

## **Report from the Just Compensation Task Force 2024**

### **Why this Task Force was Created?**

At the 2023 Virginia Annual Conference session, a lay member named Ms. Terrie Chaplin (MV) expressed genuine concern about the financial well-being of our clergy, which led the Conference to adopt the amended motion to:

“Amend the report from the Equitable Compensation Committee to increase the minimum salary by \$1,000 for full-time clergy in each category for 2024.”

Out of that same concern, a motion by Rev. Dr. Janine Howard (NV) followed and was passed by the 2023 Conference to create our Task Force when she moved that:

“A work group be created by the Annual Conference to study housing allowances for clergy and make recommendations to create consistent and equitable practices for setting the allowances, further suggest that conference commissions related to advocacy, Clergy Excellence/Board of Ordained Ministry, Equitable Compensation, CFA (and other as deemed necessary) be included in the study.”

### **The Challenge**

Clergy housing allowances range greatly due to the following factors:

- Geographic location/cost of living
- Years of service
- Salary range
- Finances available within each local church
- Lack of standardization across the Conference and across districts

### **Our Goal**

To review our current housing allowance practices and recommend a new way forward which is equitable to both local churches and clergy.

### **Our Work**

We met seven times this past year to study all the factors that go into creating a housing allowance. Our research included housing allowances as well as the totality of clergy compensation in the Virginia Conference, focusing on years of service, age, gender, and race/ethnicity. For the purpose of statistical clarity, we primarily reviewed Full Time Elders, knowing that we also need to make sure we are not ignoring other clergy statuses in our discussions and recommendations. We also studied the policies and procedures around clergy compensation in other UMC conferences.

We also are keenly aware that our Conference has called upon us to study these concerns during a season of significant shortfall in income due to disaffiliations. Local churches are struggling financially, and creative solutions need to be well researched. On March 2, 2024, we presented our initial findings to the Board of Laity, whose input has been added to this report.

At the Board of Laity meeting, Rev. Bill Davidson (TN) (a task force member) shared the handout “Pastor Leontine” (see attachment pages 8-11) which describes the finances of a clergy person who is at the minimum salary. The Board of Laity responded that they had no idea that many pastors at minimum salaries (due to their other fiscal responsibilities as laid out within the handout) are barely getting by financially. This was an eye-opening exercise on both sides of the

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conversation, which speaks to why more education on clergy housing and salaries is needed for both clergy and laity.

### **Our Research (Outside of our Conference Comparisons):**

The task force reached out to other Annual Conferences to see how they created their housing allowance policies and included the following Conferences: Baltimore-Washington Conference UMC (BWCUMC), California-Pacific Conference UMC (CALPACUMC), Western North Carolina Conference UMC (WNCCUMC), North Carolina Conference UMC (NCCUMC), and the Florida Annual Conference UMC (FLUMC).

### **Our Findings:**

Each Annual Conference does this process differently. The Baltimore-Washington Conference and California-Pacific Conference have a set minimum number for housing. The Florida Annual Conference minimum housing allowance varies by geographic location (i.e. urban, oceanfront, and rural). In the North Carolina Conference, the following equation is followed: “Churches/charges providing a housing allowance in lieu of a parsonage should follow the Conference requirement, paying no less than 20% and not more than 40% of the Conference Average Compensation (CAC)” (“2023 Compensation and Personnel Policies for Pastors of The NC Conference of the United Methodist Church”). The Western North Carolina Conference does not set a minimum amount for housing allowances and states that “the local church shall determine how best to provide adequate housing for their pastors...in consultation with the District Superintendent” (Clergy Housing: Parsonages & Housing Allowances Guidelines & Policies Western North Carolina Conference The United Methodist Church revised 2020).

Some of these Annual Conferences include utilities (on top of housing allowances) within their equitable compensation report that local churches are required to pay, including:

- Heat, water/sewer, trash pick-up, local telephone, cable and internet access (NCCUMC, CALPACUMC)
- Climate control, both heating and cooling (FLUMC)
- Travel allowance & auto expense (CALPACUMC)

### **Our Current Practice**

In the Virginia Conference, our practice is much like the Western North Carolina Conference. As stated in *The Virginia Annual Conference Clergy Housing Policy*: “housing allowances shall be based on the fair rental value for a 3-bedroom, 1.5 bath home in the community (zip code) in which the church is located.”

### **Our Research (Inside the Virginia Conference UMC):**

The task force looked at the data from the Virginia Conference UMC Unity database for the 2024 conference year (July 1, 2023-present) which includes the housing allowance information for clergy utilizing a housing allowance. For the purpose of these statistics we used ordained elders. Those in extension ministry, deacons, and lay supply were taken out.

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Below you will find the housing allowance district statistics based off of ordained elders.

<b>District</b>	<b>Elders</b>	<b>Reside in Parsonage</b>	<b>Collect Housing Allowance</b>	<b>Min Housing Allowance</b>	<b>Max Housing Allowance</b>	<b>Average Housing Allowance</b>
Coastal Virginia	40	22	16	\$15,000.00	\$30,000.00	\$22,696.91
Living Waters	18	12	5	\$12,000.00	\$18,000.00	\$14,800.00
Mission Rivers	40	25	14	\$10,800.00	\$33,620.00	\$20,202.14
Mountain View	14	8	5	\$11,400.00	\$22,200.00	\$17,720.00
Northern Virginia	74	39	33	\$15,000.00	\$42,600.00	\$30,182.30
Shenandoah River	32	11	16	\$15,000.00	\$36,270.00	\$21,579.38
Three Notch'd	53	15	36	\$12,000.00	\$36,000.00	\$19,799.53
Valley Ridge	28	9	15	\$14,000.00	\$23,000.00	\$17,888.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>\$13,150.00</b>	<b>\$30,211.25</b>	<b>\$20,608.53</b>

The statistics above show that there is a great range both within each district and between districts.

The task force spent a lot of time talking about whether a minimum housing allowance and maximum housing allowance would be helpful and possible to use on every district. After looking at the cost of living within and between districts, the task force did not think it was possible to find an equitable number that would work across all the districts.

### **A Study on Clergy Salaries**

While the Just Compensation Task Force was tasked to look at clergy housing, we noticed a wide gap in housing allowances and wanted to study the effects of housing on total compensation. The housing allowance could be lowered or raised as a means of lowering or raising the overall compensation package. Our study of the salaries also showed a gap in pay between male and female clergy. The pay gap became wider between genders as we looked at racial factors. This is an area of concern that we would like to explore further.

The task force also examined housing allowances by district and found that the allowances varied widely across districts with the varied cost of living across our large districts. Because of this, the task force decided not to recommend setting housing allowances by districts and instead moved to a contextual housing allowance model adopted by the cabinet in their “Virginia Annual Conference Clergy Housing Policy” updated 2/2024, see pages 14-15).

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### Findings on Virginia Conference 2024 Salaries

Just as the housing allowances varied within and between districts, the task force found that salaries varied as well, due to race, ethnicity, gender, and years of service. For a full report view the “Data Analysis of Virginia Conference Clergy Compensation Trends” on pages 12-13.

### Summary of Results of 2024 VAUMC Salary Study

The data reveal that the highest salaries for full elders are going to male elders, who are compensated at an average of \$64,757 compared to \$60,251 for female elders when we look in aggregate at all elders across ethnic groups and years of experience. As stated above, it is important to note that these data also include, in some places, very small subgroups which can create outliers.

It is clear that our Conference has significant work to do in terms of recruiting and sustaining full elders who are in the subgroups of Hispanic/Latino Male, Hispanic/Latino Female, as well as Multi-Racial Male and Female elders and African-American/Black Female elders. In the report, the cells marked #N/A are subgroups where, at various levels of experience, we are lacking full elders (see the following link: <https://vaumc.org/jctfreport2024/>).

Within the provisional status, the data are particularly telling, as they reveal subgroups where diversity is lacking amongst those in the ordination process in the Virginia Conference. These data also show disparities between men and women at various points in the provisional process in each ethnic group.

When comparing the data for full-time local pastors across years of experience, the average salary for men outpaces women \$43,855 to \$42,970. It is also noteworthy that the data indicate that even with 25+ years of experience, the average salary for a licensed local pastor across all ethnic groups (\$45,291) falls just below the average salary for all clergy in the Conference at 5-9 years of experience (\$47,792). There is a dearth of African-American/Black Female local pastors with experience above 9 years. The same is the case for Asian Female local pastors, as Asian Females who are licensed local pastors only fall into the range of 5-9 years of service. It is also important to note that the data reveal that our Conference lacks full-time local pastors who are Hispanic/Latino Females, as well as lacks Hispanic/Latino Male local pastors with service in the Conference other than those who have served in the 5-9-year range.

It is crucial to note that while these figures tell a very important story about where we are as a Conference in regard to clergy compensation, they cannot tell the complete story, as they do not reflect elements of the work of our clergy, such as effectiveness in ministry, variations in costs of living across the geographic regions of the Conference, and clergy who are limited in their ability to itinerate at various stages of their life and ministry.

In order to better understand this condensed summary, it must be accompanied by the full report which is available in the spreadsheet linked below. It is our hope that these two resources can spark holy conversations around clergy compensation in the Virginia Conference at all levels of our life together: Conference, District, and local church, and that these holy conversations will serve as touchpoints that will lead the people called United Methodists in the

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Virginia Conference to compensation for all of our clergy shepherds that is fair, equitable, and just.

See the full statistical table here: <https://vaumc.org/jctfreport2024/>

### **Collaboration between the Cabinet and the Task Force**

The Cabinet will annually review “The Virginia Annual Conference Clergy Housing Policy” and has worked in collaboration with the Just Compensation Task Force to make the following updates and additions (see pages 14-15 highlighted items). The main changes and additions include the following:

- Clergy couples: when it comes to housing allowances, clergy couples are now treated individually. For instance, our current policy now states that even if a parsonage is provided by one church, “the other church will provide a full allowance” to the other member of the clergy couple (“The Virginia Annual Conference Clergy Housing Policy”). It also states: “If both appointments provide a housing allowance, each church provides a full housing allowance to both appointed pastors.”
- Accessibility needs: in order to support pastors and their family who may have accessibility needs, the following statement was added to the policy: “If a parsonage is not accessible for persons with disabilities and the pastor or pastoral family requires accessible housing, either the parsonage shall be made appropriately accessible or a housing allowance shall be paid” (“The Virginia Annual Conference Clergy Housing Policy”).
- “The Virginia Conference Annual Housing Review Worksheet” was created by the Task Force and passed by the Cabinet for churches to use as they calculate housing allowances (see pages 16-17) and what is highlighted in “The Virginia Annual Conference Clergy Housing Policy” bullet number three). This fillable worksheet helps churches calculate just and equitable housing for their pastors and includes calculating the fair rental value of five homes in the same zip code where the church is located. It then eliminates the highest and lowest outliers. Finally, it adds the annual cost of heat and air conditioning.

### **Collaboration with the Equitable Compensation Commission**

In conjunction with our work, the Equitable Compensation Commission also established long term goals for the setting of the minimum salary (see their report within The Book of Reports), which includes projecting minimum salaries for the next five years. This projection will be helpful to both pastors and local churches as they plan for the future.

### **Our Recommendations:**

1. Most notably our task force created a new “Virginia Conference Annual Housing Review Worksheet” (see pages 16-17) to be used by Staff Parish Relations Committees in consultation with their District Superintendent to calculate clergy housing allowance. This worksheet is now being phased in to be used as part of “The Virginia Annual Conference Clergy Housing Policy.”

As the Cabinet Clergy Housing Policy states: housing “shall be based on the fair rental value of 3- bedroom, 1.5 bath home in the community in which the church is located.” In setting the housing allowance, there should be a comparison of five homes that meet the above defined criteria identified by a realtor (or other appropriate professional) within the

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same zip code in which the church is located. This worksheet also adds in the utility cost of heat and air conditioning.

2. Our task force is dedicated to increasing education around clergy compensation issues. To that end, we are working with the Office of Clergy Excellence, the Board of Ordained Ministry, the Office of Pensions and Benefits, and other willing partners to prepare and offer resources for clergy and laity on the following topics:
  - a) Unique clergy tax regulations and maximizing clergy tax benefits
  - b) Clergy debt reduction and financial wellness
3. Given the scope of the perceived needs and injustices around clergy compensation in the Virginia Conference, it is essential that this work continue to determine what additional variables might contribute to just, equitable, and adequate clergy compensation for all.

We recommend that:

*The Just Compensation Task Force continue its work for another year to study clergy compensation in the Virginia Conference in its totality and present its findings and recommendations pertaining to this topic to the 2025 Virginia Annual Conference.*

Topics that the task force would study include, but will not be limited to, the following:

- Salary statistics including documented inequities with regard to clergy status, district, gender, race, ethnicity, years of service.
- Minimum parsonage standards.

In conclusion, our data confirm that the Conference's concern regarding these issues is well-founded. The 2023 Annual Conference decision to increase the minimum salary recommendation and the recent actions of the Cabinet and the Equitable Compensation Committee are significant first steps in addressing these issues of justice, adequacy, and equity. We are confident that further research will reveal additional strategies.

We seek your assistance in identifying meaningful and creative solutions. If you or someone you know has a story to tell, suggestions to offer, comments to make, or resources to share that address these concerns of the Conference, please email the chair, Rev. Jessie Colwell at [jessiecolwell@vaumc.org](mailto:jessiecolwell@vaumc.org) or use the QR code below:



## Report from the Just Compensation Task Force 2024

### Just Compensation Task Force

Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson	Resident Bishop
Steve Summers	Assistant to the Bishop
Tom Durrance	Equitable Compensation Chair
Doug Forrester	Cabinet Representative
David Dommissie	Treasurer, VAUMC
Jessie Colwell	Director of Clergy Excellence, VAUMC
Tammy Estep	Board of Ordained Ministry, Chair
George Warner	Cross Cultural/Cross Racial Committee Chair
Eduardo Carrillo	Commission on Ethnic Minority Concerns Chair
Mark Ogren	CFA Committee Representative, Retired Elder
Jenny Day	Commission on the Status and Role of Women, Co-Chair
John Fuller	Pensions and Benefits, Director
Bill Davidson	Clergy Taxes, EA, Retired Elder
Chris Malak	Director of Data Management, VAUMC
Timothy Barth	Commission on Disabilities, Chair
Christy Haga Turner	VAUMC pastor
Marcela Jarman	VAUMC pastor, Provisional Elder
Laura Stratton	VAUMC pastor, young woman clergy
Donna Kellam	Lay Member

### Resources

“2023 Compensation and Personnel Policies for Pastors of the NC Conference of the United Methodist Church: Effective January 1, 2023.” <https://nccumc.org>. January 1, 2023. Accessed August 1, 2023. <https://nccumc.org/treasurer/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/Compensation-and-Personnel-Policies-for-Pastors-2023.pdf>.

“Baltimore-Washington Conference Commission on Equitable Compensation 2024 Recommendations.” <https://www.bwcumc.org/>. Accessed August 1, 2023. [https://s3.amazonaws.com/account-media/19721/uploaded/e/0e15952525\\_1685479394\\_equitable-comp-sllides.pdf](https://s3.amazonaws.com/account-media/19721/uploaded/e/0e15952525_1685479394_equitable-comp-sllides.pdf).

“California-Pacific Conference Charge Conference Appendix C 2023 Minimum Compensation Standards.” <https://www.calpacumc.org/>. Accessed January 1, 2024. <https://www.calpacumc.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/AppC-MinimumCompensationStandards-2024.pdf>

“Clergy Housing: Parsonages & Housing Allowance Guidelines & Policies Western NC Conference The United Methodist Church Revised 2020.” <https://www.wnccumc.org/>. Accessed August 1, 2023. <https://www.wnccumc.org/files/tables/content/11730247/fields/files/b514c8d181ac47fa9f48367ef846716e/2020+clergy+housing.pdf>.

“Florida Annual Conference North East District Housing Allowance.” <https://www.flumc.org>. Accessed August 1, 2023. <https://www.flumc.org/files/ne+directory/district+clergy+housing.pdf>.

**Virginia Conference  
Minimum Salary,  
Clergy Housing,  
and  
the Cost of Living  
2024**



**Rev. Leontine Wesley**

**Full Time Elder**

**Addendum to the  
Report of the  
*Just Compensation  
Task Force*  
to the  
2024  
Virginia Annual  
Conference**

**NOTE: The estimated expenses for the cost of living are based on assumptions in this example. Individual circumstances may vary.**





**Rev. Leontine Wesley** is preparing for her first appointment as a full time elder in 2024. She will receive the Virginia Annual Conference Minimum Salary of **\$46,000 plus housing**. Her housing will depend on what her appointment provides:

- a cash housing allowance (to provide a home that meets the Virginia Conference Parsonage Minimum Standards: *3 bedroom/1.5 bath home plus heating and AC*) or
- a parsonage.

She is excited to serve wherever the Bishop appoints her. She wonders how she will fair financially. She compares three localities: Richmond, Danville, and Northern Virginia. Based on her research for Richmond, she compares her salary to her budget living in a parsonage.

### **HER TAXES--\$12,930**

She is surprised to learn that, as a minister, she is exempt from withholding and is subject to self-employment tax. Therefore,

- her church does not withhold her tax payments so she will need to make regular estimated tax payments (both federal and state) (estimate based on tax year 2023: \$12,930 out of her pocket as a single person living in a parsonage).
- her church does not pay the “employer’s portion” of her social security/medicare taxes since the Tax Code classifies ministers as self-employed. She pays this tax (7.65% of her salary and 7.65% of the fair rental value of the parsonage provided to her) with her tax payments above (approximately \$4,600 of the \$12,930 total).

### **HER TRAVEL AND OTHER EXPENSES RELATED TO HER MINISTRY**

**\$2,000\***

She is aware that most churches in Virginia do not fund her expenses for pastoral travel so she prepares to pay these expenses herself (\$2,000 based on about 3,000 miles of pastoral travel). \*May be higher in a rural area due to distances.

### **HER STUDENT LOAN--\$3,120**

She has a student loan for her required education in the amount of \$33,000 for which she pays \$3,120 annually in monthly payments (\$33,000 @5% for 15 years).

### **CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS-\$4,600**

As a good steward of the resources God provides her, she proclaims and models the biblical witness of financial stewardship. She tithes her income (10% of her salary--\$4,600) as part of her Christian commitment. She designates a major portion of this contribution to her church.

## PASTOR LEONTINE'S ANNUAL BUDGET CALCULATIONS FOR RICHMOND

TAXES (estimate based on 2023 tax year)

**\$12,930** (as a single person living in a parsonage)

CLERGY FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS (per year):

**\$2,000** Pastoral travel related to her ministry

**\$3,120** Student Loan Payment (\$33,000 @ 5% for 15 years)

**\$4,600** Charitable contributions

RENT (if not provided a parsonage):

**\$2,200/mo = \$26,400 per year** Richmond

**\$2,000/mo = \$24,000 per year** Danville

**\$3,000/mo = \$36,000 per year** Northern VA

GENERAL COST OF LIVING EXPENSES **\$24,444** (see next box below)

### **\$24,444 IS PASTOR LEONTINE'S ANNUAL GENERAL LIVING EXPENSES FOR RICHMOND**


Monthly cost of living expenses for a single person:

<b>\$ 83/mo</b>	<b>Furniture payment</b> (first time furnishing a home, \$5,000 no interest for 5 yrs at the <i>Room Store</i> )
<b>350/mo</b>	<b>Car Payment</b> (used 2015 Toyota Corolla with 49,450 miles, \$18,750 @ 4.49% for 5 years-- <i>The United Methodist Credit Union</i> loan)
<b>192/mo</b>	<b>Medical</b> (annual \$1,308 PPO Core Premium, \$1,000 deductible)
<b>110/mo</b>	<b>Retirement</b> —personal pension contribution (3% of salary--\$1,320/yr)
<b>200/mo</b>	<b>Restaurant</b>
<b>53/mo</b>	<b>“Going Out”</b> (movie, snacks, etc.)
<b>331/mo</b>	<b>Food at Home</b>
<b>137/mo</b>	<b>Gasoline</b> (1,000 mi personal travel/mo; \$3.43/gal; 480 gal)
<b>142/mo</b>	<b>Vacation and Travel</b> (4 weeks)
<b>238/mo</b>	<b>Utilities</b>
<b>28/mo</b>	<b>Clothing and Shoes</b>
<b>50/mo</b>	<b>Gifts</b>
<b>123/mo</b>	<b>Other Goods and Services</b> (Household supplies, Electronics, Home insurance, Other)

**\$2,037/mo = \$24,444 per year**

This estimate (researched for this report on 9/23) is based on:

- Actual expenses (e.g. Medical Plan Premium, Retirement)
- Estimates sourced from cost of living comparison reports:
  - *Redfin* <https://www.redfin.com/cost-of-living-calculator>
  - *Numbeo* <https://www.numbeo.com/cost-of-living/>

On this chart see  for Pastor Leontine as a single person in a parsonage in Richmond. This chart also compares her with a cash housing allowance and as

- a single parent with 1 child,
- married with a spouse who cares full time for 1 child and 2 children.\*\*

	MINIMUM SALARY of <b>\$46,000</b>	SINGLE	SINGLE PARENT (CHILDCARE <b>\$12,000</b> )	MARRIED 1 CHILD (NO CHILDCARE)	MARRIED 2 CHILDREN (NO CHILDCARE)
<b>R</b>	<b>RENT \$2,200 mo=\$26,400/yr</b>				
<b>I</b>	<b>\$30,000 HOUSING EXCLUSION/AMOUNT SPENT ON HOUSING/AMOUNT APPROVED BY CHARGE CONFERENCE</b>				
<b>C</b>	with 2023 Three Notch'd District Average cash Housing Allowance of <b>\$19,800</b> (range \$12,000-\$36,000)				
<b>H</b>	INCOME	\$65,800	\$65,800	\$65,800	\$65,800
<b>M</b>	COST OF LIVING	<b>\$70,482</b>	<b>\$79,321</b>	<b>\$86,243</b>	<b>\$93,140</b>
<b>O</b>	with cash Housing Allowance of <b>\$26,400</b> (per 2024 Clergy Housing Policy* for this example)				
<b>N</b>	INCOME	\$72,400	\$72,400	\$72,400	\$72,400
<b>D</b>	COST OF LIVING	<b>\$73,030</b>	<b>\$80,060</b>	<b>\$87,625</b>	<b>\$95,368</b>
	with a <b>PARSONAGE</b>				
	INCOME	\$46,000	\$46,000	\$46,000	\$46,000
	COST OF LIVING	<b>\$47,094</b>	<b>\$54,823</b>	<b>\$61,721</b>	<b>\$69,477</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>RENT \$2,000 mo=\$24,000/yr [COST OF LIVING 6.2% LESS COMPARED TO RICHMOND]</b>				
<b>A</b>	<b>\$30,000 HOUSING EXCLUSION/AMOUNT SPENT ON HOUSING/AMOUNT APPROVED BY CHARGE CONFERENCE</b>				
<b>N</b>	with 2023 Mountain View District Average cash Housing Allowance of <b>\$17,720</b> (range \$11,400-\$22,200)				
<b>V</b>	INCOME	\$63,720	\$63,720	\$63,720	\$63,720
<b>I</b>	COST OF LIVING	<b>\$66,511</b>	<b>\$74,700</b>	<b>\$80,762</b>	<b>\$86,916</b>
<b>L</b>	with cash Housing Allowance of <b>\$24,000</b> (per 2024 Clergy Housing Policy* for this example)				
<b>L</b>	INCOME	<b>\$70,000</b>	\$70,000	\$70,000	\$70,000
<b>E</b>	COST OF LIVING	<b>\$68,376</b>	<b>\$74,815</b>	<b>\$81,574</b>	<b>\$89,019</b>
	with a <b>PARSONAGE</b>				
	INCOME	\$46,000	\$46,000	\$46,000	\$46,000
	COST OF LIVING	<b>\$45,578</b>	<b>\$52,602</b>	<b>\$59,019</b>	<b>\$66,173</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>RENT \$3,000/mo=\$36,000/yr [COST OF LIVING 3.9% HIGHER COMPARED TO RICHMOND]</b>				
<b>O</b>	<b>\$40,000 HOUSING EXCLUSION/AMOUNT SPENT ON HOUSING/AMOUNT APPROVED BY CHARGE CONFERENCE</b>				
<b>V</b>	with 2023 Northern Virginia District Average cash Housing Allowance of <b>\$30,182</b> (range \$15,000-\$42,600)				
<b>A</b>	INCOME	\$76,182	\$76,182	\$76,182	\$76,182
	COST OF LIVING	<b>\$82,975</b>	<b>\$91,113</b>	<b>\$97,694</b>	<b>\$107,592</b>
	with cash Housing Allowance of <b>\$36,000</b> (per 2024 Clergy Housing Policy* for this example)				
	INCOME	\$82,000	\$82,000	\$82,000	\$82,000
	COST OF LIVING	<b>\$84,756</b>	<b>\$92,249</b>	<b>\$100,228</b>	<b>\$108,404</b>
	with a <b>PARSONAGE</b>				
	INCOME	\$46,000	\$46,000	\$46,000	\$46,000
	COST OF LIVING	<b>\$47,542</b>	<b>\$57,522</b>	<b>\$64,781</b>	<b>\$91,674</b>

\*The Virginia Conference Clergy Housing Policy states that the cost of heating and air conditioning are provided. As these utility expenses are difficult to meaningfully estimate due to variances in region, size of home, and fuel source, this chart does not include the provision of the cost of heating and air conditioning utilities.

\*\*The task force did not calculate a working spouse because the salary range would be too great for this statistical exercise.

# Data Analysis of Virginia Conference Clergy Compensation Trends

Submitted to the Annual Conference on Behalf of the Just Compensation Workgroup

June, 2024

The following analysis is based on data culled from the Virginia Conference Unity database in February and March of 2024, and it represents clergy compensation for the 2024 calendar year. The figures used for this analysis are based on the “Appointment Workbook Compensation” line on the “Clergy Compensation Report” submitted at each church/charge’s annual charge conference as well as anytime a new pastoral appointment begins. These figures do not include clergy who are on various types of leave, such as personal, family, or medical leave. They also do not include clergy appointed to extension ministries outside of the United Methodist Church, such as hospital or military chaplains. However, they do include clergy appointed to the Virginia Conference, such as district superintendents.

It is crucial to note that while these figures tell a very important story about where we are as a Conference in regard to clergy compensation, they cannot tell the complete story, as they do not represent elements of the work of our clergy such as effectiveness in ministry, variations in costs of living across the geographical regions of Conference, and clergy who are limited in their ability to itinerate at various stages of their life and ministry.

Finally, perusing the available information will show that the datasets are very small in some subgroups which means that individual clergy can skew data in very significant ways. For this reason, this report includes only full-time elders, provisional elders, and local pastors. However, information on other clergy statuses are reported in the [Average Salary Data spreadsheet](#) linked at the end of this document. A fulsome analysis of the data below requires use of the data in this spreadsheet.

For reference, the 2024 minimum salaries for full-time local pastors, provisional elders, and full elders are as follows:

Licensed: \$39,000

Provisional Elders: \$41,500

Full Elders: \$46,000

## Full-Time Elders (#N/A corresponds to cells where there is no data)

Category	0-4 yrs	5-9 yrs	10-14 yrs	15-19 yrs	20-24yrs	25+yrs
All	41,901	47,792	54,539	59,377	62,307	69,203
Full Elder, All	56,703	52,069	59,654	65,191	69,577	74,293
Full Elder, African American/Black, Female	#N/A	47,750	62,500	60,000	#N/A	100,000
Full Elder, African American/Black, Male	60,000	#N/A	47,000	61,550	81,395	84,357
Full Elder, Asian, Female	47,380	50,000	53,700	#N/A	#N/A	67,167
Full Elder, Asian, Male	#N/A	54,450	61,912	69,056	#N/A	68,180
Full Elder, Hispanic/Latino, Female	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	46,000	#N/A	59,346
Full Elder, Hispanic/Latino, Male	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	74,000	#N/A
Full Elder, Multi-Racial, Female	#N/A	#N/A	54,500	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
Full Elder, White, Female	62,730	54,565	57,468	66,582	59,561	72,528
Full Elder, White, Male	#N/A	50,056	62,911	64,592	73,399	75,191

Notes: As the data above reveal, the highest salaries for full elders are going to our male elders, who are compensated at an average of \$64,757 compared to \$60,251 for our women elders when we look in aggregate at all elders across ethnic groups and years of experience. As stated above, it is important to note that this data also includes, in some places, very small subgroups. For example, the row “Full Elder, African American/Black, Female” includes an average salary at 25+ years of \$100,000. This figure represents one clergyperson, a district superintendent, and this subgroup of one skews the data for the entire subgroup. As such, when this salary is removed from the average, the average for Full Elder, “African American/Black, Female” drops from \$67,653 to \$56,760.

It is clear to see that our Conference has significant work to do in terms of recruiting and sustaining full elders who are in the subgroups of Hispanic/Latino Male, Hispanic/Latino Female, as well as Multi-Racial male and female elders and African-American/Black women elders. As seen in the chart above in the cells marked #N/A, these are subgroups where, at various levels of experience, we are lacking.

## Full-Time Provisional Elders (#N/A corresponds to cells where there is no data)

Category	0-4 yrs	5-9 yrs	10-14 yrs	15-19 yrs	20-24yrs	25+yrs
All	41,901	47,792	54,539	59,377	62,307	69,203
Provisional Elder, All	41,975	44,884	48,234	51,000	#N/A	#N/A
Provisional Elder, African American/Black, Female	#N/A	38,000	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
Provisional Elder, African American/Black, Male	#N/A	53,525	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
Provisional Elder, Asian, Female	42,525	40,000	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
Provisional Elder, Asian, Male	43,175	42,371	64,394	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
Provisional Elder, Hispanic/Latino, Female	#N/A	41,500	46,000	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
Provisional Elder, Hispanic/Latino, Male	#N/A	#N/A	47,456	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
Provisional Elder, Indian, Female	43,500	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
Provisional Elder, Multi-Racial, Female	41,347	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
Provisional Elder, White, Female	40,050	43,030	48,723	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
Provisional Elder, White, Male	#N/A	48,221	44,703	51,000	#N/A	#N/A
Provisional Other Conf, White, Female	38,500	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A

Notes: It is important to note that the subgroups in this clergy status are comparatively small, as provisional elder is a temporary clergy status that one only holds enroute to becoming a full elder. However, as can be seen in the chart above, there are provisional elders with experience above the 5-9 year range because this chart includes total years of service as clergy in the Virginia Conference, and in some cases, for example, persons served as licensed local pastors prior to beginning the provisional process.

This chart is particularly telling, as it reveals subgroups where diversity is lacking amongst those in the ordination process in the Virginia Conference. This chart also shows disparities between men and women at various points in the provisional process in each ethnic group.

#### Full-Time Local Pastors (#N/A corresponds to cells where there is no data)

Category	0-4 yrs	5-9 yrs	10-14 yrs	15-19 yrs	20-24yrs	25+yrs
All	41,901	47,792	54,539	59,377	62,307	69,203
Full Time Local Pastor, All	38,944	44,281	42,743	45,660	44,859	45,291
Full Time Local Pastor, African American/Black, Female	40,491	40,000	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
Full Time Local Pastor, African American/Black, Male	41,041	45,040	36,000	41,852	52,750	#N/A
Full Time Local Pastor, Asian, Female	#N/A	42,842	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
Full Time Local Pastor, Asian, Male	37,863	48,262	57,000	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
Full Time Local Pastor, Hispanic/Latino, Male	46,738	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
Full Time Local Pastor, Multi-Racial, Male	#N/A	39,000	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
Full Time Local Pastor, White, Female	38,446	41,621	41,599	48,172	44,800	#N/A
Full Time Local Pastor, White, Male	38,578	46,067	42,613	44,954	44,206	45,291

Notes: When comparing the data for full-time local pastors across years of experience, the average salary for men outpaces women \$43,855 to \$42,970. It is also noteworthy that the data indicate that even with 25+ years of experience, the average salary for a licensed local pastor across all ethnic groups (\$45,291) falls just below the average salary for all clergy in the Conference at 5-9 years of experience (\$47,792). There is a dearth of African-American/Black women local pastors with experience above 9 years. The same is the case for Asian women who are local pastors, as our Asian women who are licensed local pastors only fall into the range of 5-9 years of service. It is also important to note that the chart above reveals that our Conference lacks full-time local pastors who are Hispanic/Latino women, as well as lacking Hispanic/Latino male local pastors with service in the Conference other than those who have served in the 5-9 year range.

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As was stated at the outset of this report, in order to be better understood, this condensed document must be accompanied by the full report which is available in the spreadsheet linked below. It is our hope that these two resources can spark holy conversations around clergy compensation in the Virginia Conference at all levels of our life together: Conference, District, and local church, and that these holy conversations will serve as touchpoints that will lead the people called Methodists in the Virginia Conference to compensation for all of our clergy shepherds that is fair, equitable, and just.

To see the full statistical table go here: <https://vaumc.org/jctfreport2024/>

# The Virginia Annual Conference

## Clergy Housing Policy

- Each full-time clergy appointment will provide housing that meets or exceeds The Virginia Annual Conference minimum parsonage standards including heat and air conditioning by either providing a parsonage or an adequate housing allowance.
- In some circumstances, the district superintendent may work with the church and pastor to arrange for the church to rent a parsonage for the pastor, in lieu of a housing allowance; or, to provide a loan for a security deposit so that the pastor can use a housing allowance to enter into a rental agreement.
- If a parsonage is not accessible for persons with disabilities and the pastor or pastoral family requires accessible housing, either the parsonage shall be made appropriately accessible or a housing allowance shall be paid.
- The church shall submit the “Annual Parsonage Inspection” or “Housing Allowance Review” to the district by June 1 of each year.
- Every pastor on a charge will be expected to receive the same housing allowance.
- Housing allowances shall be based on the fair rental value for a 3 bedroom, 1.5 bath home in the community (zip code) in which the church is located (including heat and air conditioning). See [Housing Allowance Review document for calculation of Housing Allowance](#).
- If housing is offered and the pastor chooses NOT to live in the church-provided housing, the church is not obligated to pay housing allowance. If the parsonage is rented out, then a housing allowance must be paid.
- If a parsonage is to be rented, ¶2540 of the 2016 Book of Discipline shall be followed for approval.
- If a church has a parsonage that is rented, the rental funds should be placed in a designated parsonage/housing account. If the local church rents out the parsonage, then a minimum of 75% of the rental income shall be paid towards a housing allowance for the pastor, and 25% of the rental income shall be used for maintenance reserve for the parsonage. (see above regarding the calculating amount of housing allowance)
- Churches are responsible for compliance with any tax laws applicable to income generated from rental and for taxes related to the change in property use.
- Housing arrangements for clergy couples are made in consultation with the District Superintendent. (see below)
- The sale of parsonages must be done in collaboration with the District Superintendent and in accordance with ¶2540 and 2543.1 of the 2016 Book of Discipline. Please note that principal proceeds from the sale of a parsonage may not be used for the current (or budget) expenses of the local church. Interest on the proceeds of the sale may be used for a housing allowance. The principal proceeds may be used for capital expenditures, with the approval of the District Superintendent.

Revised by the Cabinet 2/2024  
Revised by the Cabinet 11/2023  
Revised by the Cabinet 1/2016  
Adopted by the Cabinet 4/2011

## Clergy Couple Housing Policy

- If both churches have a parsonage, the clergy couple may choose which to reside in. The other church will provide a full housing allowance (see above).
- If both appointments provide a housing allowance, each church provides a full housing allowance to both appointed pastors.
- If one appointment provides a parsonage and one appointment provides a housing allowance, the parsonage will serve to house the couple and the housing allowance will be provided to the clergy of the church that provides that allowance (if the clergy couple, in consultation with their churches and the district superintendent, arrange to live in a home other than the provided parsonage, refer to above policy regarding housing allowance in lieu of parsonage).

Approved by Cabinet 11/23

**Virginia Conference Annual Housing Allowance Review – due 6/1**  
**Refer to [The Virginia Annual Conference Clergy Housing Policy](#)**

See Sample on Back

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

The undersigned have reviewed the clergy housing allowance of the \_\_\_\_\_  
pastoral charge at (address) \_\_\_\_\_

**Analysis**

**THE VIRGINIA CONFERENCE CLERGY HOUSING ALLOWANCE ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE**

Each pastoral charge that provides a housing allowance for its appointed clergy shall determine the Fair Rental Value of homes that meet the Virginia Conference Minimum Parsonage Standards:

*(Housing Allowances shall be based on the fair rental value for a 3 Bedroom, 1 ½ bath home in the community [zip code] in which the church is located, including heat and air conditioning).*

Contact a real estate agent to provide current listing of at least three homes within its neighborhood. For an appointment in a more rural community, determine the Fair Rental Value of homes nearest the church that provides the most accurate value as possible.

1. Fair Rental Value of Homes  
Home 1 \_\_\_\_\_ address \_\_\_\_\_  
Home 2 \_\_\_\_\_ address \_\_\_\_\_  
Home 3 \_\_\_\_\_ address \_\_\_\_\_  
Home 4 \_\_\_\_\_ address \_\_\_\_\_  
Home 5 \_\_\_\_\_ address \_\_\_\_\_
2. Average (after eliminating the highest and lowest ["outliers"]): \_\_\_\_\_  
*(This is the Fair Rental Value of a home for purposes of determining the clergy housing allowance for the church/charge.)*
3. Annual cost of heat and air conditioning \_\_\_\_\_
4. Step 3 plus step 4 \_\_\_\_\_  
*This is the amount of the Housing Allowance (fair rental value plus heat and air conditioning) required by the Clergy Housing Policy.*

**CLERGY HOUSING ALLOWANCE COMPLIANCE PLAN**

*(Required if the amount of the clergy housing allowance recommended for adoption by the Charge Conference does not comply with the Virginia Conference)*

Amount of Clergy Housing Allowance recommended to Charge Conference 202\_: \_\_\_\_\_  
Amount of Fair Rental Value plus heat required per the Conference Clergy Housing Policy (#4 above): \_\_\_\_\_  
Percentage of 202\_ Housing Allowance compared to Clergy Housing Policy \_\_\_\_\_%  
Percentage goal for 202\_ Housing Allowance \_\_\_\_\_%  
Percentage goal for 202\_ Housing Allowance \_\_\_\_\_%  
Percentage goal for 202\_ Housing Allowance \_\_\_\_\_%

Based upon this compliance plan, our pastoral charge will set the Clergy Housing Allowance at the full amount of the Fair Rental Value of a home that complies with the Conference Clergy Housing Policy in the year \_\_\_\_\_.

SIGNATURES:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson, Pastor-Parish Relations Committee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson, Trustees

\_\_\_\_\_  
Pastor

Date \_\_\_\_\_



Virginia Conference Annual Housing Allowance Review – due 6/1  
Refer to [The Virginia Annual Conference Clergy Housing Policy](#)

**Sample**

DATE: November 10, 2024

The undersigned have reviewed the clergy housing allowance of the First United Methodist Church pastoral charge at (address) 123 Church St., Richmond, VA

**Analysis**

**THE VIRGINIA CONFERENCE CLERGY HOUSING ALLOWANCE ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE**

Each pastoral charge that provides a housing allowance for its appointed clergy shall determine the Fair Rental Value of homes that meet the Virginia Conference Minimum Parsonage Standards:

*(Housing Allowances shall be based on the fair rental value for a 3 Bedroom, 1 ½ bath home in the community [zip code] in which the church is located, including heat and air conditioning).*

Contact a real estate agent to provide current listing of at least three homes within its neighborhood. For an appointment in a more rural community, determine the Fair Rental Value of homes nearest the church that provides the most accurate value as possible.

1. Fair Rental Value of Homes  
Home 1 ~~\$30,000~~ address ~~456 Main St.~~  
Home 2 \$27,000 address 3231 First Ave.  
Home 3 \$28,000 address 1212 High St.  
Home 4 \$29,000 address 31 Low St.  
Home 5 ~~\$20,000~~ address ~~1515 Second Ave.~~
2. Average (after eliminating the highest and lowest ["outliers"]): \$28,000/yr  
(This is the Fair Rental Value of a home for purposes of determining the clergy housing allowance for the church/charge.)
3. Annual cost of heat and air conditioning \$ 2,000/yr
4. Step 3 plus step 4 \$30,000/yr  
*This is the amount of the Housing Allowance (fair rental value plus heat and air conditioning) required by the Clergy Housing Policy.*

**HOUSING ALLOWANCE COMPLIANCE PLAN**

*(Required if the amount of the clergy housing allowance recommended for adoption by the Charge Conference does not comply with the Virginia Conference)*

Amount of Clergy Housing Allowance recommended to Charge Conference 2025:	\$25,000
Amount of Fair Rental Value plus heat required per the Conference Clergy Housing Policy (#4 above):	\$29,000
Percentage of 2025 Housing Allowance compared to Clergy Housing Policy	85%
Percentage goal for 2026 Housing Allowance	<u>92.5%</u>
Percentage goal for 2027 Housing Allowance	<u>100%</u>
Percentage goal for 2028 Housing Allowance	_____

Based upon this compliance plan, our pastoral charge will set the Clergy Housing Allowance at the full amount of the Fair Rental Value of a home that complies with the Conference Clergy Housing Policy in the year \_\_\_\_\_.

**SIGNATURES:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson, Pastor-Parish Relations Committee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson, Trustees

\_\_\_\_\_  
Pastor

Date \_\_\_\_\_