

## 1 **Section 2: Connectional Ministries & Ministries of Nurture**

### 2 **ASIAN COUNCIL REPORT**

3 **Rev. Dr. YangHee Christine Stopka, Chair**

- 4 101. On June 7, 2019 Asian Council of New York Annual Conference gathered at Hofstra University to discuss  
5 the future of Asian ministries within the conference.
- 6 102. The council started this meeting with the celebration of Rev. Doris Dalton to the New York Annual  
7 Conference as the Director of Leadership Development and Intercultural Competency. The group felt this  
8 was much needed leadership and resource to promote the ministries of Asian Council.
- 9 103. The group discussed the fact that the Asian ministries of New York Annual Conference did not reflect the  
10 diverse Asian demographics represented within the geography of New York Annual Conference. In  
11 addition, the group questioned the readiness of NYAC for the changing climate of the world and the future  
12 ministry needs of the Asian communities.
- 13 104. At this meeting a plan was made to invite Rev. Dalton for conversation and planning toward these  
14 concerns.
- 15 105. On September 21, 2019 the council met at the New York Annual Conference Center with Rev. Doris Dalton  
16 for fellowship and conversation around the concerns of the Asian ministries within the New York Annual  
17 Conference.
- 18 106. The group decided to focus on the ministry toward future generations of the Asian ministries within the  
19 New York Annual Conference. A plan was made for the Conference wide event to invite all the Asian  
20 ministries for sharing of resource currently available. The date was tentatively set for March 20, 2020.  
21 Unfortunately, this date was postponed due to many unforeseen circumstances.
- 22 107. Due to the COVID19, the activity of the Asian Council was suspended

### 23 **BLACK METHODISTS FOR CHURCH RENEWAL**

24 **Rev. Sheila M. Beckford, BMCR-NYAC Coordinator**

#### 25 **Ways to “Come Alongside” the Black Churches of the** 26 **New York Annual Conference** 27 **June 24th, 2020**

- 28 101. The killing of George Floyd, Breona Taylor, Tony McDade, Elijah McClain, Rayshard Brooks, and countless  
29 others by police in the last few months, and the disproportionate infection and deaths due to Coronavirus  
30 (COVID -19), have once again highlighted systemic racism and white privilege that for too long have  
31 devastated communities of color in this country. The call for justice reaches far beyond accountability  
32 from the police. It reaches into every facet of our communal life including the Church.
- 33 102. The time is surely upon us when we must dismantle the ways in which our denomination has been  
34 complicit in maintaining and in some cases promoting systemic racism and white privilege as the way to  
35 affirming and living out the words of our founding father John Wesley when he said: “Methodism was  
36 raised up to spread scriptural holiness”. It is to this holiness that we must be a witness to the world, and  
37 we must seize this moment and this opportunity to rid ourselves of this millstone that for far too long has  
38 hindered our Christian witness.
- 39 103. In one of his most recent statements, Bishop Bickerton explicitly pledged to do the following:

1 "I pledge to **come alongside** those of you who have, for far too long, felt unheard and marginalized. I  
2 pledge to keep the conversation, the words, and the actions in front of us and to not let it fade. I pledge  
3 to lead with you and for you. And I pledge, as a part of that leadership, to admit mistakes, seek  
4 forgiveness, and listen deeply."

5 104. Historically, in the New York Annual Conference, Black churches, which include Brown communities that  
6 identify with the African Diaspora, have suffered from systemic racism and questionable practices by City  
7 Society. We have been burdened by huge edifices that are impossible to maintain, in communities that  
8 have been demoralized and destabilized by white flight, deindustrialization, and displacement under the  
9 rhetoric of urban renewal projects. The United Methodist City Society (UMCS) has profited from these  
10 sales, significantly growing its endowment at the expense of just reinvestment into the Black and Brown  
11 communities where those churches were located. To receive assistance, Black and Brown churches either  
12 have to accept ecclesiastical mortgages or navigate matching grants. The UMCS has failed to consistently  
13 follow its own policy where ecclesiastical mortgages are not required to be repaid for churches that  
14 remain within the connection. Its matching grant policy is particularly problematic for churches with  
15 limited resources and/or lack of members to meet the sweat requirement.

16 105. Data shows that there are significant disparities in salaries between Black and Brown pastors and their  
17 White and Asian peers. For years Black and Brown clergy have been denied churches with high paying  
18 salaries because the churches were located in affluent White neighborhoods.

19 106. Black and Brown pastors experience abuse when appointed to Cross-Cultural/Cross-Racial appointments  
20 and are required to teach their abusers to be anti-racist. As an elder who is serving a predominately White  
21 congregation recently pointed out "we are appointed to pastor those who hate us." The New York Annual  
22 Conference owes a debt to its Black and Brown congregations and clergy.

23 107. We are encouraged by Bishop Bickerton's stated commitment to dismantle institutional racism in both  
24 church and society. We call on all white leaders of the New York Annual Conference to join in this  
25 commitment. Nevertheless, we are conscious of a long history of good sentiments, intentions, and spoken  
26 commitments being offered without tangible fruit as a result. To make sure that words and pledges do not  
27 become, once again, a transparent fig leaf to cover the nakedness of our inaction, Titus 3:14 reminds us,  
28 "And let our *people* also learn to maintain good works, to *meet* urgent needs, that they may not be  
29 unfruitful. Accordingly, we ask that the following directives be implemented immediately by the Annual  
30 Conference.

31 • Cancellation of Ecclesiastical mortgages and a Jubilee Moratorium on paying apportionments for 7  
32 years in an effort to balance the inequity that the Black churches have suffered due to economic,  
33 denominational and moral injury as expressed in the aforementioned examples of institutional  
34 racism.

35 • Checks and balances for the United Methodist City Society -

36 1. Include permanent ex officio membership representing BMCR on the City Society board.

37 2. Creation of an external review Board, determined by CCORR, to ensure a fair and equitable  
38 decision-making process. This Board will review all funding decisions made by the United  
39 Methodist City Society and be invested with the power to demand corrective measures. The  
40 review board will include the District Superintendents of the areas of the applicant churches, a  
41 BMCR representative (2 votes), and a representative from the Conference's Commission on  
42 Religion and Race (2 votes).

- 1           • Provide funding for COVID19 testing sites located within our communities, and specifically in our  
2 Black churches. Racism is a public health crisis. Due in large part to a lack of access to adequate  
3 healthcare, Black people are disproportionately affected by the COVID19 pandemic. In the same  
4 ways that the UMC worked effectively to combat Malaria in the world, the Church should again be  
5 at the forefront of the efforts to quell this global pandemic.
- 6           • Equity in Compensation and Accommodations for Black pastors.
- 7                 1. Align salaries with the efficient and effective pastors regardless of race. CCORR will collaborate  
8 with GCORR to establish a mechanism that interrogates and redefines effective and efficient  
9 pastors intentionally applying an implicit bias and anti-racist lens.
- 10                2. Improve the living conditions of Black & Brown clergy. The parsonages for many of the Black  
11 churches to which Black pastors are appointed are dilapidated, unkempt, and unfit for living.  
12 Establish District Parsonage Task Force in collaboration with the District Boards of Trustees to  
13 ensure the upkeep of the local church parsonages.
- 14           • Cross-Cultural/Cross-Racial Readiness - In 2001, the 202 Session of the New York Annual  
15 Conference approved guidelines titled “THE VISION, FOUNDATION AND GUIDELINES FOR CROSS-  
16 RACIAL AND CROSS-CULTURAL APPOINTMENTS IN THE NEW YORK CONFERENCE”. Being that  
17 CCORR’s primary goal is to challenge and equip leaders in the United Methodist Church and  
18 beyond in the work of dismantling racial discrimination in all its forms, CCORR will be tasked to  
19 update these guidelines to include, but not limited to, anti-racism training for all predominantly  
20 White congregations to be completed and presented to the next called session of the New York  
21 Annual Conference. <https://www.nyac.com/files/forms/crosraci.pdf>
- 22           • Provide proven evidence of anti-racism work by those who serve on the following decision-making  
23 committees: BOOM, Board of Trustees, City Society, Conference Committee of Finance and  
24 Administration, Personnel Committee, Conference Staff, and the Cabinet. (A list of evidentiary  
25 measurable proof will be created by the Bishop, CCORR, and BMCR)
- 26           • An initiative must be developed to create a pipeline of future Black and Brown clergy.
- 27                 1. This includes mentoring, scholarship resources, vocational discernment, and internship  
28 opportunities for promising candidates from within our congregations.
- 29                 2. The Young Clergy Debt Assistance Program, created in 2014 by our late Ebony Bishop Martin D.  
30 McLee, gives funds to several young clergy persons each year for academic debt relief. It has yet to  
31 award a grant to a single Black clergyperson. This is not just a failure of oversight. Our conference  
32 does not currently have Black clergy who are within the age range to qualify for this program. The  
33 cabinet has not included young Black clergy in its revitalization plan. The Bishop and his cabinet  
34 must actively recruit Black clergy who are under the age of 40.
- 35           • For decades the NYAC has benefitted from the gifts of its Black members without just and equal  
36 treatment or recompense. BMCR is seeking to have four percent (4%) of the conference budget  
37 redirected to BMCR for two quadrenniums as reparations. Funding after this stated period will be  
38 agreed upon by the executive committee of NYAC BMCR and the Annual Conference.
- 39 108. As the Bishop quoted in his June 26th correspondence titled “Steps Towards Dismantling Racism”, “We  
40 are now faced with the fact that tomorrow is today. We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now.” -  
41 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. We, the New York Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church,

1 cannot continue to give lip service. We do not want cheap grace in the form of empty promises and  
2 apologies. We do not want the church to decide for us, we decide what we want and need. It is time for  
3 action. As Dr. King also once said, "Justice too long delayed is justice denied."

4 109. *"Let your word be 'Yes, Yes' or 'No, No'; anything more than this comes from the evil one." Matthew 5:37*

5 110. In the name of the Liberator, Jesus the Christ: Rev. Sheila M. Beckford, BMCR-NYAC Coordinator; Veronica  
6 Darby, Vice Coordinator; Rev. Dr. Laurel Scott, Secretary; Deaconess Gail Douglas-Boykin, Program  
7 Director; Michelle Stanley, Treasurer **If you wish to add your name in support of this letter, click here:**  
8 <https://forms.gle/5CrEiVJ5ah19Wg1b6>

## 9 **CAMPING AND RETREAT MINISTRIES**

10 ***Marvin Moss– Chairperson***

11 ***Brooke Bradley – Executive Director, Camping & Retreat Ministries***

12 101. The Board of Camping and Retreat Ministries serves to guide the Executive Director and staff of Quinipet  
13 and Kingswood in fulfilling the mission of the ministry inspired by the 7 Foundations of the United  
14 Methodist Camp & Retreat Ministries ([www.umcrm.camp/about-us/7-foundations/](http://www.umcrm.camp/about-us/7-foundations/)).

15 102. Kingswood - Hancock, NY ([www.Kingswoodcampsite.org](http://www.Kingswoodcampsite.org)) (766 Acres - Seasonal) Kingswood offers several  
16 unique experiences: fully equipped campsites, tent and trailer sites for campers bringing their own gear,  
17 and RV sites. Programs include family camping, youth retreats, pastoral retreats, and several large church  
18 retreats.

19 103. Hathaway Farmhouse is available for retreats from October to May. Kingswood hosted winter and  
20 summer youth retreats in 2019.

21 104. Kingswood depends on a large and dedicated group of volunteers. In 2019, over 100 volunteers donated  
22 several days to weeks of time for set up, maintenance, renovations, and campsite hosting. Volunteers  
23 participate in a Memorial Day Set Up Weekend, Trail Blazing Weekend, Senior Week and take down  
24 weekend—all of which provide Christian fellowship and keep costs low for participants.

25 105. The daily summer program schedule was provided by a young enthusiastic Program Director. The first  
26 volunteer recognition was implemented, which is a new tradition. Volunteers recognized included Karen &  
27 Dave Taylor, Jon Stidworthy, Judy & Bud Swanson, Alan Coddington, Gary Schmidt, Don Kirby, Carl &  
28 Vivian Yettru, Gladys & Knud Hansen, & Bob Porter were recognized for 40 or more years of service to  
29 Kingswood.

30 106. A new part time administrator was hired in December. Rachael Skuggevik brings technology & business  
31 skills, a can-do attitude, and great enthusiasm for Kingswood.

32 107. Earned revenue was \$73,775 and the operating expense was \$64,987. Conference apportionment support  
33 was \$16,720 and additional donations totaled \$17,012. Summer camping participants totaled 402, which  
34 was a lower number than usual due to very wet conditions.

35 108. Improvements included a new tent platform and new tent, rebuilt swim dock, first section of the Stone  
36 Ministry roof completed with slate, gravel parking areas added to two sites, and a memorial bench  
37 installed which was donated in memory of Jonathan (Caldwell) Bortin.

38 109. Quinipet - Shelter Island Heights, NY ([www.Quinipet.org](http://www.Quinipet.org)) (25 acres –Year-round) Quinipet’s Christian  
39 overnight camp hosted 681 day and overnight campers for a total of 1,174 camper weeks (1 camper x 2

1 weeks = 2 camper weeks). Quinipet's summer program is growing. In 2019, the staff added a seventh  
2 week of overnight and an eighth week of day camp in order to accommodate increased numbers.

3 110. In 2019 the CRM piloted two outreach initiatives. With the support of the Committee on Native American  
4 Ministries, 12 underserved children from the Shinnecock Nation attended Quinipet for a week. Quinipet  
5 also partnered with Salem UMC and Wakefield Grace UMC to bring 15 underserved children to camp for a  
6 week. Both of these programs were successful and will be continued and expanded when summer camp  
7 reopens in 2021.

8 111. In addition, Quinipet hosts church and nonprofit retreats, along with outdoor education programs  
9 throughout the year. In 2019, the camp served 114 retreat groups. Quinipet also provided environmental  
10 education programming for an additional 25 school groups. The staff hosted the second volunteer work  
11 and worship weekend over Memorial Day with 50 participants, which was double the number from the  
12 previous year. Beach Week was a new end of the summer opportunity for UMC families and pastors to  
13 enjoy the camp. Forty participants enjoyed the waterfront, meals, worship and programming.

14 112. Quinipet had \$1,996,586 in program revenue in 2019 and operational expense totaled \$1,794,659. The  
15 program revenue for 2018 was \$1,761,861 and the operational expense totaled \$1,723,414. Conference  
16 apportionment support and general donations totaled \$192,410.

17 113. Continuing to utilize cost controls and increase camp usage, Quinipet was able to make regular payments  
18 to the Conference, fully meeting payroll expenses in 2019. The Board of Trustees voted to pay off the  
19 camp payroll indebtedness of \$336,574.43 as of December 2, 2019, with the expectation that payroll costs  
20 will be paid in full every year going forward. The CRM has borrowed \$300,000 from CF&A to weather the  
21 financial effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

22 114. Capital expenditures and improvements included: purchase of 3 Pico sailboats, renovation of Strawbridge  
23 to create two apartments for year round staff, rebuilt main campfire area with outdoor stage, built  
24 portable outdoor campfire benches, built carpetball games, replaced tables and chairs in dining hall,  
25 replaced food service steam table, resurfaced concrete and replaced roof and steps on gazebo and Bobilin  
26 outdoor porch, and added shade awning at swim area.

27 115. Quinipet has a small and dedicated staff: Brooke Bradley, Executive Director; Justin Savarese, Associate  
28 Director; Ben Riddle, Program Director; Megan Schmidt, Administrative Manager; Mark Keerans,  
29 Maintenance Assistant; and Reggie Johnson, Food Service Manager. Several part time employees assist  
30 each year with food service and facilities, in addition to the counselors, program directors, and nurses that  
31 drive the summer season.

32 116. We look forward to welcoming campers and retreat goers to our sacred places to connect with God and  
33 one another.

## 34 **CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES and SAFE SANCTUARIES - Report to Annual Conference 2020**

### 35 ***Cassandra Negri, Consultant***

36 101. In 2019, with the support of the Connectional Ministries Office, Children's Ministries delivered VBS  
37 preview workshops for the current Cokesbury VBS program throughout the conference. A puppet  
38 travelled through the conference to different churches who borrowed it for their VBS program. The  
39 workshops also gave the churches an opportunity to make connections to share supplies and decorating  
40 items to keep their costs down.

- 1 102. I continue to work with churches in the conference to further improve their children's ministries  
2 programs. There has been an increase of questions looking for more information and programming for  
3 children who are differently abled. It is wonderful to see families feeling comfortable in our churches. It is  
4 also great to see our churches wanting to learn and work on making these families and children feel  
5 welcome and safe.
- 6 103. Safe Sanctuaries continues to be a vital component of our ministries. Two workshops were held in 2019 to  
7 "Train-the-Trainer". These workshops help the Safe Sanctuaries trainers in each church create a training  
8 for their own church's policy. Policy writing and editing workshops continue to be offered as needed.
- 9 104. Babysitting was offered at Annual Conference in June of 2019. Children participated in Bible stories,  
10 games, music, crafts, etc. Their evening activities are quieter with movies and storytime. The babysitters  
11 are Safe Sanctuaries trained and criminal background checked. This program allows clergy and laity to  
12 attend sessions of annual conference without worrying about their children.
- 13 105. So far, 2020 has made us think about children's ministries programs in a whole new way. The Covid-19  
14 virus forced us to move our ministries from in person to virtual, online, telephone and even snail mail. Our  
15 churches have dealt with this change in a very positive way. I have been working with churches on how to  
16 engage children and families through this new delivery method. I am trying to give churches the tools they  
17 need to help equip families to continue their children's participation in children's ministries.
- 18 106. I was able to offer two online meetings to discuss holding virtual VBS this summer. In total, about 20  
19 churches attended. The reception to this new type of VBS has been mostly positive. While some churches  
20 are concerned, some are very excited. One church told me that they have not been able to have VBS for  
21 quite a few years because they did not have enough adults to run the program but they could do an online  
22 VBS with fewer adults.
- 23 107. Covid-19 did not steal Sunday School and VBS. It has made us look at our ministries differently. I am  
24 looking forward to what the fall can bring to children's ministries even though it may not look like it did  
25 last year.

## 26 **COMMUNICATIONS REPORT - New York Annual Conference**

### 27 ***Lisa Isom, Director of Communications***

- 28 101. After an extensive, nationwide search the New York Annual Conference retained its first ever Director of  
29 Communications in August 2019. Lisa Isom, NYAC Director of Communications, is a former  
30 business journalist with an extensive background in print/broadcast/digital media, corporate  
31 communications and communications/marketing for not-for-profit organizations.
- 32 102. In October 2019, our new Communications Director presented NYAC leadership with a strategic plan with  
33 detailed insight on an immediate, short and mid-range plan for professional, informative, aesthetically  
34 engaging, open and transparent communications within the Conference.
- 35 103. The emergent NYAC strategic communications plan aims to broaden understanding among internal  
36 audiences (Episcopal office; NYAC Church leadership and Conference staff) and external audiences  
37 (current and prospective congregants; current and prospective NYAC Clergy, Laity; people and  
38 organizations outside of the denomination) in thoughtful ways.
- 39 104. It is also focused on helping all who engage with our communications:
- 40
  - Better understand how NYAC puts its mission, vision and core values into action on the
- 41 organizational level, within our individual churches and in the communities we serve.

- 1 • View NYAC, conference leadership and staff as a resource for a range of things that can help
- 2 clergy, churches and congregants do and be better.
- 3 • Be moved by compelling stories of Christian commitment, experience, faith, and service; and
- 4 other means that give expressions of witness for Jesus Christ.
- 5 • Envision a UMC church environment that can meet their needs, a goal especially important to
- 6 attract Christian “seekers” and “questioners.”
- 7 • Embrace the future and increase engagement based on the positive/hopeful messaging offered.
- 8 105. In executing the strategic plan, the NYAC Communications Ministry immediately took steps to:
- 9 • Map all NYAC communications collateral for better understanding and assess best practices, pain
- 10 points and opportunities for future growth.
- 11 • Connect with NYAC leadership, clergy, laity and local church communicators to establish the
- 12 understanding that the NYAC Communications Ministry is available to help with the resources,
- 13 information and access needed to stay connected, informed and equipped for broader outreach
- 14 and understanding.
- 15 • Partner with key areas and leadership teams to create, refine and maintain strategies for internal
- 16 and external communications outreach (i.e.: Missions, leadership development, Bishop’s
- 17 Convocation, Laity Convocation) in a manner that best reflects our new and evolving brand and
- 18 approach to internal and external communications.
- 19
- 20 • Create and internally execute a brand strategy to allow NYAC opportunities to engage more
- 21 broadly across a range of demographics with cohesive, contemporary imagery and robust
- 22 storytelling that illuminates its unique set of characteristics, benefits and attributes to those
- 23 confused about who we are and why we exist.
- 24 • Build a media relations strategy needed to create/manage our own NYAC narratives and positively
- 25 inform external and internal audiences about who we are, what we do and the principles/mission
- 26 that guide our work.
- 27 • Build a crisis communications strategy needed to guide, protect and defend the developing NYAC
- 28 brand and reputation.
- 29 • Develop print/digital communications guidelines and branding/style guidelines to encourage
- 30 consistency, professionalism, cohesion and authenticity needed to reinforce the developing NYAC
- 31 brand.
- 32 • Retain a professional web development firm to begin the process of exploring redesign and
- 33 development of the NYAC public-facing website, intranet and publication microsites.
- 34 • Retain a professional videographer to work with NYAC communications to create high-end and
- 35 highly-effective video (NYAC Easter Service, etc.) to engage with internal/external and
- 36 current/prospective audiences in a more professional, contemporary and compelling manner.
- 37 • Map out project management protocols and tools to bring cohesion and strategic thought to
- 38 external outreach to enhance effectiveness, usability and professional/branded appearance of all
- 39 NYAC communications.

- 1           • Build in an ongoing educational component for NYAC staff who engage with external  
2           communications to ensure understanding of best practices and newly developed policies and  
3           practices.
- 4 106. In March 2020, NYAC Communications transitioned into crisis mode in response to the Covid-19 pandemic  
5           and in June 2020 the prioritization of the need to address race relations and the NYAC church response.
- 6 107. Communications focused on regularly offering information to engage, educate and inform all members of  
7           the NYAC and worked to:
- 8           • Create a strategy for regular web, social and print media updates on pertinent matters relating to  
9           church closings; essential technology and social media platforms needed to continue worship and  
10          fellowship online; best practices; increasing engagement and morale during the pandemic and  
11          more.
- 12          • Develop an ongoing repository of Covid-19 web-based resources on nyac.com aimed at keeping  
13          clergy, laity and congregants informed.
- 14          • Implement a means for Bishop Bickerton to be a consistent presence in front of and engaging with  
15          the NYAC in a variety of ways, with a high-reliance on development of new and engaging video  
16          productions (Inside NYAC, State of the NYAC and 20 Questions with Bishop Bickerton) to keep  
17          internal and external constituents informed.
- 18          • Host a series of educational webinars and Zoom meetings to discuss key issues.
- 19
- 20          • Build out new communications platforms (Inside NYAC), focus existing communications (The  
21          Vision) and broaden use of social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube)  
22          and ongoing campaigns to allow for better access to need-to-know information.
- 23          • Partnered with key leaders within the New York Annual Conference to produce:
- 24              ○ **The Covid-19 Guidelines for Church Reopening resource book, web pages, supplemental**  
25              **documents, accompanying webinars, and video updates.** The book, designed in accordance  
26              with new NYAC branding/content guidelines, is offered on New York State’s list of  
27              recommended guidelines for houses of worship.
- 28              ○ **Sunday Respite Service for NYAC Clergy** and associated collateral needed to boost morale and  
29              allow for all NYAC pastors to take a moment to breathe.
- 30              ○ **Food ministry communications strategy and associated platform rollout** needed to allow  
31              individual churches, clergy and ministry leaders to engage and collaborate on essential  
32              services, resources and more.
- 33              ○ **Reopening collateral design and development** needed to provide NYAC clergy and churches  
34              with a uniform and branded reopening certification badges, educational posters and more.
- 35 108. Future plans for NYAC communications include, among other things, immediate implementation of the  
36           priorities outlined in the strategic plan presented last October. We will continue to evolve and grow the  
37           Communications Ministry with a spirit of excellence, integrity, creativity and the deepest respect and  
38           understanding of how important communications is to our mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for  
39           the transformation of the world.

## 1 CONNECTIONAL MINISTRIES VISION TABLE

### 2 *Rev. Matt Curry, Director of Connectional Ministries*

- 3 101. Our theme for Annual Conference 2019 was “Pathways and Possibilities...Journeying Together.” Little did  
4 we know then what our “journey together” over the next twelve months would look like. Summer began  
5 predictably enough with some pastors retiring, some moving to new appointments, and some working to  
6 reinvigorate current appointments. Conversations and activism focused on how the denomination would  
7 change after General Conference in May of 2020, in light of the growing rift between traditionalist and  
8 progressive United Methodists.
- 9 102. In the fall, Bishop Bickerton began a rigorous schedule of “town hall” meetings with the newly-formed  
10 cooperative parishes throughout the conference. Rev. David Gilmore, Director of Congregational  
11 Development and Revitalization; Rev. Doris Dalton, Director of Leadership Development and Intercultural  
12 Competency; and I helped to facilitate these meetings. While acknowledging that decisions made at  
13 General Conference 2020 would most certainly change the future of our denomination, we urged clergy  
14 and laity to continue to do ministry cooperatively and collaboratively. To think creatively, to listen  
15 carefully and respectfully, to work with what we have in common rather than focusing on our differences.  
16 To invest in leadership development and training, and to continue to live into the NYAC’s Mission, Vision,  
17 and Core Values.
- 18 103. Fall also included conversations about the 2021 budget, and how collaboration could influence the way we  
19 allocate and spend money. The Connectional Ministries Vision Table was charged with creating ministry  
20 groupings based on the focus or mission of the ministries that fall within the Conference Benevolences  
21 budget. The proposed categories were: advocacy ministries, discipleship ministries, representative  
22 ministries, connectional ministries, and mission ministries. By grouping complementary ministries  
23 together, we hope to create a “non-silo” atmosphere of awareness and accountability, and allow for funds  
24 to be used more flexibly within each budget line.
- 25 104. As we journeyed together into winter, many of our clergy participated in the Bishop’s Convocation, with  
26 presenters Dr. Val Hastings, who spoke about and demonstrated the benefits of peer coaching; and  
27 Fearless Dialogues, who challenged us to have the hard conversations, and modeled how to begin them.  
28 Bishop Bickerton also journeyed to England with 2020 ordinands, for the Wesleyan Heritage Tour.
- 29 105. And then COVID-19 arrived. The Heritage Tour was cut short. Worship and ministry were reinvented  
30 practically overnight. The expression “virtual reality” took on a whole new meaning as we began to  
31 navigate the restrictions and confinement of a world-wide pandemic via Zoom, FaceBook, and You-Tube,  
32 to name a few. General Conference was postponed from May 2020 until August/September 2021, and  
33 Annual Conference was postponed from June to September 2020. And our journey together veered away  
34 from conversations about division and divvying up property, to creating ways of supporting each other  
35 and our communities through the isolation, uncertainty, and grief of these unprecedented days.
- 36 106. Such support has taken many forms: establishing and training clergy cohorts to coach their colleagues;  
37 technology-savvy clergy and laity volunteering to assist technology-challenged congregations with virtual  
38 meetings and online worship; supplying technology grants to congregations wanting to improve or expand  
39 their on-line presence; offering weekly centering and reflection times led by NYAC staff members;  
40 providing two NYAC-produced worship services, one for Easter and one for a clergy respite in June;  
41 collecting and organizing information about food insecurities in our conference and creating a NYAC  
42 Emergency Food Task Force, with representatives from each district; encouraging Christian educators with

workshops on how to do virtual VBS and church school; packing up and delivering starter cleaning kits to district drop-off sites, as congregations begin to think about reopening their buildings.

107. Our journey together also brought us face to face with the stark truth that racism continues to be a clear and present danger in our midst. The death of George Floyd in May was the spark that ignited an explosive response to systemic racism in our country and world, and our church has entered into the fray. Speculation about what the denomination will look like after General Conference has subsided, to be replaced with intentional efforts to bring hope, justice, and peace in the wake of the violent responses to the mistreatment and deaths of so many of our brothers and sisters of color.

108. Inherent in any journey is the possibility of exciting hellos and bittersweet goodbyes. In Connectional Ministries, we have said hello to Rev. Doris Dalton, our Director of Leadership Development and Intercultural Competency; to Rev. Jenna Johnson, our Coordinator of Youth Ministries\*; and to Lisa Isom, our Director of Communications. We are about to say goodbye to Rev. Joanne Utley, editor of the Vision for more than a decade, as she enters into a full-time appointment; and to Rev. David Gilmore, Director of Congregational Development and Revitalization, as he returns to Missouri to serve as a District Superintendent in his home conference. Each of these co-laborers has blessed our conference in myriad ways, and I am profoundly grateful to serve with them as colleagues and friends.

109. Finally, my heartfelt thanks to Rev. Tom Vencuss for his management and guidance in our work around food insecurities and cleaning kits during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond, and to Bishop Thomas Bickerton for his non-anxious leadership during this turbulent year.

110. \*In September, Jenna Johnson began working as the full time Youth Ministry Coordinator, a position that had not been filled in at least several decades. She has worked to build a database of churches with active youth ministries and youth workers to better communicate Conference news and resources with local congregations. This has enabled the Conference to build better relationships with youth groups and individuals to enhance programming and trainings. In February, a group of 24 youth and adults went to Jamaica and partnered with the National Children's Home for mission work and education. While many of the plans for the year were delayed due to COVID-19, the Conference has been hosting bi-weekly virtual youth groups for teens across the Conference to make sure they are being spiritually nourished even while they cannot attend regular youth meetings. Jenna looks forward to being able to gather again and program for in person events for Conference youth.

## **CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT & REVITALIZATION**

### ***Rev. David A. Gilmore, Director of Congregational Development and Revitalization***

101. The 2020 appointment year continued our focus on revitalization via new church starts, church restarts and re-visioning/vitality visits at the district and local church level. Some highlights from this cycle include:

102. Focused Preaching

- Men's Day at Fordham UMC, Bronx, NY
- Re-Visioning Celebration at Hamden Plains UMC, Hamden, CT
- 46<sup>th</sup> Church Anniversary at UMC of Co-op City, Bronx, NY
- Re-Visioning Celebration at Butler Memorial UMC, Bronx, NY
- 195<sup>th</sup> Church Anniversary at St. Stephen's UMC, Bronx, NY
- MLK Celebration at St. John's UMC, Valley Stream, NY
- Other churches where I preached were:
  - Park Avenue UMC, New York, NY

- 1           ○ Woodycrest UMC, Bronx, NY
- 2           ○ UMC of New Canaan, New Canaan, CT
- 3           ○ Butler Memorial UMC, Bronx, NY
- 4           ○ Metropolitan Community UMC, New York, NY
- 5           ○ Golden Hill UMC, Bridgeport, CT
- 6           ○ New Rochelle UMC, New Rochelle, NY
- 7           ○ Bethany UMC, Brooklyn, NY
- 8           ○ Trinity UMC, White Plains, NY
- 9           ● Centering & Reflection Devotions
- 10          ● Participation in Worship Experiences for NYAC

11 102. In the visioning process towards revitalization, I visited the following churches/parishes:

- 12          ● Stratford UMC, Stratford, CT
- 13          ● Butler Memorial UMC, Bronx, NY
- 14          ● Clinton Avenue UMC, Kingston, NY
- 15          ● UMC of Hartford, Hartford, CT

16 103. Churches I either visited or offered consultation for the purpose of discerning vitality were:

- 17          ● Ghana UMC, Bronx, NY
- 18          ● Hamden Plains UMC, Hamden, CT
- 19          ● Memorial UMC, White Plains, NY

20 104. Some District/Conference/Connectional Mission/Training Events were:

- 21          ● Cooperative Parish Meetings
- 22          ● Ministry Incubator Innovative Ministries
- 23          ● Wesley Heritage Trip with Ordinands to England
- 24          ● Mosaix 2019
- 25          ● BoOM/Cabinet Retreats
- 26          ● Joint Cabinet/Trustees Mtg
- 27          ● Joint Cabinet/Nominations Committee Mtg
- 28          ● Compass Orientation
- 29          ● Visioning Strategic Goals
- 30          ● CMVT
- 31          ● Bishop's Fall Retreat
- 32          ● Bishop's Convocation
- 33          ● Taught Evangelism at Local Pastor's Licensing School
- 34          ● Table Ministry Training
- 35          ● National Developer's Meeting/The Navigate (replacement for SCD)
- 36          ● Fresh Expressions Trip to Western North Carolina Conference
- 37          ● Greater Meriden Cooperative Parish Webinar
- 38          ● Drew Faculty Retreat

39 105. Recruited clergy and seminarians to the NYAC from the following locations:

- 40          ● New Jersey (new Black Church start out of Butler Memorial UMC, Bronx, NY)
- 41          ● Duke University (Grace UMC, New York, NY)

42 106. Last, but not least, we either have or are planning to plant or restart the following faith communities:

- 43          ● HA:N Church (January 2019)

- 1 • Rivertowns Incubator (July 2019)
- 2 • First Spanish re-start (July 2019)
- 3 • Black Church start (July 2020)
- 4 • Black Church start (July 2020)
- 5 • Flanders UMC re-start (July 2021)
- 6 • Brooklyn Church (July 2021)
- 7 • Sag Harbor re-start (July 2021)
- 8 • Ossining new church plant (July 2022)

9 107. As I prepare to move into my new appointment as a superintendent serving the Heartland District of the  
10 Missouri Conference, I give God thanks for how richly the wonder-filled people of the New York Annual  
11 Conference have blessed me. You are loved and will forever hold a special place in my heart...Shalom!

## 12 **LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT and INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCY**

13 *Rev. Doris K. Dalton, Director of Leadership Development and Intercultural Competency*

14 101. If we had been together for Annual Conference in June, we would have celebrated my one year  
15 anniversary in this position. This past year has been a year of personal growth, new vision and progress,  
16 and I am thankful for the opportunity to serve God and the New York Conference “for such a time as this”  
17 (Esther 4:14). My goal for the first year has been to strengthen leadership development opportunities and  
18 introduce intercultural competency as a core leadership value of the NY Conference.

19 102. Leadership development is an essential part of the continual renewal leaders need to fulfill their callings.  
20 Intercultural Competency is the set of skills we have to help us respond to difference we encounter in our  
21 ministries. These skills help diverse congregations become inclusive congregations and reflect the message  
22 of the Gospel. Using intercultural competency skills, leaders can navigate intercultural conflict and equip  
23 their congregations to address the cultural effects of white supremacy within the church and throughout  
24 the community, such as racism, genderism, xenophobia, and much more. Intercultural competency is a  
25 core value and leadership skill that we must embrace, endorse and equip our clergy to use in order for our  
26 clergy and churches to be effective in contextual ministry in this changing cultural landscape.

27 103. To meet the goals of embedding leadership development and intercultural competency into the core  
28 values of the conference this past year, I focused on these areas:

29 104. **Strengthen leadership skills for leaders.** I explored different ways to offer relevant trainings for clergy and  
30 laity in-person and through the internet. I held leadership learning opportunities to introduce and  
31 strengthen leadership skills through online trainings, at District gatherings, cooperative parish meetings, at  
32 specialized workshop experiences and at the Bishop’s Convocation. Virtual leadership trainings are  
33 available on the conference website.

34 105. **Build Intercultural Competency skills and systems for leaders.** I advise and support Cabinet on integrating  
35 intercultural competency into their systems. I worked with the Board of Ordained Ministry to incorporate  
36 intercultural competency into their process so that the candidates for ministry are prepared for contextual  
37 ministry. So far this year, I have trained over 100 clergy and laity in intercultural competency leadership  
38 skills, including the Conference staff. This area continues to develop and expand.

39 106. **Create a new resource for leadership development.** Through the new Clergy Coaching initiative, clergy  
40 now have access to thirty trained clergy coaches within our conference. The purpose of this initiative is to  
41 offer pastors individualized leadership coaching that will help them meet ministry goals, deepen their

1 leadership skills and move to the next level of pastoral ministry. My office provides coordination and  
2 support for clergy to receive clergy coaching, and training for clergy coaches.

3 107. My goal for this coming year is to build on the foundation we are creating together and strengthening our  
4 framework of leadership development and intercultural competency. My ongoing projects include  
5 intercultural competency training for candidates for ministry and active clergy, an initiative for new cross-  
6 cultural and cross-racial appointments, leading the Eight Year Assessment program for clergy, a ministry  
7 training program for Chinese-speaking pastors to serve in the New York Conference, training clergy  
8 coaches and supporting Conference efforts to build effective and Christ-centered leaders in churches and  
9 communities throughout the New York Conference. To God be the glory!

## 10 **DISTRICT COUNCIL ON MINISTRIES – CATSKILL HUDSON**

### 11 *Jeremy Mills, Chair*

12 101. Greetings to you from the mountains and valleys, rivers and the creeks, hamlets and cities, waterfalls and  
13 babbling brooks and the 102 churches of the Catskill Hudson District of the New York Conference.

14 102. Our first meeting for the year brought us together on a beautiful fall evening at the Lexington-Westkill  
15 UMC, located in the heart of the Catskill Mountains. Together we broke bread and shared our recent God  
16 sightings. The leaders of our various ministry work areas shared updates about their respective ministry  
17 areas. An update was shared by individuals from local churches who started a Messy Church Ministry, the  
18 feedback was positive and we hope this ministry will continue grow throughout our district.

19 103. Our second meeting for the year brought us together on a beautiful crisp evening in November. Our  
20 journey led us to the Rondout Valley UMC, located on the eastern edge of the Catskills Mountains. We  
21 came together in prayer, song, and fellowship as we shared a light meal. As our attention turned to the  
22 work of the evening, we took time to pray for Pastor Dora Odarenko and the congregation of the East  
23 Branch UMC who lost their church building in a devastating fire. Pastor Dora shared even through this  
24 tragedy, God is still working. The congregation had been blessed with a location to meet for worship, the  
25 former Harvard UMC Church which was sold years earlier. The council spoke about two exciting projects  
26 for our district, first being a Technology Mission from Pastor Sejin Cha. Pastor Cha has been working with  
27 his local churches and community on different areas of technology. One area that Pastor Cha spoke to and  
28 is concentrating on is security within the every fast paced and changing world of technology. Pastor Cha  
29 hopes to be able to offer this as a district wide initiative, all were in favor, as technology is a big part of our  
30 everyday lives with an increasing need to connect technology and our churches. Secondly, Pastor Cathy  
31 Schuyler agree to administer our district Advent Facebook daily devotion. Various leaders and pastors  
32 from around the district were invited to write Advent devotions, these were posted each morning during  
33 the Season of Advent. This project was well received, and thank you Pastor Cathy for taking on such a big  
34 undertaking during one of the busiest times of the year. Joy and Thanksgiving was also shared as the  
35 Installation Service for our District Superintendent, Rev. Dr. Karen Monk, was a joyous occasion. Many  
36 thanks to the District Superintendency Committee for a beautiful event.

37 104. Our third meeting for the year brought us together on a rainy evening at the Quarryville UMC, located in  
38 the Catskill Mountains just outside of Saugerties, NY. Once again we gathered in song, prayer, and broke  
39 bread together in fellowship. All ministry work areas shared updates concerning their respective work  
40 areas to bring the council up to date. Thanksgiving was shared for our Spiritual Life Team who worked so  
41 diligently on our District Day Apart held on February 22, with a theme of Cup of Blessing. This time apart  
42 was used as a time of rest and recreation before the discipline of Lent began.

- 1 105. Our fourth meeting for the year was to be held at the Hurleyville UMC, which is a church surrounded by  
2 rolling hills and quiet streams. Our fourth meeting of the year has become a time of retreat, an extended  
3 time together to vision and dream about future ministries or events. This year, due to the COVID-19  
4 virus, we were not able to meet in-person for a time of retreat. Instead we came together as a  
5 council via Zoom, in June. It was so good to see one another, to hear each other's voices, and to see all  
6 the beautiful smiles on each face. We used our abbreviated time together to share how it was with our  
7 souls. Our District Superintendent, Rev. Dr. Karen Monk, gave us updates on the process of reopening,  
8 answering questions as best she could from our district leaders. Rev. Dr. Monk shared about various  
9 ministries around the district that were still alive and well, even through the pandemic. Many leaders  
10 shared how they have enjoyed being able to virtually visit other worship services around the district as  
11 most are now livestreamed on Facebook or YouTube. Rev. Dr. Monk shared Psalm 104 with us, reminding  
12 us to take time to look at nature and the beauty around us. She encouraged the council to take and share  
13 pictures of all the beautiful things and places right within our own district.
- 14 106. I am thankful to be able to serve with such wonderfully talented, gifted, and resourceful pastors and laity  
15 from across this district. I am grateful for the leadership of our Bishop, Thomas J. Bickerton, our DS, Rev.  
16 Dr. Karen Monk, and the staff of the New York Conference. Thank you for your continued communication,  
17 prayer and message of hope.

## 18 **DISTRICT COUNCIL ON MINISTRIES – CONNECTICUT**

### 19 ***Rev. John Parille, Chair***

- 20 101. The Connecticut District Council on Ministries (DCOM) met on September 23, 2019. Our first objective was  
21 to brainstorm and come up with ideas, create assignments and teams, and begin to enact plans for the  
22 District Resource Days that was scheduled for late January and Early February.
- 23 102. We have been exploring the idea of having District Resource Days by Parish teams. Instead of having two  
24 weekends of these events, we would have them spread out over a period of a month to six weeks. The  
25 hope was to make it easier to find space and also offer better geographic choices and seminars.
- 26 103. Unfortunately, time got away from us and before we knew it winter was upon us. With the guidance of  
27 our DS, Rev. Alpher, we moved in the direction of having a district webinar. The event was held on  
28 Thursday May, 7 and was a great success.
- 29 104. Ross Williams, CFO of our conference, was the lead presenter. We had over 90 participants who were very  
30 engaged and asked many great questions that educated all. We applaud the efforts of Ross and his team  
31 for making this a huge success. Rev. Alpher and I are currently working on another webinar to be offered  
32 in the coming months. We will be providing information to the district as soon as we secure the next  
33 speaker.
- 34 105. Of course all of us have been impacted with the COVID pandemic which has basically bought this  
35 committee to a halt. The webinars are a good option for our district to connect us and offer some useful  
36 information to pastors and laity.
- 37 106. In closing, we were all shocked and sadden with the news of the passing of Rev. Carol Downs, co-chair of  
38 this committee. I have known Carol for 8 years and was thrilled to be partnered with her in my first  
39 attempt as being chair of this committee. Our district has lost a wonderful pastor, prayer warrior and  
40 friend. This loss will be felt for many years to come as Carol left a tremendous imprint, a legacy, on not  
41 only her church community, but with her fellow clergy. I am very grateful that our paths connected for she  
42 truly blessed my life, and I'm sure many of you in our district.

1 107. On behalf of the District Council on Ministries, I would like to express particular thanks to our District  
2 Superintendent Rev. Alpher Sylvester and the many individuals who have inspired me with their persistent  
3 dedication to our work to ultimately advance the cause of Christ.

#### 4 **DISTRICT COUNCIL ON MINISTRIES – LONG ISLAND EAST**

##### 5 ***Rev. Chuck Van Houten and Danny Gastelua***

6 101. Greetings in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. The District Council of Ministries of the Long Island  
7 East District has accomplished a lot in this past year, especially in this time of Covid-19, through the  
8 devotion of its members and the grace of our God.

9 102. This past year we met to discuss how we could help more of our team and committee chairs attend  
10 more meetings as our district spans from the east end of Long Island to the western edge of Nassau  
11 county. We decided to have full meetings that brought people together every other month, in person  
12 as well as over Zoom, for those who lived further away, and an executive board meeting every other  
13 month via Zoom. This worked fairly well, however, once Covid-19 caused us to shutdown it became  
14 how we worked in all of our meetings.

15 103. Again, this fall, the DCOM met to discuss the Mission, Vision and Core Values expressed by the New  
16 York Annual Conference. We worked with one another to determine ways in which we could be  
17 more in compliance with the ideals of these statements. In particular, the DCOM understands that its  
18 role is to equip the saints – particularly in the local churches.

19 104. The annual *Disciple 2 Disciple* workshops, held on February 1st, in Hicksville, was a big success under  
20 the leadership of Rev. David Collins and Rev. Romi Abelova. Sixty people attended. Although, our  
21 Hampton Bays Workshop had to be cancelled, strong attendance was witnessed in Hicksville.

22 105. Among the other notable educational opportunities through the district have been our annual  
23 pilgrimage to the *Global Leadership Summit* (Willow Creek Association). Again, due to the  
24 Coronavirus this year's numbers did not support attendance as a group over the internet. However,  
25 some of our usual attenders will be joining online on their own.

26 106. Our District Committee on Ministry continues to thrive under the leadership of Rev. Roy Grubbs. At  
27 present, even with the restrictions of Covid-19 this year we had 3 persons Certified/recommended, 2  
28 others certified, and 4 more currently in process.

29 107. Our ERT Training has continued on a virtual basis.

30 108. With the intent of providing financial support for our local churches' mission efforts, our Missions  
31 Walk this year became a virtual walk. Participants were asked to walk a 5k during the Month of June.  
32 We had 66 participants who raised \$4,650.00.

33 109. Rev. Bob Leibold and his team coordinated this year's District Prayer Walk. Unfortunately, there best  
34 laid plans were impacted by the onset of the Coronavirus, as well. At first, it was thought that we  
35 could hold off for a while. However, as the severity and duration of the Coronavirus became more  
36 clear, the prayer walk had to be cancelled for safety's sake. Some online prayer was coordinated in its  
37 stead.

38 110. In addition, our Walk to Emmaus team had been meeting to prepare for the Men's Walk which was  
39 scheduled for April 23-26. Unfortunately, the Coronavirus caused us to cancel the Men's Walk this  
40 year. All plans for Walk to Emmaus Retreats, both Men and Women have been cancelled for the year  
41 until such time as there is a vaccine, and it is safe to gather in numbers again.

- 1 111. It goes without saying that our lives and how we do ministry have changed dramatically since the  
2 beginning of the shutdown. At the onset of the shutdown our Cooperative Parishes, many of whom had  
3 begun sharing in various ministries, became much more vital to our daily and weekly ministries in this  
4 “new normal.” Our Cooperative Parishes began meeting weekly for prayer, support, and sharing of ideas  
5 on how to do ministry when no in-person meetings or worship could be held. While these meetings were  
6 very helpful in learning how to do virtual ministry, they were also equally helpful in caring for one another  
7 in a time of great change, fear, and concern for our congregations. Our cooperative Parish coordinators  
8 also met weekly at the request of our District Superintendent Rev. Julia Yeonhee Yim. These meetings  
9 have proven to be vital in communicating information and caring for one another in this time of Covid-19.
- 10 112. This year our District Youth retreat became an online event. Our youth played games and even held a  
11 worship service online.
- 12 113. I am so grateful for the inspired leadership of my co-chair Mr. Danny Gastelua, DCOM Secretary Ken  
13 Bohler, Lay Leader Lorraine Leak, and Associate Lay Leaders Fred Dymek, Bill Flipse, Sam Newman, Zam  
14 Zam Quraishy, and Wayne Redman. I feel that anyone would be hard-pressed to find a more active  
15 district in our NYAC, and I applaud the faithfulness of all of these disciples of Jesus Christ. They work very  
16 hard and have a strong vision of Christ’s Kin-dom. My special thanks to District Superintendent Rev. Julia  
17 Yeonhee Yim, for her leadership and support. But most of all, I would like to thank the local churches of  
18 the Long Island East District for being so in love with Jesus Christ and all God’s children. May both  
19 continue to be well-served by our churches. I pray our district and Annual Conference will remain safe and  
20 well during this historic and difficult year. I know we are all up to this challenge.

## 21 **DISTRICT COUNCIL ON MINISTRIES – LONG ISLAND WEST**

22 ***Rev. David Ball, Chair and George Browne, Vice Chair***

- 23 101. It never seems to astonish me how fast a year can go by. The saying is true: “A day feels like a lifetime, a  
24 lifetime feels like a day.” In this case, we can use the same saying for a year. This is a time to allow us to  
25 reflect on what God has been doing here in the Long Island West District, and also to help us look forward  
26 to what God will continue to do through us as we walk faithfully with Him.
- 27 102. I will like to thank our District Superintendent Rev. Sungchan Kim and our Bishop, Thomas J. Bickerton for  
28 their continued support towards the ministries of our district. Our district continues to grow spiritually and  
29 is focused on utilizing all resources available to us to enhance the church’s ministries.
- 30 103. As Chair of the Council on Ministries it is my joy and privilege to be in ministry with hardworking and  
31 dedicated leaders. I must say thanks to all members of the committee for their support.
- 32 104. We were only able to meet for three months this year due to the Covid 19. The reports received from the  
33 different ministries representatives indicated both positive growth and the need for assistance to help  
34 overcome some struggling issues.
- 35 105. Our Annual Lay Leadership Training Seminar, held in February of this year was again a very successful  
36 event under the leadership of Mrs. Gail Boykin and her team. I would like to encourage all Pastors to  
37 continue sending their leader to this training.
- 38 106. The Lay Servant Ministry classes under the leadership of Mr. Willie Dixon, Sr. was a success although the  
39 attendance was low. It is my hope that more members will be encouraged to attend these classes.

- 1 107. Our District Committee on Ordained Ministry is Chaired by Ms. Gail Douglas-Boykin, and Co-chaired by the  
2 Rev. Delroy Murdock. There are 20 persons from the Long Island West District currently in the care of the  
3 District Committee on Ordained Ministry.
- 4 108. We bid farewell to Rev. Laurel Scott. We thank her for her service and wish her well in her new  
5 appointment in the Metropolitan District.
- 6 109. The United Methodist Women, led by Ms. Zuhairah McRae, continue to fully support the local  
7 congregations. They provide the leadership for Mission U. This ministry is filled with serious committed  
8 persons who are doing everything possible to fulfill its mission.
- 9 110. The United Methodist Men Ministry is not where the committee will like it to be. We will be working  
10 diligently to make sure that this ministry receive all necessary resources to fulfil its obligations.
- 11 111. The Brooklyn United Methodist Church Home, (BUMCH), The Far Rockaway Mission, and the Anchor  
12 House ministry to women and men struggling with drug abuse and addictions still continues to meet the  
13 needs of the community. We will like to thank all churches, members, friends and businesses who  
14 supported these ministries.
- 15 112. There is still a lot to be done especially in the present situations our churches are dealing with. It is my  
16 hope that this Committee will be able to assist our local churches where ever possible. May God continue  
17 to open doors and to remove all obstacles so that our District will become a lighthouse for others to see  
18 their way to our Lord and savior, Jesus Christ.

## 19 **DISTRICT COUNCIL ON MINISTRIES – METROPOLITAN**

### 20 ***Marcia Blake-Davey, Chairperson***

- 21 101. I greet you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
- 22 102. I am profoundly grateful to our Lord and Savior for granting me the opportunity to serve you as  
23 Chairperson to the Metropolitan District of New York Conference.
- 24 103. As a district we give God thanks for our Bishop, Thomas J. Bickerton. We give God thanks for our District  
25 Superintendent, Rev. Dr. Denise Smartt Sears. We give God thanks for our pastors and for the laity of our  
26 churches. We give God thanks with every fiber of our being for walking by our side on this life’s journey.
- 27 104. The year 2020 has been one like no other. This is a year that challenged us to be different in worship,  
28 tested our capabilities, pushed us to learn and forced us to venture into the new territories. This is a year  
29 that gave us an undeniable clear view of the disparities within our communities. This is a year that bought  
30 us insurmountable grieve. This is a year that challenged our beliefs and caused us to question our faith. In  
31 spite of it all, this is the same year that brings reassurance, confirmation, and conviction that we are  
32 children of God and our Father will not leave us nor forsake us.
- 33 105. The district held its first event on November 2, 2019 - The Metropolitan District-Wide Church Conference -  
34 at Memorial United Methodist Church. Here, Rev. Doris Dalton led us through a prophetic, profound and  
35 energetic discussion around the topic of “Leadership Dialogue Across Differences.” The use of skits and  
36 engaging discussions demonstrated key requirements for holding productive dialogs. Rev. Dalton  
37 highlighted the meticulous care and construction that should proceed a gathering. Additionally, she  
38 bought to light the need for a leader to engage in self-reflection in order to determine triggers and biases  
39 that can derail the benefits of a fulfilled dialogue.

- 1 106. The Annual Day of Spiritual Renewal was held on Dec 14, 2019 at Grace United Methodist Church. Here  
2 Rev. Cathy Gilliard highlighted Romans 12:2 which states, *Do not be conformed to this world, but be*  
3 *transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good*  
4 *and acceptable and perfect.* Rev. Gilliard then challenged us to look within ourselves and listened to each  
5 other as we probed the question: “Are we ready to be transformed?” Today, the response to that  
6 question is not a simple ‘yes’ or ‘no’. Today the response is: “Transformation is inevitable, transformation  
7 is here.” As a district we continue to pray for discernment in what is good, acceptable and perfect in the  
8 sight of our God.
- 9 107. Laity Leadership Training was held on February 1, 2020 at Salem United Methodist Church. The following  
10 workshops were presented:
- 11 • Staff-Pastor Relations facilitated by Rev. Dr. Allen N. Pinckney, Jr. of Butler Memorial United  
12 Methodist Church
  - 13 • Board of Trustees, facilitated by Sis. Tiffany French-Goffe, Conference Trustee
  - 14 • Finance, facilitated by Bro. Ross Williams, CEO and Director of Administrative Services
- 15 108. Leaders and members of these United Methodist Churches, together we press on...as Paul states in  
16 Philippians chapter 3 verses 13-14: *Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this*  
17 *one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on*  
18 *toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.*
- 19 109. There is much work to be done in our districts, in our conference and within the entire United  
20 Methodist church. With God’s grace and mercy, we will harness the strength in our diversity and  
21 press on to do His will.

## 22 **DISTRICT COUNCIL ON MINISTRIES – NEW YORK CONNECTICUT**

### 23 **Rev. Nikki Edleman, Chairperson**

- 24 101. This was my inaugural year chairing the Council. I am indebted to the entire committee, and especially  
25 District Superintendent Tim Riss, NY/CT Administrative Assistant Karen Yostpille, and former Chairperson  
26 Jennifer Harmer for their guidance, support, and patience as I learned the position. Thank you.
- 27 102. Our Council was spurred in administrative meetings to strike a balance between maintaining the status  
28 quo in light of District Superintendent transition, and to interrogate the way things have always been done  
29 in an effort to reimagine our call to ministry as a District. Although our progress on visioning new things  
30 was interrupted by the coronavirus, I trust this Council is well-positioned for innovating in the next year.
- 31 103. Our annual District Advent worship service planned for December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019, was postponed owing to  
32 winter weather, and transformed by our hardworking Worship Sub-committee into a Twelfth  
33 Night/Epiphany Service on January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020, graciously hosted by the Mid-Hudson Korean UMC in  
34 Poughkeepsie. A more permanent transition to an Epiphany offering is to be seriously considered moving  
35 forward.
- 36 104. Our two annual Leader-to-Leader Training sessions in February, 2020 were well-received and attended.  
37 Youth Ministries Coordinator Jenna Johnson gave the keynote address at both gatherings. Breakout  
38 sessions in the recurrent subjects of Finance, Trustees, and Staff-Parish Relations were joined by focus on  
39 Evangelism and Media & Press Relations. A big thank you to hosting churches Trinity-Newburgh UMC and  
40 Rowayton UMC, as well as breakout session leaders D.S. Tim Riss, Ross Williams, Al Hanson, Rev. Jeff  
41 Hooker, Rev. Jessica Anschutz, and Lisa Isom.

1 105. As of this writing, our NY/CT District meeting is slated for August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020, although there is some  
2 uncertainty about our being able to hold the meeting owing to continuing pandemic closures and  
3 concerns. For similar reasons, a potential Visioning Retreat during the summer months has been  
4 indefinitely postponed. It is clear that our calling at the District level—as at all levels—must be focused on  
5 a leap into uncharted and creative venues at this historic moment when vital ministry is so needed in our  
6 communities. May the Spirit of the Lord bless us to this work in the coming year.

## 7 **BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION and CAMPUS MINISTRIES**

8 ***Rev. Sandra B. Mantz, Chair***

9 101. The Conference Commission on Higher Education and Campus ministry is the liaison between the General  
10 Board and New York Annual Conference. We update covenants with our ecumenical chaplains as well as  
11 endeavor to strengthen the United Methodist Presence on Campus. We evaluate and review the  
12 ministries that we support and as to integrity of their mission and if they are in sync with goals of the  
13 General church and the Conference. We monitor and have fiscal oversight over all the income that we  
14 share and by developing a close relationship see how we support the campuses. We seek to equip and  
15 empower campus ministries to build and to cultivate Christian community. The work of this team is  
16 described in detail in paragraph 634 of *The Book of Discipline*, 2016.

17 102. Due to the pandemic we have not met in person. However we have been in contact on a regular basis.  
18 We edited our scholarship forms and continue to support our Campus ministries. Since many ceased to  
19 meet in person we are in the process and checking ensure to the campus ministries are having their needs  
20 met and are now receiving updated reports. This keeps us accountable.

21 103. In addition to supporting Campus ministries we try empower our students through reviewing and granting  
22 scholarships. The Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry is committed to providing quality  
23 educational opportunities for higher learning. We offer scholarship opportunities: Gloster B. Current  
24 Scholarship, New York Education Society Fellowship Program.

25 104. Please encourage your young people to consider attending a United Methodist university or college. A  
26 complete list of United Methodist colleges can be found at the General Board of Higher Education and  
27 Ministry website: [www.gbhem.org](http://www.gbhem.org).

28 105. National scholarships and loans are available to members of the United Methodist Church. For  
29 information and application forms for other United Methodist scholarships and loans please visit the  
30 General Board of Higher Education at [www.gbhem.org](http://www.gbhem.org).

31 106. Loan applications for enrollment Jan – May are open Dec 13 - May 2; loan applications for enrollment June  
32 – Dec are open May 6 – Oct. 15.

33 107. Find more information at: <http://www.gbhem.org/loans-and-scholarships>

34 108. During these time of upheaval we not only want to support our young people but want to give them the  
35 tools to not only enhance their lives but the world around them.

36 109. I thank our committee for their hard work through conference calls emails and phones calls as they  
37 faithfully do their work. They have a passion and love for young people and God. It is an honor to serve  
38 along side of them.

## 39 **HISPANIC AMERICAN COUNCIL**

40 ***Pastor José F. Mora-Gil, Council Chair***

- 1 *Don't get tired of helping others. You will be rewarded when the time is right, if you don't give up. Galatians 6: 9*
- 2 101. With great joy I am before each one of you to present a simple report of what has been done from 7/2019
- 3 to 6/2020 as president of the Hispanic American Council.
- 4 102. We carried out our Family Camp titled: The Lord God's spirit is upon me, because the Lord has anointed
- 5 me, He has sent me to ..." Isaiah 61:1, in Quinipet on August 30 – September 2, 2019. It was a wonderful
- 6 camp where we had the attendance of 140 campers. Of these, 80 were children and young people. God
- 7 glorified Himself greatly and we were all blessed in a very special way.
- 8 103. Our next activity was held at the Hicksville United Methodist Church of Pastor Rosa Bonilla on Sunday
- 9 October 19 at 4:00 PM. The direction of the service was in charge of Rev. Bonilla and her worship team,
- 10 and the proclamation of the message was given by her husband Mr. Bonilla. It was a very nice service
- 11 where about 100 people attended and above all the name of our God was glorified.
- 12 104. Our activities for 2020 like our Annual Assembly, Annual Conference Lunch and Quinipet Scholarship
- 13 Fundraising Dinner were suspended because of the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- 14 105. The Good News is that all of our churches help their communities during this pandemic, that now all of
- 15 them are streaming their services even if they come back to in-person services, and that all of our
- 16 churches re-affirm they stand against racism by making sure racism is eradicated first from our church
- 17 ministries.
- 18 106. I want to thank all the pastors, the lay people who have constantly supported our bi-monthly meetings of
- 19 the leadership of the Hispanic-American Council and all our activities. I will not mention their names
- 20 because I can sin of forgetting someone, but God knows how you have endorsed our council and will bless
- 21 your fidelity to Him and His work.
- 22 107. Finally, I want to remind you that the success of our Hispanic-American council will only be as great as our
- 23 commitment to it. Let's walk the extra mile so that our council will be fruitful, prosperous, solid and above
- 24 all blessed by the Almighty God that we serve.
- 25 *I am the vine, and you are the branches. If you stay joined to me, and I stay joined to you, then you will produce*
- 26 *lots of fruit. But you cannot do anything without me. John 15:5*

## 27 **KOREAN COUNCIL/CAUCUS ACTIVITY**

### 28 ***Rev. Steve (Young Dong) Kim***

- 29 101. **July 15, 2019:** Korean Caucus hosted a pastoral spirituality seminar to help the pastors develop their
- 30 pastoral vitality and spirituality. The event was held at Queens Central Korean UMC in Flushing and the
- 31 seminar was led by Rev. Dr. Dong-Ju Han, an Old Testament professor in Pyoung-Taek University in Korea.
- 32 102. **August 5, 2019:** The Korean pastors of the New York Annual Conference gathered together to have a
- 33 renewal/fellowship time at Moses State Park, NY. We welcomed newly appointed pastors and had open,
- 34 honest, and respectful conversations about the local churches, the annual conference and the UMC,
- 35 confirming that we are one in Christ.
- 36 103. **September 9, 2019:** Korean Caucus led the Opening Worship Service of the Drew Theological School
- 37 Korean Caucus in the beginning of Fall semester. We introduced the New York Annual Conference and the
- 38 UMC ordination process to the seminarians. We also provided various kinds of Korean food and snacks to
- 39 all who participated in the worship service.

- 1 105. **September 16, 2019:** Korean Caucus hosted a church growth seminar to provide resources and strategies  
2 of evangelism for Korean pastors. The event was held at Great Neck Korean UMC in Great Neck, NY and  
3 the seminar was led by Korean Methodist Church Bishop Jae-Tack Lim.
- 4 106. **October 21, 2019:** Korean clergy who serve in Cross-Racial/Cross-Cultural ministry gathered at the New  
5 York Annual Conference center and had a productive time with Rev. Doris Dalton, a new director of  
6 intercultural competency and leadership development by sharing joys and concerns of the cross-  
7 racial/cross-cultural ministry experiences and about dismantling racism.
- 8 107. **October 28, 2019:** Korean Caucus hosted a special gathering at the New York Korean UMC in Plainview,  
9 Long Island, NY to get more information about the four petitions submitted before the General  
10 Conference 2020. A special presentation was led by Rev. Paul Chang, Executive Director of Korean Ministry  
11 Plan at GBGM and Rev. Thomas Kim, Director of Korean/Asian News of UMNS.
- 12 108. **January 14-15, 2020:** Korean Caucus supported a pastoral spirituality seminar to help the pastors to  
13 develop their pastoral vitality and spirituality. Led by Rev. Sung Chan Kim, the District Superintendent of  
14 Long Island West, and Rev. Ben Yoo, the pastor of Floral Park UMC.
- 15 109. **February 3, 2020:** Korean pastors gathered together to celebrate Korean New Year so called Chinese New  
16 Year in America by having joint worship service, playing traditional games, and having fellowship with  
17 traditional Korean Food. Korean Caucus supported special prizes and presents while the First UMC in  
18 Flushing donated Korean food for the participants.
- 19 110. **February 23-25, 2020:** Korean Caucus Spiritual Retreat @ Honor's Haven Retreat Center, NY. A guest  
20 speaker/presenter was Rev. Dr. Sungho Lee, who gave four seminars on Homiletics. In addition, there  
21 were two group workshops on discussing petitions that were submitted before the General Conference  
22 2020 (now, it has changed to 2021 due to pandemic.)
- 23 111. **May 18, 2020:** Korean Caucus met via Zoom meeting titled, "Online Koinonia," to check-in with one  
24 another during the "stay home" directive in place. We celebrated with those who are going to be  
25 ordained, commissioned, and newly appointed in the 2020 Annual Conference. We also shared online  
26 resources and opportunities for clergy and laity physical/mental/spiritual health during COVID-19.  
27 Ultimately, it was a time of fellowship and community support.
- 28 112. **June 11, 2020:** Korean Caucus met via Zoom meeting titled, "Online Koinonia: Racial Justice," first, to  
29 check-in with one another, and second, to discuss a response as a Korean Caucus on the death of George  
30 Floyd and the issue of systemic racism in the U.S.A. We had a genuine conversation on racism within the  
31 UMC as well as in American society.

## 32 **Mission and Disaster Response**

### 33 **Rev. Tom Vencuss, Director**

- 34 101. Two major efforts dominated the work of the Missions office this year: hurricane recovery efforts in the  
35 Caribbean and the Coronavirus pandemic.
- 36 102. **Disaster Response**
- 37 • The New York Conference Missions office continued to serve as the Puerto Rico (Mainland) Volunteer  
38 office, resourcing and vetting all teams seeking to respond to Hurricane Maria. Tom Vencuss, NYAC  
39 Missions and Disaster Response Coordinator, was also part of an UMCOR-based team to visit Puerto  
40 Rico after the December earthquakes.

- 1 • The NYAC deployed two Advance Teams to the Bahamas to provide initial assistance and disaster  
2 response training events for church and community leaders.
- 3 • A young adult recovery team from Jesse Lee UMC served in Florida as part of the Hurricane Michael  
4 recovery program.
- 5 • Unfortunately, all volunteer teams were cancelled when Coronavirus travel restrictions went into place  
6 in March 2020.
- 7 • The NYAC Missions office worked with St Bernard Project to address outstanding Sandy-related projects.  
8 This was funded by a grant from UMCOR. A Done in a Day team also worked to remove debris from a  
9 Sandy-affected home. Tragically, many Sandy-affected homeowners are still in need of assistance.
- 10 • Working through our local churches the Missions office provided assistance to a family in Jamaica,  
11 Queens, displaced by a large sewer main break this past fall.
- 12 • Three “Done in a Day” teams worked at First Spanish, Manhattan, to provide repairs and refurbishment  
13 to the church office and large community room. Soon after, their building was used for several  
14 community-based gatherings and outreach missions.
- 15 • The NYAC continues to partner with New York Disaster Interfaith Services, NYC VOAD, LI VOAD, CT Rises,  
16 and a number of other disaster-response agencies.

17 **103. Missions** - The NYAC Missions office provided support for Mozambique, Haiti, and Antigua.

- 18 • Mozambique - funds were provided to assist with roof repairs at the Dondo House for Children following  
19 Hurricane Idai.
- 20 • Haiti – Mountains of Hope for Haiti continues to provide for a medical clinic, two schools, a Farmer’s  
21 Association and a Sewing Ministry in the village of Furcy. The Caribbean Mission Partnership provides  
22 support for a school in the village of Fond Doux.
- 23 • Antigua – the NYAC Missions office supported a Caribbean Mission Partnership volunteer team working  
24 on the Gilbert Memorial Conference Center.
- 25 • Youth Ambassadors – 17 youth and 7 adults travelled to Jamaica in February. Their itinerary included  
26 working at several schools and meeting with Jamaican young adults. This was in coordination with the  
27 NYAC Youth office.

28 **104. Abundant Health** - Abundant Health Conference Representatives from the UMC Northeast Jurisdiction  
29 recently met (online) to share Information about their current Abundant Health Ministries and also future  
30 possibilities. We are looking forward to working together and also to encourage our churches to  
31 participate in the FAN (Faith Activity, and Nutrition) online training! We are also hoping to reschedule  
32 several “Hulapaloozas” that were postponed because of the pandemic. Jesus said: *“I have come that you  
33 may have life and having it abundantly!”* John 10:10 Blessings and Peace, Wendy Vencuss, NYAC  
34 Abundant Health Coordinator

35 **105. Coronavirus pandemic response** - As soon as coronavirus restrictions went into place, the NYAC Missions  
36 office began working with NYAC churches which sponsor or support emergency food ministries. The work  
37 that our churches are doing is nothing short of remarkable. Thousands of families, throughout the  
38 Conference boundaries, are supported by the efforts of our local churches. At a time when many food  
39 missions are closing down due to a lack of funding, and volunteer concerns around the coronavirus, our  
40 churches are stepping up. This effort has been supported by two UMCOR grants, grants from the United

1 Methodist City Society and Frontier Foundation, and individual donations. We are grateful for the support  
2 received.

3 106. We have also been working with the Bishop and Cabinet to secure PPE (personal protection equipment)  
4 for our local churches as they seek to re-open this summer or early fall.

5 **NYAC GLOBAL MINISTRIES**

6 ***Jill Wilson, Conference Secretary of Global Ministries***

- 7 101. One of our NYAC mission initiatives is a relationship and partnership with Mozambique Methodist Church.  
8 Strengthening this connection was the itineration of Global Ministry Missionaries John Nday and his wife  
9 Florence Kaying. They serve in Mozambique. They were welcomed by 4 different congregations in our  
10 conference when they were in New York Annual Conference - Fall 2019.
- 11 102. We were expecting 5 missionaries to itinerate in 2020. Due to the Corona Virus, all itinerations have taken  
12 on a new virtual format. Everyone in the conference has been invited to attend a virtual itineration of not  
13 only 'our' missionaries, but all those itinerating this year. This had proved very successful with GBGM, and  
14 NYAC will be hosting several opportunities to meet and greet one of 'our' missionaries via Zoom, in the  
15 coming months.
- 16 103. 4 of 'our' missionaries received renewed appointments in 2020. They are Rev. Dr. Ediberto Lopez, Puerto  
17 Rico, Rev. Hikari Chang, Japan, Rev. John Calhoun, Ukraine, and Rev. Young Cho, Russia.
- 18 104. All churches that have or have had a relationship with a missionary in the last couple of years have been  
19 contacted by the General Board of Global Ministries asking them to reengage with missionaries. Currently  
20 we have approximately 20 churches with known ties to 11 different missionaries. There are 21 new  
21 missionaries in the class of 2020. We hope to connect more churches with these or other missionaries. It  
22 can be based on geographical region or programming that might interest a church. Examples of  
23 missionary assignments include education, social justice, youth, evangelism and health care. As always,  
24 there is an open invitation to develop a relationship with a missionary. I am more than happy to assist  
25 with this process! [jillmwilson@comcast.net](mailto:jillmwilson@comcast.net).