in the hopes that it can allow the Virginia Annual Conference to see our budget as a missional document.
- ▶ Budget as a missional document
 - Because the budget is a missional document, it is the hope that CFA can show some particular alignment with the work of the United Methodist Church in Virginia. First, the primary objective of the Annual Conference is to resource the local church. *The Book of Discipline*, in describing the mission of the United Methodist Church, shares that the local church and extension ministries are the most effective arenas through which disciple making occurs. The 2026 budget is an attempt to resource the local church and extension ministries first and then resource the wider United Methodist connection, all with the hopes of transforming the world.
 - To do this, the budget has been broken down into four “buckets”:

FOUR “BUCKETS”

- ▶ The four buckets are...
 - Ministry Infrastructure – these are the costs to provide needed institutional structure to local churches and extension ministries throughout the Annual Conference.
 - Resourcing Connection – these are the costs to provide intentional opportunities for connected, transformational ministries throughout the Annual Conference.
 - Retired Clergy Health Support – these are the costs to support clergy who have sustained local churches and extension ministries throughout their careers and have now taken on retirement status.
 - Sending into Worldwide Connection – these are the costs to live into the United Methodist connection beyond the Virginia Annual Conference.
- ▶ These categories are allocated as a result of the apportionment giving of United Methodists around Virginia.
- ▶ Each category has importance to the overall missional capacity of the Virginia Annual Conference.
- ▶ Spending in these four categories is not even. For example, it is more expensive to provide benefits to retired clergy than it is to maintain ministry infrastructure.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR APPORTIONMENTS?

- ▶ Overall, apportionments are down from 2025

- This is largely due to removing Active Clergy Health apportionment and pivoting this cost to a direct bill to local churches.
- However, that same action has increased some of our expenses related to conference staff, campus ministry, and appointive cabinet expenses. Because the benefits of clergy in connectional roles were paid out of the former Active Clergy Health apportionment, those are now assigned as a part of the total personnel costs of the offices that employ clergy in the Annual Conference.
- This, along with some other changes, means that the total Conference Mission and Ministries apportionments are up 4.7% from 2025.
- There has also been an increase in the cost of offering Retired Clergy Health benefits, up 3.6% from 2025.
- ▶ The model for apportionments is shifting
 - First, you'll notice there are new numerical codes for apportionment line items. Lines 101, 102, 103, and 104 replace the previously used "400-series" line items. Because there are new categories for apportionments, this will help ensure we are assigning apportionments to the appropriate, current line item rather than trying to fit in a former methodology.
 - The four apportionment line items are as follows:
 - 101: Conference Mission and Ministries – Committed
 - These are funds that contractually or covenantally have already been allocated for the conference to spend and will be prioritized for payment during the 2026 budget year.
 - This includes costs from both the Ministry Infrastructure and the Resourcing Connection buckets.
 - 102: Conference Mission and Ministries – Expected
 - These are the expected costs of resourcing the local church and doing mission and ministry in 2026.
 - This includes costs from both the Ministry Infrastructure and the Resourcing Connection buckets.
 - 103: Retired Clergy Health
 - These are the expenses that support retired clergy health benefits and comprise the Retired Clergy Health Support bucket.
 - 104: General and Jurisdictional Ministries
 - These expenses represent our share of general and jurisdictional apportionments and comprise the Sending into Worldwide Connection bucket.
- ▶ Moving forward, as we live into this new missional model of budgeting together, CFA is asking that local churches make an adjustment to how they pay apportionments.
 - First, CFA asks that local churches pay the committed costs of ministry, those now found in line 101, first.
 - This represents approximately $\frac{1}{3}$ of each church's apportioned figure.
 - Once local churches have paid line 101 apportionments, they are then asked to pay the remainder of their apportioned figure by the end of the year.
 - By the end of the year, the hope is that all churches have paid 100% of their apportioned figure. This enables our entire Annual Conference to be in mission and ministry together.
 - As local churches are paying apportionments, CFA asks that you join your hearts with the entire Annual Conference in a constant sense of prayer and discernment that our giving would have a Spirit-filled capacity for impact and that we would have a consistent mind for the efficient and effective use of funds shared for deployment around the Annual Conference.

MISSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

- ▶ In the supporting schedule for apportionment lines 101 and 102, you will find nearly 30 elements of the work of the Annual Conference that are impacted by apportionments. Some missional highlights from these categories include:
 - Cabinet – the funds in this line item cover the work of the Appointive Cabinet. These funds ensure that these key leaders can be present in local churches, be leaders in the Annual Conference, and be missional strategists in the geographic areas they serve. Additionally, this fund includes support for the work of belonging and advocacy as the Director is on the appointive cabinet.
 - Ministries at Educational Institutions – the funds in this line item allow campus ministries around the Virginia Annual Conference to have needed resources to reach young people at colleges and universities throughout the Commonwealth.
 - Ministry offices – The line items for the Center for Clergy Excellence, Missional and Community Engagement, Discipleship and Congregational Vitality, and Connection and Innovation resource the work of the conference office to train and equip clergy and laity to be in ministry through the local church to communities across the Commonwealth of Virginia.
 - Grantmaking cooperative – This new methodology for funding great, shared ideas in the Annual Conference is ready to enter its second funding cycle. In addition to funds from apportionments, this work will be supported by other funding sources coming with resources from closed churches.

OTHER BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

- ▶ Line 103 – Retired Clergy Health
 - 1.35m savings from direct bill shift
 - Funds held for future benefits – this represents monies contributed from disaffiliated churches.
- ▶ Line 104 – General and Jurisdictional Ministries
 - The total number of this apportionment is unchanged from 2025. CFA will support these apportionments directly based on apportionment receipts.
 - For more information about each of these apportionments, please visit the following links:
 - [Episcopal Fund](#)
 - [World Service](#)
 - [Ministerial Education](#)
 - [Black College Fund](#)
 - [Africa University Fund](#)
 - [General Administration](#)
 - [Interdenominational Cooperation Fund](#)
 - [Southeastern Jurisdiction](#)

GOALS FOR 2026 AND BEYOND

- ▶ **Returning resources to the local church:** because the top priority of the Annual Conference is to resource the local church, the goal of the budget is to ensure the local church has the resources it needs to connect in community and transform neighborhoods around Virginia.
- ▶ **Stabilizing reserves:** while conditions for ministry in Virginia are challenging now, there is a recognition that a larger and more stable reserve fund will enable the impact of United Methodism in Virginia to be more widespread and generational.

- **Creative development:** as we look to reduce the amount of apportionments moving forward, the Annual Conference will also be relying on funds from closed churches, grants, and other forms of alternative fundraising to expand the capacity of the Annual Conference to resource local churches and extension ministries to be transformation agents around the world.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE WORK OF THIS BUDGET AND CFA, PLEASE WATCH THIS CONVERSATION WITH MEMBERS OF CFA: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7jb4ngftvzy>

REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE TREASURER

FINANCIAL COMMITMENT REPORT

Cash Receipt for the Year Ending December 31, 2024

Virginia Conference

Apportioned Funds	YTD 12/31/2024	YTD 12/31/2023	Increase (Decrease)	Pct. Pd 2024	Pct. Pd 2023
<i>Conference Apportionments</i>					
401 Conference Mission & Ministries	2,611,002	2,447,592	163,410	80.7%	70.6%
402 Conference Services	1,608,126	1,583,829	24,297	83.8%	79.5%
403 Appointive Cabinet Fund	1,078,972	886,658	192,314	83.0%	81.0%
404 Equitable Compensation	145,540	164,414	(18,874)	80.9%	78.3%
405 Church Extension Fund	305,088	678,293	(373,205)	76.3%	75.4%
Total Conference Apportionments	5,748,728	5,760,786	(12,058)	81.7%	75.1%
<i>Clergy Benefit Apportionments</i>					
407 Active Clergy Health	8,416,365	8,426,296	(9,931)	84.2%	84.3%
408 Retired Clergy Health	4,894,802	5,023,924	(129,122)	82.6%	83.7%
Total Clergy Benefit Apportionments	13,311,167	13,450,220	(139,053)	83.6%	84.1%
<i>General & Jurisdictional Apportionments</i>					
410 Episcopal Fund	663,628	665,680	(2,052)	76.7%	77.0%
411 World Service	1,652,439	1,623,803	28,636	76.9%	75.5%
412 General & Jurisdictional Fund	245,329	243,368	1,961	75.5%	74.9%
413 Ministerial Education	512,138	499,178	12,960	75.9%	74.0%
414 Black College Fund	242,868	235,286	7,582	77.1%	74.7%
415 Africa University Fund	56,276	52,738	3,538	80.4%	75.3%
Total General & Jurisdictional App.	3,372,678	3,320,053	52,625	76.7%	75.5%
Total Apportionments	22,432,573	22,531,059	(98,486)	82.0%	80.3%
<i>Second Mile Giving</i>					
GBGM Advance Specials	909,955	688,295	221,660	2024	82.0%
Virginia Advance Specials	170,253	99,162	71,091	2023	80.3%
Special Sundays	47,354	69,004	(21,650)	2022	84.4%
World Service Specials	670	2,820	(2,150)	2021	80.6%
Conference Special Offerings	44,397	32,051	12,346	2020	74.3%
Total Second Mile Giving	1,172,629	891,332	281,297	2019	84.4%

Virginia Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church
Balance Sheets

	<u>December 31, 2024</u>	<u>December 31, 2023</u>
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Cash	2,211,170	4,055,319
Investments	19,383,890	17,949,154
Receivables and accrued interest	1,949,953	1,838,375
Real estate held for sale or to be determined	7,603,000	-
Prepaid expenses	85,296	111,820
Total Current Assets	<u>31,233,308</u>	<u>23,954,669</u>
Fixed Assets		
Land	5,063,619	2,522,219
Buildings	12,419,685	6,721,985
Furniture & equipment	1,169,273	1,152,055
Accumulated depreciation	(3,791,704)	(3,504,547)
Total Fixed Assets	<u>14,860,873</u>	<u>6,891,712</u>
Other Assets		
Loans receivable	108,612	120,612
Total Other Assets	<u>108,612</u>	<u>120,612</u>
Total Assets	<u><u>46,202,793</u></u>	<u><u>30,966,993</u></u>
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts payable	3,839,439	3,265,370
Note payable	1,038,749	1,109,592
Accrued and payable personnel expenses	115,417	60,943
Total Current Liabilities	<u>4,993,605</u>	<u>4,435,905</u>
Net Assets		
Without Restrictions	1,832,812	1,940,847
Other board designated & board restricted	39,376,376	24,590,241
Total Net Assets	<u>41,209,189</u>	<u>26,531,088</u>

Virginia Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church

Statement of Changes in Conference Reserves

For the Year Ending December 31, 2024

Beginning of Year Balance		1,940,847
Income (Expenses) charged directly to reserves:		
Investment income	572,628	
Support for New Initiative	(12,000)	
Miscellaneous net receipts	(14,096)	
		<u>546,532</u>
Conference Apportionment Closeouts		
Conference Mission & Ministries	(248,977)	
Conference Services	(248,379)	
District Superintendents Fund	(200,426)	
Equitable Compensation	16,583	
Funds released from board designations	26,632	
		<u>(654,567)</u>
End of Year Balance		<u><u>1,832,812</u></u>

REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE TREASURER

Virginia United Methodist Conference of The United Methodist Church
401 - Conference Mission & Ministry
Financial Summary

12/31/2024

Project Name	Apportionment Receipts	Revenues from other sources	Total Revenues	Total Expenses	Revenues Over (Under) Expenses	Beginning Balance	Closeout to Reserves	Ending Balance
Program & Board Administrative (see below)	943,877.16	42,024.51	985,901.67	1,093,868.62	(107,966.95)	-	107,966.95	-
Conference Benevolence Grants	134,727.69	-	134,727.69	140,999.92	(6,272.23)	-	6,272.23	(0.00)
CommonTable Grants	42,089.34	25,000.00	67,089.34	78,750.00	(11,660.66)	-	11,660.66	-
Campus Ministry and Higher Education	1,010,379.38	22,405.45	1,032,784.83	1,144,113.47	(111,328.64)	-	111,328.64	-
Bishop's Discretionary Fund	16,840.96	4,215.10	21,056.06	32,804.32	(11,748.26)	-	11,748.26	-
	2,147,914.53	93,645.06	2,241,559.59	2,490,536.33	(248,976.74)	-	248,976.74	(0.00)
Program & Board Administrative								
Common Table	2,532.67	-	2,532.67	772.55	1,760.12	-	(1,760.12)	-
Connectional Ministries Office	35,352.95	-	35,352.95	43,541.95	(8,189.00)	-	8,189.00	-
Board & Agency Administration	21,070.79	1,831.95	22,902.74	20,103.29	2,799.45	-	(2,799.45)	-
Personnel Costs - Common Table	643,272.53	40,192.56	683,465.09	743,667.58	(60,202.49)	-	60,202.49	0.00
Personnel Costs - Communications	213,867.16	-	213,867.16	279,142.25	(65,275.09)	-	65,275.09	-
Video Production	6,736.39	-	6,736.39	6,641.00	95.39	-	(95.39)	-
CT Contingencies	21,044.67	-	21,044.67	-	21,044.67	-	(21,044.67)	-
	943,877.16	42,024.51	985,901.67	1,093,868.62	(107,966.95)	-	107,966.95	0.00

402 - Conference Services

Project Name	Apportionment Receipts	Revenues from other sources	Total Revenues	Total Expenses	Revenues Over (Under) Expenses	Beginning Balance	Closeout to Reserves	Ending Balance
Treasurer's Office	400,262.51	159,600.00	559,862.51	665,383.39	(105,520.88)	-	105,520.88	-
Computer Services	444,684.90	-	444,684.90	376,534.55	68,150.35	-	(68,150.35)	-
Annual Conference Session	246,316.63	15,703.74	262,020.37	461,770.94	(199,750.57)	-	199,750.57	-
Conf Publications Committee	6,593.31	15.00	6,608.31	126.89	6,481.42	-	(6,481.42)	-
Council on Finance & Admin	1,752.86	-	1,752.86	3,436.49	(1,683.63)	-	1,683.63	-
Board of Trustees	884.47	-	884.47	2,298.15	(1,413.68)	-	1,413.68	-
Committee on Episcopacy	1,752.86	-	1,752.86	-	1,752.86	-	(1,752.86)	-
Historical Society	3,521.78	-	3,521.78	1,314.05	2,207.73	-	(2,207.73)	-
Cabinet Discretionary Fund	8,796.44	-	8,796.44	11,475.00	(2,678.56)	-	2,678.56	-
Pastor Relocation Transition	6,593.31	-	6,593.31	9,375.00	(2,781.69)	-	2,781.69	-
Episcopal Residence	4,406.27	10,000.00	14,406.27	32,859.05	(18,452.78)	-	18,452.78	-
Conference Liability Insurance	17,592.91	-	17,592.91	17,102.00	490.91	-	(490.91)	-
Audit	48,388.48	-	48,388.48	35,630.75	12,757.73	-	(12,757.73)	-
Human Resources	39,592.05	-	39,592.05	43,210.72	(3,618.67)	-	3,618.67	-
General Conference Delegation	8,796.44	1,494.36	10,290.80	15,299.57	(5,008.77)	-	5,008.77	-
Contingencies	4,406.27	-	4,406.27	-	4,406.27	-	(4,406.27)	-
CFA Discretionary	-	66,704.00	66,704.00	5,000.00	61,704.00	-	(61,704.00)	-
Postage, Printing & Phone	31,663.99	2,400.00	34,063.99	47,168.12	(13,104.13)	-	13,104.13	-
BOM Personnel Costs	241,926.44	-	241,926.44	279,743.51	(37,817.07)	-	37,817.07	-
Clergy Excellence Admin.	13,636.89	-	13,636.89	19,612.79	(5,975.90)	-	5,975.90	-
Board of Ordained Ministry	62,459.61	-	62,459.61	75,768.67	(13,309.06)	-	13,309.06	-
BOM - Ministerial Support	28,158.28	-	28,158.28	23,372.70	4,785.58	-	(4,785.58)	-
	1,622,186.70	255,917.10	1,878,103.80	2,126,482.34	(248,378.54)	-	248,378.54	-

REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE TREASURER

Virginia United Methodist Conference of The United Methodist Church
CFA Designated Funds with Carryover Balances
Financial Summary

12/31/2024

Project Name	Apportionment Receipts	Revenues from other sources	Total Revenues	Total Expenses	Revenues Over (Under) Expenses	Beginning Balance	Closeout to Reserves	Ending Balance
CFA								
Property & Equipment Fund	-	-	-	(8,040,003.70)	8,040,003.70	5,782,120.18	-	13,822,123.88
United Methodist Center	167,148.60	84,374.00	251,522.60	318,057.58	(66,534.98)	1,482.19	65,052.79	-
Long Term Building Maintenance Fund	-	-	-	-	-	300,000.00	-	300,000.00
Legal Expenses	79,168.03	-	79,168.03	156,401.29	(77,233.26)	50,000.00	27,233.26	-
Funds Held for Future Benefits	-	1,085,352.28	1,085,352.28	-	1,085,352.28	9,719,630.82	-	10,804,983.10
Archives	22,867.55	58,000.00	80,867.55	56,254.67	24,612.88	27,019.74	-	51,632.62
Sustentation Fund	-	-	-	-	-	15,000.00	-	15,000.00
2024 Apportionment Support	(2,120,000.00)	-	(2,120,000.00)	-	(2,120,000.00)	2,120,000.00	-	-
District Support Fund	-	-	-	245,000.00	(245,000.00)	480,000.00	(35,000.00)	200,000.00
Property management - WCD	-	80,692.76	80,692.76	106,361.34	(25,668.58)	-	-	(25,668.58)
New Town	-	81,261.66	81,261.66	212,507.03	(131,245.37)	131,245.37	-	-
Property Management - AC	-	86,184.15	86,184.15	206,459.39	(120,275.24)	35,255.59	-	(85,019.65)
Property - Undecided or available for sale	-	16,826,100.00	16,826,100.00	9,223,100.00	7,603,000.00	-	-	7,603,000.00
Trustee's General Fund	-	398,004.71	398,004.71	317,656.36	80,348.35	-	-	80,348.35
Parsonage - New Town	-	7,500.00	7,500.00	1,433.63	6,066.37	-	-	6,066.37
Residential real estate investment	-	18,890.00	18,890.00	2,953.25	15,936.75	-	-	15,936.75
	(1,850,815.82)	18,726,359.56	16,875,543.74	2,806,180.84	14,069,362.90	18,661,753.89	57,286.05	32,788,402.84

Common Table

Connectional Ministries Programming	67,363.85	(16,328.39)	51,035.46	3,500.00	47,535.46	34,129.70	(81,665.16)	-
Fall Youth Retreat	-	59,812.22	59,812.22	59,812.22	-	-	-	-
Conference Youth Council Leadership Retreat	-	(360.06)	(360.06)	2,139.94	(2,500.00)	2,500.00	-	-
Disaster Response Committee	-	6,713.52	6,713.52	8,755.02	(2,041.50)	2,041.50	-	-
UMVIM - Team Leader Training	-	413.71	413.71	336.66	77.05	(77.05)	-	(0.00)
Conf. Legislative Network	-	(2,648.41)	(2,648.41)	1,791.43	(4,439.84)	4,439.84	-	-
Advocate legacy funds	-	-	-	-	-	55,836.85	-	55,836.85
Wesley Fdtn Maintenance Fund	71,567.63	-	71,567.63	81,433.43	(9,865.80)	38,261.79	-	28,395.99
Wesley Foundation Proceeds	-	-	-	-	-	104,444.99	-	104,444.99
All God's Children Camp	-	72,796.08	72,796.08	54,700.17	18,095.91	16,648.95	-	34,744.86
Safe Sanctuaries Training	-	-	-	-	-	744.58	-	744.58
Lay Servant Ministries	-	4,227.03	4,227.03	4,715.41	(488.38)	11,943.33	-	11,454.95
Lay Servant Ministry Events	-	5,360.28	5,360.28	5,684.44	(324.16)	1,531.44	-	1,207.28
Discipleship Training Events	-	7,558.49	7,558.49	6,309.86	1,248.63	-	-	1,248.63
Camp Rainbow	-	61,016.53	61,016.53	104,195.02	(43,178.49)	43,178.49	-	(0.00)
Commission on Disabilities	-	200.00	200.00	680.04	(480.04)	3,514.21	-	3,034.17
Voices of Youth	-	-	-	-	-	1,549.94	-	1,549.94
UMVIM	-	3,634.43	3,634.43	44.04	3,590.39	18,657.09	-	22,247.48
Caretakers of God's Creation	-	681.00	681.00	328.19	352.81	7,710.36	-	8,063.17
Five Talent Academy - Events	-	(3,848.80)	(3,848.80)	-	(3,848.80)	3,848.80	-	-
Fresh Expressions	-	(4,309.46)	(4,309.46)	500.00	(4,809.46)	4,809.46	-	-
CDT Training Events	-	12,887.16	12,887.16	12,887.16	-	-	-	-
Grant Making Cooperative	-	50,000.00	50,000.00	-	50,000.00	-	-	50,000.00
	138,931.48	257,805.33	396,736.81	347,813.03	48,923.78	355,714.27	(81,665.16)	322,972.89

Board of Ordained Ministry

Licensing School	-	27,701.44	27,701.44	24,352.42	3,349.02	4,810.58	-	8,159.60
Order of Elders	-	-	-	66.91	(66.91)	9,276.90	-	9,209.99
Order of Deacons	-	1,419.54	1,419.54	988.72	430.82	3,614.51	-	4,045.33
Welcome Meal at AC	-	(1,322.68)	(1,322.68)	-	(1,322.68)	1,322.68	-	-
Local Pastor's Retreat/Lunch	-	2,091.66	2,091.66	2,091.66	-	-	-	-
Spouse Retreat	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Seminary Scholarships	-	28,187.77	28,187.77	13,313.75	14,874.02	2,313.75	-	17,187.77
BOM Training Events	-	310.02	310.02	1,330.42	(1,020.40)	1,020.40	-	(0.00)
Clergy Education	-	65,000.00	65,000.00	30,069.25	34,930.75	89,150.00	-	124,080.75
Calling 21	-	-	-	-	-	13,270.41	-	13,270.41
AC Clergy Spouses Luncheon	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ministers' Convocation	-	27,988.20	27,988.20	19,933.62	8,054.58	16,429.86	-	24,484.44
Pilgrimages	-	(445.61)	(445.61)	-	(445.61)	445.61	-	-
Cross Culture/Cross Racial	-	2,450.00	2,450.00	47.32	2,402.68	1,563.87	-	3,966.55
VA Clergy Leadership Program	17,592.91	2,200.00	19,792.91	68,603.38	(48,810.47)	96,088.26	-	47,277.79
Candidacy Summit	-	10,015.57	10,015.57	11,027.39	(1,011.82)	10,885.95	-	9,874.13
Creating a Culture of Renewal	-	9,340.00	9,340.00	9,340.00	-	-	-	-
Clergy Spiritual Vitality	-	6,466.00	6,466.00	-	6,466.00	(6,466.00)	-	-
United Methodist Studies Program	-	1,377.50	1,377.50	4,500.00	(3,122.50)	3,122.50	-	-
	17,592.91	182,779.41	200,372.32	185,664.84	14,707.48	246,849.28	-	261,556.76

REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE TREASURER

Virginia United Methodist Conference of The United Methodist Church
Donor Designated and Miscellaneous Funds
Financial Summary

12/31/2024

Project Name	Apportionment Receipts	Revenues from other sources	Total Revenues	Total Expenses	Revenues Over (Under) Expenses	Beginning Balance	Closeout to Reserves	Ending Balance
Ministerial Education Funds								
Ministerial Education Funds	128,034.58	(22,415.15)	105,619.43	206,205.71	(100,586.28)	384,401.36	-	283,815.08
	128,034.58	(22,415.15)	105,619.43	206,205.71	(100,586.28)	384,401.36	-	283,815.08
Church Extension Funds								
Church Extension Fund	305,088.32	45,879.04	350,967.36	790,413.02	(439,445.66)	2,644,120.03	-	2,204,674.37
	305,088.32	45,879.04	350,967.36	790,413.02	(439,445.66)	2,644,120.03	-	2,204,674.37
Donor Restricted								
NFC - New Town	-	35,800.00	35,800.00	24,916.37	10,883.63	-	-	10,883.63
Strategic Salary Support	-	125,000.00	125,000.00	-	125,000.00	-	-	125,000.00
Disaster Relief Fund	-	14,084.68	14,084.68	17,991.88	(3,907.20)	31,908.39	-	28,001.19
AC Serving Response Fund	-	134,073.63	134,073.63	143,952.10	(9,878.47)	99,663.56	-	89,785.09
Partnerships of Hope	-	38,780.91	38,780.91	1,700.00	37,080.91	29,143.93	-	66,224.84
POH - Mozambique	-	-	-	-	-	23,980.69	-	23,980.69
POH - Brazil	-	-	-	-	-	29,190.15	-	29,190.15
POH - Cambodia	-	-	-	-	-	27,802.21	-	27,802.21
POH - Vietnam	-	-	-	-	-	22,000.00	-	22,000.00
POH - Native Americans	-	-	-	253.26	(253.26)	38,084.13	-	37,830.87
POH - Haiti	-	105,998.27	105,998.27	105,000.00	998.27	5,867.92	-	6,866.19
The Olson Mission and Justice Fund	-	83,498.27	83,498.27	7,100.00	76,398.27	-	-	76,398.27
The Olson Historical Society Fund	-	40,255.91	40,255.91	10,000.00	30,255.91	-	-	30,255.91
Francis Asbury Education Funds	-	172,025.14	172,025.14	-	172,025.14	1,117,025.58	-	1,289,050.72
CEMCA-Hispanic Aid Fund	-	-	-	-	-	9,616.78	-	9,616.78
Bishops' Foundation	-	-	-	-	-	1,714.09	-	1,714.09
Journeys of Paul	-	37,500.00	37,500.00	36,000.00	1,500.00	-	(1,500.00)	-
Youth Service Fund	-	593.00	593.00	-	593.00	19,719.07	-	20,312.07
Peace with Justice	-	2,072.50	2,072.50	-	2,072.50	27,993.23	-	30,065.73
Native American Awareness Sun.	-	2,986.05	2,986.05	-	2,986.05	4,777.00	-	7,763.05
Treasurer's Discretion	-	-	-	(275.00)	275.00	1,802.68	-	2,077.68
CFA Strategic Mission Fund	-	-	-	27,000.00	(27,000.00)	274,798.27	-	247,798.27
AC Youth Gift	-	1,950.00	1,950.00	29,779.74	(27,829.74)	35,483.72	-	7,653.98
Annual Conference Offering	-	60,068.85	60,068.85	60,068.85	-	-	-	-
Hatching Faith Cohorts	-	1,250,000.00	1,250,000.00	59,099.67	1,190,900.33	-	-	1,190,900.33
	-	2,104,687.21	2,104,687.21	522,586.87	1,582,100.34	1,800,571.40	(1,500.00)	3,381,171.74
Clergy Support Obligation	-	-	-	362,979.06	(362,979.06)	363,732.00	(752.94)	0.00
Richmond Area Episcopal office	23,317.88	97,678.83	120,996.71	123,967.40	(2,970.69)	93,273.42	-	90,302.73
Bishop's John Wesley Service Fund	-	2,258.11	2,258.11	-	2,258.11	3,594.02	-	5,852.13
ARMS	-	10,645.00	10,645.00	9,219.11	1,425.89	17,644.45	-	19,070.34
Heritage	-	970.00	970.00	999.75	(29.75)	7,228.38	-	7,198.63
Scouting Ministries	-	-	-	-	-	11,358.82	-	11,358.82
	23,317.88	111,551.94	134,869.82	497,165.32	(362,295.50)	496,831.09	(752.94)	133,782.65

Council on Finance and Administration

SECTION I(a) - Proposed Conference Budget

	2026	2025	Increase (Decrease)	Pct Change	Pct Budget
Ministry Infrastructure	2,437,200				15.1%
Resourcing Connection	4,368,800				27.2%
Total Conference Mission and Ministries	6,806,000	6,500,000	306,000	4.7%	42.3%
Retired Clergy Health Support	5,240,000	5,060,000	180,000	3.6%	32.5%
Sending into Worldwide Connection	4,060,000	4,060,000	-	0.0%	25.2%
Active Clergy Health - no longer apportioned	-	9,000,000	(9,000,000)	-100.0%	
Total Apportionments	16,106,000	24,620,000	(8,514,000)	-34.6%	100.0%

SECTION I(b) - Proposed Conference Apportionments

	2026	2025	Increase (Decrease)	Pct Change	Pct Budget
101 - Conference Mission and Ministries - Committed	5,459,400				33.9%
102 - Conference Mission and Ministries - Expected	1,346,600				8.4%
Total Conference Mission and Ministries	6,806,000	6,500,000	306,000	4.7%	42.3%
103 - Retired Clergy Health	5,240,000	5,060,000	180,000	3.6%	32.5%
104 - General and Jurisdictional Ministries	4,060,000	4,060,000	-	0.0%	25.2%
Active Clergy Health - no longer apportioned	-	9,000,000	(9,000,000)	-100.0%	-
Total Apportionments	16,106,000	24,620,000	(8,514,000)	-34.6%	100.0%

REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE TREASURER

Supporting Schedule for Conference Apportionments (101 and 102)

	Section I(a)		Section I(b)		Total	Prior Year Total	Diff
	Ministry Infrastructure	Resourcing Connection	101 - Conf. Mission &	102 - Conf. Mission &			
			Ministries Committed	Ministries Expected			
Conference Mission and Ministries							
1 Cabinet	403,800	1,211,200	1,495,000	120,000	1,615,000	1,270,000	345,000
2 Ministries at Educational Institutions	-	1,120,000	682,500	437,500	1,120,000	1,050,000	70,000
3 Operational Infrastructure	850,800	147,200	957,000	41,000	998,000	1,052,000	(54,000)
4 Center for Clergy Excellence	364,600	-	343,000	21,600	364,600	308,800	55,800
5 Annual Conference Session	350,000	-	350,000		350,000	400,000	(50,000)
6 Communications	-	306,000	286,000	20,000	306,000	278,300	27,700
7 Missional and Community Engagement	-	305,000	290,000	15,000	305,000	169,100	135,900
8 Church Extension	-	300,000		300,000	300,000	350,000	(50,000)
9 Discipleship and Congregational Vitality	-	290,000	275,000	15,000	290,000	292,000	(2,000)
10 Connection and Innovation	-	238,000	223,000	15,000	238,000	218,000	20,000
11 Building Operations and Services	170,000	-	170,000	-	170,000	170,000	-
12 Grantmaking Cooperative	-	130,000		130,000	130,000	130,000	-
13 Legal and Audit	112,000	-	112,000		112,000	112,000	-
14 Boards and Agencies	81,700	28,000	79,700	30,000	109,700	104,000	5,700
15 Benevolence Grants	-	70,000	70,000		70,000	70,000	-
16 Equitable Compensation	-	50,000		50,000	50,000	50,000	-
17 Conference Programs	-	50,000		50,000	50,000	50,000	-
18 Human Resources	35,000	8,700	43,700		43,700	45,000	(1,300)
19 Wesley Foundation Maintenance	-	40,000	20,000	20,000	40,000	40,000	-
20 CFA Contingency for Unforeseen Expenses	20,000	20,000		40,000	40,000	40,000	-
21 Episcopal Office Support	13,300	13,200	26,500		26,500	26,500	-
22 Archives	26,000	-	26,000		26,000	26,000	-
23 Bishop's Discretionary	-	20,000		20,000	20,000	20,000	-
24 Pastor Relocation and Transition	-	15,000		15,000	15,000	5,000	10,000
25 Episcopal Residence	10,000	-	10,000		10,000	10,000	-
26 Historical Society	-	4,000		4,000	4,000	4,000	-
27 General Conference	-	2,500	-	2,500	2,500	-	2,500
28 Contingency Funds - Budget Shortfall	-	-			-	209,300	(209,300)
	2,437,200	4,368,800	5,459,400	1,346,600	6,806,000	6,500,000	306,000

Supporting Schedule for Other Apportionments (103 and 104)

	2026	2025	Diff
103-Retired Clergy Health			
1 Retired Clergy Health	7,000,000	5,400,000	1,600,000
2 Savings from Active Clergy Health shift to Direct Bill	(1,350,000)	-	(1,350,000)
3 Funds Held for Future Benefits	(410,000)	(340,000)	(70,000)
	5,240,000	5,060,000	180,000
104-General and Jurisdictional Apportionments			
1 Episcopal Fund	914,000	900,000	14,000
2 World Service	1,820,000	1,820,000	-
3 Ministerial Education	630,000	630,000	-
4 Black College Fund	255,000	255,000	-
5 Africa University Fund	60,000	60,000	-
6 General Administration	313,625	327,625	(14,000)
7 Interdenominational Cooperation Fund	25,000	25,000	-
8 Southeastern Jurisdiction	42,375	42,375	-
	4,060,000	4,060,000	-

SECTION II – Recommended Apportionments to Districts and Local Churches

A. TOTAL RECOMMENDED APPORTIONMENT LEVELS:

The Council of Finance and Administration (CFA) recommends that the amounts apportioned from the General, Jurisdictional, and Annual Conference be apportioned to the districts as follows:

2026 Virginia Annual Conference Apportionments

101 - Conference Mission and Ministries - Committed	5,459,400
102 - Conference Mission and Ministries - Expected	1,346,600
	6,806,000
103 - Retired Clergy Health	5,240,000
104 - General and Jurisdictional Ministries	4,060,000
	\$ 16,106,000

B. CONFERENCE APPORTIONMENT RECOMMENDATION SPECIFICS:

The Conference Apportionments are intended to carry out the mission and ministry of the Virginia Annual Conference. All balances at the end of the year are to be closed to Conference Reserves unless an exception is granted by the Conference Council on Finance and Administration.

All apportionments are important to the mission and ministry of The United Methodist Church. Starting in 2026 by the end of the calendar year, churches must fulfil the 101 Apportionment (Conference Mission and Ministries - Committed) before the other apportionments can be funded. This is important to protect the required reserves of the Annual Conference for committed costs.

Report on 2024

As set in the Annual Conference procedures, the Annual Conference is informed through this report of shortfalls in the apportionments that impact Conference reserves. These shortfalls were managed through budget cuts, contingency funds, and Conference reserves in accordance with Annual Conference-approved policy.

Below are the stated Apportionment shortfalls for 2024.

	Shortfall
401 Conference Mission & Ministries	625,998
402 Conference Services	311,874
403 Appointive Cabinet	221,028
404 Equitable Compensation	34,460
	1,193,360

SECTION III — Apportionment Procedures

A. APPORTIONMENT FORMULA:

- **All Apportionments except for the Active Clergy Health Benefits**

Apportionments are calculated using the last year of available statistics of each local church (i.e. 2026 apportionments are calculated using 2024 statistics). The formula is based on total net paid expenses which are the total expenditures of the church minus expenditures for benevolent causes, apportionments, capital improvements, and payments on loans and mortgages. The apportionments for each church are sent to each district based on decimal calculations from the formula below:

$$\frac{\text{Individual Church Net Paid}}{\text{Total of all Conference Churches Net Paid}} = \text{Church Decimal}$$

- The district then passes the apportionments on to the local church.
- The Council on Finance and Administration, in consultation with the Church Development Team and Cabinet, has the authority to set a policy for apportioning newly chartered churches, legacy churches, and 2nd sites of chartered churches.
 - Effective January 1, 2016, the policy will be to phase in the apportionments for new chartered churches over a five year period with the first year beginning at 20% and increasing 20% for each subsequent year until the church is at 100%.
 - Effective January 1, 2016 for 2nd site (satellite & multi-site) locations that are recognized as new faith communities by the Church Development Team and the Cabinet, the existing chartered church may exclude direct expenses of the second site from the apportionment calculation based upon the following schedule:

<u>Months since est.</u>	<u>Percentage excluded</u>
0-42 months	100%
43-54 months	80%
55-66 months	60%
67-78 months	40%
79-90 months	20%

B. REPORTING GUIDELINES:

- District superintendents will report the apportioned amounts for each church to the Conference treasurer and the apportioned amounts will be shown on the monthly Treasurer's report sent to each church.
- Apportionments are to be calculated and distributed annually rather than on a quadrennial basis.
- The Annual Conference will raise World Service funds only through contributions from the local churches. CFA urges that district superintendents, pastors, and local church leaders seek to fully implement Section 812 of the 2024 Discipline.

SECTION IV - Annual Conference Special Offerings

Annual Conference offerings provide important and life-giving support for key Conference programs. The following are recommended for approval for 2026:

- United Methodist Family Services. It is recommended that December be designated as United Methodist Family Services Month and that each church promote an offering during this time for this purpose.
- Pinnacle Living (Samaritan Fund). It is recommended that the period between Mother's Day and Father's Day be designated in support of the Pinnacle Living (Samaritan Fund), and that each church promotes an offering during this time for this purpose.
- Heart Havens. It is recommended that February be designated as Heart Havens Month and that each church promotes an offering during this time for this purpose.
- Partnerships of Hope. It is recommended that September be designated as Partnerships of Hope Month and that each church promote an offering during this time for this purpose.
- Annual Conference Offering. CFA recommends continued support for this important offering.

SECTION V - Policies

A. CABINET

Overall Policies for the Fund:

- In compliance with the Book of Discipline, the current salaries and expenses for district superintendents (DS), and those under special appointment, will be published in the Conference Journal with each DS's salary individually calculated and assigned each year as part of the appointive process, using the following criteria:
 - Each District Superintendent's salary shall be \$103,000.
 - Each year, the annual salaries of the District Superintendents are to be recommended by CFA to the Annual Conference.
 - CFA also administers salary-related expenses, to include such items as pensions, supplemental benefits, travel by voucher, continuing education, and other Cabinet-related expenses. CFA, in consultation with the Bishop, sets the Assistant to the Bishop's salary and related personnel costs.
 - The total cost of salaries and related expenses apportioned to Districts are to be based on the current approved decimal system (upon recommendation of CFA).
 - All other District Superintendents' costs, such as housing, district office expenses and staff, are to be paid at the district level.

B. TRAVEL & MEETING EXPENSES

Board and Agency members and staff engaged in Conference business are provided reimbursements for travel and meeting expenses per the guidelines below:

- The mileage reimbursement rate is set at the IRS business rate for Conference staff. The mileage reimbursement rate is set at the IRS volunteer rate for those serving as volunteers of Conference boards and agencies.
- Meals are to be reimbursed at actual costs, but not to exceed \$50 per 24-hour period. (breakfast on the date of departure from home/office is not accepted; dinner on the date of return is not accepted, except when the arrival to home/office is after 7 p.m.).

- Reimbursement for daily room charges is set at \$200 if the travel incurred extends to a period over three hours prior to the starting time of 10 a.m. on the day of the meeting.
- Spouse expenses are not part of allowable expenses.
- To encourage stewardship in this area, CFA suggests: (1) that advance reading materials be provided for study prior to meetings; and (2) that there be use of teleconferencing, where feasible.

C. INDIVIDUAL EXPENSES FOR ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Reimbursements for Annual Conference expenses will be provided per the guidelines below:

- Each charge is responsible for the expenses of both the clergy and lay members (including diaconal ministers) from that charge to the annual conference, working out its own plan of compensating for actual expenses.
- Persons not covered through local church appointment shall receive annual conference reimbursement not to exceed \$200 a night for mileage, meals and lodging; the Conference treasurer shall reimburse the claimant through voucher of approved expenses. Coverage under this section extends to:
 - (a) retired clergy who retired with pension under one of the Disciplinary options and who are not serving full-time;
 - (b) clergy on medical leave;
 - (c) clergy on sabbatical leave who are members of the Virginia Annual Conference;
 - (d) retired diaconal ministers who served at least eight years in the Virginia Conference and who are granted a retired relationship by the Conference;
 - (e) persons expecting their first appointment;
 - (f) members of the conference who have been appointed to attend a theological school;
 - (g) those serving as chaplains in Armed Forces;
 - (h) deaconesses under appointment;
 - (i) furloughed missionary members of the Virginia Annual Conference;
 - (j) those on loan to other annual conferences, whose expenses are not otherwise provided for; and
 - (k) clergy returning from an approved leave of absence receiving local church pastoral appointments.
- Each district is responsible for the expenses of its district superintendent, youth members and members-at-large.
- Each board, agency or committee is responsible for the expenses of its chairpersons, if that person is not a clergy or lay member whose costs are covered by their charge or district.

D. CONFERENCE RESERVE FUNDS

Policies on the Maintenance of Reserve Fund Levels:

- The Council monitors the Conference Reserves to ensure the ability to cover future contingencies including:
 - a) Reserve funds for emergencies and catastrophic needs related to the maintenance of Conference property held by the Conference trustees and include: (1) Virginia United Methodist Center; (2) Wesley Foundation buildings; (3) the Episcopal residence and (4) closed church properties.
 - b) Reserve funds for cash flow purposes.
 - c) Reserve funds for economic and financial downturns.

- d) Council on Finance and Administration has the authority to utilize reserves in excess of the minimum to preserve the Conference's financial stability.
- The Council has set the following target for Conference Reserve Funds:

Core Reserves:

A. 20% of the Conference budget that closes to reserves	\$ 1,230,000
a. 401 – Conference Mission and Ministries	
b. 402 – Conference Services	
c. 403 – District Superintendents Fund	
d. 404 – Equitable Compensation Fund	
B. 15% of Invested Assets not including cash equivalents and investments designated for specific purposes	<u>376,000</u>
	<u>\$ 1,606,000</u>

On December 31, 2024, the Annual Conference had reserves in excess of the target amount (see Treasurer's Report for details).

- Consistent with approved Annual Conference policies (effective January 1992), the use of investment income is authorized to maintain reserve levels. At the discretion of CFA, excesses may be used to: (1) meet shortfalls in Conference benevolences; (2) meet shortfalls in Conference Services; and/or (3) reduce apportionments from the Annual Conference to local churches.
- Reserve funds in the amount of \$300,000 are available to cover actions emerging from Annual Conference vote, emergencies, support of advances for campaigns, and potential liabilities of the Conference.
- Of the amounts reserved: (1) up to \$50,000 is available for emergency needs of the Common Table, with the approval of CFA; and (2) up to \$100,000 may be allocated by CFA between sessions of Annual Conference, as deemed necessary.
- The status of Conference reserves at the end of the prior actual year is to be reviewed each year by CFA and included in the Treasurer's Report to the Annual Conference Session.

E. PASTOR RELOCATION TRANSITION FUND

1. By action of the June 2003 Annual Conference, CFA has established the Pastor Relocation Transition Fund and has provided funding through the Conference Services apportionment.
2. Churches/charges which are served by full-time clergy appointed to their charge as pastor may request reimbursement on the following schedule for an incoming pastor, if the previous pastor served two years or less in the appointment to their charge:
 - One-year appointment – Verified moving expenses up to a maximum of \$1,500 reimbursement.
 - Two-year appointment – Verified moving expenses up to a maximum of \$1,000 reimbursement.
3. No moving expenses will be reimbursed that are not in compliance with the Virginia Annual Conference Guidelines for Moving Expenses as printed in the Journal of the Virginia Annual Conference.

F. AUDIT REPORTS

The Council on Finance and Administration reminds all district offices, agencies, institutions, and organizations receiving any financial support from conference funds or from any authorized conference-wide appeal to be in compliance with the *2024 Book of Discipline* to submit audited financial statements to the Conference Treasurer no later than six months after the end of the organization's fiscal year.

G. IRS REGULATIONS

CFA reminds all church and/or charge treasurers to comply with the IRS regulations.

H. REQUESTS FOR BUDGET FUNDING

CFA requires that all groups requesting funding from CFA submit requests for budget funding to CFA by January 15 each year for the following year's budget (i.e. budget requests for the 2027 budget must be submitted by January 15, 2026). This will allow the requests to be reviewed by CFA in sufficient time for consideration at the Annual Conference Session each June.

I. FINANCIAL COMMUNICATIONS

When CFA proposes significant changes in apportionments (10% or more) for any board, agency, or other recipient of financial support, such proposed changes and the guiding rationale shall be presented to the Annual Conference for its final approval, with the information being conveyed no later than 30 days prior to the Annual Conference session.

J. LEGAL EXPENSE POLICY

The Annual Conference shall not pay for the legal expenses for local church or district matters such as non-appointed personnel, churches seeking disaffiliation, property issues, etc.

Angie Williams, President

NEXT STEPS



A Reporting Guide for Lay Members of the 2025 Virginia Annual Conference

June 12-14, 2025

Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson, presiding
Martha E. Stokes, Conference Lay Leader

*Lay Ministry is the work of mission or ministry to which each believer is called.
As Christians we are called to this ministry or priesthood – not just clergy.
Each of us has a responsibility to proclaim the Good News and reach out to others in love.*

— Discipleship Ministries of The United Methodist Church

Dear Lay Member of the Virginia Annual Conference:

Thank you for serving as a member of the 2025 Virginia Annual Conference. We come to this role in a variety of ways. You may be representing your local charge or district. Your service may be determined by virtue of your role on a Virginia Conference or General Church board or commission. No matter how we have been chosen to serve as lay members of this Annual Conference session, we share the same responsibilities to:

- v Interpret the actions of the Annual Conference to our congregations,
- v Build the connection between the congregation and all United Methodist churches, and
- v Connect the church of God with people who are not yet part of it.

These responsibilities come from the stated purpose of the Annual Conference as found in *The 2020/2024 Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church (BOD)*, Chapter 4, Section IX: THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE, ¶601: “... the Annual Conference is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world by equipping its local churches for ministry and by providing a connection for ministry beyond the local church; all to the glory of God.” As the lay member of Annual Conference, YOU ARE THE CONNECTION from your church/district/board to the Annual Conference and from the Annual Conference to your church/district/board. An effective lay member of Annual Conference informs these groups about The United Methodist Church in the conference and around the world, bringing our United Methodist connection to life.

To carry out your responsibilities as a lay member, the *BOD* notes that you shall:

- v Attend and participate in this session of the Annual Conference: “The lay members of the Annual Conference shall participate in all deliberations and vote upon all measures except...” matters of ministerial relations (¶602.6, *2020/2024 Book of Discipline*). Come prepared to participate. As we do our work during the conference session and in the months that follow, we must hold one another accountable to the mission and vision of the church.
- v “Connect” with your local church when you return: “...The lay member(s) of the annual conference, along with the pastor, shall serve as an interpreter of the actions of the annual conference session. These persons shall report to the local church council on actions of the annual conference as soon as possible, but not later than three months after the close of the conference” (¶251.2, *2020/2024 Book of Discipline*). You have a key role in linking the mission and vision of the local congregation to the mission and vision of the annual conference.

This reporting guide is offered to:

- Aid lay members in recording your experiences and feelings about the actions and events of this Annual Conference session;
- Encourage you to interpret the mission and ministry we have together through our Annual Conference; and
- Assist you in preparing your report and interpretation of the actions and business of the 2025 Annual Conference session for sharing back in their local church. Communication truly improves connection.

SPEAKING DURING ANNUAL CONFERENCE

You have the right to speak and vote on all issues except those that have to do with clergy and ministerial orders and relations. Listen for specific instructions regarding communicating at this session. Follow the instructions that are given to be recognized in this setting.

If you wish to speak, take a few moments to think about what you want to say. Take notes; keep your comments direct and to the point. Then, addressing the chair, identify yourself. For example: “Bishop Hauptert-Johnson, I am your name, a lay member from name of your local church and district.” State the reason for seeking recognition and wait for a response from the bishop before continuing. If recognized, then ask your question, call for clarification of parliamentary procedure, or make a statement in support of or opposition to the matter under discussion. Be brief and to the point! If you have a motion you wish to present, introduce yourself and declare that you have a motion you would like to have considered. You will be asked to write the motion in the proper format as approved for this session and communicate it to the Conference Secretary.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- To help you while attending Annual Conference, please follow the agenda as printed in this *Book of Reports*. Be on time for all scheduled events.
- Standing Rules govern the session. Read and be familiar with the Standing Rules of Order and Procedure printed in this *Book of Reports*.
- Items to be voted on come from this *Book of Reports* and from issues raised from the floor by members of the conference.
- There is an equal number of lay and clergy making the decisions. You are a representative of the approximately 252,226 United Methodist laity in 861 churches divided into eight districts across the Virginia conference. It is important that we be faithful to this responsibility.

PEOPLE YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Presiding Bishop: Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson
- Assistant to the Bishop and Chief Operating Officer: The Rev. Dr. Steve Summers
- Director of Connection and Innovation: The Rev. Dr. Jonathan Page
- Conference Secretary: The Rev. Claire Miller
- Conference Lay Leader: Martha Stokes
- Conference President of United Women in Faith: Karen McElfish
- Conference President of United Methodist Men: David Collins
- Your District Superintendent: _____
- Your District Lay Leader: _____

REPORTING

A balanced and interesting report interpreting the work of Annual Conference should include:

- Significant happenings and impressions. Make sure to take your own notes and use daily proceedings reported on the VAUMC website. A summary video will be available through the Conference Communications Office.
- Observations on the diversity and unity of our conference. Identify some of the challenges this creates and some of the benefits this brings.
- Reflection on the importance of what is happening here for you, for your local church, district and your conference.

How will you share your experience and the action of the Annual Conference with your congregation?

- Write an article(s) for your church newsletter.
- Display pictures, resource material, etc.
- Use the summary video.
- Facilitate a panel with members presenting various aspects of conference work and activities.
- Share a dialogue between clergy and lay members.
- Be interviewed by someone in the congregation.

When will you share your report?

- Sunday morning during worship
- Church Council/Leadership Team meeting
- Meetings of the United Women in Faith, United Methodist Men, and youth
- Adult church school and/or small groups
- Conversation with others
- Special all-church gathering

What will you share?

- Observations and notes you have written down during sessions and events
- Highlights of reports offered during the conference sessions and from the *Book of Reports*
- Materials received both online and in your official conference packet
- Resources found for programs in your church (people, ideas, materials)

You will receive an evaluation survey after the conference via email. We encourage you to share your thoughts and suggestions. Your comments will assist the planning committee for the next annual conference.

If you have questions, please reach out to your District Lay Leader or Virginia Conference Lay Leader, Martha Stokes, by email at marthastokes@vaumc.org or call (804) 366-7162.

REPORTS RECEIVED AFTER PUBLICATION DEADLINE



Resolutions Committee Report 2025

I. RESOLUTION OPPOSING MASS DEPORTATION OF MIGRANTS, AND ADVOCATING FOR COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM:

WHEREAS, The United Methodist Church states that “at the center of Christian faithfulness to Scripture is the call we have been given to love and welcome the sojourner” (The Book of Resolutions – #3281); and

WHEREAS, The United Methodist Social Principles, as adopted by General Conference 2024, states with regards to migrants, immigrants and refugees:

- We affirm the dignity, worth, and rights of migrants, immigrants and refugees;
- We recognize that displaced people are particularly vulnerable as their in-between status often provides them with few protections and benefits, leaving them open to exploitation, violence, and abuse;
- We urge United Methodists to welcome migrants, refugees, and immigrants into our congregations and commit themselves to providing concrete support, including help with navigating restrictive and often lengthy immigration policies, and assistance with securing food, housing, education, employment and other kinds of support;
- We oppose all laws and policies that attempt to criminalize, dehumanize or punish displaced individuals and families based on their status as migrants, immigrants or refugees;
- We decry attempts to detain displaced people and hold them in inhumane and unsanitary conditions;
- We challenge policies that call for the separation of families, especially parents and minor children; and
- We oppose the existence of for-profit detention centers for such purposes [of detaining migrants, immigrants and refugees, including minor children]

(Social Principles of The United Methodist Church, The Political Community, Basic Rights and Freedoms, Section G. Migrants, Immigrants and Refugees); and

WHEREAS, God calls God’s people throughout the Bible to love the migrant, immigrant and refugee, and to help the most vulnerable in our midst, especially the sojourner; Leviticus issues a call to love the sojourners in our midst, treating them as if they were a fellow citizen (Leviticus 19:33-34); scripture calls us to show compassion and justice for the sojourner and alien among us (Exodus 22:21; Deuteronomy 10:18-19; Psalm 94:6; Jeremiah 7:6; Ezekiel 22:29; Zechariah 7:10); Hebrews tells us that in welcoming strangers into our homes, we may be “entertaining angels without knowing it” (Hebrews 13:2); and

WHEREAS, Jesus Christ was himself a sojourner; Jesus began his earthly life fleeing to Africa as a refugee in Egypt (Matthew 2:13-23); Jesus says that to welcome the sojourner is to welcome him (Matthew 26:35-40); and

WHEREAS, God’s Reign is made up of persons from every tribe, tongue, nation, and language (Revelation 7:9), the Great Commandment compels us to love our neighbor as ourselves (Mark 12:30-31), and the Church calls us to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves; and

WHEREAS, the present Administration of the United States government is:

- Unleashing chaotic fear in immigrant populations through its cruel, inhumane and un-Christian policy of mass detainment, family separation, and deportation of undocumented immigrants, asylum seekers, and various categories of legal immigrants;
- eliminating, suspending, or reducing legal immigration programs, including the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program; and
- using xenophobic and racist lies and language to dehumanize immigrants as “the other,” falsely claiming them to be threats to public safety, health, and fiscal resources; and

WHEREAS, the United States government has failed to repair a broken immigrations system or establish fair, humane, and comprehensive immigration reform; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Virginia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church calls the United States government to immediately cease all arrests, detainment, and deportations of undocumented immigrants, asylum seekers, and legal immigrants (such as humanitarian parolees and those with Temporary Protection Status) solely based upon their immigration status, until fair and comprehensive immigration reform is passed; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Virginia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church calls the United States government to immediately cease any policies or actions that separate the families of undocumented immigrants, asylum seekers, and legal immigrants, (such as humanitarian parolees and those with Temporary Protection Status); and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Virginia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church urges the U.S. Congress to pass Comprehensive Immigration Reform that fairly and compassionately upholds the civil and human rights of all migrants in the United States while establishing an effective, orderly and timely system for managing immigration; and be it further

continued from page 185

RESOLVED, That the Virginia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church urges the Administration and U.S. Congress to restore, protect, and strengthen the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program and its resettlement services for approved refugees, recognizing our nation's historic leadership in welcoming and supporting refugees; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Virginia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church urges the government of the Commonwealth of Virginia to approve no funds for creating or supporting migrant detention centers in Virginia; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be delivered to the President of the United States, members of the U.S. House and Senate, committees of the U.S. House and Senate responsible for immigration and refugee policy, the Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia, and members of the Virginia General Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Virginia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church encourages congregations to 1) provide whenever possible pastoral care and crisis intervention to refugees and newly arrived migrants, identifying and responding compassionately to their spiritual, material, and legal needs; 2) work with civic and legal organizations to support migrant communities affected by harsh immigration laws and over-reaching national security measures; 3) engage in educational activities on issues of immigration and refugee concerns; and 4) actively welcome and assist immigrants and refugees in their communities.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

War, conflict and persecution have displaced more than 122 million people worldwide, the highest number ever recorded, and forced 37.9 million of these people to flee to other countries as refugees. The actual number of global migrants is even greater. Many of these persons, desiring a better future for themselves and their families, are fleeing brutal economic and political situations, gang violence, natural disasters, including climate disasters, famine, and domestic violence.

The number of immigrants living in the United States was 47.8 million in 2023 (Pew Research Center). Nearly half are naturalized citizens. About 12 million are permanent legal residents, and another 2 million are temporary legal residents.

Since 1975, the United States has welcomed 3.6 million refugees, who can apply for permanent residence after one year. The safety and rights of refugees are both a moral and legal obligation. U.S. law incorporates the principles of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, the cornerstones of international refugee protection. The Refugee Act of 1980 aligned U.S. law with the standards of the Convention and established the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program.

Approximately 12-14 million immigrants are undocumented. Although difficult to determine, an estimated 3.4 million are Dreamers, undocumented immigrants who were brought to the U.S. as children. About 530,000 Dreamers have DACA status (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals), which granted them work permits and temporary protection from deportation. The average DACA recipient has lived in the United States 25 years and arrived here when they were 7 years old. Nearly all have completed high school, and 49% have some college education; 83% are in the labor force.

Regardless of their immigration status, these newcomers are a vital part of the U.S. economy. The economic contribution they make and taxes paid surpass the cost of public services received. Mass deportation would be an economic disaster for the nation.

In Virginia, 13.4 percent of residents are foreign-born (about 1.16 million in 2023). The Migration Policy Institute estimates that Virginia had about 251,000 undocumented immigrants in 2022.

An estimated 80% of undocumented immigrants have lived in the United States for more than a decade. They are employed in nearly every job sector, from farm, health and construction workers to teachers, engineers, IT professionals, and business owners. Some have served honorably in the military. In 2022, they paid \$96.7 billion in federal, state, and local taxes (Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy), and here in Virginia, they paid nearly \$700 million in state and local taxes. They are our neighbors, co-workers, classmates, and fellow congregation members. They deserve our respect, compassion, support, and Christian love.

Submitted by the Virginia Conference Board of Church and Society

II. RESOLUTION ON PERMISSION FOR CLERGY:

WHEREAS, after much distress and disappointment, we celebrate that the season of disaffiliations is over, and we desire to move forward in love and grace,

WHEREAS, many pastoral relationships that were nurtured in former churches and communities with families and friends have been severely harmed,

WHEREAS, scripture calls us to “be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another as Christ in God has forgiven [us]...” (Ephesians 4:32)

BE IT RESOLVED, that we strongly urge the Virginia Conference, in a spirit of love and grace, to revoke all prior hindrances and prohibitions on clergy (See Footnotes #1, #2 and #3), active and retired, from practicing their own discernment and/or discretion with regard to assisting, supporting, and/or participating with any church that disaffiliated, not including employment, unless permitted by the Bishop and the District Superintendent, as per The United Methodist Book of Discipline 2020/2024. ¶341.4

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Footnote #1 *Guiding Principles for UMC Clergy and Disaffiliated Churches*, Bishop Sue Halpert-Johnson, February 20, 2024

Footnote #2 *For All Retired Clergy of the VAC*, Board of Ordained Ministry, May 18, 2023

Footnote #3 Letter from Bishop Sue Halpert-Johnson, June 1, 2023

Submitted by Rev. David A. Rash, Rev. Janet Knott, Rev. Edward Pruitt, Rev. David Tanner, Rev. Penny Cory, Rev. Jim Harris, Rev. Ralph Rowley, Rev. David Breeden, Rev. Jeff Allen, Rev. Patricia Riggs

III. RESOLUTION FOR AFFIRMING BIOLOGICAL WOMEN’S/GIRLS’ SPORTS

WHEREAS, God expressly created a man and a woman as the two sexes, and

WHEREAS, God endowed males and females with different qualities, roles, and attributes in life and

WHEREAS, God intended for those qualities to be specific and separate and

WHEREAS, The United Nations Report on Violence Against Women and Girls (as of March 30, 2024), reports that over 600 female athletes in more than 400 competitions have lost more than 890 medals (to transgender women) in 29 different sports,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT

the Virginia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church affirms that girls’ or women's sports are expressly designated as “girls” or “women's” sports so that girls and women can compete exclusively with one another according to their biological sex.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,

that the Virginia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church affirms that including persons born as males in “women’s” sports constitutes an express violation of the first rule of all “girls” or “women’s” sports; that one must be a biological female to compete in “girls” or “women’s” sports and that by these affirmations, the Virginia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church upholds the integrity of all “girls” and “women’s” sports and the integrity of all the competitors therein.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

BIBLICAL REFERENCES:

Genesis 1:27, “So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.”

Genesis 2:22, "And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man."

Genesis 2:24 states: “Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh.”

Matthew 19:5-6 says, "Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh."

Submitted by the South Hill UMC Church Council, Living Waters District

IV. RESOLUTION TO CEASE CASTING BLAME AND DISCREDIT

WHEREAS, the Virginia Conference has a “Journey in Understanding” team, and

WHEREAS, this team is involved in a Commission of Truth Telling and Reconciliation, and

WHEREAS, the Conference represents the entirety of the congregations of the United Methodist Churches in Virginia,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, with singleness of purpose, the Virginia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church endeavors to model holy unity through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Therefore, The Virginia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church affirms that projecting blame and guilt on our brothers and sisters in Christ for their sincerely held beliefs, which are affirmed by the Holy Scriptures above, and thereby pronouncing judgment on those persons by making apologies for their sincere and steadfast obedience to their consciences before Christ their Lord, does not serve to further the cause of unity within the church, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Virginia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, by not making apologies regarding the dissent of some of its members, respects and affirms the faithful dissent of those who expressed their feelings and beliefs concerning the United Methodist Church’s teaching and preaching relative to human sexuality, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,

the Virginia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church affirms that the value and veracity of the entirety of God’s Holy Word, as communicated in both the Old Testament and the New Testament, cannot be overestimated for the Church or the individual believer.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

BIBLICAL REFERENCES:

Genesis 1:27, “So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.”

Matthew 19:5-6 says, “Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.”

Submitted by the South Hill UMC Church Council, Living Waters District

Wesley at VT

I am constantly amazed at the students of Wesley at Virginia Tech! Throughout this past year as they worked to be “an affirming, grace-filled community that develops and sends out disciples rooted in faith,” the students increased engagement across the campus and sought to provide a place for all students to experience the transforming love of God. A lot is asked of the students at VT Wesley as it is truly a student led ministry. However, they embrace the challenge to lead creatively and work hard to reach students and youth who desire a community to live out their faith in a place of grace and love.

Part of that work is leading a District Youth Retreat for the youth of the Valley Ridge District and beyond. This retreat is a product of months of planning so that our youth in the Virginia Annual Conference can come and worship, spend time in small groups, and have lots of fun in fellowship with other youth. This year’s retreat was themed “Can’t Stop the Feeling” and we discussed, through the lens of Inside Out 1&2, how our emotions are vital to our well-being. 50 youth participated in what one youth leader remarked “was one of the best youth retreats I have been to in 15 years of youth ministry in this conference!”

Wesley truly sees the youth as a vital part of our UMC church now and in the future! We are investing in them so that they know there are UMC Campus Ministries for them wherever they choose to go to college and, then, they will be developed to be leaders in our UMC Church for years to come!

– Rev. Bret Gresham

Arise Campus Ministry

The past year, 2024 has been a year of renewal and excitement around Arise Campus Ministry or (United College Ministries in Northern Virginia). We have expanded our feeding ministry, renewed our worship service, continued our life-groups, and continue to stand at the intersection of inclusion and justice on campus at George Mason University and NoVA Community College. This year, we are also finding new ways to engage and commit to the younger generation of Christian leaders who have so much to share with the church.

Food insecurity continue to be a real challenge at George Mason University. We continue to find students who need meals and struggle with the cost of living in our area. With inflation and rising food costs this year we continue to spend money on kickoff and out of our service funds to make sure that we can feed and deliver a lot of meals to the college students. This past year we offered meals three nights a week and appreciated our church partners who helped us make this a reality. This year we were able to provide 1654 meals over the course of the entire year.

We also reintroduced worship to Arise and created a team of student leaders, staff and volunteers who will continue to bring it to fruition in 2025 and beyond. George Mason University opened a Spiritual Life center this Spring semester, so our team from Arise will begin hosting the noon service on campus which will also include lunch. Our life-groups continue to be places for students to explore their faith and grow as disciples of Jesus Christ. Our life-groups explored faith, Scripture, social justice and read books together. We grew in our faith and helped one another through difficult times.

In 2025, we look forward to continuing to serve our campus and students through our presence, our witness, and our service. We continue to be the only fully inclusive Christian ministry on campus who believes in the full gifts of the LGBTQ+ communities, and we are also the only Christian ministry who recognize and celebrate the full ordination and call of women. We know our work is hard on campus, but we also want to be sure to support the work of the denomination and our other amazing campus ministries around Virginia.

In 2024, we have been working hard to support those serving in student ministries and have put into place the opportunity to have a conference-wide scavenger hunt as a free way to engage students and share with them about campus ministry. We are looking forward to launching it this fall. To preview that experience, we are having a scavenger hunt right now. If you want to check out our campus ministry scavenger hunt and receive a free prize, you can go to the campus ministry table in the display area. There you can learn more about Arise, and all the Virginia Campus Ministries, and even learn how you can support campus ministry near where you live.

Finally, we want to say thank you to all of you. Thank you to our wonderful donors, volunteers, partner churches, district and conference leaders. All your support really does change and save lives. We look forward to partnering more and doing more to change the world and share God’s love with as many people as possible. To see more about Arise go to arisecampusministry.org.

Thank you again for all you do.

– Rev. Drew Enszt

The Trustees of the Virginia Conference Historical Society met twice during 2024. On February 24, we met at Shenandoah University and toured the EUB Archives. On October 5, we met at the Virginia Conference Center where David Worthington spoke on Charles Wesley.

The reports of our foundations and committees are submitted below.

Mike Browder, president

The Old Brunswick Circuit Foundation (TOBCF)

More details and photos available in our OBCF e-Newsletters at <https://vaumc.org/obcfnewsletters/>

In 2024 the Old Brunswick circuit Foundation accomplished the following:

- I. Continued the implementation of the \$209,605 ESHPF grant (aka Hurricane grant) received in 2021 from the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR) in partnership with the National Park Service (NPS) as follows:
 1. Worked with Mr. Mike Hoffman of Hovera, Inc., the single contractor who responded to our first request for proposals (RFP) with a bid proposal with a scope of work which included rebuilding of the foundation, repairing and stabilizing the wooden understructure, taking down and rebuilding the front porch and taking down the chimneys to include photographing, numbering, accessioning and stacking the bricks for later rebuilding.
 2. TOBCF submitted Mr. Hoffman's proposal for review by the VDHR, but it was not accepted mainly because they did not feel that taking the chimneys completely down was within the Dept. of Interior's preservation standards.
 3. Mr. Hoffman did not feel it was safe for his crew to work around the fragile and unstable chimneys. TOBCF announced a second request for proposal (RFP) in which the scope of work was reduced eliminating any work on the chimneys until further plans could be drawn up specific to that construction element.
 4. Historic brick mason, Mr. Clint Hobbs of Old World Masonry, submitted a proposal which was reviewed and accepted by VDHR and TOBCF. He began masonry work on the foundation in December 2024.
- II. Applied for a grant from the Virginia 250 Preservation fund sponsored by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources and funded by the General Assembly. This grant, if awarded, would be used to make improvements to the access road to our historic Rev. Edward Dromgoole House.
- III. Continued our outreach efforts to foster awareness of our three sites and their history which included:
 1. Organizing and hosting a tour of our three sites and the Sapony church on October 4, 2024 for Mr. David Worthington, Global Ambassador of Methodist Heritage Sites for the UMC.
 2. Setting up an informational display at the Virginia United Methodist Annual Conference in Hampton VA on June 19-21, 2024.
 3. Coordinating a tour of the Rev. Edward Dromgoole house for a Dromgoole descendant, Dr. Larry Heath and his wife Jeanette, on March 7, 2024.
 4. Setting up TOBCF's historical display at the Brunswick County Family Fun Day in Lawrenceville VA on Sept 21, 2024.
 5. Giving presentations on TOBCF and our three historical sites to:
 - a. The monthly dinner gathering at the Centenary United Methodist Church in Portsmouth VA on October 16, 2024
 - b. The Lucy Blanton Circle at the Reveille United Methodist Church in Richmond, VA on Nov. 5, 2024
- IV. Created and maintained partnerships with other organizations to promote common goals to include:
 1. Partnering with the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) under their "Service to America" program, two board members spent several days using DAR approved techniques to clean the family Dromgoole tombstone at the Rev. Dromgoole House.
 2. Recognizing the shared history between Randolph Macon College and the Boydton Methodist Church by celebrating together the church's 200th year anniversary. The College's choir and chaplain made several trips to Boydton to sing and preach at that year's celebratory services.
 3. Celebrating with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources as we unveiled their newly installed Virginia historic highway marker which pointed out and provided visitors information on the Ebenezer Academy.

ARCHIVES COMMITTEE REPORT

Archivist Stephanie Davis has begun working on identifying media for digitization, with the records of the early Virginia Annual Conferences as a priority. Based on recommendations from Laurie Preston, she has contacted “George Blood” for a quote to perform the work, and money currently in the Archives budget will be used for this project. Other funds will be requested as needed.

Stephanie has also reached out, once again, to District Superintendents’ Offices to remind them about the requirement to forward records from disaffiliated churches to the Archives. The Committee is pleased that Stephanie’s persistence and attention to this issue has resulted in transfers, and she has confirmed that those records remaining in the District Offices are being maintained until they can be reviewed and transferred to the Archives.

The Archives is still searching for additional storage space for incoming records. Stephanie continues to arrange current records as efficiently as possible to clear space, but as more and more records are received from disaffiliating churches, this may become a problem and will require additional storage space. Renting off site storage space is not ideal since humidity and temperature controls, needed for proper preservation, will be extremely costly. Additionally, off site storage of the records would mean they would not be readily available for responding to information requests and for researchers. Digitization of records will help with this problem. Stephanie is ensuring that the Archives website is kept up to date, and she will continually review it as additional records are received or deemed appropriate for uploading.

Laurie Preston announced that phase one of the digitization of the Virginia Advocate is moving along more quickly than expected. The cost of \$18,980.50 was well under the \$42,000 earmarked for the project and approved by the VCHS, leaving a balance \$23,019.50. The cost of the final stage of the project is \$20,446.97. The RMC Library is working on the preservation of the papers of Bishop John Early, one of the founders of RMC. Laurie is working on a project on the Virginia Conference’s military chaplains, in part to commemorate the Army Chaplaincy’s 250th Anniversary of its establishment, with a particular emphasis on RMC alumni.

Nina Frederick , Chair

REPORT TO THE SOUTHEAST JURISDICTIONAL COMMISSION ON ARCHIVES & HISTORY

The Virginia Conference Historical Society (VCHS) continues to support and develop ways to ensure the important history of the Virginia Conference is recognized and documented. Despite some setbacks, VCHS continues in its quest to provide a thorough and complete record of the many actions and individuals who contributed to the spread of United Methodism in the state.

Work on updating the written history of the Virginia Conference from 1939 to the present is moving along with four draft chapters completed: Asian American Ministries, Mission and Related Topics, Higher Education, and Campus Ministries. Drafts of all chapters are expected to be submitted for review and editing by November 25, 2025.

The William Watters Gravesite, located in McLean, VA, which commemorates the first American-born Methodist itinerate preacher, is in good condition. VCHS recently approved a request for \$10,000 to support several projects relating to the site, including: performing ground penetrating radar of the cemetery to find unmarked graves; repairing erosion damage to the driveway leading to the graveyard (gravesite?); and installing fencing in the area.

1) the relationship of the OBCF to the VCHS changed when it was discovered that grants would be difficult to get, due to the organization not appearing on the Guidestar program that certifies entities that are eligible for grants, despite the fact that the OBCF was said to be under the tax-free aegis of the VA Conference. We lost out on a grant from Sun Trust Bank because of it. It was then decided to seek 501 (C) 3 status. From that time the OBCF has had a stand-alone, yet collegial position with the Conference, and is supposed to receive \$500 annually to assist in its work. The President reports to the VCHS annually.

The Old Brunswick Circuit Foundation, supported in part by VCHs, continues work on two sites: the Dromgoole House and the original site of Randolph-Macon College, which became the Boydton Institute, the campus of which includes the Helensha Cottage. The Dromgoole House, located in Brunswick, VA, was built by Edward Dromgoole, an early Methodist itinerate preacher and associate of Francis Asbury, and is an outstanding example of late 18th-century domestic architecture. Recently missing sections of the foundations were replaced, stonework on various walls has been completed, and brush around the building has been removed. Repairs of the chimneys of the Helensha Cottage have been complete, along with general cleaning and clearing of the site.

To support continued preservation work on the Dromgoole House and surrounding area, two applications for grants were submitted: one to the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution and the other to the Virginia Department of Historic Resources. Unfortunately, neither request was accepted and there is concern that future grant request may not be available due to recent charges in governmental priorities.

Although a request to nominate the Randolph-Macon College and Boydton Institute Campus as an Historical District did not come before the Virginia State Review Board in December 2024 as hoped, the nomination packet will be resubmitted in June 2025 at the Review Board's quarterly meeting.

In October 2024, David Worthington, Global Ambassador to Methodist Heritage Sites based in Bristol England at the John Wesley New Room, presented a program on Charles Wesley at the VA Conference Historical Society semi-annual meeting. He reminded the VCHS of the important role Charles Wesley played in early Methodism, although he is often overshadowed by his brother. Mr. Worthington noted that, while few people can recite any of John's written works, Charles' contributions are still an important part of Sunday worship. Mr. Worthington also visited the VCHS-maintained sites in McLean and Southside Virginia, and provided helpful suggestions on obtaining grant requests.

Dr. Anna M. Lawrence, Associate Professor of History at Fairfield (CT) University, spoke at the VCHS March 2025 meeting on "Revolutionary Era Methodism and Black Believers." Dr. Lawrence has written and published articles and chapters on revolutionary era Methodism, including Wesleyan ideals on marriage and sexuality, Methodist responses to the revolutionary war, and Jarena Lee, considered the earliest Black female preacher in U.S.

Important historical records of the United Methodist Church in Virginia are maintained in three locations: Conference Archives in Glen Allen at Conference Headquarters; the Methodist Collection at Randolph-Macon College (RMC) in Ashland, VA; and Evangelical United Brethren (EUB) collections located at Shenandoah University in Winchester, VA. All three locations welcome researchers, maintain websites containing a vast collection of records, and archivists at all three locations are active members of VCHS.

The Virginia Conference Archivist continues to work to ensure the preservation and transfer to the Archives of the records of disaffiliated churches. Some records have been transferred and the Archivist continues to work closely with District Offices to ensure the collection and preservation of records still to be transferred.

The early recordings of the Virginia Annual Conference in the Conference Archives have been identified as a priority for digitization and work on this project will begin in the very near future. The digitization of the Virginia Advocate, housed in the McGraw-Page Library of RMC is entering phase two and the project is scheduled to be completed and uploaded before the end of 2025.

continued from page 194

The RMC Library is involved in two important projects: preserving the papers of Bishop John Early, one of the founders of RMC, and identifying RMC alumni who served as Military chaplains as part of the commemoration of the Army Chaplaincy's 250th Anniversary.

The EUB Archives curated a collection of early records and artifacts that document the Denomination's history up to its merger with the Methodist church in 1968. The exhibit is available for viewing in the Shenandoah University Library during operating hours.

Heritage, the biannual publication of the Committee on Archives and History, distributes important historical articles and information about the history of the United Methodist Church in Virginia. Recent articles include a retelling of the rescue of old district conference records from the Fredericksburg dump in 1962, and a story from Fern Stukenbroeker's book, *A Watermelon for God*. Mini histories of Conference churches, stories about circuit riders ("Saddlebags") and updates from VCHS Foundations are regularly included in each issue.

In October 2024, a Governance Committee was established as a standing committee to review current VCHS Bylaws and make recommendations to the Board of Trustees for changes and improvements. These have been drafted and vetted, and the next step is to ensure that bylaws are in accordance with the Book of Discipline.

Nina Frederick, Va. Conf. Representative

Agenda	6-8
Annual Conference Member Responsibilities	9
Association of Retired Ministers	156
Apportionments.....	163
Bishop, Greetings from the	5
Budget, Conference.....	163
Cabinet	94
Campus Ministry Association	130
Children and Family Ministry Council	141
Church and Society, Board of	118
Church Building and Location, District Committee on	92
Church Development Team	121
Common Table for Church Vitality.....	116
Common Table for Church Vitality, Charter for	72
Communications, Conference Board of.....	121
Consent Agenda	71
Creation Justice, Committee on	119
Delegation to General and Jurisdictional Conference	122
Disabilities, Commission on	139
Discipleship, Board of	123
End Poverty and Support Civil Rights.....	119
Episcopacy, Committee on.....	145
Equitable Compensation Commission.....	97
Extended Extended Cabinet Update	112
Finance and Administration, Council on	163
Heart Havens.....	125
<i>HERITAGE</i>	159
Historical Update, Committee	157
Historical Society, Virginia Conference.....	157, 192
Journey in Understanding	159
Just Compensation Task Force, Report from.....	98
Laity, Board of	134
Minute Questions	80
Missional Ministries Board.....	123
Name Badge Colors	36
Nominations, Conference Boards and Agencies.....	142
Old Stone Church Foundation	158
Older Adult Council	138
Ordained Ministry, Board of	143
Ordained Ministry, District Committee on	90
Peace and Non-Violence, Committee on	118
Peace with Justice Special Sunday and Grant Program.....	119
Pensions, Virginia United Methodist, Inc.	101
Pinnacle Living	126
Preacher's Relief Society	156
Printing the <i>Book of Reports</i>	4
Proposed Constitutional Amendments.....	39
Religion and Race, Conference Committee on.....	140
Reporting Guide for Lay Members.....	182

INDEX

Reserves, Conference.....	169
Resolutions.....	185
Retired Clergy Housing Corporation	155
Rules, Committee on.....	76
Rules, Standing	11
Schools of Theology	152
Site Selection Committee.....	96
Society of St. Andrew	140
Speaking.....	10
Statistician, Conference	162
Status and Role of Women, Committee on (COSROW)	139
Treasurer, Conference	167
Trustees, Conference Board of.....	145
UMFS.....	128
United Methodist Day at the General Assembly.....	120
United Methodist Men	136
United Methodist-Related schools	146
United Methodist Women in Faith.....	136
Virginia United Methodist Foundation and Development Company	161
Voting Rights Related to Name Badge Colors.....	36
Wesley Foundations/Campus Ministries.....	130
Wesley Housing.	128
William Watters Foundation	158
Youth Council	138