



THE COLLEGE OF BISHOPS NORTHEASTERN JURISDICTION

March 29, 2021

To the United Methodists of the Northeastern Jurisdiction
From the College of Bishops of the Northeastern Jurisdiction

Grace and Peace to you in the name of Jesus Christ,

We thank God for you and commend the clergy and congregational leaders for your leadership. These have been difficult and isolating times for many and yet you are leading our most vital ministry, congregations and community ministries with conviction and determination. You have demonstrated the gifts of courage, leadership, innovation and grace. Thank you.

Today, we announce the coverage of Episcopal Areas in the Northeastern Jurisdiction effective September 1, 2021.

The pandemic has presented unprecedented challenges in the life of the church. One area of challenge has been our ability to conference together in the General and Jurisdictional Conferences. General Conference sets the policies for the church, elects new general agency leadership and sets the global direction and budget for the church. The Jurisdictional Conference elects new bishops and assigns bishops to episcopal areas.

Due to the 2020 General Conference being postponed a second time, it has meant the continual postponement of the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference. Two of the Northeastern Jurisdiction bishops, Bishops Peggy Johnson and Jeremiah Park have requested and been granted voluntarily retirement starting September 1, 2021 under paragraph 408.2 (b) of The Book of Discipline.

Bishop Johnson will move to Virginia in August of 2021 to employ her gifts and experience to serve in ministry with congregations and provide consultation with deaf and disability ministry in the NEJ and across the connection.

Bishop Park will move to New Jersey in August of 2021 to employ his gifts and experience to serve in ministry as the Presiding Bishop with both the Northeastern Jurisdiction Korean Mission and the United Methodist Mission in Mongolia.

The 2020 postponed General Conference will gather in person August 29 through September 6, 2022 in Minneapolis, MN followed by U.S. Jurisdictional Conferences to be held in October of 2022 for the election and assignment of bishops.

Because two bishops will retire this year, effective September 1, 2021, The Book of Discipline authorizes the College of Bishops to provide coverage of open episcopal areas until new bishops are elected and

assigned by the Jurisdictional Conference. This coverage will be for 16 months from September 1, 2021 through December 31, 2022.

The College of Bishops after consulting with the Northeastern Jurisdiction Episcopacy Committee and individual bishops, and after prayer and meeting several times about coverage during this interim period, announces the following bishops will provide episcopal leadership and coverage within the Northeastern Jurisdiction.

- Episcopal Areas: West Virginia Area (West Virginia Conference), Pittsburgh Area (Western Pennsylvania Conference) and Harrisburg Area (Susquehanna Conference), Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi and Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball.
- Episcopal Areas: Washington Area (Baltimore-Washington Conference) and Philadelphia Area (Peninsula Delaware Conference) – Bishop LaTrelle Easterling.
- Episcopal Areas: New Jersey Area (Greater New Jersey Conference) and Philadelphia Area (Eastern Pennsylvania Conference) – Bishop John Schol.
- Upper New York Area (Upper New York Conference), Bishop Mark Webb.
- Boston Area (New England Conference), Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar.
- New York Area (New York Conference), Bishop Thomas Bickerton.

These are temporary arrangements and configurations to provide coverage. The next in-person Jurisdictional Conference will set the episcopal areas and assignments of bishops for the next quadrennium.

We thank you for your continued ministry and service within The United Methodist Church and the world. We invite you to pray for the church and our leadership as bishops as we serve together to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

In Christ,

Boston Area

Sudarshana Devadhar

Harrisburg Area

Jeremiah J. Park

New Jersey Area

John R. Schol

New York Area

Thomas J. Bickerton

Philadelphia Area

Peggy A. Johnson

Pittsburgh Area

Cynthia Moore Koikoi

Upper New York Area

Mark Webb

Washington Area

LaTrelle Easterling

West Virginia Area

Sandra Steiner Ball

Retired

George W. Bashore

Violet L. Fisher

William Boyd Grove

Susan W. Hassinger

Neil L. Irons

Clifton S. Ives

Alfred Johnson

Ernest S. Lyght

Marcus Matthews

Jane Allen Middleton

Susan M. Morrison

Forrest C. Stith

Peter D. Weaver

Joseph H. Yeakel