

“Write the vision clearly on the tablets, that one may read it on the run.” – Habakkuk

# THE VISION



May 2018

## Bishops Back ‘1 Church Plan’ for Way Forward

BY HEATHER HAHN

UMNS | To find a way forward on the denomination’s homosexuality debate, bishops are recommending the church allow more freedom at the conference and local church levels.

Under what the Council of Bishops calls the “One Church Plan,” decisions about whether to ordain LGBTQ clergy or to officiate at same-gender unions would be made closer to the congregational level.

The plan would remove the restrictive language against the practice of homosexuality in the *Book Discipline*, the denomination’s policy book. The plan also adds assurances to pastors and conferences who in good conscience cannot perform same-sex weddings or ordain “self-avowed practicing” gay clergy that they don’t have to do so. Central conferences—church regions in Africa, Asia and Europe—could maintain current restrictions.

The plan “encourages a generous unity by giving United Method-



**Bishops Thomas J. Bickerton and Tracy Malone, both at right, kneel as Bishop Sharma Lewis, left, leads the Council of Bishops in prayer at the end of the third day of their recent discussions on the Commission on a Way Forward report.**

ists the ability to address different missional contexts in ways that reflect their theological convictions,” said the bishops’ press release.

While the majority of bishops recommend the One Church Plan, the bishops also will submit two additional plans to the special General Conference on Feb.

23–26, 2019, in St. Louis. All three possibilities had support among some of the bishops.

The other two plans on the table are:

The Traditionalist Plan would affirm the current language in the denomination’s *Book of Discipline*,  
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### *Bishop Bickerton Responds to Report*

*As Bishops of The United Methodist Church, we affirm that WE ARE OF ONE HEART in our desire to discern the mind and will of Jesus Christ for our leadership and the church. In the Northeastern Jurisdiction and around the world we experience great diversity of thought and practice within The United Methodist Church. In partnership with Bishops from around the world, we will continue to lead collectively and individually to value and provide room for our diversity as United Methodists.*

—The Northeastern Jurisdiction College of Bishops, May 4, 2018

*Dear Friends and Colleagues in Christ,*

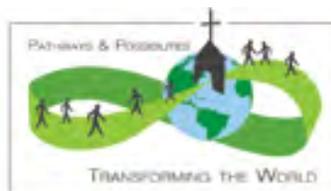
In 2016, the General Conference asked the bishops of our church to lead a process that would find a way forward for the church concerning the matter of human sexuality and, in particular, the full inclusion of  
**Continued on page 10**

## Getting Ready for 219th Annual Conference

In just a few weeks, clergy and laity will converge on Hofstra University for the celebration and business of the 219th session of the New York Annual Conference. The gathering begins with check-in starting at 10 a.m. on Thursday, June 7 and runs through the ordination service on Sunday morning, June 10. Opening worship is at 1 p.m.

The [call to conference](#) is available online. Register online

by May 24 [here](#). May 24 is also the deadline to request to be excused from attending annual conference. It is Bishop Bickerton’s expectation that all clergy and lay members will be present. Clergy, laity, provisional members or local pastors must submit in writing the reason for their absence to the Conference Secretary Margaret Howe. The excuses may be sent via [email](#), or by mailing a letter to Howe at 20 Soundview Ave., White



Plains, N.Y. 10606-3302.

A [draft agenda](#) for the four days is available. The second draft of the pre-conference reports, petitions, and resolutions can be found [here](#).

Saturday afternoon workshops

(3:30 p.m.) will focus on the sharing of your faith, moving from activity to outcomes, new approaches to stewardship, the Sanctuary Church Movement, local and global missions, and developing mission, vision and core values for the local church. Those who registered early will be contacted to choose a workshop; others will make a selection when they register.

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For a full lineup of events, go to: [www.nyac.com/conferencecalendar](http://www.nyac.com/conferencecalendar).

### Ongoing Immigration Prayers

Join the NYAC Immigration Task Force for a time of prayer for our country and immigrant brothers and sisters on Monday nights from 7:30–8 p.m. until further notice. Call-in number: 641-715-3580; group code: 780843#. Contact Pastor [Ximena Varas](#) for more information.

### 5/24 Newly Appointed Pastors

Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton will meet with pastors for a time of conversation and centering around their new appointments starting on July 1. The noon to 2:30 p.m. event will take place in the White Plains conference. Contact Bob Walker by [email](#) or call 914-615-2234 with any questions. RSVP by email to the [bishop's office](#) by May 18.

### 5/25–27 Quinipet “Spring into Action”

Volunteers are needed to help get Camp Quinipet ready for the summer season. Individuals, church groups, youth groups, and/or Quinipet alumni are all welcome to participate. Projects may include painting, raking, beach and grounds cleanup. Housing and meals are free in appreciation for the work. Register [here](#).

### May & June End of Life Care Seminars

Provisional deacon Janet Cox will present seminars to give clergy and laity the tools to initiate end-of-life conversations with families in their congregations. Times and locations are below. Please RSVP to Cox via [email](#).

**May 26:** 10 a.m. to Noon, Westchester UMC, 2547 E Tremont Ave., Bronx, N.Y.

**June 16:** 10 a.m. to Noon, Grace UMC, 21 S. Franklin Ave. Valley Stream, N.Y.

### 6/16 ERT Recertification

Register for this 9:30–11:30 a.m. training opportunity to update your early response team (ERT) credentials, which are valid for disaster recovery work for three years. Participants must be 18 years of age, and submit to a background check, which costs \$10. Centerport UMC, 97 Little Neck Rd., Centerport NY. Questions? Contact Nikki Rose by [email](#). Register by clicking [here](#).

### 6/7–10 New York Annual Conference

Clergy and laity from around the conference will gather to explore the theme, “Pathways & Possibilities: Transforming the World” at Hofstra University on Long Island. [Online registration](#) is now open for the session that will begin on Thursday afternoon and conclude following the ordination service on Sunday. See the annual conference preview on Pages 1 and 3.

### 7/26–29 Creation Care Summit

The Minnesota Annual Conference and Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary are co-sponsors for this event at Hamline University, St. Paul, Minn. The summit will look at key ways to heal the planet, and empowering Christians to bring about a more sustainable and just future for their communities and the planet. The sessions from Thursday noon through Friday afternoon are designed for UMC leaders in the working on creation care/environmental justice at any level of the church. Those who choose to attend these sessions will be asked to complete some assignments before they arrive. Friday evening through Sunday are designed for anyone interested in learning more about engaging in the work of creation care / environmental justice. For more info and to register, click [here](#).

### 7/27–29 Mission u

The United Methodist Women and Board of Laity invite all to this time for spiritual growth and to expand your knowledge and concepts of mission. The 2018 studies are: “Embracing Wholeness: An Earth Perspective to Covenantal Living,” “What About Our Money? A Faith Response,” and the “Geographic Study: Missionary Conferences in U.S.” Participate in all three days at the Stamford Hilton, or drop in for the Saturday Sampler. [Register online](#) before July 1.

### 10/14–25 “Journeys of Paul” Cruise

Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton will host the nine-day journey aboard Royal Caribbean’s “Jewel of the Seas,” in conjunction with Educational Opportunities Tours. Beginning and ending in Rome, the trip includes stops in Taormina and Pompeii, Italy; Mykonos, Santorini, Athens, and Corinth, Greece; and Ephesus, Turkey. There is also an optional two-day tour of Vatican City on October 25–26. Find the [reservation information](#) online. If you have any questions, contact [Rev. Chuck Ferrara](#), the regional representative for Educational Opportunities in our area.

### Vision Deadlines for 2018

*The Vision* is a monthly online publication of the New York Conference. Deadlines are always the first Friday of the month, with posting to the web site about 10 days later. The deadlines for 2018 are June 1, July 6, August 3, September 7, October 5, November 2, and December 7. Please send any stories, photos, ideas, or questions directly to [vision@nyac.com](mailto:vision@nyac.com).

<small>The News of the New York Conference of the United Methodist Church</small>	
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# NYAC Pushes for Peace on Korean Peninsula

BY REV. KUN SAM CHO  
AND REV. PAUL FLECK

The meeting of the leaders of North and South Korea and their commitment to ending the Korean War has been much in the news as of late, and with good reason. The conflict is the longest running one of its sort in modern history. Many assume that the Korean War ended in the 1950s. What they do not know is that, while there was an armistice in 1953 that led to decades of tension on the peninsula, no official peace treaty has ever been reached.

All of that could change very soon. On April 27, South Korean President Moon Jae-In and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un met in an historic summit where they committed the two countries to talking about removing or banning nuclear weapons and bringing a formal end to the Korean conflict. In either late May or early June at either Panmunjom or Pyongyang (undetermined as of the time of this article), U.S. President Donald Trump plans to meet with Kim Jong Un in an effort to reduce tensions.

The New York Conference has been at the forefront of The United Methodist Church in seeking to bring peace, reconciliation, and reunification to the two Koreas. In 1995 during Korea's Jubilee Year



**Marching for peace in Washington, D.C., in 2015, on the 61st anniversary of the armistice that brought the fighting to an end in the Korean War. A peace treaty has never been signed between the north and the south.**

celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Korean independence, the NYAC held special services of prayer and worship for this very purpose.

Then, in 2011, the annual conference, working with the Committee on Peace of the Korean Association of the UMC, forwarded a petition to General Conference 2012, which, as amended and passed by the General Conference, established a Korean Peace March in 2015 that was held in Washington, D.C.

At that march, members of

the NYAC joined participants from across the UM connection in visits to their senators and representatives to promote peace on the peninsula. In 2016, there was a report to the General Conference and a celebration dinner that many representatives from the NYAC delegation attended.

Most recently, in the fall of 2017, a delegation from the conference, including Rev. Steve Peiffer and Sheila Peiffer (a staffer with the Conference Board of Church & Society) attended a symposium

sponsored by the General Board of Church & Society seeking to promote peace and reconciliation in Korea. Participants in Washington, D.C., visited their senators and representatives to educate them about the need for a lasting peace.

Out of that most recent visit to our nation's capitol, we have decided to join another Peace March on July 27, the anniversary date of the armistice reached 65 years ago. A resolution, endorsed by the Board of Church and Society, the Korean Council/Caucus and the Asian Council, has been forwarded to the NYAC session for consideration this June. It is, however, our earnest prayer that this resolution will require amendment, and we will instead hold a Korean peace celebration march. The march would culminate with a prayer service at the Korean War Memorial.

Interested in joining us in efforts to promote peace and reconciliation on the Korean Peninsula? We are considering chartering a bus from the NYAC for the event from July 26–28. If you have an interest, please contact by email either [Steve Peiffer](mailto:Steve.Peiffer@umc.org) or [Kun Sam Cho](mailto:Kun.Sam.Cho@umc.org).

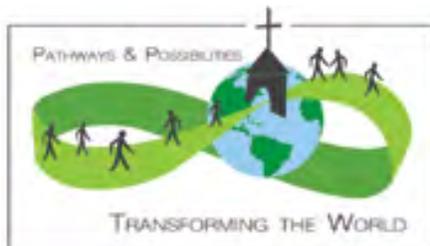
Read the UMNS story, "Christians Find Hope in Korean Summit," by clicking [here](#).

## Join a Mission Project Before, During AC2018

Continued from page 1

Several mission opportunities—UMARMY, "Done in A Day," and Rise Against Hunger—have been added to this year's schedule.

- **UMARMY:** Work on a project near Hofstra on Wednesday, June 6. United Methodist Action Reach-out Mission by Youth (UMARMY) will run from 8 a.m.–4 p.m. To register click [here](#); although this form refers to a project from June 3–9, it is the correct form for the one-day project.
- **Done in a Day:** Also on Wednesday, DIAD projects will include both interior and exterior work and allow for all skill



levels. Participants must be 14 or older. Dorm rooms are available on Wednesday night for volunteers. Click this [link](#) to apply.

- **Rise Against Hunger:** Children and youth (preschool to high school) and

their youth leaders may help package 30,000 meals beginning at 11 a.m. Saturday June 9. Buses will provide transportation to and from Hofstra. Lunch will be provided. During the afternoon, the teams will observe what happens at annual conference. Register [here](#).

- **Health Kits:** Kits will be collected on Thursday and Friday in the arena. Volunteers are needed to help box and load the health kits onto the Mission Central truck. Please indicate your availability to help when you register.

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# Register for Health Screening at Hofstra

Continued from page 3

## Wednesday Agenda

Pre-conference mission projects with UMArmy or the Done-in-a-Day program.

## Thursday

- 10 a.m. Check in begins at Mack Arena lobby
- 1 p.m. Opening worship with Bishop Bickerton preaching
- 3 p.m. 219th Session opens; balloting for General Conference delegates begins.
- 5 p.m. All-conference dinner at the fitness center.
- 7 p.m. Clergy and laity sessions, followed by healing service

## Friday

- 10 a.m. Memorial service with Bishop LaTrelle Easterling preaching

## Saturday

- 10 a.m. Service of Commissioning & Sending. Retiree class of 2018 will pass the mantle to a UM missionary, local pastors, and provisional members. Bishop Latrelle Easterling will preach.
- 11 a.m. Rise Against Hunger meal packing

## Sunday

- 10 a.m. Ordination service with Bishop Bickerton preaching

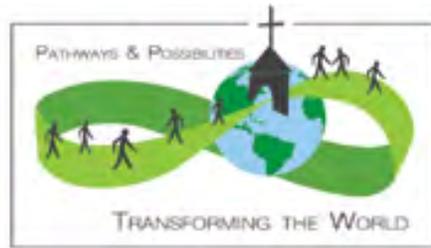
Other special guests will include a representative from the Shinnecock Nation; Fred Day, general secretary of the Commission on Archives and History; and Rev. Glorymar Rivera, project director for hurricane recovery in Puerto Rico.

## 2019 General Conference Election

Four clergy and four lay delegates will be elected to the special General Conference in February 2019 in St. Louis. We will also choose four clergy and four lay reserve delegates. Eligible clergy may withdraw their names in the online registration process.

## Confirmand Celebration

This year's confirmands, their families and sponsors are invited to a special worship celebration during the Ordination Service at 10 a.m. Sunday, June 10. Pastors who plan to bring confirmation classes are asked to fill out the



related information on their registration form. Someone from the worship team will contact those pastors with further details.

## Childcare/Children's Programming

The conference is offering Safe Sanctuaries-certified childcare (infants and preschoolers) and children's programming (school-aged) free of charge. If you sign up for this option, Cassandra Negri, NYAC children's ministries consultant, will contact you with more information.

## Blueprint for Wellness Screening

Sign up for the screening from 6–8 a.m. on Friday or Saturday. Active clergy and spouses enrolled in HealthFlex along with retirees should consider participating and earning cash rewards through Virgin Pulse. This is the first step to completing the Health Quotient and saving on your annual deductible in 2019.

To register, call 1-855-623-9355, and identify your employer group as HealthFlex or United Methodist Church. Or go to the [Wespath](http://Wespath) web site, click on "HealthFlex/WebMD" and sign into your account. Select "Quest Blueprint for Wellness" and then choose a local lab or an event location. Register for the screening at Hofstra by May 26.

## Live Streaming/Captioning

All special services in the Mack Arena will be available through a live-stream link on the conference website. All events in the arena will also be "live captioned."

## Come Sing or Dance

Share your gifts by ministering with the mass choir during the ordination service on Sunday, June 10. Rehearsal is 8:45 a.m. before the service. Contact Raymond Trapp, director of music, or Ian Wharton, coordinator at [music.worshipnyac@gmail.com](mailto:music.worshipnyac@gmail.com).

Dancers of all ages are also needed; no experience is necessary. Email [Rev. Sheila M. Beckford](mailto:Rev.Sheila.M.Beckford) or [Rev. Leslie Duroseau](mailto:Rev.Leslie.Duroseau) for the details.

# Latest New Appointments

It is the intention of Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton to make the following appointments effective July 1:

**HyounKyu Park** to First UMC, Flushing, (LIW) District

**Oon Don Choi** to The Parish of the Five Churches (includes Bangall, Elizaville, Rowe in Milan, Millerton and Pine Plains UMCs) (NYCT)

**Christine Lindeberg** to Pleasant Valley UMC, NY with The Parish of the Five Churches (includes Bangall, Elizaville, Rowe in Milan, Millerton and Pine Plains UMCs) (NYCT)

**Dyanne Corey** to Bellmore UMC (LIE)

**Lillian M. Hertel** to St. Paul's UMC, Staten Island (MET)

**Joseph Upole** to Summerfield & Woodrow UM churches, Staten Island (MET)

**Annette Rodriguez** to South Bronx Hispanic new church start (MET)

**Ruben Rivera Martinez** to Flanders UMC (LIE)

**Dorlimar Lebrón Malavé** to First Spanish UMC / Primera Iglesia Hispana, Manhattan (MET)

**Mary Langley** to First UMC, Coxsackie (CH)

**Peggy Ann Sauerhoff** to Phoenicia & Reservoir UMCs (CH)

**Vicki I Flippin** to First and Summerfield UMC (CT)

**Jacob Hanbin Eun** to UMC of Wallingford (CT)

**Claire Wu** to First Church Baldwin UM (LIE)

**Jane H. Kim** to Community UMC, Massapequa (LIE)

**Arnaldo Sanchez Orta** to Iglesia Evangelica de Co-op City (MET)

**Samuel A. Arhin** to Ghana UMC, Bronx (MET)

**Linda M. Willey** to Trinity-Boscobel UMC (NYCT)

**Micah Coleman Campbell** to Fishkill UMC & Wiccopee Community UMC (NYCT)

**J. Michael Cobb** to Rowayton UMC (NYCT)

# Bells Call Out the Need for Kindness

BY PAULA LOPATOSKY  
GUMC Missions Chair

Today more than ever, the world needs kindness. One of my favorite quotes is, "In a world where you can be anything, be kind." Imagine what the world would be like if everyone was kind.

Grace United Methodist Church in Southington, Conn., strives to be known as the "Kindness Church." And one of the ways we are working toward that goal is participating in the "Ben's Bells Project" that inspires, educates, and motivates people to realize the impact of intentional kindness. Ben's Bells was founded by a woman in Arizona whose son Ben passed away unexpectedly, just before his third birthday. The founder has said that the kindness of family, strangers, and friends helped her family begin to heal. They wanted a way to pass on that kindness and to help others in the process, so they developed the "Ben's Bells" and "Kindness Education" projects. The organization has since spread from Tucson to a branch in Bethel, Conn.

There are several components to the Ben's Bells program. The first are handmade bells that are hung randomly around the community for people to find. A note on the bell says to take the bell home and pass on the kindness. Next is the "kindness coin" program, where individuals give handmade tokens to someone they don't know when they see them do an intentional act of kindness. In further support of the program, "Kind Campus" is a school-based program that strives to educate students, families, faculty, and staff about the benefits of kindness.

Last fall, several members of GUMC went to Bethel to learn more about the project. While we were there, we painted "kindness coins" and molded clay into shapes that would eventually become part of Ben's Bells. We have been



**Handmade "kindness bells" will soon be hung throughout Southington by members of Grace UMC. The bells are one part of the "Ben's Bells Project" to promote intentional acts of kindness.**

handing the kindness tokens ever since.

Members of the church will be hanging Ben's Bells in the Southington community in early May. Ben's Bells are hung in public spaces throughout the community for people to find and take home as a reminder to practice intentional kindness.

A member of Grace is a teacher at DePaolo Middle School in Southington. She approached the principal to see if she could use the program in her classroom and he agreed. With this small start, we now have access to the entire

"Kind Campus" curriculum. Our hope is that the kindness program can spread into more classrooms in Southington and eventually all the schools, inspiring, motivating, and empowering a culture of kindness in the school and beyond.

Future plans include having Ben's Bells come to Grace to teach kindness education to adults and children in Southington.

For more information on Ben's Bells project and a calendar of events, click [here](#). Watch a video from the project's founder [here](#).

## New Name for Boy & Girl BSA Troops

Beginning February 1, 2019, the scouting program for 11- to 17-year-old boys and girls will be called Scouts BSA. There will be no change in the name of Cub Scouts, and the Venturing program, which already includes both genders.

Just as before, boys and girls who are part of Scouts BSA will be known as scouts; they will earn merit badges, go camping, and work toward the Eagle Scout Award.

"BSA has experienced several changes in its membership standards over the last few years," said Larry Coppock, director of scouting ministries for the General Commission on

UM Men. "While changes naturally bring both opportunity and controversy, the UMC has continued its mission to make disciples through scouting ministry as an option for children and youth."

Larry notes that the decision to include girls in Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts expands the pool of candidates for ministry outreach and evangelism.

"Each local church should decide how best to implement the new change, just as in the past," said Coppock. "The new Boy Scout division name change to Scouts BSA reflects the new membership focus."

Coppock underscored the fact that "the corporate name, Boy Scouts of America, will remain the same, reflecting a generation of service to young people."

Some girls will want to join Cub Scout packs or Scouts BSA troops. Others will want to join Girl Scouts and the commission continues to support both Girl Scouts USA and the Boy Scouts of America.

Beginning February 1, 2019, girls can join all-girl troops. Boys can continue to join all-boy troops. Scouts BSA will not have any mixed-gender, or coed, troops.

# A 1968 Protest Vote to be Truly “United”

**BY JOANNE S. UTLEY**  
Editor

Ethel R. Johnson has always been a bit of a pioneer. She was the first African-American on the staff of the New York East Conference (NYEC) of the United Methodist Church and would become the first woman on the faculty of the Methodist Theological School of Ohio (MTSO).

At the 1968 Uniting Conference in Dallas, she was the only African-American woman among the conference’s 16-member delegation. So it might not be surprising that she did not support the merger that would form the United Methodist Church from the Evangelical United Brethren (EUB) and the Methodist churches.

Johnson stumbled over the idea of a “united” church, questioning whether the Methodist church had made enough effort to invite the branches of Methodism that were predominantly black.

“I voted against the union. There were several of us who did,” she said in a recent interview at her home in Columbus, Ohio. “How could we call ourselves a United Methodist Church when we have completely ignored the AME, AME Zions, the CMEs and the Wesleyans and all the other branches of the Methodist church? So we are calling ourselves a United Methodist Church, but we were not united, we were just joining with the EUBs.”

Johnson had been a delegate to the 1964 General Conference in Pittsburgh when the discussion about abolishing the Central Jurisdiction came to the forefront because of the merger talks with the EUB. Protests occurred then, too, Johnson remembered, with black armbands being worn by those pushing for the demise of the racially segregated Central

Jurisdiction.

“Some of us were saying we could not unite with anybody until we do away with the Central Jurisdiction,” Johnson said. “We were the only church that I know of that had constitutionally built in a segregated system.”

The Central Jurisdiction, which segregated African-Americans from their white Methodist brothers and sisters, was a byproduct of the 1939 merger that created The Methodist Church from the Methodist Episcopal Church, Methodist Episcopal Church South and Methodist Protestant Church. The Southern church only agreed

to the union after a jurisdiction based exclusively on race—and not geography—was constructed.

And while Johnson and countless others believed that the Central Jurisdiction “should never have been” and “really needed to be done away with,” concerns

arose about the representation of African-Americans in the latter merger.

“The only reason that black people voted for the Central Jurisdiction in the first place was because at least it would give them representation, it would give us representation which we did not have,” Johnson noted.

Included in the 1968 merger was what Johnson called “the 12-year rule,” insuring EUB representation on all of the general church boards and agencies for that length of time.

“The thing that grieved me was that the same care was not taken . . . to say that there had to be so many blacks or African Americans on all the general boards and agencies. There was not the same care offered when the Central Jurisdiction was done away with.”

Johnson went on to say that those concerns led to the formation



**Ethel R. Johnson, now a retired seminary professor, voted against the merger that created the United Methodist Church in 1968; she shares part of her story about the Uniting Conference in a [video](#).**

of Black Methodists for Church Renewal in 1967.

“BMCR had to be formed,” Johnson said. “We formed it to assure that there was representation, that the concerns of African Americans were continuously before the church.”

A year later in Dallas, Johnson joined in the silent protests, and said that she could not vote “yes” in good faith even after hearing all the rationale for the merger.

“I stood for ‘no’ right in front of Bishop Wicke’s nose,” she noted. NYE Conference Bishop Lloyd C. Wicke chaired the committee of The Methodist Church that had drawn up the merger proposal and then presided over the uniting service on April 23, 1968, with Bishop Reuben H. Mueller of the

EUB church.

Johnson remembers the uniting worship itself as “really a beautiful service . . . though it didn’t have the meaning for me that it probably had for a lot of other people.”

As a lay delegate, Johnson represented New York at General Conferences from 1960 to 1972. She was first elected while serving as the associate executive secretary of the conference’s board of education. In that role, she developed Christian education programs, offered training in all of the conference’s 268 churches, and championed the importance of laity to the church. Johnson also was charged with creating Sessions Woods, a rustic camp in Bristol, Conn.

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# HealthFlex Choices Expanded

By **SALLY TRUGLIA**

Human Resource & Benefits Manager

The Conference Board of Pension & Health Benefits recently voted to recommend expanding the HealthFlex insurance plan options available to you and your family. The NYAC has previously offered two insurance plans, but starting in 2019, we will offer **six medical insurance plan options** in the categories described below:

## Wespath HealthFlex Exchange Insurance Options

- **PPO:** Preferred provider organization insurance: Medical and behavioral health office visits, urgent care and ER have a fixed co-payment, and then the plan pays 100 percent. Certain provider services require that a deductible be met first, before the plan pays a fixed percentage (co-insurance). There is no pharmacy deductible; there are fixed co-pays for generic meds and co-insurance for brand medications. Members may elect a medical reimbursement account to assist with out of pocket expenses. One PPO Plan option will be offered.
- **HDHP:** High deductible health plans combine the medical and pharmacy deductible. Medical and behavioral health services (office visits, inpatient and outpatient) as well as all medication/pharmacy services require that you meet the *full annual* deductible for all covered members before the plan pays a fixed percentage (co-insurance). Plan includes a health savings account (HSA) and the member may elect a medical reimbursement account. There will be three HDHP insurance plans offered.
- **CDHP:** Consumer driven health plans have separate deductibles for individual

and families which must be met initially for medical and behavioral health services (office visits, inpatient and outpatient) before the plan pays a fixed percentage (co-insurance). There is no pharmacy deductible; there is a fixed co-payment for generics and percentage co-insurance for brand medications. Plan includes a sponsored health reimbursement account (HRA) and members can elect a medical reimbursement account, as well. There will be two CDHP plans offered.

HealthFlex members will be able to choose a version of one of the above medical plans, as well as choose a dental insurance plan and elect an enhanced vision plan. In 2019, NYAC will offer members three dental insurance plans through CIGNA's PPO Advantage Network. You will be able to elect a plan that suits you, your family, and your budget.

Clergy will be allocated a *defined contribution amount* (DC)—or spending dollars—and use these funds to “buy” a plan for you and your family from the six plans offered. The DC is based upon the uniform rate that increases by 4.2 percent in 2019.

You will, for the first time see the actual premium charged by Wespath for the insurance plan that you choose. If you choose a plan that costs less than the DC funding provided, the excess funds will be placed in an HRA or HSA for your use. If you choose a plan that exceeds the DC funds provided, you will be billed that excess cost. In each tier, (i.e. single, single plus one, family) there are plans that cost less than the DC and plans that cost more. Choosing a more expensive option will increase your costs over the current pastor's rate of \$120 per month.

Wespath provides several **decision support tools** on HealthFlex WebMD to help you choose the best plan for you and your family.

# Moving Costs Now Taxable

The federal “*Tax Cuts and Jobs Act*” made numerous changes to the taxation of both individuals and organizations, including new restrictions on deductions for moving costs.

Those clergy who are moving must have church-paid moving expenses reported as income on their W-2 forms for 2018 taxes.

Clergy that are retiring will receive a 1099 from the conference if moving costs are reimbursed.

To read a blog post from conference CFO Ross Williams and the statement provided by the legal team of the UMC's General Council on Finance & Administration, click [here](#).

# A 1968 Protest Vote to be Truly “United”

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She came to the conference role in 1957 after serving as the director of Christian education at Brooklyn's Janes UMC, a church that would become the first predominantly black congregation in the NYEC after a time of “white flight” in the 1940s. She would return to the local church at Bushwick Avenue UMC in Brooklyn after 6½ years with the conference.

Johnson's vision of Christian education begins with the empowerment of the laity, and the advancement of justice and social action in the church and community.

When the MTSO dean called her about joining the faculty, she told him that she wasn't looking for a job, and “didn't have a PhD or a plan to get one.” But she did agree to an interview. She would spend “16 wonderful years” at the Delaware, Ohio, seminary teaching church administration and directing the field education program.

In 1975, she made her first trip to Africa to teach a course in church administration at Gbarnaga School of Theology in Liberia. She fell in love with the pastors and local church leaders she was training and would return to Africa for extended periods, teaching also in Sierra Leone, Nigeria and Zimbabwe. Her work on the continent was at times supported by the General Board of Global Ministries and the Council of Bishops. She would retire from MTSO in 1985 to spend more time in Africa.

“The students I taught at Africa University were so eager and anxious to learn,” Johnson said. “. . . the thing that gives me the most joy is to see people assuming responsibility for themselves and their own learning.”

Now 93, Johnson is an active member of Asbury North UMC in Columbus, where this summer she will be co-directing a Vacation Bible School program with two 30-somethings. She also chairs the spiritual life committee in the community where she has lived for 25 years.

Her greatest hope for the church is that more and more people will begin to feel and experience God's love for them so strongly that “they can't do anything else but reach out and love others.”

And about those pioneer moments in her life, Johnson had this to say:

“A long time ago, with the help of God . . . what I had to do was realize whether or not this was what God was calling me to do. If that was what God was calling me, it didn't matter to me why people chose me, if I said ‘yes’ I was going to give it my best.”

## Volunteer For June Work In Puerto Rico

Report from Rev. Tom Vencuss,  
NYAC coordinator of mission ministry

A team from the NYAC just returned from Puerto Rico. We worked on a home in Tao Baja, a community west of San Juan. The small home sits on four-foot piers and still took on five feet of water. By the time we arrived initial ERT-type work had already been done. The walls had been stripped, almost all home furnishings and appliances had been moved to the street, several feet of mud from under the home had been cleared, and the home had been tarped. The homeowner, both a storm and cancer-survivor, is still living in the house. Our primary team assignment was to replace the roof. In addition, we reinforced all the trusses and rafters with additional wood, installed hurricane straps, replaced portions of the flooring, and cleaned the yard of debris, among other smaller projects. We worked alongside a foreman from the United Methodist Church of Puerto Rico "3R" recovery program.

The homeowner's sister graciously provided two meals for the team and the homeowner himself brought us fresh towels to address the heat. They were an amazingly grateful and kind family; overall we had a fantastic experience.

A team from New Life United Methodist Church in New Fairfield, Conn., is scheduled to work on the hurricane-ravaged island from May 26–June 2.

If you are interested in joining the upcoming team to Puerto Rico scheduled for June 16–23, please reference the [team guidelines](#), complete the [application form](#), and email [Tom Vencuss](mailto:Tom.Vencuss) or call, 914-615-2224, as soon as possible. Airline tickets will be purchased shortly.

## Advance Turns 70

The Advance, an official program of The United Methodist Church for voluntary, designated, second-mile mission giving, marked its 70th anniversary on May 7.

The Advance was established by General Conference in 1948 to provide a channel of giving for Methodists to send aid and to help in reconstruction. It was also to be an educational tool to connect Methodists with the ministries being established around the world and an evangelical vehicle to rebuild and expand faith communities and churches.

For the full story by Christie R. House, click [here](#).



Members of the North Fork, above, UMC break ground around a small cross for their new church building in Southold, N.Y. Below, Pastor Tom MacLeod and District Superintendent Julia Yeon-Hee Yim, stand ready with a shovel before the ceremony.

## North Fork UMC Begins Building

A day after celebrating the Risen Christ, North Fork United Methodist Church took a major step in raising a new church building on Long Island's North Fork.

"That a church may meet here where the weary and heavy-laden shall find an inner peace that the world can neither give nor take away ... We break this ground today."

With those words, Pastor Tom MacLeod, Long Island East District Superintendent Julia Yeon-Hee Yim, and church members broke ground April 2 for their new home at the southeast corner of Horton Lane and Route 48 in Southold, N.Y. MacLeod placed a simple wooden cross on the spot where the altar will stand and led prayers of blessing for the 2.45-acre property and the ministries that will flow out from it.

"The church is a listening place," said MacLeod at the ceremony. "We're slow to speak, slow to anger and quick to listen ... The responsibility and the privilege rest upon us to cause a building to rise here that shall be a house of this people of God, a place devoted to worship of almighty God, and to the glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

North Fork UMC was formed when the Southold and Cutchogue churches merged in 2014; Greenport joined in July 2015, and Orient in March 2016. Three of the four church buildings have been sold, according to MacLeod, with the proceeds being used to construct the new building and expand ministries in the four communities. The congregation has been gathering for worship in the former Cutchogue UMC.

The property, which was purchased in May 2016, will eventually hold a 7,100-square-foot



one-story building with solar panels and space for 50 cars. The inside of the church will be a light-filled and barrier-free transitional space with clean, modern lines.

Architects D&D Harvey of Sag Harbor modeled the building after the Sag Harbor UMC that they designed and was constructed when MacLeod served as pastor there.

Before becoming a pastor, MacLeod had worked as a carpenter and contractor. Seifert Construction of Mattituck is taking on the contractor duties for this project.

In an email on May 7, MacLeod reported that the footings had been poured and the foundation should be completed by the end of the month.

"I hope we can be in the new church by Easter 2019," he added.

# Reminiscing Can Clear Path to Move Forward

BY JIM STINSON

Consultant on Older Adult Ministries

In her book of reflections and prayers, "I've Been Thinking," Maria Shriver at one point writes, "I go back so I can go forward."

That simple observation got me thinking as well. I thought of how many people love to reminisce as they age. I thought of my 81-year-old brother, with whom I talk several times a week, and of how frequently our sentences begin with "do you remember when?"

I thought of daily conversations with residents of United Methodist Homes, where I served as director of spiritual life for 13 years. Many of them began with past events.

I thought of the small congregation I have been serving for nearly three years now and of how often its members, including the key leadership, speak of the "way things were."

Although I thought I knew why memories are so important, after pondering Shriver's observation, I am even more convinced than ever, that on some level, every memory we recall can serve the purpose of going back so as to go forward. For in going back, consciously or otherwise, we are making connections between "then" and "now" and discovering that the past has taught us lessons—both those that hurt us and those that opened our minds and hearts—which help us deal with the present. The past has led us to the present. Remembering is helpful, if we allow it to be a gateway to understanding our strengths and weaknesses in the present moment.

Shriver speaks of the present environment with its incivility and its apparent growing lack of tolerance for those who are different than we



are. She sees the sense of many that "things have never been this bad" and that things will never change. To which she recalls times such as the Great Depression, the World Wars, the Korean War, the Vietnam conflict, the Mideast tensions, and so many other times that seemed endless, and notes that they were not. That is an observation and insight worth keeping.

These varied insights led to reflection on some of the most important words of our Christian faith. "Do this in remembrance of me," or as I have often phrased it, "Do this and remember me." Our faith is renewed through memory. It is enlightened by memory. Reminiscing and recalling where we began (where we were) can throw light on a past life-changing event, and can lead us to take what we learned with us into the current moment. What a useful tool to enable us to change, and even reshape, the present.

These thoughts led to other memories of my time with the New York Conference as the consultant on older adult ministries, which will cease on June 30, after 16 years. I have learned a lot, grown a lot, and been inspired a lot in those years. My prayer for all those engaged in ministry with older adult is that we encourage aging persons to reminisce, to go back, so they can reclaim the lessons and strengths needed to live creatively in the present moment.

To quote Bob Hope, "Thanks for the memories."



Rev. Jim Stinson

## Summer Jobs Available at Quinipet, Kingswood

BY JANE WAKEMAN

Deaconess

Reservations at our beautiful camps are filling up fast. The season is almost upon us. And Kingswood and Quinipet still have a few openings for special people who would like to get involved.

Anyone looking for summer work should check out these unforgettable opportunities:

It takes character, compassion, and fun to be a dynamite camp counselor, and that's exactly what we look for in our staff. We select spiritually grounded, creative, caring, inspiring individuals who have a passion for working with children.

Quinipet offers both a day and an overnight camp for boys and girls ages 5–17. Most staff members live in cabins with campers and also teach a program activity. There is time off to spend on the beachfront, and lots of other perks.



**Swimming in the lake at Kingswood, above, or the ocean at Quinipet is one of the campers' favorite activities.**

Other openings include: spiritual life coordinator, head of swimming, head of trips, senior male head counselor, activity counselors, sailing counselors, waterfront counselors (lifeguards),

office manager, maintenance, and nurse (weekly position). Applications may be made online [here](#).

For those who like waking up to birdsongs and grazing deer and

going to sleep hearing bullfrogs and watching fireflies and the Milky Way, the lifeguard position at Kingswood Campsite might be the perfect job. The lifeguard spends four hours each afternoon at the beach, keeps the bathhouse clean, and uses equipment to maintain the waterfront area. This job runs from June 22 through September 2, and pays \$300 per week. It has been a 10-week position, but there is a possibility to split it between more than one person for several weeks at a time. Candidates must be Red Cross certified, or an avid swimmer interested in getting Red Cross certification, and at least 18 years old. The lifeguard stays in one of the cabins on site and works six hours per day, six days per week. Interested candidates should contact Cheryl Winship by [email](#) or at 845-615-1542 as soon as possible.

Spread the word and the Word, through our summer camps!

# Staying Open to Guidance of Holy Spirit

Continued from page 1

LGBTQI persons in the church. That process led to the formation of “The Commission on the Way Forward” which has been at work in an intensive and intentional series of meetings of discernment. The commission had a three-fold purpose:

- Maximize the presence of a United Methodist witness across the globe.
- Allow for as much contextual differentiation as possible.
- Balance an approach to different theological understandings of human sexuality with a desire for as much unity as possible.

The work of this commission has now come to our Council of Bishops. Meeting in Chicago, we have just finished a weeklong meeting to review and act upon the three separate plans that were developed by the commission.

This was a week of amazing highs and humbling lows as we worked with intentionality and purpose. Our discernment was filled with struggle and revelation as we made serious attempts to bridge our differences and understand the vast and diverse cultures that are represented in our global church. Yet, in the end, we expressed overwhelming support for a plan to be submitted to the 2019 Special Session of the General Conference.

Meeting in a closed session, the Council of Bishops overwhelmingly supported the “One Church Plan.” We also agreed that all three plans

considered by the commission and the bishops would be shared as a part of the report to the General Conference along with a historical narrative in order to provide a transparent look at the journey of the council’s discernment process regarding all three plans. While the values of our global church are reflected in all three plans, and while there is support for each of the three plans within the council, the strong majority of the Council of Bishops recommends the “One Church Plan” as the best way forward for our denomination.

Here’s a brief look at all three plans:

## 1. The One Church Plan (Recommended)

Components include:

- Allows for contextual expression.
- Congregations will be able to decide on their marriage policies
- Pastors will be able to determine who they will marry.
- Annual Conference Boards of Ordained Ministry and Clergy Sessions will be able to determine the standards upon which someone is ordained.
- This model uplifts mission without uniformity of practice.
- It removes restrictive language from our current *Book of Discipline*.
- It has an impulse of continuity and consistency.

*This is the plan that is recommended by the Council of Bishops to the special session. It*

*preserves our unity in the midst of our differences, allows for contextualization to be honored, and enables us to focus on our mission.*

## 2. The Traditionalist Plan (will be submitted as a part of the report)

Components of this plan include:

- Strengthening the existing language of the current *Book of Discipline*.
- Increased accountability of anyone that does not comply with the current *Book of Discipline*.

*This plan is not being recommended by the Council.*

## 3. The Connectional Conference Plan (will be submitted as a part of the report)

Components of this plan include:

- Creation of three “values-based” connectional conferences (traditional, centrist, and progressive in nature).
- Adaptations to the *Book of Discipline* would be allowed in each connectional conference.
- Annual conferences and local churches could choose which values-based conference to align with.
- Churches would align their practices to the theology and understanding established by the branch they choose.

*This plan is not being recommended by the Council.*

We in the Council of Bishops believe that the recommendation of the “One Church Plan” represents our best thinking and judgment around these critical and sensitive matters. This recommended plan will now be sent to the February 2019 Special General Conference delegates for their consideration. I wanted to offer this initial report to you as well for your review and thoughtful reflection. We also offer this work to you with the request that you intentionally and purposefully pray for our church as we enter into this season of deliberation and discernment.

The full report, including the recommended “One Church Plan,” the other two plans, the historical narrative, and other important information will be shared no later than July 8, 2018. This is necessary in order to allow the report to be perfected, translated, and interpreted in the various native languages that make up our global United Methodist Church. If you would like to read the official press release concerning our work here is the [link](#).

Throughout the month of May, I will be



PHOTO BY MIKE DUBOSE, UMNS

**Members of the United Methodist Council of Bishops, spouses and guests (including Rev. Alex da Silva Souto, center) join in the “Praying Our Way Forward” closing worship May 4 at the United Methodist Council of Bishops meeting in Chicago. The council deliberated on its final proposals to next year’s special General Conference that will address decades of division over how the church should minister with LGBTQI individuals.**

Continued on page 11

# Bishops Back ‘One Church Plan’ for Way Forward

Continued from page 1

the denomination's governing document, and seek to strengthen enforcement.

The Connectional-Conference plan would allow conferences to choose among three connectional conferences for affiliation. The connectional conferences would align based on theology or perspective on LGBTQ ministry—be it traditionalist, progressive or allowing for a variety of approaches. This plan would require multiple amendments to the denomination's constitution.

“Unity is a gift from God, but it's also something you have to work for,” said Florida Area Bishop Kenneth H. Carter Jr., the newly installed Council of Bishops president, during a press conference. He added that he is hopeful for the process.

Carter is one of three bishops who serve as moderators of the Commission on a Way Forward, a 32-member, bishop-appointed group that has advised the council on possible options forward.

The bishops do not plan to release their vote tally on the One-Church Plan, said Dakotas-Minnesota Area Bishop Bruce R. Ough, outgoing Council of Bishops president.

“Typically when I've worked with consensus, you arrive at a place where everybody says I can stand here,” Ough said. “If you use that definition, it's fair to say we don't have consensus. But it is fair to say we have strong affirmation.”

Before heading to General Conference, all three plans still may face hurdles.

At the bishops' request, the Judicial Council—the denomination's top court—will meet May 22–25 to address any requests



**Bishop Jane Allen Middleton, center, offers communion to Bishop Sally Dyck, right, during the Council of Bishops meeting in Chicago.**

stemming from the bishops' submissions. The bishops also are requesting the top court have an oral hearing as part of its session.

The bishops have not yet determined all the questions they will ask the Judicial Council, Ough said.

The church court already has agreed to the bishops' request to rule on whether other petitions—in addition to the report from the Council of Bishops—can be submitted prior to the convening of the special General Conference. The deadline to submit petitions to General Conference is July 8.

The bishops' recommendation aims to bridge a decades-long division that has grown so intense that, during the 2016 General Conference, rumors of a potential church split over homosexuality reached a fever pitch.

General Conference authorized the bishops in

a 428-405 vote to form a commission to advise them on possible ways forward that foster unity.

The Council of Bishops executive committee later detailed “the mission, vision and scope” of the Commission on a Way Forward.

The goal, the bishops said, is to “design a way for being church that maximizes the presence of a United Methodist witness in as many places in the world as possible” and “that allows for as much contextual differentiation as possible.”

Louisiana Area Bishop Cynthia Harvey, the bishops' president-designate, said that she and her colleagues have lived with that framework throughout this process. “It has had life beyond what I think we ever imagined,” she said.

Rev. Mark Holland, a General Conference delegate from the Great Plains Conference, attended the bishops' meeting on behalf of his delegation. At General Conference 2016, Holland made the motion that eventually led to the bishops launching the Way Forward process.

“It has been a collaborative process between General Conference and the bishops,” Holland told United Methodist News Service. “In some ways, the vote is going to be a referendum on the bishops. Do we trust the bishops' discernment?”

For his part, Holland said, he supports the one-church model. “There is no model that is unproblematic,” he said. But he said is not fearful of the debate moving to the local-church level.

“The argument that we are protecting our churches sounds as if our church members aren't grownups and can't talk about these things,” he said. “Our pastors have an opportunity to model dialogue in a healthy way. And I bet most churches do it better than General Conference. You love each other. You've been to each others' weddings and funerals.”

## Seeking Unity for Disciple-Making Work

Continued from page 10

traveling to each of our six districts in the New York Conference. The purpose of my visits will be to share the exciting pieces of our mission, vision, and core values along with our work to align our ministry around those priorities. I will also be sharing more insight around this proposal of a way forward for the church that we love. I hope that you will make plans to join me when I am in your area.

Given the great diversity of thought and understanding that resides in our more than 12 million United Methodists worldwide, I am fully aware that not everyone will be in agreement with the proposed plan for a way forward. Yet, regardless of your opinion on these matters, I pray that you will remain open and receptive to the

guidance of the Holy Spirit as we continue our discernment and our work as a people of faith.

Over the years I have witnessed, affirmed, celebrated and been blessed by the diversity of theology and practice within our United Methodist Church. This has never been more true than during my time here in New York and Connecticut as your bishop. I feel so blessed to be able to serve in your midst. I believe that we reside in a conference that has the potential of modeling for the rest of the denomination that vital ministry is not dependent upon agreement as much as it is on the embracing of a common mission. I want you to know that I embrace my role as your bishop and as a bishop of the whole church. Regardless of individual opinions on matters like these, we must continue to work

together for the unity of the church and the fulfillment of our mission to make disciples and change the world by God's grace. I long for each of us to embrace our common mission with a heart of peace and will continue to make faithful attempts to model that heart of peace in your midst.

May God continue to inspire us and bless us as we continue our work to transform the world into the likeness of Christ.

The Journey Continues, . . .

Grace & Peace,

**Thomas J. Bickerton**  
Resident Bishop

# Error Forces Revote on Failed Constitutional Amendment

By **Kathy L. Gilbert**

UMNS | Annual conference voters around the globe will be revoting on one of two constitutional amendments dealing with women's equality. The revote was announced after the Ask the UMC team and United Methodist News Service learned of an error and reported it on May 10 to the Rev. Gary Graves, secretary of General Conference.

At the 2016 General Conference, when the Independent Commissions Committee considered Amendment 1, it deleted the sentence, "The United Methodist Church recognizes it is contrary to Scripture and to logic to say that God is male or female, as maleness and femaleness are characteristics of human bodies and cultures, not characteristics of the divine." The amended copy also changed the last sentence to "The United Methodist Church shall work collaboratively with others to address concerns that threaten women's and girls' equality and well-being."

"As the petition was processed and then the constitutional amendments were prepared to go out to annual conferences, it appears that 'delete the second sentence in its entirety' was missed," Graves said. "So the words that went to annual conferences contained text that should have been stricken before it went out."

The amendments were originally sent to bishops and annual conference secretaries in late 2016 by the former secretary of the General Conference, the Rev. Gere Reist. Both Reist and Graves apologized for the error.

Graves told the Commission on General Conference that since the material was wrong, he consulted with the Council of Bishops about how to address the error. The correct wording of the amendment will be sent to the conferences next week. Since some annual and central conferences have already held their sessions this year, their voting will take place next year.

When United Methodist News Service reached out to conference delegates who voted no on this amendment, many cited that sentence as the reason for their votes.

The Liberia Conference voted against both amendments dealing with women's equality with 956 no votes on Amendment 1 and no votes supporting the amendment. On [Amendment 2](#), which would have added gender, ability, age and marital status to the list of characteristics that do not bar people from membership in the church, 955 Liberian delegates voted no and one delegate voted yes.

The Rev. Jerry Kulah, who was a 2016 General Conference delegate, wrote an analysis after the vote in May that was published in [Juicy](#).

[Ecumenism](#). "We are in total agreement, and consistent with Scripture (Genesis. 1:26–27; 9:6; I Corinthians 11:7), that humanity is made in the image of God. Therefore both male and female are of equal value before God. We also stand strongly opposed to discrimination against women and girls, for we are all God's children. However, we strongly opposed the reference that 'it is contrary to Scripture and to logic' to acknowledge or claim the maleness or fatherhood of God." Kulah did not respond to e-mails requesting further comment.

In debate at the North Texas Conference, John Dorff of Highland Park United Methodist Church spoke against the amendment, specifically the phrase that says, "The United Methodist Church recognizes it is contrary to Scripture and to logic to say that God is male or female..." In the minutes reported in the conference journal, Dorff concluded that God is represented in Scripture as male.

Dorff greeted the revote as "great news."

"During the debate last year I said I would have supported the amendment if it didn't have that specific line in it. I will be happy to support it as soon as I have the opportunity at annual conference," he said.

North Texas did vote 436-192 for the amendment.

To be ratified, each constitutional amendment first requires at least a two-thirds majority vote at General Conference, which happened in 2016. Then, each must win at least 66.7 percent of the total votes at annual conferences around the world. That voting took place in 2017 and early 2018.

The Council of Bishops announced the results of the voting on May 7. The first amendment, the one with the error, failed by fewer than 100 votes with a 66.5 percent tally—31,304 yes and 15,753 no. The second amendment received 61.3 percent, shy of 2,529 votes to ratify with

29,049 yes votes and 18,317 no.

[The bishops expressed "dismay"](#) at the outcome of the two women's equality amendments.

The female bishops issued a separate [pastoral letter](#) expressing "lament" over the results.

Several bishops, pastors and laity have been expressing pain over the votes on Facebook posts.

United Methodist Young Clergywomen, a subgroup of Young Clergywomen International, is circulating a [letter](#) about the votes on both amendments.

The Rev. Janessa Chastain, one of the authors of the letter, responded to the news of the revote by urging all delegates to vote at their annual conferences.

"The news of this revote means that we United Methodists have a rare opportunity to right an injustice. While this doesn't erase the painful message sent by the first vote, The United Methodist Church has the opportunity to send a new message.

"We urge those who voted against Amendment 1 to listen to women and learn why it matters to them that God made them in the Divine image. We also urge all disappointed by the original vote to remember that Amendment 1 failed by a margin of fewer than one hundred votes. In light of this, we urge all clergy and delegates to vote at their respective annual conferences. Your vote matters. Show up. Vote. Affirm that God has created women and men equal in God's image," she told United Methodist News Service.

UMNS reported the error and asked for a comment May 10. Graves asked the news not be released until May 11, and UMNS honored that agreement.

UMNS and Ask the UMC compared the text of all five amendments to the text submitted to the conference secretaries. The other four amendments are correct.

## New Assistant for Bishop

Pamela Bowe-Tabbs has joined the NYAC staff as executive administrative assistant to Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton. She most recently worked at Monroe College in New Rochelle, N.Y., as assistant to the senior vice president and campus dean and as human resources manager.

She and her husband, Michael, live in White Plains, N.Y. and have two adult daughters and two grandchildren. Bowe-Tabbs is a member of Bethel Baptist Church in White Plains.

Bowe-Tabbs is responsible for scheduling the bishop's calendar, maintaining the office database, handling correspondence, and providing public relations and offering hospitality for the episcopal office.



**Pamela Bowe-Tabbs**

# OBITUARIES

## Rev. Norma Andrus Rust

The Reverend Norma Andrus Rust, 86, died May 7, 2018. Rust was born May 2, 1932, in Simsbury, Conn., daughter of Arthur G. and Elizabeth (McHenry) Andrus.

Rev. Rust received a Master of Divinity at Hartford Seminary, and a Doctor of Ministry from Drew Theological Seminary. She served appointments at several United Methodist Churches in Connecticut including Forestville, Kensington, South Middletown and Higganum, and at Bellmore on Long Island, N.Y. After her second retirement, Rev Rust returned to Simsbury and shared her talents with the United Methodist Church there as pastor of visitation.

Rust had a love for gardening and enjoyed traveling.

She is survived by a nephew, Donald F. (Teri) Rust, Jr. of Granby; a niece, Joan (Ralph) Johnson of Canton, and several extended family members. She was predeceased her husband, Frank J. Rust; a brother, Robert E. Andrus, and a sister, Frances L. Andrus.

A memorial service was celebrated May 12 at Simsbury UMC; burial followed at Simsbury Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Simsbury Volunteer Ambulance Assoc., PO Box 301, Simsbury, CT 06070.

Online condolences may be added on the web site of the [Vincent Funeral Home](#).

## Connie M. Sartorio

Connie M. Sartorio, 80, of Norwalk, Conn., died April 28, 2018. She was born June 27, 1937, in Philipsburg, Penn. She was the widow of the Reverend Paul Sartorio, who served the New York Conference from 1944 until his retirement in 1987. He died on December 14, 1992.

Sartorio spent most of her life in New Canaan, Conn., where her husband was pastor at New Canaan UMC. They married in 1983. Connie was a former New Canaan insurance and real estate agent and a member of the Insurance Women's Association of Southern Connecticut, serving on its board of directors. She also served as vice-chair of the board of directors for the Day Care Center of New Canaan, Inc.

After Rev. Sartorio retired, the couple moved to Kilmarnock, Va., but spent several months a year in Naples, Fla. After her husband's death, Sartorio lived in Naples for ten years. She was a member of the Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church in Naples, where she served as an elder and on many other church committees. Sartorio also served on the board of directors of her condominium association. She was a trustee of the Southwest Florida Yale Club and authored the book *Quiet Times* under her pen name of C. Griffith. When Sartorio returned to Connecticut in 2003, she became a member of the Wilton Congregational Church.

Sartorio is survived by son, Michael Sette of Newtown, Conn.; daughter-in-law, Lisa Benjamin Sette; brother Walter G. Schetrompf of Wilson, N.C.; and three nephews. In addition to Rev. Sartorio, she was predeceased by her first husband, Ralph J. Sette; son Clifton Angstadt; and brother, Robert E. Schetrompf.

A private funeral service was held at Naples Memorial Gardens. A memorial service was held at the Wilton Congregational Church on May 12. Memorial contributions may be made to the Fish Driving Service of Norwalk, an organization that provides transportation to seniors, located at 1 Park Street, Norwalk CT, 06851. Messages of condolence may be left for the family at [www.hoytfuneralhome.com](http://www.hoytfuneralhome.com).

## Athena M. Hagerty

Athena M. Hagerty, the wife of Reverend William Hagerty, died April 24, 2018, in Monroe, N.Y. She was 75. Rev. Hagerty is currently serves the

Fosterdale UMC in Fosterdale, N.Y.

Hagerty was born in Athens, Greece, on August 18, 1942. She moved to Philadelphia after high school to attend Drexel University, where she obtained a bachelor's degree in home economics and a master's degree in biology and dietetic sciences. Hagerty worked 25 years as a dietician for New York State Public Services, specializing in helping people with special needs. The couple lived in Monroe, where she enjoyed time with her daughters, gardening, and helping animals.

In addition to her husband, she is survived by twin daughters, Athena and Diana; brothers, John and Caustas; nieces, Pennayota, Katerina, and Katie; and a nephew, Dimitri.

A celebration of Hagerty's life was held April 28 at the Fosterdale UMC. To leave online condolences, visit [www.stewartmurphyfh.com](http://www.stewartmurphyfh.com).

## Rev. Philip A. C. Clarke

The Reverend Philip A. C. Clarke of Cape Elizabeth, Maine, died February 13, 2018, in Westbrook, Maine.

He was the son of the Rev. Fred Clarke and Marjorie Hall Clarke of Leeds, England, and Gloversville, N.Y. He was a graduate of Gloversville High School, Middlebury College in Vermont, and Boston University School of Theology. He also studied theology in Edinburgh, Scotland.

His first assignment in 1955 was as the associate pastor of Scotia Methodist Church in Scotia, N.Y., in the Troy Annual Conference. He served there for a year and a half before joining the New York Conference to serve at Park Avenue UMC in New York City. He served there for 43 years until his retirement in 1999. During his tenure, Park Avenue grew to become one of the most vital, progressive, and welcoming congregations in the New York Conference. In 2003, Park Avenue UMC voted to invest Rev. Clarke with the honorary office of pastor emeritus.

Clarke is survived by children, David Clarke, Catherine Clarke, and Caroline Clarke Schack Chakeris; grandchildren, Sara and John Chakeris; Emma Clarke; and John and Mathew Clarke. A son, Jonathan Clarke, predeceased his father.

A memorial service will be held at noon, Saturday, May 19 at Park Avenue UMC.

Memorial donations may be made to [Park Avenue United Methodist Church](#), 106 E. 86th St., New York, NY 10028, or to the [92nd Street Y](#), 1295 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10128.

## JOB OPENING

### NYAC Administrative Assistant

The New York Conference is seeking one more qualified individual to serve as an administrative assistant to our Long Island East and Long Island West district superintendents. To-date, two assistants have been hired supporting the other four district superintendents.

The three positions will work cooperatively to record and disseminate information; schedule meetings and events; maintain files, lists and records; facilitate communication; and perform other duties required to effectively manage the district offices. A detailed job description can be found by clicking [here](#).

This full-time position is based at the White Plains conference center. Salary is up to \$47,500 based upon experience. Health, pension and other benefits are provided.

For additional job openings across the conference, check out the ["Classifieds" link](#) on the web site.