Susquehanna Conference
The United Methodist Church

RISE UP!

LOVE BOLDLY | SERVE JOYFULLY | LEAD COURAGEOUSLY

Matthew 22:36-40

PROGRAM & REPORTS

Annual Conference

June 4-6, 2026

Community Arts Center - Williamsport, PA

Susquehanna Conference
The United Methodist Church

Holy Conferencing: What God Expects of Us

As God's chosen people, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another, and if anyone has a complaint against someone else, forgive each other—just as the Lord has forgiven you, so must you forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, for you were called to this in one body. Be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him. (Colossians 3:12–16a, 17).

Guidelines for Respectful and Thoughtful Dialogue

- **Acknowledge everyone as a child of God**: Always speak respectfully to everyone. Disagreement does not require hostility.
- **Be open to God's transformative power:** Patiently observe the behavior of others and trust that God can work in the hearts of all involved.
- **Listen before responding:** Listen to learn. Take time to understand others' perspectives before formulating your reply.
- **Seek to understand experiences:** Try to grasp the journey that shaped others' views.
- **Exercise caution when expressing offense:** Avoid reacting in ways that might hinder dialogue or understanding.
- **Reflect others' views accurately:** Especially when disagreeing, ensure you convey their position truthfully and fairly.
- **Steer clear of inflammatory language:** Refrain from using derogatory names, angry tones, or generalizations. Support your points with specific evidence and examples.
- **Utilize mediators if necessary:** Facilitators can help keep conversations constructive.
- **See beyond flaws:** Remember that everyone's worth comes from their relationship with God—not the imperfections we perceive in their actions or opinions.

Christians can approach important issues without succumbing to divisive, combative debates often seen in secular settings. Guided by the Holy Spirit, we aim for decision-making that avoids creating winners and losers. Through respectful and honest conversation, we can address matters that are passionate to us—ultimately working together to change the world.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section I

Organization 8
Conference Offering 26

Section IV-A

Recommendations 27

Rec-1 Commission on Equitable Compensation 28
Rec-2 Board of Pensions 30
Rec-3 Council on Finance and Administration 42

Resolutions

RES-1 SUS Strategic Missional Path Forward 44
RES-2 Key Funds Reallocation Plan 63
RES-3 Africa University 62
RES-4 Dissolution of Sierra Leone Initiative 63
RES-5 Affirming Native American Awareness and a Call to Peaceful Witness 63
RES-6 United Methodist Immigration Response 67
RES-7 Answering the Call of Kairos Palestine II 68
RES-8 Gun Violence Prevention and Support of Community Violence Intervention (CVI) Programming 70
RES-9 Energy Stewardship as Faithful Discipleship 71
RES-10 Affirming Mental Health Awareness, Education, and Faithful Response 72

Section IV-B

Reports 73

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind… love your neighbor as yourself."
Matthew 22:36-40

Dear partners in ministry,

Grace and peace from Jesus Christ, our Savior and Friend, be with you.

On June 4-6, 2026, United Methodists in the Susquehanna Conference will gather for the 2026 Annual Conference Session at the Community Arts Center in Williamsport, Pennsylvania

As envisioned in our *Book of Discipline*, the Annual Conference session is a sacred time of Christian conferencing in which we:

- Worship the Risen Christ and grow as disciples.
- Celebrate the lives and ministries of those who have served faithfully.
- Welcome a new class of spiritual leaders.
- Reflect on the realities, challenges, and opportunities of our shared ministry.
- Discern and act on important resolutions.
- Organize our mission and ministry for 2026–27.

BISHOP HÉCTOR A. BURGOS-NÚÑEZ
Susquehanna & Upper New York Area

This year's session marks the beginning of a three year journey into active, embodied discipleship. Rooted in *Love Boldly*—the first movement of our newly adopted denominational Vision Statement—our theme, **"Rise Up,"** calls us to live our faith with passion, intentionality, and courage.

In preparation for our time together, I invite you to:

- **Pray** for God's guidance and blessing over our gathering and our work.
- **Prepare** by reading the Pre Conference Workbook, participating in information sessions, and sharing these resources with your congregation.
- **Participate** by arriving ready to be fully present and to offer the best of Christ's grace, wisdom, and love to one another.

I look forward to gathering with you in Williamsport, PA for a meaningful time of Christian conferencing.

Together in Christ's mission.

REV. DR. KATHLEEN E. KIND
Chair,
Annual Conference Sessions Committee

Church family, welcome back to Williamsport and the beautiful Community Arts Center!

The Community Arts Center is beginning to feel a lot more like home. This space transforms for us from a theater to holy ground where we come to care for our business, to worship, to reunite with one another, and to be challenged to go into the world as followers of Jesus who love boldly.

Our theme, ***Rise Up! Love Boldly Transform the World,*** roots us in who God has created and called us to be- a people who love God and love our neighbors. As we move into the Williamsport community for a few days, we each have the opportunity to embody this very message. As we enjoy the hospitality of the local hotels and have meals in the local restaurants or shop at the local markets, we are ambassadors of the United Methodist Church and represent Christ as we model our love for God, one another, and the people with whom we interact throughout the Community Arts Center and the community of Williamsport.

As we gather, we will begin our days with worship, seek after God's yearnings for us through prayer, express our faith through song, and engage in holy conferencing as we care for the work that is before us at this Annual Conference session. Ken Willard will be with us to lead the learning session. There will be opportunities to participate in lunch and learns at Pine Street UMC.

Additionally, we will have exhibitors in the Grand Ballroom of the Genetti. And, if you are looking for a place to hang out and catch up with friends, brainstorm ministry ideas with one another, or play games the Grand Ballroom will have lots of space with tables and chairs. Please take advantage of not only the information that can be gleaned from the exhibits but also the space to gather with one another.

My hope and prayer is that as we meet we will experience God's presence, live in God's grace, and share Christ with those whom we meet- at the Community Arts Center, in the hotels, at the restaurants, throughout the community of Williamsport, and with one another. I look forward to seeing you in Williamsport.

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Organization

Conference Officers, Cabinet and Connectional Ministries Staff 8

Conference Lay Leadership 10

2026 Conference Sessions Committee 10

Important Information 11

Voting Rights of Clergy and Lay Members to Annual Conference 13

Monitoring Statement 14

Organizational Motion 15

Local Restaurants/Coffee Shops 17

Annual Conference Parking 18

Hotel Shuttle Service 18

Schedule of 2026 Annual Conference Session 19

Rules of Procedure 20

How to Understand Parliamentary Procedures 23

Consent Calendar 25

Conference Offering 26

Conference Officers, Cabinet, and Connectional Ministries Staff

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Camp Penn Center Director, Camp & Retreat Ministry:
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Vision Forward Director: Charlie Renner - ccrenner@susumc.org
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President, United Methodist Men
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Young Peoples Ministries Council
Kevin Witt, 303 Mulberry Dr, Mechanicsburg, PA 17050-3179 (717) 766-7441; kwitt@susumc.org

2026 Conference Sessions Committee

Committee on Conference Sessions: Kathleen E. Kind, ***Chair;*** Héctor Burgos-Núñez***, Bishop,*** Cindy Weaver, ***Conference Secretary;*** Mark Knecht, ***Conference Treasurer;*** Joyce Davis, ***Conference Lay Leader;*** Tom Salsgiver***, Assistant to the Bishop & Agenda;*** Chuck Kaufman, ***Arrangements;*** Elizabeth Jackson***, Worship;*** Adam Miller, ***Worship;*** Kelly Kocher-Ross***, Clergy Head Teller;*** Marsha Curry***, Lay Head Teller;*** Matthew Shineman***, Communications;*** Nate Smith***, IT;*** Christine Sims, ***Registrar;*** Steve Salisbury***, Board of Ordained Ministry;*** Eric Funk, ***Stage Manager;*** Megan Millard, ***Stage Manager;*** Andrea Katz, ***Hospitality;*** Alyson McCabe, ***Young Peoples Ministry;*** Paul McReynolds***, Member-at-Large,*** Amy Wynn, ***Connectional Ministry Staff***

	Clergy	Laity	Youth Pages
Head Tellers	Kelly Kocher Ross	Marsha Curry	
Freedom Trail District	Faith Anderson	Jacqueline Clabaugh	
	Cheryl Gonsman		
	Patricia Hall		
	Fernando Matsimbe		
	Barbara Servello		
	Chuck Steel		
Mountain Valley District	Richard Conklin	Lori Cottrill	
		Jennifer Lynch	
North Central Rivers District	Tenny Hutchinson	Teri Carpenter	Charlotte Carpenter
	Jason Schwartzman	Steven Casella	Kylie Kalenak
	Robert Strozyk	Frank Harrison	Gwendolyn Whitenight
	Jenny Woods	Thomas Meyer	Joscelyn Whitenight
		Sylvia O'Keefe	
		Brenda Shultz	
Northern Wilds District	Nate Reeve	Barbara Doan	
	Eric Shafer		
River Valley	Mindi Gochnaur	Shari Bellish	
	Margie McCarty	Marlyn Diehl	
	Randall Zeiler	Stephen Coates	
		Beth Zeiler	

Important Information

1. **CHECK-IN FOR ANNUAL CONFERENCE** will open at 8am on Thursday, June 4th for the Annual Conference Session. Check in for lay members will be located in the Community Arts Center, Williamsport. Check in for clergy will be at Pine Street UMC prior to clergy session. You will receive your name tag and pre-ordered boxed lunch ticket(s) during the time of check-in. Registration is alphabetical for clergy and lay members together.
2. **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND MESSAGES** – Urgent or Emergency messages may be given to the Conference Secretary at any time. Meeting notices may be announced in the online Susquehanna Daily LINK emails if they are received the previous day.
3. **OFFERINGS** – Offerings will be taken at the Opening Worship Celebration, at the Memorial Worship Service
4. **PROTOCOL FOR SPEAKING ON THE CONFERENCE FLOOR**
   a. Walk to a microphone and stand until you are recognized by the Chair (Bishop Héctor Burgos-Núñez). Note the number of the microphone where you are because you will be recognized by this number.
   b. When recognized, speak directly into the microphone:
      1. Address the chair "Mr. Chair" or "Bishop Héctor Burgos-Núñez."
      2. Speak your name and identify your local church affiliation or other affiliation as applicable.
      3. Speak clearly and concisely.
      4. Watch the timer on the screen. Yellow is a 30-second warning of the end of your time. Red indicates that your time has expired, conclude immediately.
5. **MOTIONS** – **All** motions require the use of the triplicate forms provided by the Secretary. An assistant to the Secretary will collect two copies of a motion from the motion maker. The maker will keep the third copy. This must be done whether the motion passes or fails. Motions should be turned in to the Secretary prior to presentation at the microphone.
6. **DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS** – Materials shall be distributed only under the direction of a Head Teller after approval by the Conference Secretary, and such materials shall be limited to information pending by the Conference.
7. **DISTRIBUTION OF CONFERENCE JOURNALS** – The 2026 Journal will be posted on the Susquehanna Conference on a secure section of the website. Opportunity will also be made available to order a paper copy at the purchaser's expense. Please contact the conference secretary to obtain the link to purchase a paper copy.
8. **ATTENDANCE** – It is the duty of every member, all provisional members, and all local pastors of the annual conference to attend its sessions. Any such person unable to attend shall report by letter to the Conference Secretary, setting forth the reason for the absence. Should any ordained minister in active service be absent from the session of the annual conference without a satisfactory reason for the absence, or excused by the Bishop, the matter shall be referred by the Conference Secretary to the Board of Ordained Ministry. (2020/2024 Book of Discipline, ¶602.8)
9. **BEVERAGES IN THE COMMUNITY ARTS CENTER THEATER AREA** - Only water in spill proof containers is permitted inside the theater area of The Community Arts Center.
10. **VOTING MEMBERS**
    a. Clergy Eligible to Vote:
    Deacons and Elders in full connection, provisional members, associate members, affiliate members, and local pastors under full-time and part-time appointment to a pastoral charge, clergy from other denominations upon recommendation of the Board of Ordained Ministry and retired local pastors serving.
       1. Clergy members in full connection shall have the right to vote on all matters in the annual conference except in the election of lay delegates to the General and jurisdictional or central conferences and shall have sole responsibility for all matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy.
       2. Provisional clergy members shall have the right to vote in the annual conference on all matters except constitutional amendments, election of clergy delegates to the General and jurisdictional or central conferences and matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy. Provisional clergy members who have completed all of their educational requirements may vote to elect clergy delegates

to General and jurisdictional or central conferences.

3. Associate clergy members shall have the right to vote in the annual conference on all matters except constitutional amendments, and matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy. When associate members are members of the conference Board of Ordained Ministry, they have the right to vote at clergy session on matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy (¶ 634.1). Affiliate clergy members shall have the right to vote in the annual conference on all matters exc ept the constitutional amendments, election of clergy delegates to the General jurisdictional or central conferences, and matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy.
4. Full-time and part-time local pastors shall have the right to vote in the annual conference on all matters except constitutional amendments; election of delegates to the General and jurisdictional or central conferences and matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy. When local pastors are members of the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, they have the right to vote at clergy session on matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy (¶ 634.1). Local pastors who have completed course of study or an M. Div. degree and have served a minimum of two consecutive years under appointment before the election may vote to elect clergy delegates to General and jurisdictional or central conferences.

b. Lay Persons Eligible to Vote:

1. Those persons in accordance with Section IX, ¶602.6 of the 2020/2024 Book of Discipline and the Lay Equalization Policy of the Annual Conference in the Policies, Procedures, Guidelines handbook.
2. Changes in Lay Voting Members: Only the approved lay representatives may sit in the voting area during the plenary sessions. Alternate Lay Members who are present in addition to the Lay Member are visitors and must sit in the section for visitors. Alternate Lay Members present in place of the Lay Member must complete the registration process before being seated in the voting area. Changes in Lay Member or Alternates since the initial Charge Conference election must be certified to the Conference Secretary by the district superintendent on a card provided by his/her office.

Voting Rights of Clergy & Lay Members to Annual Conference
2020/2024 Book of Discipline

	Laity			Full Connection				Currently Serving							Other				
Voting Items	Laity[1]	Lay Person/Pastor Assigned [8]	Deaconess and Home Missioners (active & under episcopal appointment)	Elder Active/Retired	Deacon Active/Retired	Voluntary leave	Involuntary Leave	Provisional members (Met educational requirements)	Provisional Members (not met educational requirements)	Associate Member Active/Retired	Full-Time/Part-Time Local Pastor (Met educational & service requirements)	Full-Time/Part-Time Local Pastor (Not met educational requirements)	Retired Full/Part Time Local Pastor Under Appointment (Met educational & service requirements)	Retired Full-time/Part-Time Local Pastor Under Appointment (not met educational requirements)	Retired Local Pastor NOT Under Appointment	Other Annual Conferences	Other Denominations	Honorable Location Administrative Location	Affiliate
Anything on the Floor of AC	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No[7]	No	No[5,7]	No	No[4]
Constitutional Ammendments	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Matters Before Laity Session	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Matters Before Clergy Session	No[2]	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No[6]	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	no	No
Matters of Ordination & Character & Conference Relations of Clergy	No[2]	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No[6]	No[6]	No[6]	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Elect Delegates to General & Jurisdictional Conference[3]	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
Relevant 2020/2024 BOD Reference	¶33	¶205.4 ¶33	¶1913 ¶602.4 ¶33	¶33 ¶602	¶602 ¶33	¶354.7	¶355.9	¶327.2	¶327.2	¶321.1	¶317.6	¶317.6	¶320.5 ¶602.1d	¶320.5 ¶602.1d	¶320.5c	¶346.1	¶346.2	¶359.2 ¶360.3	¶344.4

Explanitory Notes

1. The lay representative for Campus Ministries and UM related Colleges shall be elected from eiter their campus ministry board of directors or a student from that mnistry/foundation.
2. Except for the lay members on the Conference Board of Ordained Mnistry.
3. Laity only vote on Lay Delegates and Clergy only vote on Clergy Delegates.
4. BOOM must approve if they have a voice but no vote.
5. Those currently serving under appointment and approved by the BOOM are allowed voice but no vote - UNLESS - educational requirements are met and approved by BOOM.
6. NO vote unless they are serving on Conference BOOM
7. Voice but no vote
8. Lay Person Assigned = No Voice and No Vote unless elected as a local church lay member to Annual Conference

Monitoring

Commission on the Status and Role of Women
Commission on the Beloved Community

During our 2026 session of the Susquehanna Annual Conference, the Commission on the Status and Role of Women and the Commission on the Beloved Community will collaborate to monitor our individual and corporate behaviors. Monitoring allows us to better understand the barriers that prevent equity and equality between all people. The goal of monitoring is to help the Church hold the most inclusive meeting possible, where every voice is respected and given opportunity to be heard. Monitoring is not policing, participating in the discussion, finger pointing, or shaming.

Some of our work begins before Annual Conference. During registration you will be given an opportunity to share demographic information: gender, age group, ethnicity, status (clergy, laity), disability, and district. This information is self-identified and helps us understand who we are. Throughout the Annual Conference session, we will continue this invitation to self-identify. When you participate and speak during Annual Conference, you will be invited to share additional information beyond your Name, Church, and Status (clergy, laity). If you feel comfortable, you may also share your age group (youth, young adult, adult, older adult) and pronouns you identify with.

We will also be observing our work during the Annual Conference session with intentionality and reporting back on these observations to assist the members in self-awareness of our conduct toward one another. Attention will be given to 3 basic principles:

(1) Language matters.
(2) Which voices are being heard?
(3) Integrity and ethical behavior require self-awareness and intentionality.

The data is examined for general patterns of disparity, remembering also that our patterns may be the result of learned yet unconscious bias. Daily reports and a full report at the conclusion of Annual Conference will be shared.

It is a privilege to begin this renewed journey with you. Together, working intentionally to shape our individual and collective behaviors, we can show what it means to Love Boldly.

Rev. Jane L. O'Borski - *Chair, Commission of the Status and Role of Women*
Pastor Robin Fillmore – *Co-Chair, Commission on the Beloved Community*

Organizational Motion

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Susquehanna Conference session organizes as follows:

1. This is the seventeenth ecclesiastical and corporate session of the Susquehanna Annual Conference Annual Conference, held on June 4-6, 2026, at the Community Arts Center in Williamsport, PA.

2. Holy Conference affirms our covenant with God and one another. At any time during the proceedings, the bishop may call for a moment of discernment and prayer before a vote.

Membership

3. The roll call of voting members shall be taken during the on-site check-in. Upon checking in, voting members shall receive a name badge which states their name and voting status.

4. Lay members are those specified by the *2020/2024 Book of Discipline*, ¶33, Article I, and ¶602.4. The election of lay equalization members, as required in ¶33, Article I, and ¶602.4 (i.e., "the annual conference shall, by its own formula, provide for the election of additional lay members to equalize lay and clergy membership of the annual conference") was determined according to the Rules of the Susquehanna Conference for electing lay equalization members.

Business Procedures

5. The session shall be governed by the rules of the General Conference of the United Methodist Church (2020/2024) and the Conference Rules of the Susquehanna Annual Conference (2025). Roberts Rules of Order, 12th edition, shall govern all procedural questions where the rules of the General or Annual Conference cannot be applied.

6. Clergy entitled to vote are those specified by the *2020/2024 Book of Discipline*, ¶602, subject to the limitations contained in the same paragraph.

a. Ordained Ministers from other Annual Conferences or Methodist denominations who are approved for appointment in the Annual Conference while maintaining their conference or denominational membership who are granted voice at this Annual Conference are: Charles Richard Edmund, Joseph Ewoodzie, Faith Gatwiri, H Ward Greer, Bern Kefer, Fernando Simone Minguno Matsimbe, Lyssette Pérez, David Repenning, Kermit Shrawder, Lillian Smith.

b. Clergy in good standing in other Christian denominations who have been approved to serve appointment or ecumenical ministries within the bounds of the Susquehanna Annual Conference while maintaining their denominational affiliation who are granted voice and accorded voting rights within the Annual Conference are: Robert W Brown, Margaret M. McCarty, Dwayne Nichols, Ronald Troup

7. Voting Area: The voting area of the Conference ("bar of the Conference") is limited to the orchestra-level seating of the Community Arts Center. Guests and non-members may sit only in the designated visitor areas—the balcony and the accessible orchestra-level seats marked with red reserved sashes. Individuals seated or standing outside the bar of the Conference have no voice or vote on legislative matters. To be counted in any hand or standing vote, members must be seated within the bar at the moment the vote is called.

8. Tellers: In accordance with the Susquehanna Conference Rules of Procedure, Lay and Clergy Tellers are elected by the voting members of the Annual Conference Session. The list of proposed tellers is published in the PreConference Workbook on page 10. Adoption of this organizational motion constitutes their election.

9. Securing the Floor: Clergy and Lay members wishing to speak shall come to one of the microphones at the front of the orchestra level of the Community Arts Center and raise the appropriate colored placard to indicate the purpose for recognition. Members with mobility concerns who cannot come forward should remain seated, raise a hand, and signal a Teller. A Teller will bring a microphone to you when the bishop recognizes you.

Use the following placards to indicate your intent:

Green — Speech in favor
Red — Speech in opposition
Yellow — Question, "call the question," or other parliamentary inquiry
Blue — Motion or amendment
Hot pink — Point of Order

10. **Motions and Amendments:** To ensure accuracy of the minutes and fidelity to the mover's intent, all motions and amendments must be submitted in writing to the Conference Secretary using the designated form. Forms are available from the Assistant Secretaries at their table at the front of the orchestra section of the Community Arts Center. The author shall retain one copy and provide the remaining copies to the Assistant Secretaries—either directly or through Conference staff or volunteers—before or at the time the motion or amendment is made.
11. **Speaking Limits:** No speaker may address the Conference more than once on the same question. Each speaker is limited to two minutes, except for the maker of the resolution or the chairperson of the submitting agency, who shall have three minutes to open debate and two minutes to close.
12. **Plan for Funding Ministry:** In accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Susquehanna Annual Conference, following the presentation of the budget, funding plan (as provided in the PreConference materials), and the formula for Shares of Ministry, any motion from the floor that proposes an increase in spending in any area of the budget must include, within the same motion, an equal or greater reduction in spending from non–General Apportioned items.
13. **Voting Procedures:** Voting shall be conducted by voice vote, show of hands, standing count (with those unable to stand voting by raising a hand), or ballot at the discretion of the bishop as Presiding Officer, unless otherwise ordered by the Conference. Any member may call for a counted vote on a question before the Conference. If onethird of the members present and voting sustain the call, the vote shall be taken by count as requested.

Conference Documentation and Communication

14. **Agenda:** The agenda published in the PreConference Workbook shall serve as the official agenda of the Annual Conference. Questions regarding the agenda may be directed to the Director of Connectional Ministries.
15. **Consent Calendar:** All reports that contain no recommendation shall be placed on the Consent Calendar. The Bishop's Address and the Leadership Report are exempt from this provision. Upon proper motion from the floor, any report may be removed from the Consent Calendar and placed on the agenda by a onethird (1/3) vote of the Conference. Reports lifted from the Consent Calendar shall be read into the record, without discussion or debate, as time permits.
16. **Communications:** The Director of Communications shall provide reports to the general periodicals of The United Methodist Church and to secular news media. All materials submitted for publication in the Conference's official periodical are subject to editing and condensing by the editor.
17. **Distribution of Materials:** No materials may be distributed within the bar of the Annual Conference session without prior review by the Agenda Committee. All materials intended for such review shall be submitted to the Director of Connectional Ministries.
18. **Journal:** The Journal Editor shall have sole authority to edit, condense, organize, and publish the Susquehanna Annual Conference Journal. All materials from this session must be submitted in writing no later than August 1, 2026.
19. **Daily Proceedings:** The Daily Proceedings of this 17th Session of Annual Conference will be published in the Susquehanna Annual Conference Journal.

Submitted by:
Cindy Weaver, *Conference Secretary*

Local Restaurants and Coffee Shops

Within Walking Distance of Community Arts Center (220 W 4th Street)

- Bullfrog Brewery – 229 W. 4th Street – pub lunch and dinner options
- Moon and Raven Public House – 155 W 4th Street – classic pub with Irish and English food
- Wegman's – 201 William St. – grocery store with hot and cold food options and seating
- Stonehouse Wood Fired Pizza – 343 Pine St. #2 – Italian
- The Brickyard – 343 Pine St. #3 - Pub food – burgers, salads, etc.
- Vinnie's Italian Eatery – 44 W. 4th Street – Pizza joint
- Ozzie and Mae's – 36 W. 4th Street – Mexican food
- Joy Thai Cuisine – 15 W. 4th Street – Thai food
- Long Island Pizza – 435 Hepburn St. – Pizza and sandwiches
- Laziza Cuisine – 427 W. 3rd St. – Indian/Pakistani food
- Boom City Restaurant & Pub. – 454 Pine Street, Lower Level – Pub fare
- Barrel 135 – 135 W 3rd St. - American gastropub with large patio
- Julie's Café – 33 W 3rd St. – Coffee, sandwiches and salads – lunch only
- Windows on 4th – 200 W 4th St. – in Genetti Hotel
- The James – An American Kitchen and Bar – 100 Pine St – in Holiday Inn
- Perkins – 160 Via Bella St – traditional chain

Within Easy Driving Distance
(East on Washington Boulevard/3rd St – AKA "The Golden Strip")
Take 3rd Street or Washington Boulevard East for 2.5 miles, and you'll hit "the Strip" with all of these options.

- Don Patron –1503 E. 3rd St – Mexican food
- Buffalo Wild Wings
- Qdoba
- Denny's
- Popeye's Chicken
- Pizza Hut
- Five Guys Burgers n Fries
- Long John Silvers
- Red Lobster
- TGI Fridays
- Venice Pizza
- Olive Garden
- Texas Roadhouse
- Dunkin
- Mr. Sticky's
- Chipotle
- Ichiban Japanese Restaurant
- Taco Bell
- Dolly's Diner
- McDonald's
- Hoss's

Annual Conference Parking

Williamsport Parking Authority - https://parkwilliamsport.com/facilities/#1644979982344-14099c8a-6704

For those staying in hotels within walking distance to the Community Arts Center, please consider remaining parked at the hotel and walk or request the hotel shuttle to bring you to the Community Arts Center.

Near the Community Arts Center there are many spaces for permit holders. These are not available for parking during the day.

There are metered spaces nearby with varying time limits. Many of the meters will take coins and credit cards for payment.

Third Street Parking Garage is located at 115 West Third Street.

The Third Street Garage is a fully automated parking facility that offers 300 monthly permits and 200 daily parking spaces.

Daily rates are $2.00 for the first hour, and $1.00 for each additional half hour, with a $15.00 daily maximum charge.

Daily rates are in effect Monday-Thursday; 9:00am- 7:00pm, Friday; 9:00am-8:00pm.

Upon entering the deck, daily parkers will receive a time stamped ticket that must be presented at the cashier booth when leaving the deck. The Third Street Garage consists of 7 levels withlevels 1-3 designated for daily parking and levels 4-7 designated for permit parking.

Per the Williamsport Parking Authority
Lot L 30 metered spaces - Located at 100 block of West Fourth Street
Lot E 116 permit spaces (Mon. – Fri. 9 am – 4 pm) and 19 metered spaces
116 additional metered spaces available Mon. – Friday 4 pm – 9 pm, all day Sat. & Sun
Located at Hepburn and West Fourth Streets
Lot R 19 metered spaces **-** Located in the 100 block of West Fourth Street
Lot B 50 metered spaces 4 hour limit - Located at Market and Edwin Streets
Lot F 110 permit spaces and 13 metered spaces - Located in the 400 Block of Pine Street

Hotel Shuttle Service Available

The following hotels are offering shuttle service to be available between the hotel and The Community Arts Center during Annual Conference.

Hampton Inn (.5 mile, 7 minute walk to CAC)
Shuttle service available from 7am to 5pm. Please inform front desk of your information.

Holiday Inn (.6 mile, 8 minute walk to CAC)

Holiday Inn Express (.5 mile, 7 minute walk to CAC)

TownePlace Suites (.6 mile, 8 minute walk to CAC)
Shuttle service available from these locations.
Information about shuttle will be available at front desk.
Note: They will have a rolling shuttle between these 3 sister locations during prime times according to the conference schedule.

Residence Inn (.3 miles, 4 minute walk to CAC, 3 blocks away)
No shuttle service. They are 3 blocks from the Community Arts Center.

Schedule of the 2026 Annual Conference Session

THURSDAY June 4, 2026

7:45 AM	**Teller Training** (Community Arts Center-Lounge)
8:00-10:00 AM	**LAITY CHECK-IN** (Community Arts Center)
8:00-10:00 AM	**CLERGY CHECK-IN** (Pine Street UMC)
8:30 AM	**Childcare Opens**
10:00 AM	**LAITY/CLERGY SESSIONS** (Community Arts Center/Pine Street UMC)
11:30 AM	**LUNCH** (Those who purchased bagged lunches-pick up at Pine Street UMC)
	Extension Ministry Lunch (Genetti Hotel; by invitation only)
	Preacher's Aid Society Annual Meeting (12:15; Pine Street UMC-Chapel)
	Lunch and Learns (Pine Street UMC)
1:00 PM	**OPENING WORSHIP**
3:00 PM	**PLENARY SESSION I** (Organizing of the Annual Conference)
5:00 PM	**DINNER** (Enjoy the local cuisine of your choice)
	Awards Dinner (Genetti Hotel; by invitation only)
	Out of the Gutter Church
	Fellowship of Local Pastors/Associate Pastors Dinner (Pine Street UMC)
7:00 PM	**PLENARY SESSION II** (Community Arts Center)
8:30 PM	**ADJOURN FOR THE DAY**

FRIDAY June 5, 2026

6:00 AM	**QUEST HEALTH SCREENINGS** (Genetti Hotel)
8:00 AM	**Community Arts Center Opens**
8:00 AM	**Childcare Opens**
8:00 AM	**CHECK-IN**
8:30 AM	**PLENARY SESSION III** (Community Arts Center)
8:30 AM	**PRAISE AND WORSHIP** (Community Arts Center)
10:30 AM	**MEMORIAL SERVICE**
11:30 AM	**LUNCH** (Those who purchased bagged lunches-pick up at Pine Street UMC)
	Memorial Luncheon (Genetti Hotel; by invitation only)
	Deacons Luncheon (Pine Street UMC)
	Lunch and Learns (Pine Street UMC)
1:00 PM	**PLENARY SESSION IV** (Community Arts Center)
1:00 PM	**LEARNING SESSION**
5:00 PM	**DINNER** (Enjoy the local cuisine of your choice)
5:15 PM	**Ministry Dinner** (Genetti Hotel; by invitation only)
6:45 PM	**CLERGY ROBING & PROCESSIONAL** (Line Up & processional from CAC Inner Lobby)
7:00 PM	**CELEBRATION OF MINISTRY WORSHIP** (Community Arts Center)

SATURDAY June 6, 2026

8:00 AM	**Community Arts Center Opens**
8:00 AM	**Childcare Opens**
8:30 AM	**PLENARY SESSION V** (Community Arts Center)
8:30 AM	**PRAISE AND WORSHIP**
9:00 AM	**LEADERSHIP ADDRESS**
12:00 PM	**Dismantle Display/Vendor Tables** (Displays to be removed by Noon)
12:00 PM	**CLOSING WORSHIP**
1:00 PM	**ADJOURNMENT**

***Oral Histories will be scheduled throughout the Annual Conference at Pine Street United Methodist Church**

Please note: ***The Community Arts Center opens each day at 8:00am and doors close immediately at the close of business or worship.***

Times are subject to change.

Rules of Procedure

(Supplemental to the Conference Standing Rules)
Please read these Rules of Procedure before the Conference sessions begin.

1. The **Voting Area/bar of the conference** will be in the orchestra section (first floor of The Community Arts Center). This is for clergy and lay Conference members who are eligible to vote.
2. All others: visitors, guests, clergy and laity not eligible to vote shall sit in the balcony.
3. Seats will be available in the front house left section and the rear of the orchestra section for visitors in need of accessible seating.
4. The first row in front of the stage with tables shall be reserved for the Bishop, Cabinet, assistant secretaries, and head tellers. **(NOTE: the above seating arrangements are subject to reconfiguration as announced during plenary sessions.)**
5. Attendance shall be taken from the registration and given to the Conference Secretary or designated assistant.
6. The printed schedule in the workbook, with such changes as may be determined by the agenda sub-committee, by the presiding bishop or by conference action, shall be the official schedule of the current session.
7. Reports, recommendations, or resolutions not printed in the workbook or having been otherwise provided prior to Conference or in the packet, shall be given to the Conference Secretary for approval by the agenda sub-committee to be included in the agenda or on the consent calendar. All petitions/resolutions to be considered during Annual Conference must first be submitted to the Board of Global Ministries who then submits them to the Annual Conference. Contingent upon approval by the agenda sub-committee, persons submitting reports, recommendations or resolutions must prepare it for email distribution or prepare 900 copies to conference members at least twenty-four hours in advance of presentation.
8. Standing count votes shall be taken by the tellers. Written ballots shall be tallied by tellers (appointed by the bishop/assigned by the secretary and elected by the body).
9. Materials approved by the agenda sub-committee for action by the Conference shall be distributed under the direction of the head tellers.
10. All reports without recommendations shall be placed on the consent calendar. Upon proper motion from the floor, any report may be lifted from the consent calendar and placed on the agenda by a one-third vote of the Conference. The State of the Church message by the bishop, and the Leadership Report, are exempt from this rule.
11. Reports with recommendations, and resolutions, shall be presented by name and number by the Conference Secretary. If the report or resolution is not referred to the agenda sub-committee for inclusion in the agenda, the report/resolution shall be considered approved and placed on the consent calendar.
12. Resolutions that are not submitted by Annual Conference Boards and Agencies must come through the Conference Board of Global Ministries (or successor groups). Resolutions must contain factual information. No proposed resolution or petition which seeks, in substance, conference approval of any provision of The Book of Discipline or The Book of Resolutions, shall be considered or acted upon by the conference. The Conference Board of Global Ministries (or successor groups) set the deadline for submission of resolutions.
13. Presenters of reports shall, first, present the recommendations for action, and second, make additional remarks if time remains within their assigned timeframe.
14. Speeches shall be limited to two minutes during debate on recommendations, reports, and motions before the Conference. The time shall be kept by the presiding officer or designate, using a lighted device to track the time. Speeches shall be limited to three in favor and three in opposition.
15. All motions shall be in writing on forms provided by the Conference Secretary. The original and one copy shall be given to the Secretary or an assistant to the Secretary prior to presentation of the motion to the body. Exact wording of the motion on the form is imperative. The form shall be signed by the maker of the motion.
16. After the presentation of the budget with a funding plan (via pre-conference documents), and formula for Shares of Ministry, any motion from the floor of the Susquehanna Annual Conference to increase spending in any area of the budget must include an equal or greater corresponding reduction in spending from non-

General Apportioned items as part of the same motion.

17. Agency chairpersons shall be responsible for ensuring that the Conference Secretary receives, before adjournment of the Conference session, if possible, and no later than July 1, a corrected copy of any report or recommendations in which changes were made.

18. All material to be printed in the 2026 Journal shall be in the hands of the Conference Secretary no later than July 1, 2026.

19. All references for printing by the Conference official publication shall be subject to editing and condensing by the editor.

20. Nominations Policy and Practices to Serve on Conference Boards, Agencies and Committees

    a. Reflect inclusivity and diversity (gender, geography, age, race/ethnicity, church size)

    b. Midyear vacancies- filled by the Cabinet (with input from the Board/ Agency/ Committee chair/designee)

    c. Term limits- 2 terms of 4 years (completing unfulfilled terms for two years or less would not count against the 2 term limit) unless Com on Nominations and Cabinet would – The standard term limit would be 2 terms of 4 years except in circumstances that would benefit a committee/ board/ agency by a 3rd and final term contingent upon the support of the Nominations Committee and Cabinet.

    d. When appropriate to be organized into classes, each Board/ Agency/ Committee will be organized so that there is an intentional rotation of members

    e. Nomination Committee is made of one clergy person and lay person from each district named by the Cabinet

    f. Attention should be given to the positions that Conference Staff fulfill on boards/ agencies/ committees, aligning with Book of Discipline requirements, and needs of board/ agencies/ committees.

    g. Priority should be given to populating boards/ committees/ agencies with the appropriate number of members while being sensitive to diversity and aligning with any Book of Discipline requirements (in other words, because a committee has 24 members now does not necessarily mean it needs 24 members in the next term- what is the correct size in order to do the work faithfully and fruitfully)

    h. Missing meetings- If a member misses more than 2 unexcused meetings, the person is eligible to be removed in consultation with the chair of the committee and Cabinet

    i. Prior to the start of each Nominations season, the chairs of each committee/ board/ agency will communicate with the Nominations chair the needs of their entity

    j. Nominations process- complete online form, if unable to access online form contact chair of nominations. In order to be certain your form is before the Nom committee please complete by November 1. The Nominations Committee will receive forms throughout the year.

    k. It is to be understood that each person shall be contacted in advance of nomination to any conference board or agency to ascertain whether he/she is willing to serve. No name shall be presented of any person who has not indicated willingness to accept election.

    l. Individual clergy and laity will typically limit their service to no more than two Conference wide boards/ committees/ agencies and no more than two District boards/ committees/ agencies (provided not in conflict with the Book of Discipline). This does not include a temporary task force/ study group/ or other limited time assignment.

    m. Terms begin at the close of the Annual Conference session

    n. Clergy should be understood as Elders, Deacons, and Local Pastors serving in an appointment unless otherwise stipulated by the Book of Discipline.

    o. Laity should be understood as members in good standing in their local United Methodist Church unless otherwise stipulated by the Book of Discipline.

21. Display space shall be limited to UM affiliated and non-affiliated organizations that can demonstrate a benefit to the mission and ministries of the churches of the Susquehanna Conference. Qualifications are determined by the Director of Connectional Ministries, the Rev. Dr. Kathleen Kind.

22. The conference session will be guided by policies previously adopted by the Susquehanna Conference. In the

case when no policy is in place to cover a particular situation, the bishop or body, may request that the Policies and Procedures Task Force consider the need, and if necessary, develop a policy to be reviewed and brought to the next annual session for adoption.

23. Annual Conference meeting by Telephone or Online Conference: When the Bishops, the Cabinet and the Sessions Committee are in agreement, the Bishops may call for a meeting of the Annual Conference by telephone, online conferencing or meeting in person. Notification of such meetings shall be subject to the requirements for Annual Conference meetings specified in The Book of Discipline. The conferencing platform must ensure that all clergy and duly elected or chosen lay members of conference session can hear each other and vote and that their presence can be recorded. The Sessions Committee shall recommend the method of voting and/or balloting to the Bishops and the Conference Secretary. Voting/balloting may be by electronic, telephone, or written means. The voting area (bar) will be clergy and lay members of the Annual Conference who have been provided a voter ID.
24. The Election of Clergy and Lay Delegates to the General and Jurisdictional Conferences. The process for the election of Clergy and Lay Delegates to the General and Jurisdictional Conferences of 2020, and subsequent sessions of General and Jurisdictional Conference, be the following:
    a. Eligibility for being a clergy or lay delegate be those in accordance with the current Book of Discipline's requirements.
    b. The Susquehanna Annual Conference will publish, in a variety of accessible formats, an invitation to all those eligible for election as delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conference. Said invitation, sent no later than March 1 of the year in which elections take place, will offer the opportunity to request, in writing/electronically, an individual's desire to be listed on their respective clergy/lay ballot to be presented to the Annual Conference with the pre-conference materials. A form for submission of information will be included. Only those eligible laypersons and eligible clergy who submit a request will be listed on the official ballot at the annual conference session.
    c. Provision will be made for write-in votes on the first ballot at Annual Conference for eligible persons who do not already appear on the ballot.
    d. The first ballot for General Conference shall be taken at the first session of Annual Conference.
25. Lay Equalization - Election of Lay Members at Large- After the election of local church lay members to the Annual Conference during Church Conference season, the Conference Secretary will determine the additional number of laity needed to equalize lay and clergy membership of the Annual Conference (per BOD para 33). In January a nomination form will be distributed through the QuikLink to receive nominations and self-nominations. Once those nominations have been collected, the District Superintendents will review to confirm that nominees are in good standing. The Board of Laity will vote to confirm the slate of nominees.

How to Understand Parliamentary Procedures

To Do This ...	You Say This ...	Interrupt Speaker?	Second Needed?	Motion Debatable	Amendable?	Vote Needed?
SECONDARY MOTIONS IN ORDER OF PRECEDENCE						
Adjourn	" I move to adjourn..."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Recess	"I move we recess until..."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Suspend debate without calling for a vote	" I move that we table..."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
End Debate	"I move the previous question..."	No	Yes	No	No	2/3 Majority
Limit Debate	"I move debate be limited to..."	No	Yes	No	Yes	2/3 Majority
Postpone to a specific time	"I move to postpone this matter until..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Have matter studied further	"I move we refer this matter to..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Amend motion or substitute	"I move to amend by..." or "I move to substitute..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Postpone Indefinitely	"I move to postpone indefinitely..."	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
INCIDENTAL MOTIONS GROW OUT OF THE BUSINESS THE CONFERENCE IS CONSIDERING						
Correct error in parliamentary procedure	"Point of Order"	Yes	No	No	No	Chair Rules
Obtain advice on parliamentary procedure	"I raise a parliamentary inquiry"	Yes	No	No	No	Chair Rules
Request Information	"Point of information"	Yes	No	No	No	None
MAIN MOTIONS AS TOOLS TO INTRODUCE NEW BUSINESS						
Introduce Business	"I move that..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Take up matter previously tabled	"I move we take from the table..."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Reconsider matter previously voted	"I move we reconsider"	No	Yes	No	No	Majority

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Consent Calendar

Advance Specials 89
Board of Global Ministries 94
Board of Ordained Ministry 95
Camp & Retreat Ministries 97
Commission on Archives and History 98
Commission on the Beloved Community 99
Communications Ministry 99
Conference Lay Leader and Laity Leadership 100
Connectional Ministries 102
Creation Care Ministries 102
Disaster Response 102
Historical Society of the Susquehanna Conference 103
Mental Health Ministries 103
Mission u 104
Preachers' Aid Society 104
Report of the Conference Cabinet 105
Student Aid Fund 105
The Bishop' s Committee on Interfaith Relationships 107
United Women In Faith 107
Volunteers in Mission 108
The Wesley Foundation at Penn State University 109
Young Peoples Ministry Council 110

Mission Updates

Center for Spiritual Formation 110
Neighborhood Center/Journey Church 111

Affiliated Ministries

Africa University 112
Candler School of Theology 113
Drew University Theological School 114
Duke University Divinity School 114
Everstand/Therapeutic Health (Formerly Board of Childcare) 115
Gammon Theological Seminary 116
Garrett Evangelical Seminary 117
Methodist Theological School in Ohio 118
Mission Central 119
Pennsylvania Council of Churches 120
St. Paul School of Theology 121
United Methodist Advocacy in Pennsylvania 122
United Methodist Foundation of Pennsylvania 123
United Theological Seminary 124
Wesley Theological Seminary 125

Annual Conference Offerings

17th Session of the Susquehanna Annual Conference
June 4-6, 2026

There will be two offerings received at Annual Conference. There will be an opportunity for people to give online or checks may be sent into the Conference Office or churches can submit with their remittance report.

BUILDING THE BELOVED COMMUNITY FUND (BBCF)
You may give online at: **https://susumc.org/donations/cbc/**

The Beloved Community Fund is a ministry to help our Susquehanna Conference to:

- resist racism
- promote diversity
- connect churches to their neighbors
- support cross-racial appointments
- build strong race relations

The money received from our people, our pastors and our churches help to fund projects by churches and conference organizations to accomplish these goals. This offering will be received during our Opening Worship Service.

Everstand *(Formerly United Methodist Home for Children)*
You may give online at: **https://susumc.org/donations/everstand/**

Everstand (formerly the United Methodist Home for Children) in Mechanicsburg is a nonprofit human-services organization that provides residential care and supportive services for youth and families facing difficult circumstances. Located on Simpson Ferry Road, the campus offers safe housing, education, counseling, and medical and behavioral health support for young people—typically ages 12–20—who have experienced trauma, family disruption, or other challenges.

Rooted in the ministry of the United Methodist Church, the program partners with child-welfare agencies and communities to help youth develop life skills, heal from trauma, and transition successfully into family and community life. The organization became part of the larger **Board of Child Care** network in 2019 and adopted the name Everstand in 2024, reflecting its continued mission of standing alongside children and families with compassion, resilience, and hope.This offering will be received during our Memorial Worship Service.

Scripture reminds us that to those who much has been given, much is expected. We, the people and churches of the Susquehanna Conference, have been given much. May we be a blessing as together we are generous in supporting these three Annual Conference Offerings.

Please make checks payable to the **Susquehanna Conference UMC** and mail to:
Susquehanna Conference UMC
Attn: Finance Office
303 Mulberry Dr.
Mechanicsburg, PA 17050
On the memo line please indicate the offering to which you are giving along with the Advance special number as given above.

Section IV-A

Recommendations

Rec-1 Commission on Equitable Compensation 28

Rec-2 Board of Pensions 30

Rec-3 Council on Finance and Administration 42

Rec-1 Commission on Equitable Compensation

ACTION:

Mission

The Commission on Equitable Compensation supports full-time clergy serving as pastors and those clergy members appointed to less than full-time serving charges of the Susquehanna Conference by:

1. Recommending standards for pastoral support.
2. Administering funds for pastoral support.
3. Providing counsel and advisory material on pastoral support.
4. Arrearage Policy Adopted by Annual Conference.

Pastoral Support & Compensation Recommendations-2026

1. That the **minimum** salary in 2027 for full-time clergy serving as pastors in the charges of the Annual Conference shall be:

2027 Minimuin Salary Years of Service	Full Members & In-Service Provisionals	Associate Members	Full-Time Local Pastors
Less than 3 years	54,812	52,382	49,957
After 3	55,924	53,439	50,957
After 6	57,035	54,426	51,954
After 9	58,157	55,552	52,954
After 12	59,263	56,615	53,963
After 15	60,349	57,668	54,943

Note: The years of service of a pastor are to be computed not only on the service in the Conference, but rather 13 on the total full-time service in the United Methodist Church or its antecedents. ***The 2027 Minimum Salary reflects a 3% increase over 2026***. The Commission strongly encourages merit-based increases and for those 15 with advanced degrees in ministry.

2. That the compensation for all part-time pastors and less than full-time appointments shall be negotiated by the Staff-Parish Committee and the District Superintendent.

3. That in addition to the cash salary paid to each full-time pastor, an amount equal to one half of the current Self-Employment tax as determined by the Internal Revenue Service shall be paid by the local church to offset the difference between self-employed and employee Social Security Tax rates. Such amount shall be identified in local church and conference reports as a separate line item under pastoral compensation. All pastors are encouraged to participate in the Social Security Program. ***This supplemental amount is only available to those participating in the Social Security Program.***

4. That pastors supplying a pulpit on a temporary basis shall receive at least $100 per single church charge, at least $25 additional per church or service in a multiple church charge, plus mileage reimbursement, at current Internal Revenue Service rates, in each instance.

5. That travel provisions shall be made for all full-time pastors and student pastors and shall be considered as part of the local church/charge budget under administrative expenses. The local church/charge, after consultation with the pastor, shall select one of the following options to ensure adequate travel provisions for the pastor while involved in church business:

Option 1: The local church/charge shall rent or purchase a vehicle for the pastor and shall be responsible for all ownership and operating costs of the vehicle. Ownership costs shall include gasoline, oil, tires, maintenance and repair of the vehicle. It shall be understood that the vehicle is to be available to the pastor at all times, with the cost of personal use being reimbursed at current Internal Revenue Service rates.

Option 2: The local church/charge shall pay the pastor an annual amount of at least $1,700 for ownership

costs, and reimburse the pastor for operating costs at the minimum rate of 14 cents per mile which is the current IRS rate, both payable at least monthly upon the submission of travel vouchers. The $1,700 will be considered as salary for tax purposes.

Option 3: The local church/charge shall reimburse its pastors for vouchered travel expenses at Internal Revenue Service rates, as defined by current IRS regulations. Reimbursement for mileage of an electric vehicle shall be at 80% of IRS rate for petroleum fueled vehicles. This may be contained within an Accountable Reimbursement Policy.

6. That travel expenses for pastors under special appointment shall be negotiated with the agency to which they are assigned. Travel expenses of pastors in less than full-time appointments shall be negotiated between the District Superintendent and the Staff-Parish Committee.

7. That a parsonage shall be provided for the appointed pastor and his/her family and furnished according to the standard adopted in the 2016 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church.

   a. That utilities, which include gas, electricity, TV antenna or basic cable installation, high speed Internet service, water, sewer, basic private telephone bill and equipment, heat, refuse collection, smoke and carbon monoxide detectors shall be furnished and paid for by the local church/charge. Pastors may negotiate the installation of a 110 or 220 volt outlet or charging device for Electric Vehicles. Vehicle specific smart charging stations may be purchased and added at the expense of the parsonage family and may be taken with them when they move.

   b. Each pastor shall report the fair rental value of the parsonage as income for Social Security purposes. The fair rental value of the parsonage shall be negotiated by the pastor and the Staff-Parish Committee and approved by the appropriate Church/Charge Conference.

   c. That each charge is encouraged to designate, each year, at the Church/Charge Conference, a portion of the pastor's cash salary as parsonage exclusion for use as the pastor sees fit for the purchase of furnishings for the church/charge owned parsonage.

   d. When a housing allowance is granted in lieu of a parsonage, it shall be done only by approved Conference policy.

8. That continuing education shall be provided for all full-time and part-time pastors under appointment. It shall be cumulative and used only during the current assignment. It shall be payable upon submission of vouchers. It shall be payable at the minimum rate of $750 per year for full-time pastors and $500 per year for part-time pastors. Other educational assistance may be available through the Board of Ordained Ministry.

9. That vacations and time away from the parish be granted on the following basis:

   a. Vacation time shall be granted based on the Conference year (July 1-June 30) and negotiated with the Staff-Parish Committee.

   b. ***All those under appointment, no matter their status or appointment level, will have 4 weeks of vacation, including 4 Sundays. It is recommended that those in ministry over 20 years receive a 5th week of vacation.***

   c. Pulpit supply during vacation periods shall be arranged by the Staff-Parish Committee and paid for by the local church/charge.

   d. All Staff-Parish committees shall encourage their pastors to take ***two days off each week, one for rest and renewal and one for Sabbath.***

   e. Some involvement of pastors in ministries beyond the local church is expected as an aspect of our connectional ministry, e.g. evangelistic missions, camping programs, work camps, etc. Such time is not to be considered as vacation. However, the extent of such involvement is to be negotiated by the pastor and the Staff-Parish Committee.

   f. Staff-Parish Committees are encouraged to pay special attention to the recommendations of the Board of Ordained Ministry and Study Leave, Sabbatical Leaves and Short-Term educational opportunities.

10. That the church portion of health insurance for clergy couples will continue to be paid by their respective churches/charges for their full requested contribution for each pastor. Only one clergy in the clergy

couple will 10 have the clergy portion of health insurance deducted and billed to the church. Each full-time pastor will 11 contribute the difference between the actual cost of the plan selected and the premium credit provided by the 12 Conference. This contribution will be a payroll deduction by the local church.

11. That the primary responsibility for pastoral base compensation, subject to the above minimum recommendations, remains with the individual pastoral charge. Special assistance is available to congregations unable to pay the pastor's minimum base compensation by application to their District Superintendent and through the resources of the Equitable Compensation Commission.

Rev. John Overman, Chair, Commission on Equitable Compensation

Rec-2 Board of Pensions

ACTION:

1. The Annuity rate for pre-January 1, 1982 service be set at $733.00 for the calendar year 2027.

2. That the following ministers who will be granted retirement status as of July 1, 2026 (unless otherwise indicated) be credited for these years of service rendered to this Annual Conference.

Name	Age	Years with Credit	Years of Service without Credit	Total Years of Service	Interim Retirement Date
Alan D. Atchison	66	18	0	18	
Patricia D. Brown	72	45	0	45	
Dann S. Caldwell	64	35	0	35	12/31/2025
Richard L. Conklin	71	8	1	9	
Debra J. Dailey	65	28.5	0	28.5	12/31/2025
Patricia Hanley	66	20.54	0	20.54	
Susan D. Jamison	68	35.5	0	35.5	
Dennis L. McCracken	67	22	0	22	
Rebecca J. McGee	63	16	0	16	
Tanya Olaviany	70	4.5	0	4.5	1/1/2026
Jennifer M. Parks-Snyder	54	20	5	25	
Deborah L. Ryder	68	13.75	13.25	13.75	
Charles W. Salisbury	66	38	0	38	
Barbara A. Servello	65	15	4	19	
David K. Shultz	68	40	0	40	
Richard D. Smith	72	41	0	41	
Gary D. Weaver	65	27	4	31	
Jennifer H. Williams	51	26	0	26	
Kevin T. Witt	67	43	0	43	6/1/2026

3. Resolutions relating to Rental/Housing Allowances for Retired or Disabled Clergy persons of the Susquehanna Conference:
The Susquehanna Conference (the "Conference") adopts the following resolutions relating to rental/housing allowances for retired or disabled clergypersons of the Conference:

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

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

WHEREAS, retirement or other amounts paid to retired and disabled Clergypersons are considered to be deferred compensation and are paid to retired and disabled Clergypersons in consideration of previous active service; and WHEREAS, the Internal Revenue Service has recognized that the Conference (or its predecessors) is the appropriate organization to designate a rental/housing allowance for retired and disabled Clergypersons who are or were members of this Conference;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

SUSQUEHANNA CONFERENCE RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESOLUTIONS

3.1 THAT an amount equal to 100% of the retirement or disability payments received from plans authorized under The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church (the "Discipline"), which includes all such payments from Wespath, during the year 2026 by each retired or disabled Clergyperson who is or was a member of the Conference, or its predecessors, be and hereby is designated as a rental/housing allowance for each such Clergyperson; and

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

NOTE: The rental/housing allowance that may be excluded from a Clergyperson's gross income in any year for federal income tax purposes is limited under Internal Revenue Code section 107(2) and regulations there under to the least of: (1) the amount of the rental/housing allowance designated by the Clergyperson's employer or other appropriate body of the Church (such as this Conference in the foregoing resolutions) for such year; (2) the amount actually expended by the Clergyperson to rent or provide a home in such year; or (3) the fair rental value of the home, including furnishings and appurtenances (such as a garage), plus the cost of utilities in such year.

4. Susquehanna Conference 2026 Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan (continued on the following pages)

Richard Conklin, Chair of Board of Pensions and Health

Susquehanna Conference (321) 2026 Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan:

This funding plan incorporates, to the best of our understanding, the plan sponsor's obligations and funding of the benefits provided to clergy and laity, as noted below.

It is understood by the signees that defined benefit plan liabilities [Pre-82 Plan, Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP) and Clergy Retirement Security Program Defined Benefit (CRSP DB) and other sponsored defined benefit plans] continue until the last benefit is paid to participants and their surviving spouses irrespective of the funding level of the plan. That is, even if the assets in the plan are larger than the liabilities in the plan, the plan sponsor still has a liability (obligation) and potential future contribution due to the plan.

Benefit Obligations Summary

Plan Contributions for 2026

Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) DB	$0
Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) DC	$0
Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP)	$0
Pre-82 Plan (Pre-82)	$0
United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP) Lay	$120,982
United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP) Clergy	$804,229
Other Defined Contribution (DC) Obligations	$1,546,137
Other Defined Benefit (DB) Obligations	$0
Health—Active Participants	$3,583,077
Health—Additional Sponsored Coverage	$164,701
Post-Retirement Medical (PRM)	$699,962
Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP)	$561,776

Ongoing Funding Contributions

Pre-82 Plan (Pre-82)	$0
Post-Retirement Medical (PRM)	$465,978

Conference Benefit Officer (or equivalent)	Mark Knecht	06/11/2025
Conference Treasurer	Mark Knecht	06/11/2025
Conference Board of Pension Chair	Richard Conklin	06/24/2025
Council on Finance and Administration Chair	JP Bohanan	06/11/2025

Wespath
BENEFITS | INVESTMENTS

Opinion on **Susquehanna Conference 2026** Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan
The funding plan meets the standards for a Pre-82 funding plan as established by Wespath Benefits and Investments. However, the funding plan does not meet the favorable opinion requirements.

Wespath Benefits & Investments
1901 W. Chestnut Ave., Glenview, IL 60025

Susquehanna Conference (321) 2026 Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan

Accounts

Wespath Accounts		Market Value as of 12/31/2023		Market Value as of 12/31/2024
CAMPAIGN FUND 02		$10,991,943		$11,798,145
Pre-82 designated assets	$0	Investment Objective		Long-term
PRM designated assets	$0	Actual Allocation	Equity	65.00%
			Fixed	55.00%
			Short-term	0.00%
DEPOSIT ACCOUNT		$2,920,122		$5,477,285
Pre-82 designated assets	$0	Investment Objective		Short-term
PRM designated assets	$0	Actual Allocation	Equity	45.46%
			Fixed	24.48%
			Short-term	30.06%
DEPOSIT ACCOUNT #2		$11,018,557		$11,826,710
Pre-82 designated assets	$0	Investment Objective		Intermediate-term
PRM designated assets	$0	Actual Allocation	Equity	65.00%
			Fixed	35.00%
			Short-term	0.00%
ENDOWMENT ACCOUNT		$3,384,419		$3,632,648
Pre-82 designated assets	$0	Investment Objective		Long-term
PRM designated assets	$0	Actual Allocation	Equity	65.00%
			Fixed	35.00%
			Short-term	0.00%
HEALTH INSURANCE RESERVE		$809,610		$868,874
Pre-82 designated assets	$0	Investment Objective		Long-term
PRM designated assets	$0	Actual Allocation	Equity	64.55%
			Fixed	34.76%
			Short-term	0.69%
PASTORAL CARE FUND		$174,757		$187,450
Pre-82 designated assets	$0	Investment Objective		Long-term
PRM designated assets	$0	Actual Allocation	Equity	62.79%
			Fixed	33.81%
			Short-term	3.40%
PENSION RESERVE		$5,631,470		$6,076,317
Pre-82 designated assets	$0	Investment Objective		Long-term
PRM designated assets	$0	Actual Allocation	Equity	64.82%
			Fixed	34.90%
			Short-term	0.28%
NON-WESPATH ACCOUNTS		$618,848		$697,174
Pre-82 designated assets	$0	Investment Objective		Long-term
PRM designated assets	$697,174	Actual Allocation	Equity	0.00%
			Fixed	0.00%
			Short-term	100.00%

$ *A portion of this account has been designated as a plan assets. The allocated amounts will be shown seperately on the Allocation screen and will not be included in the Market Value for ths account.*

Susquehanna Conference (321) 2026 Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan

Incoming Money

Primary Sources **Estimated Amount for 2026**

Apportionments $1,327,000

Annual Apportionment	$1,327,000
x Expected Collection Percentage	100.00%

Direct Billing

Refer to the following *"Allocate Funding Sources"* pages for actual amounts allocated from the above funding sources.

Allocate Funding Sources to Benefit Obligations

Funding Sources		Campaign Fund 02	Deposit Account	Deposit Account #2	Endowment Account	Health Insurance Reserve	Pastoral Care Fund
Available Balance		$11,798,145	$5,477,285	$11,826,710	$3,632,648	$868,874	$187,450
Total Allocated		$0	$0	$376,439	$0	$0	$0
Remaining Balance		$11,798,145	$5,477,285	$11,450,271	$3,632,648	$868,874	$187,450
Plan Contributions 2026							
CRSP DB							
CRSP DC							
MPP							
UMPIP Lay	$120,982						
UMPIP Clergy	$804,229						
Compass Retirement Plan	$1,538,997						
UNUM Life & Disability	$7,140						
Health Active	$3,583,077						
Health Additional	$164,701			$14,701			
Post-Retirement Medical	$699,962			$299,962			
CPP	$561,776			$61,776			
Ongoing Funding							
Pre-82							
Post-Retirement Medical	$465,978						

Susquehanna Conference (321) 2026 Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan

Allocate Funding Sources to Benefit Obligations

Funding Sources		Pension Reserve	Apportionments	Direct Billing	PRM In-Plan & Outside Assests
Available Balance		$6,076,317	$1,327,000		
Total Allocated		$0	$1,050,000	$6,054,425	
Remaining Balance		$6,076,317	$277,000		
Plan Contributions 2026					
CRSP DB					
CRSP DC					
MPP					
UMPIP Lay	$120,982			$120,982	
UMPIP Clergy	$804,229			$804,229	
Compass Retirement Plan	$1,538,997			$1,538,997	
UNUM Life & Disability	$7,140			$7,140	
Health Active	$3,583,077			$3,583,077	
Health Additional	$164,701		$150,000		
Post-Retirement Medical	$699,962		$400,000		
CPP	$561,776		$500,000		
Ongoing Funding					
Pre-82					
Post-Retirement Medical	$465,978				

Plan Contributions for 2026		**Funding Needed**
CRSP DB		$0
CRSP DC		$0
MPP		$0
UMPIP Lay	$120,982	$0
UMPIP Clergy	$804,229	$0
Compass Retirement Plan	$1,538,997	$0
UNUM Life & Disability	$7,140	$0
Health Active	$3,583,077	$0
Health Additional	$164,701	$0
Post-Retirement Medical	$699,962	$0
CPP	$561,776	$0
Ongoing Funding Contribution for 2026		**Funding Needed**
Pre-82		
Post-Retirement Medical	$465,978	$465,978

Susquehanna Conference (321) 2026 Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan

Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP)

Plan Overview: The Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) is an Internal Revenue Code section 403(b) retirement program providing lifetime income and account flexibility designed for those who serve as clergy of The United Methodist Church. The plan is designed to provide participants with one portion of their overall retirement benefits. CRSP replaced the Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP) effective January 1, 2007.

CRSP consists of two components:

- A defined benefit (DB) plan--provides a monthly benefit at retirement based upon years of credited service to the Church
- A defined contribution (DC) plan--provides a retirement account balance established and funded by the annual conferences

Elections and Estimates

	Final
Eligibility requirement	0%+
Conference Full Time Equivalents (FTE)	0.00
CRSP Defined Benefit (DB)	
Required contribution for 2026	$0
CRSP Defined Contribution (DC)	
Expected average future annual increases	0.00%
Estimated contribution for 2026	$0

CRSP DB Denominational Information as of 1/1/2024

Total plan liability	$(2,592,069,593)
Total plan assets	$3,021,093,853
Total plan funded status	$429,024,260
Total plan funded ratio	117%
Plan sponsor's liability percentage	2.2416%

Key Actuarial Assumptions Used in CRSP DB Cost Calculations

Discount Rate	6.25%
Future Denominational Average Compensation (DAC) increases	2.00%
COLA increases for actives	2.00%
Mortality	Pri-2012 TQ Adj, generational projection using MP2020

Calculated values are based upon the assumptions and methods documented in the actuarial valuation report issued in September, 2024.

Susquehanna Conference (321) 2026 Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan

Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP)

Plan Overview: Supplement Three to the Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP), also known as the Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP) provides clergy with a pension benefit for their years of ministry with The United Methodist Church from 1982 through 2006. MPP is an Internal Revenue Code section 403(b) retirement plan. MPP requires that exactly 65% of the account balance must be annuitized when it is to be distributed. The remainder may be rolled over to UMPIP, another qualified plan or an IRA, or paid in a lump sum.

Elections and Estimates

	Final
Required contribution for 2026	$0

MPP Denominational Information as of 1/1/2024

Total MPP annuities liability	$(3,782,047,675)
Total plan assets	$4,862,609,615
Total plan funded status	$1,080,561,940
Total plan funded ratio	129%
Plan sponsor's liability percentage	2.1652%

Future MPP Denominational Annuitants Information as of 1/1/2024

Total participant account balances	$2,074,596,549
Plan sponsor's participant account balances	$45,801,998

Key Actuarial Assumptions Used in CRSP DB Cost Calculations

Discount Rate	6.13%
Benefit increases	Based on increases selected by participant
Mortality	Pri-2012 TQ Adj, generational projection using MP2020

Calculated values are based upon the assumptions and methods documented in the actuarial valuation report issued in September, 2024.

Susquehanna Conference (321) 2026 Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan

Pre-82 Plan (Pre-82)

Plan Overview: Supplement One to the Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP), also known as the Pre-82 Plan, provides clergy with a pension benefit for their years of ministry with The United Methodist Church prior to 1982. The Pre-82 Plan was replaced by MPP effective January 1, 1982. If a clergyperson retires within the conference (and does not terminate), the minimum benefit payable is based on two factors:

1) Years of service with pension credit--approved by each conference on the recommendation of the Conference Board of Pensions (CBOP) in accordance with plan provisions and The Book of Discipline.

2) The conference pension rate (past service rate)--the dollar amount chosen by the conference as the amount payable for each approved year of service with pension credit (may change from year to year).

The number of years of service with pension credit is multiplied by the PSR, and the product is the minimum annual benefit payable to those clergy eligible for Pre-82 Plan benefits. In certain situations, the benefit received from the Pre-82 plan may vary based on the applicability of what is referred to as Defined Benefit Service Money (DBSM), which is the defined contribution feature of the Pre-1982 Plan. At the time that a participant retires, the DBSM account is converted to a life-based benefit. At that point, the clergy's benefit is the greater of the PSR benefit or DBSM benefit. If the conference increases the PSR, the clergy's benefit is recalculated; however the DBSM-based benefit does not change.

Elections and Estimates

	Final
Past Service Rate (PSR)	725
Estimated PSR cost-of-living increase	1.00%
Contingent Annuitant Percentage (CA%)	75%
Discount rate	6.0000%
Minimum contribution for 2026	$0
Advanced funding contribution for 2026 payable in 2025	$0

Rationale for each change *- The Board of Pensions voted to increase the PSR to 725*

Funding Plan Contribution

Funding plan liability as of 1/1/2024	$(31,739,232)
Total of in-plan and outside assets	$45,255,616
Funded status	$13,516,384
Funded ratio	143%
Funded status projection as of 12/31/2025	$13,311,978
Proposed ongoing funding contribution for 2026	$0

Pre-82 Denominational information as of 1/1/2024

Total plan liability	$(1,400,868,143)
Total plan assets	$1,727,173,304
Total plan funded status	$326,305,161
Total plan funded ratio	123%

Calculated values are based upon the assumptions and methods documented in the actuarial valuation report issued in September, 2024.

Susquehanna Conference (321) 2026 Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan

Health—Active Participants

Elections and Estimates

	Final
Health plan offered to actives	Self-Funded - HealthFlex
Actual annual plan benefit cost paid in 2024	$3,129,598
Budgeted annual plan benefit cost for 2025	$3,348,670
Projected annual plan benefit cost for 2026	$3,583,077
Expected average future annual increases	7.00%

Health—Additional Sponsored Coverage

Categories of participants who are provided health benefit coverage during periods of non-employment. Without plan sponsor-funded premiums, these participants would not be provided coverage or benefits.

- [X] Clergy or lay on disability (including pending disability)
- [X] Surviving spouses or children of deceased active participants

Coverage Obligations

Covered Category	Estimated obligation as of 12/31/2023	Estimated obligation as of 12/31/2024
Clergy or lay on disability (including pending disability)	$1,220,400	$1,354,644
Surviving spouses or children of deceased active participants	$0	$0
Total	$1,220,400	$1,354,644

Annual Cost Calculation

The following calculations are not a present value of future costs.

Total estimated obligation as of 12/31/2024		$1,354,644
Average number of years of remaining coverage	÷	9.4167
Estimated annual cost as of 12/31/2024	=	$143,856
Expected average future annual increases	x	7.00%
Projected annual cost as of 12/31/2026	=	$164,701

Susquehanna Conference (321) 2026 Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan

Post-Retirement Medical (PRM)

Valuation
The most recent actuarial valuation was provided by Towers Watson as of 12/31/2024.
Per *The Book of Discipline*, your next PRM biennial actuarial valuation is required as of 12/31/2026.

PRM Actuarial Valuation as of 12/31/2024

Valuation report (in-plan) assets	$0
EPBO net plan sponsor cost	$9,499,208
APBO net plan sponsor cost	$9,031,258
Service cost net plan sponsor cost	$49,274
Annual plan benefit cost	$1,028,410
Intention regarding PRM	Retain current plan benefit

Participant Counts by Category

Active participants	189
Active dependents	131
Retirees	255
Surviving spouses	97
Dependents of retired participants	139
Total Participants	**811**

Key Actuarial Assumptions

Census Date	01/01/2025
Discount Rate	5.30%
Expected return on assets	0.00%
Valuation year medical trend or inflation rate	6.50%
Ultimate medical trend or inflation rate	5.00%
Fiscal year for ultimate medical trend	2031

Elections and Estimates

Description of Benefit - HRA by years of service.

	Final
Health plan benefit offered to retirees	Via Benefits
Expected average future annual increases	-17.50%
Projected annual plan benefit cost as of 2026	$699,962
Ultimate medical trend or inflation rate	5.00%
Fiscal year for ultimate medical trend	2031

Funding Plan Contribution

The following calculations are not a present value of future costs.

Net PRM assets		$1,354,644
APBO net plan sponsor cost	-	$9,031,258
Funded status	=	$(8,334,084)
Number of annual payments	÷	20
Portion of funded status payable ($0 if Funded status ≥ $0)	=	$416,704
Funding plan service cost ($0 if Net PRM assets ≥ EPBO)	+	$49,274
Ongoing funding contribution for 2026	=	$465,978

Susquehanna Conference (321) 2026 Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan

Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP)

Plan Overview: The Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP) provides death, long-term disability and other welfare benefits for eligible clergy of The United Methodist Church and their families. It is an Internal Revenue Code 414(e) "church plan" funded by plan sponsor insurance premiums. Generally, clergy are eligible to participate in CPP if they satisfy the eligibility requirements, including full-time appointment with plan compensation of at least 25% of the Denominational Average Compensation (DAC). Plan sponsors may elect to cover participants with three-quarter time appointments and/or to continue to cover clergy who, due to certain leaves or appointments, are not otherwise eligible to continue coverage.

The CPP adoption agreement executed by the SUSQUEHANNA contains its elections to cover or not to cover categories mentioned above.

Elections and Estimates

	Final
Expected average future annual increases	6.00%
Estimated premium for 2026	$561,776

United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP)

Plan Overview: The United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP) is an Internal Revenue Code section 403(b) defined contribution retirement savings plan for clergy and lay employees of The United Methodist Church and affiliated organizations. Participants may make before-tax, Roth and/or after-tax contributions through payroll deductions. Participant contributions, various optional plan sponsor contributions and investment earnings comprise the individual's retirement account balance.

United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP) Lay

Elections and Estimates

	Final
Expected average future annual increases	2.00%
Estimated premium for 2026	$120,982

United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP) Clergy

Elections and Estimates

	Final
Expected average future annual increases	2.00%
Estimated premium for 2026	$804,229

Susquehanna Conference (321) 2026 Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan

Other Defined Contribution (DC) Obligations

Name
Compass Retirement Plan

Estimated annual contribution
$1,538,997

Description

Compass Retirement Plan (UMC contributions: 3%, Flat Dollar & Employer Match)

	Final
Expected average future annual increases	2.00%
Estimated premium for 2026	$1,538,997

Rationale for each change
I took the total compensation for all clergy in 2025 and multiIplied by 9.5% to get the estimated contribution for 2026

Name
UNUM Life & Disability

Estimated annual contribution
$7,140

Description

UNUM Life & Disability

	Final
Expected average future annual increases	2.00%
Estimated premium for 2026	$7,140

Richard Conklin, Chair of Board of Pensions and Health

Rec-3 Council on Finance and Administration

ACTION:

This recommendation of the Council on Finance & Administration will be distributed as an addendum prior to the Annual Conference meeting.

Resolutions

RES-1 SUS Strategic Missional Path Forward 44

RES-2 Key Funds Reallocation Plan 63

RES-3 Africa University 62

RES-4 Dissolution of Sierra Leone Initiative 63

RES-5 Affirming Native American Awareness and a Call to Peaceful Witness 63

RES-6 United Methodist Immigration Response 67

RES-7 Answering the Call of Kairos Palestine II 68

RES-8 Gun Violence Prevention and Support of Community Violence Intervention (CVI) Programming 70

RES-9 Energy Stewardship as Faithful Discipleship 71

RES-10 Affirming Mental Health Awareness, Education, and Faithful Response 72

Resolutions

RES-1 SUS Strategic Missional Path Forward

ACTION:

WHEREAS the 2025 session of the Susquehanna Conference empowered the Missional Cabinet to start and oversee a strategic visioning process, to articulate a clear and forwardlooking roadmap for the Susquehanna Conference, including to:

1. Secure input from clergy, laity, elected conference leaders, staff, ministry partners, and community members.
2. Assess the current strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and desired results for the Susquehanna Conference.
3. Explore and identify opportunities for collaboration that enables amplified impact and faithful stewardship with our missional partners: the Upper New York Conference; and
4. Recommend to the 2026 Annual Conference session a Ministry Action Plan aligned with the mission, vision, doctrine, and polity of The United Methodist Church.

WHEREAS the SUS Missional Cabinet created and empowered a Visioning Task Force to lead this work on behalf of the Annual Conference, and this team has diligently fulfilled its mandate through a comprehensive, open, and collaborative process supported by AE Sloan Leadership and ministry consultant Mike Bonem.

AND WHEREAS the Full Visioning Report and the Strategic Missional Path Forward document was reviewed and affirmed by the SUS Missional Cabinet.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Susquehanna Conference Missional Cabinet and the Susquehanna Annual Conference express their deep gratitude to the Strategic Visioning Team for their faithful, prayerful, and dedicated work over the past nine months.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this session of the Susquehanna Conference hereby affirms the Strategic Missional Path Forward document and covenants to actively support and live into this shared direction—for the glory of God and for the sake of our mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Respectfully submitted by
Rev. Daniel Wilt and Mrs. Joyce M. Davis, *on behalf of the SUS Missional Cabinet*

Susquehanna Conference Stategic Missional Path Forward

Susquehanna Conference
The United Methodist Church

THE MISSION OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

THE VISION OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
To form disciples of Jesus Christ, who empowered by the Holy Spirit: **love** boldly, **serve** joyfully, and **lead** courageously in local communities and worldwide networks.

THE PURPOSE OF THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE
Equip and resource leaders and congregations for impactful ministry and provide a connection for mission beyond the local church.

THE ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS OF THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

1	**Provide Spiritual Leadership:** Cultivate deepening knowledge, experiences, and expressions of Christ's love among disciples, clergy, and lay leaders.
2	**Develop and Deploy Leaders:** Identify, equip, and support clergy and laity for effective and faithful ministry.
3	**Resource Congregations for Impactful Ministry:** Offer learning experiences, tools, coaching, and best practices that strengthen local church vitality and mission.
4	**Foster New Faith Communities and Collaborative Ministries:** Nurture a culture of innovation that plants sustainable ministries and encourages partnerships.
5	**Align and Steward Resources for Mission:** Maximize financial, human, and structural resources to advance the mission of SUS and the UMC.
6	**Promote Unity in Diversity:** Encourage a spirit of connection that honors the richness of our God-given diversity while lifting our distinctive Wesleyan heritage.
7	**Communicate Our Shared Mission and Impact:** Tell the story of how United Methodists in the Susquehanna Conference are living out their mission and transforming communities.

Discerned during the 2025-26 Listening and Visioning Process

OUR CORE VALUES
The Susquehanna Conference is at its best when we live by these values:

Connectional Relationships	a strong sense that congregations and leaders belong to one another and work best when they collaborate.
Mutual Support & Care	an appreciation for the ways clergy and laity support one another in times of challenge.
Shared Mission	a commitment to serving communities together through collaborative programs & ministries, and justice/ advocacy efforts.
Faithful Resilience	a willingness to remain engaged in ministry even during seasons of uncertainty and institutional change.
Relational Leadership	an expectation that leadership is grounded in presence, listening, and trust-building rather than simply organizational authority.

Susquehanna Conference Stategic Missional Path Forward

The organizational charism *(spiritual gift)* of the Susquehanna Conference emerges naturally from these values.

OUR ORGANIZATIONAL CHARISM: God-led Relational Collaboration for Community Renewal.
Note: Charism refers to an organization's unique spiritual gift or missional identity—the distinctive way its values, calling, and culture combine to serve the world.

God-led Relational Collaboration for Community Renewal: The Susquehanna Conference possesses a Spirit-given capacity to cultivate authentic relationships and collaborative ministry that bring communities together and serve vulnerable neighbors.
This charism reflects the lived expression of the conference's values. It reflects more than friendliness or cooperation. It represents an organizational culture shaped by trust, relational leadership, and a willingness to work together across congregational boundaries. The conference's ability to build relationships and collaborate in ministry uniquely positions us to respond to the challenges facing its communities. The emphasis on shared mission encourages leaders and congregations to work together to address community needs. And the commitment to mutual support allows leaders and congregations to remain resilient even in difficult seasons. The primary work of the conference is to encourage and equip local congregations to live into this charism.

THE PAINT POINTS IN THE WORLD
The Susquehanna Conference is positioned to make a meaningful difference in our communities as we faithfully engage the following concerns through our Christ-centered witness and ministries:

- Rebuild belonging.
- Protect vulnerable people in our communities.

These concerns are not simply social challenges; they also represent spiritual realities. The intersection between the conference's charism and the community pain points identified reveals a compelling missional opportunity. Communities across Susquehanna are increasingly fragmented and vulnerable. At the same time, the Susquehanna Conference already possesses the relational infrastructure necessary to address these community concerns. The key challenge is to extend this relational culture more intentionally beyond congregational boundaries and into the surrounding communities.

OUR REALITIES, CHALLENGES, AND OPPORTUNITIES
These realities, if not approached with faithfulness, become obstacles to our shared mission.

1. Continued church attendance/engagement decline.
2. Growing generational gap in our congregations and leadership.
3. Growing number of older, oversized church buildings that are costly to maintain.
4. Amount and speed of change inside and outside the church.
5. Lack of trust in the conference and among clergy and laity.

REQUIRED ADAPTIVE SHIFTS
We will continue prioritizing *relationships* over everything else, and we will lead the way in the shift:

	From Congregational Independence —> Cooperative Ministry Ecosystems
1	Many congregations, particularly in rural areas, struggle to sustain ministry independently. The conference will increasingly need to cultivate cooperative parish systems and shared ministry networks that allow congregations to collaborate rather than compete for limited resources.
	From Leadership Scarcity —> Leadership Multiplication
2	Clergy shortages and leadership fatigue are prominent concerns. The conference must intentionally cultivate new leaders, including lay leaders, young adults, and bi-vocational clergy, so that ministry leadership is shared more broadly across the church.

Susquehanna Conference Stategic Missional Path Forward

3	**From Building-Centered Identity —> Community-Embedded Mission**
	Significant concerns about the financial and emotional burden of maintaining church buildings require the conference to help congregations reimagine how buildings serve ministry rather than define it, allowing churches to focus more directly on engaging their communities.
4	**From Institutional Complexity —> Relational Simplicity**
	Frustration with administrative systems and communication challenges calls the conference to simplify structures and processes to help the conference align its operations with its relational culture and mission priorities.
5	**From Reluctant Change —> Courageous Experimentation**
	The conference will need to cultivate a culture that encourages innovation and learning. Leaders must feel empowered to experiment with new approaches to ministry while learning from both successes and failures.

STRATEGIC ADAPTIVE INITIATIVES

Strategic-Adaptive Initiatives address the adaptive shifts named above while advancing the conference's mission. These initiatives combine strategic direction with experimentation and learning.

1 Collaborative Parish Development	Form supporting networks of congregations that emphasize discipleship and share leadership, ministry programs, resources, mission strategies, and even facilities. These partnerships could improve stewardship and strengthen smaller congregations while expanding their collective ministry capacity.
Objectives • Define regionality and types of collaboration. • Resource leaders to identify new/existing opportunities to experiment and practice cooperative parish collaboration.	
2 Next Generation Leadership	Intentionally cultivate and equip young leaders, lay ministers, and bi-vocational clergy.
Objectives • Define next generation leadership: what and who. • Create a plan to support the call/vocation of next generation leadership. • Create leadership development plans to support our next generation leaders.	
3 Community Engagement and Partnerships	Equip congregations to practice relational evangelism and to collaborate with local organizations that are addressing needs in the area and to be places where neighbors can experience true community.
Objectives • *Define* types of partnerships and engagement, connecting to pain points and due diligence in forming them. • *Learn* from churches/community partners doing this well and experimenting in our conference and beyond. • Be a *Resource* of best practices, processes of building partnerships, funding, legal requirements.	
4 Congregational Sustainability	Provide resources for building transitions, mergers, and adaptive reuse. This initiative focuses on creative solutions to address the burden of aging facilities, not subsidizing unsustainable practices.
Objectives • Build awareness in every congregation of current reality of church building, congregational health, and community. • Resource congregations with options and available paths forward. • Empower and equip congregations to pursue additional funding streams that sustain ministry and grow community engagement.	

Susquehanna Conference Stategic Missional Path Forward

COLLABORATION WITH THE UPPER NEW YORK CONFERENCE

The Susquehanna and Upper New York Conference are distinct, but they also share many similarities. These similarities and shared episcopal leadership create real opportunities for collective collaboration and learning across the two conferences.

Missional Learning Lab	A shared learning network supporting experimentation with Fresh Expressions, cooperative parishes, and community-based ministries.
Vulnerable Communities Partnership Initiative	A joint initiative equipping congregations to address poverty, social isolation, and community fragmentation through shared training, grant programs, and collaborative ministry experiments.
Leadership Development Initiative	Create shared leadership development pathways with unified delivery methods that provide both foundational training and adaptive leadership development for emerging and current leaders.
Sharing Human and Other Resources	Explore collaborative opportunities across ministry teams and conferences for aligning human resources, adjusting staffing structures and responsibilities, and creating equitable systems that serve the entire episcopal area—amplifying impact and ensuring faithful stewardship.

TECHNICAL PROBLEMS (High-Impact, Near-Term)

We will address these discrete, correctable issues with intentionality and visibly to rebuild trust, reduce institutional fatigue, and demonstrate our commitment to transparency, consistency, and support. We will continue addressing these concerns, adopting the following steps within our capacity and resources while ensuring steady, visible progress.

Rebuild Trust	We will rebuild trust by practicing consistent leadership—clear communication, transparent decisions, and reliable follow-through. These behaviors lay the groundwork for deeper adaptive work, and we will demonstrate authentic leadership, accountability, and steady progress on the six technical challenges that follow.
Streamline Communication Systems	We will redesign our communication practices to be simpler, clearer, and more relational—reducing density, highlighting essential information, and making practical answers easy to find so that our leaders experience connection rather than frustration. Actions: • Establish a clear, simplified communication rhythm, such as one short weekly update with standard headings and links. • Adopt a consistent format: Here's the decision, why, next steps • Create one-page explainers for major conference initiatives, appointment-related processes, and district changes. • Implement a follow-through protocol so that announcements are tracked and revisited publicly.
Reduce the Administrative Burden	We will reduce paperwork and simplify administrative expectations so that leaders—especially in small, rural, and cooperative ministries—can reclaim time for discipleship, pastoral care, and mission, rebuilding trust and relieving unnecessary pressure. Actions: • Reduce or consolidate charge conference and reporting forms. • Create a centralized administrative portal with all forms, instructions, and deadlines in one place. • Publish a simple yearly administrative calendar. • Pilot a low-paperwork district or parish model to test deeper simplification.

Susquehanna Conference Stategic Missional Path Forward

Clarify District Leadership Roles	We will clarify district leadership and strengthen DS accessibility, so clergy and congregations know exactly where to turn for care, conflict support, and administrative guidance. By reducing confusion around district identity and DS capacity, we will lower anxiety and increase confidence in our support systems. Actions: • Publish a concise What Your DS Does / Does Not Do guide. • Redefine the role of other district staff so their support functions are clear and visible. • Establish office hours or guaranteed response windows. • Ensure every clergy person knows their primary point of contact for clergy care, conflict resolution, and administrative questions.
Strengthen Connection and Support for Clergy and Congregational Leaders	We will strengthen regular contact and relational presence so that clergy—especially those serving multiple churches—and congregations that feel isolated experience meaningful support, embodying our conviction that the connection is personal, not merely structural. Actions: • Prioritize pastoral care for clergy and congregational leaders, with a clear goal for direct contact by a DS or other conference staff. • Re-institute district or sub-district gatherings, in person or virtual, for encouragement, support, and shared learning. • Develop regular support touchpoints for leaders in isolated, rural, or multi-point ministry settings.
Implement Conference Initiatives Consistently	We will demonstrate consistent follow-through and visible implementation so that announced changes lead to lasting action, strengthening confidence in the conference's ability to simplify, adapt, and sustain meaningful change. Actions: • Establish a public accountability dashboard showing progress on conference initiatives. • Commit to bi-annual updates: What we promised / What we completed / What is delayed / Why. • Name responsible leaders for major projects so local churches know how progress is being carried forward.
Simplify Access to Resources	We will make conference resources easier to locate, understand, and access—especially for smaller and volunteer-led churches—so that leaders can quickly find what they need and experience our support as visible, usable, and truly helpful. Actions: • Create a single Resource Hub on the conference website with effective search functionality. • Organize resources by topic, role, and ministry context. • Issue an annual What Your Shared Ministries Fund Makes Possible report with stories and data.

FUTURE MISSIONAL IMPACT

We will live fully into our charism by becoming a relational network of congregations that serve their communities together—cultivating intentional collaboration, sharing leadership across clergy and laity, and nurturing new forms of ministry alongside our traditional congregations.

Over time the Susquehanna conference will become known as a connection of churches that:

- Proclaim and embody Christ's love, mercy, compassion, and justice.
- Rebuild belonging across social divides.

Susquehanna Conference Stategic Missional Path Forward

- Serve vulnerable communities with compassion and hope
- Raise new generations of Christian leaders.

In this future the Susquehanna conference becomes a relational ecosystem of Christ-centered congregations working together, guided by the Holy Spirit, for community renewal.

NEXT STEPS

1. Finalize and Approve the Strategic Missional Path Forward (May 2026)

1.1. Translate recommendations into a clear, actionable playbook.
1.2. Submit for approval at the 2026 Annual Conference
1.2.1. Commit to a MultiYear Journey
1.2.2. Begin visible steps in late 2026.
1.2.3. Recognize that meaningful fruit will emerge over three to five years.

2. Form Four Initiative Teams (Fall 2026)

2.1. Create one team for each Strategic Adaptive Initiative.
2.2. Include clergy and laity from across the conference, supported by staff.
2.3. Ensure accountability to the Missional Cabinet.

3. Establish Key Results

3.1. Define measurable, timebound indicators of progress ("we will do what by when").
3.2. Use Key Results to guide priorities and decisionmaking.

4. Develop Action Plans

4.1. Build plans aligned with the Key Results.
4.2. Emphasize prototypes, not conferencewide programs.
4.3. Include feedback loops for learning and adaptation.

5. Address Technical Challenges

5.1. Form ad hoc teams as needed to resolve the technical issues identified in the report.
5.2. Remove obstacles that could hinder adaptive work.

6. Communicate Clearly and Consistently

6.1. Share Key Results, action plans, prototype outcomes, and lessons learned conferencewide.
6.2. Use communication to build momentum and reinforce trust.

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Strategic Adaptive Recommendations: From Charism to Pain Point to Missional Impact

Susquehanna Annual Conference
March 26, 2026
Mike Bonem | Daniel White | Tod Bolsinger

1. Introduction

The Susquehanna Conference stands at a significant moment of discernment and opportunity. Like many parts of the United Methodist Church, the conference has navigated a series of complex transitions in recent years, including the COVID-19 pandemic, denominational conflict, the disaffiliation process, financial pressures, and growing concerns about clergy availability and congregational sustainability.

These pressures have created understandable uncertainty about the future of the conference and the role of local congregations within it. Many participants in the listening process spoke openly about fatigue, grief over congregations that have left, and anxiety about the long-term sustainability of existing ministry models.

At the same time, the listening sessions and Transformation Team conversations revealed a deep reservoir of relational strength and spiritual resilience within the conference. Participants consistently described the conference as a place where leaders know one another, care for one another, and work together in ways that feel deeply connectional. They noted that Annual Conference gatherings feel less like bureaucratic meetings and more like family reunions. This sense of relational connection has helped the conference remain resilient during challenging seasons.

Several strengths were repeatedly named throughout the listening process:

- A strong **relational culture** in which clergy and laity feel known and supported.
- A history of **collaborative mission initiatives**, including mission hubs and shared ministries.
- A deep appreciation for the **connectional nature of the United Methodist Church.**

The Transformation Team recognizes that this relational culture represents a distinctive organizational charism. When this charism intersects with the pain points facing communities across the region—particularly social division, loss of belonging, and concern for vulnerable populations—it reveals a clear opportunity for ministry.

The future of the Susquehanna Conference will likely depend not only on structural adjustments but on strengthening and extending this relational charism into the communities it serves. Through adaptive leadership and collaborative innovation, the conference can become an even stronger relational network of congregations working together for the renewal of their communities.

2. Organizational Charism

God-led Relational Collaboration for Community Renewal

Throughout the listening process, participants described the Susquehanna Conference as a deeply relational and collaborative community. They depicted the conference as a community where clergy and lay leaders know one another well, collaborate across congregations, and support one another during times of challenge.

Several examples of this collaborative culture were highlighted during the listening process

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- Shared youth ministries that bring congregations together.
- Mission hubs that mobilize churches for service.
- Collaborative ministry partnerships among congregations across districts.

These examples illustrate a deeper cultural pattern of shared relationships and collaborative ministry within the conference. They highlight the core values that shape the conference's identity and ministry:

- **Connectional Relationships** – a strong sense that congregations and leaders belong to one another and work best when they collaborate.
- **Mutual Support and Care** – an appreciation for the ways clergy and laity support one another in times of challenge.
- **Shared Mission** – a commitment to serving communities together through initiatives such as mission hubs, shared ministries, and collaborative programs.
- **Faithful Resilience** – a willingness to remain engaged in ministry even during seasons of uncertainty and institutional change.
- **Relational Leadership** – an expectation that leadership is grounded in presence, listening, and trust-building rather than simply organizational authority.

From these values emerges the conference's organizational charism:

> ***The Susquehanna Conference possesses a Spirit-given capacity to cultivate authentic relationships and collaborative ministry that bring communities together and serve vulnerable neighbors.***

This charism reflects the lived expression of the conference's values. It reflects more than friendliness or cooperation. It represents an organizational culture shaped by trust, relational leadership, and a willingness to work together across congregational boundaries.

Susquehanna's charism is also aligned with the denomination's new vision statement: The United Methodist Church forms disciples of Jesus Christ who, empowered by the Holy Spirit, love boldly, serve joyfully, and lead courageously in local communities and worldwide connections.

In a cultural moment when many communities experience division, distrust, and isolation, this relational capacity becomes an especially important gift. The conference's ability to build relationships and collaborate in ministry uniquely positions it to respond to the challenges facing its communities. The emphasis on shared mission encourages congregations to work together to address community needs. And the commitment to mutual support allows leaders to remain resilient even in difficult seasons.

In this way, the charism of God-led Relational Collaboration for Community Renewal represents the outward expression of the relational values that participants consistently identified throughout the listening process.

3. The Pain Point in the World

The pain point interviews conducted by the Transformation Team provided an important perspective on the communities served by the Susquehanna Conference. Team members intentionally interviewed individuals outside their congregations in order to better understand the concerns shaping the broader community.

Several consistent themes emerged from these conversations. Interviewees frequently spoke about the growing sense of social division and loss of belonging within their communities. Many people expressed concern that neighbors no longer know one another as they once did and that relationships across political, economic, or cultural differences have become increasingly strained.

Interviewees also raised concerns about the well-being of vulnerable populations within their communities. These concerns included the safety of children, the challenges faced by marginalized groups, and the struggles of families experiencing economic hardship. Together these themes describe communities searching for connection, stability,

and hope. They also reveal a profound opportunity for the church to serve as a place where relationships are restored and communities strengthened.

4. The Convergence: Where Charism Meets Pain

The intersection between the Susquehanna Conference's relational charism and the pain points identified in the interviews reveals a compelling opportunity for ministry. Communities across the region increasingly experience fragmentation and isolation. Yet the Susquehanna Conference already embodies a culture of collaboration and connection that many communities desperately need.

The listening process highlighted numerous examples of this relational capacity already active within the conference. Mission hubs provide opportunities for congregations to work together in service. Cooperative youth ministries bring young people from multiple congregations together in shared ministry experiences. Congregations frequently partner with one another in ways that strengthen their collective impact.

These examples demonstrate that the conference already possesses the relational infrastructure necessary to address many of the community concerns identified in the interviews. The key challenge is to extend this relational culture more intentionally beyond congregational boundaries and into the surrounding communities.

The central missional question emerging from the Transformation Team's discernment can therefore be expressed as follows:

> ***How might the Susquehanna Conference leverage its relational collaboration to rebuild belonging and protect vulnerable people in its communities?***

This question invites the conference to view its relational culture not simply as an internal strength but as a Christ-centered gift that can serve the wider community.

5. Strategic–Adaptive Shifts Required

The Transformation Team recognizes that responding to these challenges will require adaptive change rather than simply technical solutions. Addressing the deeper issues facing congregations and communities will involve shifts in leadership expectations, organizational culture, and ministry practices. Five adaptive shifts are essential for the conference's future. Making these shifts will take several years as the conference works to practice the new behaviors that are necessary.

Adaptive Shift 1
From **Congregational Independence —> Cooperative Ministry Ecosystems**

Many congregations—particularly in rural areas—struggle to sustain ministry independently. The conference will increasingly need to cultivate cooperative parish systems and shared ministry networks that allow congregations to collaborate rather than compete for limited resources.

Adaptive Shift 2
From **Leadership Scarcity —> Leadership Multiplication**
Clergy shortages and leadership fatigue were frequently mentioned during the listening process. The conference must intentionally cultivate new leaders, including lay leaders, young adults, and bi-vocational clergy, so that ministry leadership is shared more broadly across the church.

Adaptive Shift 3
From **Building-Centered Identity —> Community-Embedded Mission**
Participants expressed concern about the financial and emotional burden of maintaining church buildings. The conference must help congregations reimagine how buildings serve ministry rather than define it, allowing churches to focus more directly on engaging their communities.
Adaptive Shift 4

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From **Institutional Complexity —> Relational Simplicity**
Many participants voiced frustration with administrative systems and communication challenges. Simplifying structures and processes will help the conference align its operations with its relational culture and mission priorities.

Adaptive Shift 5

From **Reluctant Change —> Courageous Experimentation**
Finally, the conference will need to cultivate a culture that encourages innovation and learning. Leaders must feel empowered to experiment with new approaches to ministry while learning from both successes and failures.

6. Strategic–Adaptive Initiatives

Strategic-Adaptive Initiatives address the adaptive shifts named above while advancing the conference's mission. These initiatives combine strategic direction with experimentation and learning. Four strategic-adaptive initiatives are vital for the Susquehanna Conference. A small number of objectives are also identified to provide direction for each strategic-adaptive initiative.

Strategic-Adaptive Initiative 1 - Collaborative Parish Development
Form supporting networks of congregations that share leadership, ministry programs, resources, mission strategies, and even facilities. These partnerships could improve stewardship and strengthen smaller congregations while expanding their collective ministry capacity.

Objectives:

- Define regionality and types of collaboration.
- Resource leaders to identify new/existing opportunities to experiment and practice cooperative parish collaboration.

Strategic-Adaptive Initiative 2 - Next Generation Leadership Development
Intentionally cultivate and equip young leaders, lay ministers, and bi-vocational clergy.

Objectives:

- Define next generation leadership: what and who.
- Create a plan to support the call/vocation of next generation leadership.
- Create leadership development plans to support our next generation leaders.

Strategic-Adaptive Initiative 3 - Community Engagement and Partnerships
Equip congregations to collaborate with local organizations that are addressing needs in the area and to be places where neighbors can experience true community.

Objectives:

- Define types of partnerships and engagement, connecting to pain points and due diligence in forming them.
- Learn from churches/community partners doing this well and experimenting in our conference and beyond.
- Be a Resource of best practices, processes of building partnerships, funding, legal requirements.

Strategic-Adaptive Initiative 4 - Congregational Sustainability
Provides resources for building transitions, mergers, and adaptive reuse. This initiative focuses on creative solutions to address the burden of aging facilities, not subsidizing unsustainable practices.

Objectives:

- Build awareness in every congregation of current reality of church building, congregational health, and community.
- Resource congregations with options and available paths forward.
- Empower and equip congregations to pursue additional funding streams that sustain ministry and grow community engagement.

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7. Potential Collaboration with the Upper New York Conference

The Susquehanna Conference and Upper New York Conference are distinct, but they also share many similarities. These similarities and shared episcopal leadership create opportunities for collective learning and better resource utilization across the two conferences. The conferences are already collaborating in a variety of ways. Four additional collaboration opportunities are identified in this section.

Missional Learning Lab
A shared learning network supporting experimentation with Fresh Expressions, cooperative parishes, and community-based ministries.

Vulnerable Communities Partnership Initiative
A joint initiative equipping congregations to address poverty, social isolation, and community fragmentation hrough shared training, grant programs, and collaborative ministry experiments.

Leadership Development Initiative
Create shared leadership development pathways with unified delivery methods that provide both foundational training and adaptive leadership development for emerging and current leaders.

Sharing Financial, Staff, and Other Resources
Explore collaborative opportunities across ministry teams and conferences for aligning financial and human resources, adjusting staffing structures and responsibilities, and creating equitable systems that serve the entire episcopal area—amplifying impact and ensuring faithful stewardship.

8. Next Steps

The findings and recommendations in this report are the beginning of the transformational journey for the Susquehanna Conference. The recommendations will be translated into a "missional playbook," which will be submitted for approval at the 2026 Annual Conference.

Once approved, the work of implementation begins. In the fall of 2026, four teams should be formed, one to spearhead each Strategic-Adaptive Initiative. These teams should be composed of clergy and laity from throughout the conference, with support from conference staff. Teams will be accountable to the conference's Executive Staff Team and Missional Cabinet.

One of the first steps for these teams should be to determine Key Results, which are measurable indicators that show whether meaningful progress is being made toward an objective. Key results should be verifiable and should have a defined time frame (e.g., we will do what by when). Once Key Results are defined, the teams can develop action plans to achieve these results.

Learning and experimentation are central concepts in adaptive change. Action plans should not be conference-wide programs but instead should emphasize prototypes. The prototypes should include feedback loops that will enable the team to learn and make adjustments in future prototypes.

In addition to teams for designing and implementing the four initiatives, conference leadership should address the technical problems identified in this report. This may involve the creation of other ad hoc teams for specific issues. Conference leadership should also be diligent to address obstacles that may impede the adaptive change work.

Communication is an essential element of the work that lies ahead. The Key Results and action plans should be shared in conference-wide communication as they are developed. Similarly, results and lessons learned from prototypes should be communicated. This will address the desire for more information that was expressed during the visioning process and will also build momentum for the work to be done.

The work of adaptive change is a long-term process. While it is realistic to expect to see initial steps being taken in the second half of 2026, the real fruit from this work will be three to five years in the making.

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Future Missional Impact

If the Susquehanna Conference lives fully into its charism in the places of pain in its region, it will increasingly function as a r**elational network of congregations serving communities together.** Congregations will collaborate more intentionally, leadership will be shared across clergy and laity, and new forms of ministry will emerge alongside traditional congregations.

Over time the conference may become known as a connection of churches that:

- Rebuild belonging across social divides.
- Collaborate across congregational boundaries.
- Raise new generations of Christian leaders.
- Serve vulnerable communities with compassion and hope

In this future the conference becomes a **relational ecosystem of congregations working together for community renewal.**

Appendices

Strategic Visioning Process Description

The "strategic visioning process" was approved by the Susquehanna Conference at Annual Conference in 2025. The recommendations presented in this report are the result of hours of work and widespread input as described below.

A "Transformation Team" (also referred to as a strategic visioning team) was formed by selecting a cross-section of leaders from throughout the conference. The members of the Transformation Team are:

- Joyce Davis
- Melanie Feldner
- Beth Jones
- Kathleen E. Kind
- Kelly Kocher-Ross
- Joanne Konick-McMahan
- Larry Leland
- Jennifer Saunders
- Kristopher Sledge
- Pat Shope
- Jacob Waybright
- Daniel Wilt

The conference contracted with Mike Bonem of Mike Bonem Consulting and Tod Bolsinger and Daniel White of AE Sloan Consulting to guide the process. The three consultants worked closely together to design the process, facilitate meetings, gather input, synthesize results, and prepare the final report.

An essential part of the process was listening to the hopes and concerns of the conference. This was done through a survey that was open to anyone in the conference, focus groups that covered a broad cross-section of the conference, and the feedback received in the Bishop's listening tour in the fall of 2025. "Pain point interviews" were conducted with individuals in the region who are not associated with the conference.

The Transformation Team invested a substantial amount of time in the process. They met three times for in-person,

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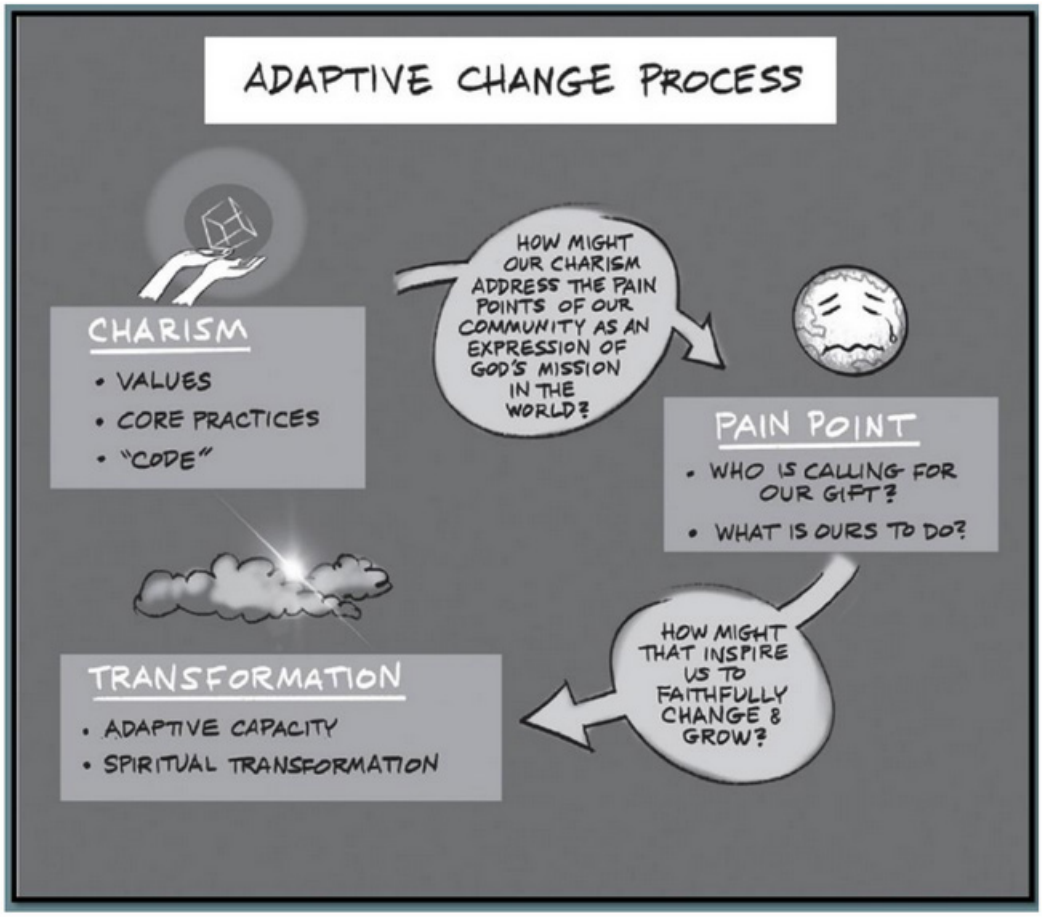
all-day sessions and five times for virtual sessions. They also supported the focus groups by taking notes and conducted the pain point interviews.

One of the objectives of the strategic visioning process was to identify opportunities for collaboration with the Upper New York Conference (UNY). UNY engaged in a parallel process and was guided by the same consultants. The three in-person sessions were jointly, with part of the time in separate teams for each conference and part of the time in combined discussions.

The "adaptive change process" is the framework that guided the strategic visioning work. This framework, shown in the diagram below, is from Invest in *Transformation* by Tod Bolsinger.



Technical Problems (High-Impact, Near-Term)

These are discrete issues that can be corrected, clarified, simplified, or strengthened without requiring deep cultural change. Addressing them visibly would generate significant goodwill in Susquehanna, where participants expressed deep affection for the conference but also strong concern about long-term sustainability, clergy strain, and administrative overload. In SUS, attending to these issues would communicate care for local churches and reinforce the sense that the conference is a real partner in ministry.

This section names seven technical problems with recommended steps to consider for each. In some cases, the conference is already taking steps to address the concern. Some of the recommended steps may need to be modified to better fit the conference's resources and capacity.

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1. Rebuild Trust

Across listening sessions, focus groups, and surveys, participants emphasized the need to rebuild trust between local churches and conference leadership. While trust ultimately involves deeper cultural change, many said it can begin with consistent leadership behaviors—clear communication, transparency in decisions, and reliable follow-through.

Strengthening trust in these practical ways creates the conditions needed for deeper adaptive work. When leaders experience the conference as responsive, present, and accountable, they are more willing to engage harder conversations about sustainability, leadership models, collaboration, and the future shape of the church. Rebuilding trust begins with authentic leadership that demonstrates care and owns mistakes combined with meaningful progress on the six technical challenges that follow.

2. Streamline Communication Systems

SUS participants described communication as too frequent, too dense, and too hard to navigate. Important information is often buried in longer messages, changes are not always easy to track, and leaders can struggle to find clear answers to practical questions. In a conference that values warmth and connection, communication that feels impersonal or hard to use can create frustration and distance. People want communication that is simpler, clearer, and more relational.

Immediate actions:

- Establish a clear, simplified communication rhythm, such as one short weekly update with standard headings and links.
- Adopt a consistent format: **Here's the decision / Here's why / Here's what happens next.**
- Create one-page explainers for key conference initiatives, processes, and changes.
- Implement a follow-through protocol so important announcements are tracked and revisited.

3. Reduce the Administrative Burden

This was a major concern in SUS. Participants described forms, reports, compliance tasks, and administrative processes as taking too much time away from discipleship, pastoral care, and mission. This burden is felt especially strongly in small churches, rural settings, and cooperative ministry arrangements where leaders already have limited capacity. Reducing paperwork and simplifying expectations would be one of the clearest ways to build trust and relieve pressure.

Immediate actions:

- Reduce or consolidate charge conference and reporting forms.
- Create a centralized administrative portal with all required forms, instructions, and due dates.
- Publish a simple yearly administrative calendar.
- Pilot a low-paperwork parish model in 2026 to test deeper simplification.

4. Clarify District and Conference Leadership Roles

SUS participants raised questions about district visibility, clarity, and access. In some places, leaders are unsure how district support is meant to function or whom to contact for different kinds of needs. Greater clarity would help churches feel less isolated and more supported, especially in rural and multi-point settings.

Immediate actions:

- Publish a concise What Your DS Does / Does Not Do guide.
- Redefine the role of other district staff to focus clearly on support.
- Establish office hours or guaranteed response windows.
- Ensure every clergy person knows their primary point of contact for clergy care, conflict resolution, and administrative questions.

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5. Strengthen Connection and Support for Clergy and Congregational Leaders

In SUS, this issue appears especially in the strain felt by clergy serving multiple churches and by congregations that feel isolated or overlooked. Participants voiced appreciation for the relational culture of the conference, but they also said that many leaders feel stretched thin and disconnected from meaningful support. Strengthening regular contact and relational presence would be a concrete way to reinforce one of SUS's strongest values: that the connection is personal, not merely structural.

Immediate actions:

- Prioritize pastoral care for clergy and congregational leaders, with a clear goal for direct contact by a DS or other conference staff.
- Re-institute district or sub-district gatherings, in person or virtual, for encouragement, support, and shared learning.
- Develop regular support touchpoints for leaders in isolated, rural, or multi-point ministry settings.

6. Implement Conference Initiatives Consistently

SUS responses reflected some skepticism about whether announced changes will really lead to lasting action. There was concern about follow-through and whether the conference can actually simplify and adapt in sustained ways. More visible implementation would help convert goodwill into confidence.

Immediate actions:

- Establish a public accountability dashboard showing progress on conference initiatives. Commit to quarterly updates: **What we promised / What we completed / What is delayed / Why.**
- Name responsible leaders for major projects so local churches know how progress is being carried forward.

7. Simplify Access to Resources

SUS participants expressed appreciation for conference resources, but many also said that resources are not always easy to locate, understand, or access. This is especially challenging for smaller churches and volunteer-heavy settings where leaders do not have time to search multiple systems or interpret unclear instructions. Better access would help the conference's support become more visible and more usable.

Immediate actions:

- Create a single Resource Hub on the conference website with effective search functionality.
- Organize resources by role, ministry setting, and common need. Issue an annual **What Your Shared Ministries Fund Makes Possible** report with stories and data.

Listening Report

Introduction

The strategic visioning project invited widespread input from the Susquehanna Conference. The summary that follows draws on the input received from:

- Conference-wide Surveys (Fall 2025, 130 respondents).
- Bishop's Listening Sessions.
- Workshop 1 discussions (SUS and UNY combined).
- Focus Groups (November 2025).
- Transformation Team (TT) discussions.

Taken together, these inputs form a **converging picture:** deep affection for the connection, serious concern about

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sustainability, frustration with administrative and communication systems, longing for care and healing, and a desire for more visible, relational leadership presence. These conversations and responses were emotional, honest, and deeply grounded in people's love for Christ and for the Church. Participants brought gratitude and worry, hope and fatigue, admiration and grief.

Not all of the ideas and concerns that are named in this "listening report" can be addressed by the conference. The strategic adaptive recommendations found in the body of this document reflect the Transformation Team's discernment of the best ways for the conference to follow the Holy Spirit into the future.

The Emotional Landscape
Across Susquehanna, the emotional landscape reflects a blend of deep affection, steady realism, and quiet grief. Participants repeatedly expressed warm gratitude for the people, relationships, and connectional spirit that make the conference feel like family, while also carrying significant anxiety about sustainability, clergy burnout, and unresolved wounds from disaffiliation. Overall, the tone is one of cautious hope—rooted in love for the conference's relational strength yet tempered by sobering concerns about the viability of current systems.

What People Love and Admire
Across SUS, people described the conference as:

- **Family-like and relational** – "we know each other," "we're in this together," Annual Conference feels like a reunion rather than just a business meeting.
- **Genuinely connectional** – the connection is not just an idea; it shows up as:
  - shared youth ministries;
  - cooperative efforts between congregations;
  - Mission Central and other hands-on mission hubs;
  - Conference camps and mission centers;
  - grants, training opportunities, and practical resourcing.
- **Supportive of clergy and laity:**
  - appointment making that is generally careful and thoughtful;
  - care during times of crisis;
  - staff and DSs who try to be responsive;
  - access to resources that small churches could not provide alone.
- **Theological breadth and diversity of gifts** – a place where different theological perspectives can serve together, and where CLMs and LLPs are welcomed as part of the leadership mosaic.

What People Wonder or Worry About
The dominant SUS concerns are:

- **Sustainability of the current system at the local and conference levels**
  - Too many buildings and small congregations; fear of being on "borrowed time" or being kept open by habit not mission.
  - Strain of apportionments and property costs.
  - Declining worship attendance and aging membership.
  - Worry that the system is "too big and too heavy" for this moment.
- **Clergy pipeline, health, and deployment**
  - Retirements outpacing new clergy.
  - Multi-point charges create exhaustion and diminish effectiveness.
  - Strain on pastors and families.
  - Inconsistent in treatment and expectations for CLMs and LLPs.
- **Disaffiliation trauma and trust gaps**

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- Grief over relationships lost.
- Uneasy trust between local churches and conference leadership.
- Confusion about"how decisions are really made."
- Mixed feelings about appointments.

What Needs Attention Right Now
Participants named four urgent areas for attention:

- **Reaching young people and raising new leaders**
  - Deep concern about the absence of children, youth, and young adults in many congregations.
  - Leadership development is needed for laity and young adults.
- **Healing unhealthy systems and nurturing cooperation**
  - Many congregations feel isolated or stuck in conflict.
  - Desire for help creating **cooperative parish models,** conflict transformation processes, and healthier church cultures.
  - Emotional and relational damage from disaffiliation still lingers.
- **Developing comprehensive strategy for buildings**
  - **Cost of buildings is a substantial burden for many congregations.**
  - **Desire for creative solutions for building use or congregational mergers.**
- **Healing unhealthy systems and nurturing cooperation**
  - Clergy and laity feel overwhelmed by forms, reports, confusing processes, and difficulty finding explanations.
  - People want streamlined communication and centralized systems so they can give more time to ministry and less to paperwork.

If God Answered All Our Prayers: 10-Year Vision
SUS respondents imagined a future with:

- **Fewer but stronger, cooperative congregations** with a clear regional strategy, especially in rural areas.
- Churches filled with **younger, more diverse people**—children, youth, young adults, and new leaders of many backgrounds.
- Thriving **cooperative parishes** with healthy laity–clergy collaboration.
- A sustainable clergy pipeline with **CLMs, LLPs, and bi-vocational models** supported and celebrated.
- Ministry focused on **mission and community engagement**, not simply building maintenance.
- A conference administrative structure that is **leaner and more agile**.
- A reputation for **justice, compassion, and spiritual vitality**, not just for institutional maintenance.

What Would Most Hinder That Future
The primary obstacles identified are:

- **Institutional self-protection** – choosing to preserve structures rather than simplify and adapt.
- **Fear of change and nostalgia for the past** – reluctance to release cherished but unsustainable patterns.
- **Leadership shortages and burnout** – transformation cannot be sustained without healthy clergy and lay leaders.
- Skepticism that "anything will really change."
- Worry that decision-making will remain opaque.
- Concern that rural and small churches will simply be allowed to fail quietly.

Additional Messages to Leadership
Participants urged conference leadership to:

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- **Simplify forms and centralize administrative tasks** so pastors and laity can focus on mission.
- **Increase transparency and consistent follow-through,** especially around appointments and structural changes.
- **Be visibly present and relational** in local churches—especially in rural or struggling areas.
- **Treat congregations as partners,** not passive recipients of directives.
- **Honor local context and listen before acting,** especially when considering closures, mergers, or cooperative arrangements.

Glossary of Key Terms

Actual Values are the values an organization is already living in practice, as revealed through stories, decisions, and repeated patterns of behavior. Identifying actual values helps leaders understand the real culture of the organization rather than relying only on aspirational statements.

Adaptive Challenges are challenges that cannot be solved by better procedures or technical expertise alone because they require shifts in values, behaviors, relationships, or culture. Addressing adaptive challenges requires learning, experimentation, and shared discernment across the organization.

Adaptive Shifts are the key changes in attitudes, priorities, or behaviors that an organization must make in order to address adaptive challenges and move toward its mission. These shifts are often expressed in a "From ___ to ___" format to clarify the transformation required.

Charism refers to an organization's unique spiritual gift or missional identity—the distinctive way its values, calling, and culture combine to serve the world. It describes not only what an organization does, but the particular way it is called to embody its mission.

Key Results are measurable indicators that show whether meaningful progress is being made toward an objective. In adaptive work, they help leaders track real movement while encouraging ongoing learning, reflection, and adjustment of strategies.

Objectives describe the major outcomes an organization seeks to accomplish in a season of work. In adaptive change efforts, objectives provide direction and shared focus while allowing flexibility for experimentation and learning.

Pain Points are the deepest challenges, burdens, or unmet needs experienced by people outside the organization. Through intentional listening and discernment, organizations identify these pain points in order to understand where their mission and charism may respond most faithfully and effectively.

RACI is a role-clarity framework used to define how work and decisions are shared within a team or organization. It identifies who is Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, and Informed, helping adaptive change efforts move forward with clear ownership and collaborative coordination.

Strategic-Adaptive Initiatives are focused efforts designed to address key adaptive challenges while advancing the organization's mission. These initiatives combine strategic direction with experimentation and learning, enabling organizations to test new approaches and make the adaptive shifts required for long-term transformation.

Technical Problems are issues with relatively clear solutions that can be addressed through improved systems, clearer communication, better tools, or stronger execution. Resolving technical problems often builds the trust and credibility necessary to address deeper adaptive challenges.

Transformation Team
A Transformation Team is a trusted group of leaders who help guide and hold the process of organizational change. Rather than functioning only as a task force, the team serves as a relational and reflective container for listening, discernment, experimentation, and shared leadership during seasons of transformation.

RES-2 - Key Funds Reallocation Plan

ACTION:

WHEREAS, the Susquehanna Annual Conference has been in the midst of a rapidly shifting missional landscape, marked by an extended season of disaffiliation in the United Methodist Church, the closure and contraction of many local churches, and the result of reduction in financial capacity.

WHEREAS, in this season, the Susquehanna Conference embraces God's renewed and urgent call to equip and resource the church for a witness that is both transformative and impactful in the world as we seek to form disciples of Jesus Christ, servant leaders, and congregations, who, empowered by the Holy Spirit: love boldly, serve joyfully, and lead courageously so that lives, communities and the world are transformed by the liberating and healing love of Christ.

WHEREAS, God's provision is already present among us, and our task is not to manufacture abundance, but to steward faithfully what has been entrusted to our care, aligning resources with mission and shaping structures in harmony with hope.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Susquehanna Annual Conference create two internally designated funds: the Missional Renewal & Innovation Fund (MRIF), and the Superintendency Strategic Fund (SSF) which will be funded from existing reserve funds.

The Missional Renewal & Innovation Fund (MRIF) is designed to establish an internally designated, alternative income stream that sustains and expands leadership and congregational development resourcing strategies, programs and initiatives and launch of new faith communities, fresh expressions, church plants, bold missional innovation strategies and initiatives, building repurposing, and grant writing to embody the gospel in fresh, contextual ways and extend the church's witness into emerging spaces of spiritual hunger and community need.

The fund will be stewarded by the Director of Connectional Ministries, in close consultation with the resident bishop and the Missional Cabinet, ensuring alignment with the mission and vision, and responsiveness to emerging needs across the connection.

The Superintendency Strategic Fund (SSF) is designed to establish an internally designated, alternative income stream that provides the appointive cabinet with financial resources to respond to strategic, emerging, time-sensitive opportunities and challenges. The fund will be stewarded by the Appointive Cabinet.

These new internally designated funds will be funded by re-allocating the following current reserve funds: EVC Property, EVC Training and Resources, EVC Revitalization, Non-Urban Closed Churches, and 2553 Disaffiliation Funds.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that following the United Methodist Book of Discipline parameters on how to use the proceeds from the sale of churches in urban areas, that the Susquehanna Conference creates The Urban Renewal and Innovation Fund (URIF), designed to sustain and expand our leadership and congregational development resourcing initiatives, as well as to launch new faith communities, church plants, fresh expressions, bold missional initiatives, building repurposing, and grant writing in urban areas of the Susquehanna Conference. The fund will be stewarded by the Director of Connectional Ministries, in close consultation with the Missional Cabinet, and the resident bishop, ensuring alignment with the mission and vision, and responsiveness to emerging needs across the connection.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, corresponding investment income will be applied to each fund annually to support the fund's stability and growth (MRIF 95%, SSF 95%, URIF 100% CF&A Unrestricted 5% of MRIF & SSF investment income/earnings).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, a revised allocation of net assets from church closure sales be enacted to enable the replenishment and strategic growth of key missional funds. This approach ensures long-term sustainability while amplifying our capacity to invest in transformative ministry across the Susquehanna Annual Conference connection without additional Shared Giving allocations. By aligning these resources with our evolving mission priorities, we honor the legacy of each congregation and steward their contributions toward future impact.

Missional Renewal & Innovation Fund	80%
Superintendency Strategic Fund	15%
CF&A Unrestricted Fund	5%
Urban Renewal and Innovation Fund	Net proceeds from urban church closures

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Target Steady Balances for the proposed funds are as follows:

Missional Renewal & Innovation Fund	15,000,000
Superintendency Strategic Fund	3,000,000

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board of Trustees, working collaboratively with the Council on Finance and Administration (CFA) and the Missional Cabinet, be given authority to review and, if necessary, recalibrate the distribution formula and steady balance goals to reflect evolving missional priorities and emerging needs. Together, these steps reflect our commitment to our shared mission, adaptive leadership, faithful stewardship, and the flourishing of ministry across our connection in the Susquehanna Conference for generations to come.

Submitted by:
Rev. Dr. Gary Weaver, *Dean of Cabinet*
Mrs. Joyce Davis, *Conference Lay Leader, On behalf of the SUS Missional Cabinet*
Rev. Barry Robison, *On behalf of the SUS Board of Trustees*
Rev. Dr. JP Bohanan, *On behalf of the SUS Council on Finance and Administration*

RES-3 Africa University Dormitory Resolution

ACTION:

WHEREAS, the vision of the United Methodist Church is to form disciples of Jesus Christ, who empowered by the Holy Spirit: love boldly, serve joyfully, and lead courageously in local communities and global connection.

WHEREAS, the Susquehanna Conference has longstanding connections with Africa University, a United Methodist Higher Education located in Zimbabwe; and whereas, thanks to the faithful generosity of United Methodists across Central Pennsylvania over the years, the Susquehanna Conference Endowed Fund currently supports 5 full scholarships at African University.

WHEREAS, in 2025, Bishop Héctor BurgosNúñez alongside a team of leaders traveled to Africa University and met the students whose lives and futures are being transformed because of Susquehanna generosity.

WHEREAS, during this visit, Africa University's Vice Chancellor and Development team shared a critical and urgent need for a new oncampus dormitory—92 beds (double occupancy)—to provide safe, stable housing for female students, at an estimated cost of $1.5 million; and Africa University is located approximately seven miles from the nearest city, leaving students without transportation facing a 2.5 hour walk to reach basic resources and offcampus housing. This reality poses significant added safety risks for female students and, in many cases, prevents them from attending school at all. Currently, 57% of AU's enrollment is female. Nearly 1,300 students are currently unhoused on campus. The university is now receiving refugee students from nearby camps, further increasing the need for secure housing. Access to higher education is essential for women across Africa to live into their Godgiven potential in societies where gender inequity remains a significant barrier. A new dormitory will provide safe housing for thousands of students in the years and generations to come.

WHEREAS, Africa University has demonstrated a remarkable record of academic excellence, faith formation in the Wesleyan tradition, inclusion, empowerment of women, and faithful stewardship of every gift entrusted to its mission.

AND WHEREAS, now joined with the Upper New York Conference as one episcopal area, the Susquehanna Conference desires to join our siblings in upstate New York in making this new dream for Africa University a reality.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Susquehanna Annual Conference approves raising $1.5 million to build a new oncampus dormitory for female students at Africa University.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an invitation be extended to the Upper New York Conference to partner with us in this mission; and, should their Annual Conference session affirm this partnership, a joint SUS-UNY team will be formed by Bishop BurgosNúñez to lead this initiative on behalf of the episcopal area. If the Upper New York chooses not to join, a team from Susquehanna will be convened by the bishop to lead this effort on behalf of our Conference.

Submitted by,
The Conference Board of Global Ministries
Rev. Andrew Burd- Harris
Pastor James Jacobs
Ms Joyce Davis, Conference Lay Leader
Rev. Sara Shaver, VIM and Disaster Response Coordinator
Rev. Dr. Gary Weaver, River Valley Superintendent and Dean of the Cabinet
Rev. Dr. Thomas Salsgiver, Assistant to the Bishop
Rev. Dr. Kathleen Kind, Dir of Connectional Ministries
The Conference Board of Global Ministries recommends concurrence.

RES 4 – Dissolution of Sierra Leone Initiative

ACTION:

WHEREAS The Susquehanna Conference of the United Methodist Church has supported the Sierra Leone pastors by paying their pastors' salaries for over 20 years through our advanced initiative # 8030.

WHEREAS our support was given at a time of great need during a time of civil unrest and environmental catastrophes.

WHEREAS the Sierra Leone Susquehanna Initiative team has, after prayerful deliberation, determined that the initiative has run its course and now is the time to focus on other needs in global mission work to include Africa.

WHEREAS the Susquehanna Conference partner churches can continue to support churches within the Sierra Leone Conference but can do so as a church initiative on an individual basis.

WHEREAS all designated funds for building projects have been disbursed.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Sierra Leone Susquehanna Initiative Committee unanimously recommends the dissolution of this initiative.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all other funds that the Sierra Leone Susquehanna Initiative has that are currently held by CF&A be placed in escrow and utilized for new or existing African initiatives at its discretion.

Submitted by:
Sierra Leone Initiative Team: Pastor James Jacobs (Chair), Rev Myron Jones (Treasurer),
Rev. Dr. Paul Amara, Donna Thomas, Chris Wagner, Roxann Laird
The Conference Board of Global Ministries recommends concurrence.

RES 5 – Affirming Native American Awareness and a Call to Peaceful Witness

ACTION:

WHEREAS, the United States will mark the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 2026, a moment that invites reflection on our nation's history, ideals, and unfinished work; and

WHEREAS, for many Tribal Nations, this anniversary is not experienced primarily as a celebration, but as a marker of the formation of a settler state that asserted control over Indigenous homelands, and whose impacts are still felt across generations; and

WHEREAS, The United Methodist Church acknowledges that its history includes both faithful witness and profound harm in its relationships with Native Peoples, including participation in systems that contributed to displacement, cultural erasure, and injustice; and

WHEREAS, many United Methodist congregations worship on lands once stewarded by Native Nations, reminding the Church of its ongoing responsibility to truth-telling, humility, and right relationship; and

WHEREAS, within the bounds of the Susquehanna Conference stands the former Carlisle Indian Industrial School, a site of deep historical trauma where Native children from across the continent were forcibly removed from their families and communities in an effort to erase Indigenous identity, language, culture, and spiritual traditions; and

WHEREAS, the legacy of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School continues to shape the lives of Native Peoples today, calling the Church to remembrance, repentance, and a renewed commitment to healing and justice; and

WHEREAS, silence has never healed a wound, and the Gospel calls the Church to speak truth with courage in order to heal, reconcile, and restore, not divide; and

WHEREAS, The United Methodist Church affirms the sacred worth, inherent sovereignty, and enduring leadership of Native American Peoples, and recognizes the importance of Native voices being present not only in storytelling and ceremony, but in decision-making, leadership, and the shaping of shared ministry; and

WHEREAS, Native American Awareness Sunday and Native American Awareness Month (November), as recognized by The United Methodist Church, provide meaningful opportunities for education, prayer, advocacy, and solidarity with Native communities; and

WHEREAS, the Susquehanna Conference Committee on Native American Ministries calls the Church to embody a prophetic witness that holds peace, truth, and justice together, especially in moments of national reflection;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Susquehanna Conference of The United Methodist Church affirms and lifts Native American Awareness Sunday and Native American Awareness Month (November) as intentional opportunities for congregations to engage in learning, worship, prayer, and action in solidarity with Native American communities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that congregations, districts, and conference leaders are encouraged to approach the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence as a moment for faithful reflection, recognizing diverse historical experiences and committing to peace rooted in honesty rather than silence; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Susquehanna Conference encourages educational, liturgical, and missional efforts that amplify Native voices, honor Native histories and cultures, and support justice-seeking partnerships with Native American communities, including attention to leadership development and representation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Conference encourages ongoing discernment about how Native voices are included in decision-making, leadership, and ministry across the life of the Church, as an expression of reconciliation and right relationship; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that this resolution be shared broadly across the Conference as an invitation to prayerful engagement, faithful witness, and renewed commitment to peace, justice, truth, and reconciliation for the sake of those who came before us and the generations yet to come.

Submitted by:
Susquehanna Conference Committee on Native American Ministries; Renee Ford, Chair
The Conference Board of Global Ministries recommends concurrence.

RES 6 – United Methodist Immigration Response

ACTION:

WHEREAS, our United Methodist Social Principles call for us to "affirm the dignity, worth and rights of migrants, immigrants and refugees, including displaced and stateless people." *(2024 UMC Social Principles, The Political Community, Basic Rights & Freedoms)* and

WHEREAS, our United Methodist Social Principles "urge United Methodists to welcome migrants, refugees, and immigrants into their congregations and to commit themselves to providing concrete support, including help with navigating restrictive and often lengthy immigration policies, and assistance with securing food, housing, education, employment and other kinds of support." *(2024 UMC Social Principles, The Political Community, Basic Rights & Freedoms)* and

WHEREAS, our United Methodist Social Principles call for us to "oppose all laws and policies that attempt to criminalize, dehumanize or punish displaced individuals and families based on their status as migrants, immigrants or refugees." *(2024 UMC Social Principles, The Political Community, Basic Rights & Freedoms)* and

WHEREAS, Jesus said that when "I was a stranger and you welcomed me" (Matthew 25:35b NRSV), and that "'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me.'" (Matthew 25:40b NRSV) **(The above four whereas are from last year's resolution for the 2025 Susquehanna Conference UMC Annual Conference - these background statements from our UMC Social Principles & from Scripture are the basis of our "Immigration Response" as United Methodists)**

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that every congregation in the Susquehanna Conference and United Methodist individuals be encouraged to respond to the current United States Immigration Policy by first telling Congress to support the Sensitive Locations Act - HR 1061 which would "amend section 287 of the Immigration and Nationality Act to limit immigration enforcement actions at sensitive locations, to clarify the powers of immigration officers at sensitive locations, and for other purposes." (summary of HR 1061) In the last year, Sensitive Locations, including United Methodist Church properties have been desecrated by Immigration & Customs Enforcement agents who have carried out enforcement actions on their property. This bill would clarify what can and cannot be done at/on Sensitive Locations including Church properties.

And
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that every congregation & United Methodist individual in the Susquehanna Conference be encouraged to live out the call we have received from the General Board of Global Ministries, The General Commission on Religion & Race, and The General Board of Church & Society of The United Methodist Church to

1. Pray: Uphold the protection and well-being of migrants in your prayers, and seeking bold leadership from communities and policymakers.
2. Volunteer: Connect with local organizations such as Church World Service or the Immigration Law and

Justice Network to assist nearby affiliates.

3. Support Projects: Apply for Mustard Seed Migration Grants of $2,000 to aid migrants in your community.

4. Learn: Go to www.umcjustice.org, www.gcorr.org, and/or www.umcmission.org to learn about the UM response to immigration justice.

5. Advocate: Contact elected officials to express your support for migrant rights and sign up for Church World Service Action Alerts for advocacy opportunities and/or sign up for Action Alerts at www.umcjustice.org (General Board of Church & Society UMC) to be ready to quickly respond to proposed legislation on the Federal Level.

6. Donate: Contribute to the Global Migration Advance (#3022144) to support programs that aid migrants and refugees.

Submitted by
Rev. Ryan K. Gephart, Peace with Justice Coordinator for the Susquehanna Annual Conference
The Conference Board of Global Ministries recommends concurrence.

(Based on, Inspired by, and some from: Roland Fernandes is the general secretary of Global Ministries, UMCOR, and Higher Education and Ministry of The United Methodist Church)

RES 7 – Answering the call of Kairos Palestine II

ACTION:

WHEREAS we read in the New Testament "Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering." (Heb. 13:3)

WHEREAS the United Methodist Social Principles state: "We further believe that God calls all members of the human family to recognize and protect the dignity and worth of all people and to work for the well-being of all God's creation. We, therefore, support structures in the church and in civil society that honor the basic freedoms and rights of all human beings and protect God's creation," and

WHEREAS in the resolution "Opposition to Israeli Settlements in Palestinian Land," adopted and re-adopted by the United Methodist General Conference in 2012, 2016, and 2024:

- The United Methodist Church has repeatedly affirmed our solidarity with Palestinian Christians and their message in the original Kairos Palestine Document and has urged all United Methodists to "read about the suffering of Israelis and Palestinians and nonviolent ways of ending the Israeli/Palestinian conflict from the perspective of all faith communities including the "Kairos Palestine" document" of 2009, and

- The United Methodist Church has stated that our church opposes: "continued military occupation of the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem, the confiscation of Palestinian land and water resources, the destruction of Palestinian homes, the continued building of illegal Jewish settlements, and any vision of a "Greater Israel" that includes the occupied territories and the whole of Jerusalem and its surroundings" and

WHEREAS Palestinians in Gaza continue to struggle for survival in the midst of devastation after two years of genocidal assault, while world powers either support or accept plans being developed for endless occupation, dispossession, and ethnic cleansing in Gaza without reference to the inalienable rights and the wishes of the indigenous people of Palestine, and

WHEREAS Palestinians in the West Bank including East Jerusalem are experiencing a terrifying escalation of military operations, settler attacks, expansion of illegal settlements, and ethnic cleansing from their land, which have reached record levels in 2024-2026, with tens of thousands being displaced, entire Palestinian communities being erased, and plans for permanent annexation of occupied Palestinian territory moving forward in the Israeli government, and

WHEREAS, Palestinian Christians, in the Kairos Palestine II document, titled "A Moment of Truth: Faith in a Time of Genocide" and issued in November 2025, have said to us:

- Referring to the original Kairos Palestine document of 2009: "After prayer and reflection on the suffering of our people under occupation, we released that cry of hope in the absence of hope, affirming our faith in God and our love for our homeland, convinced that our struggle is ultimately about human life and dignity," and

- "We live now in a time of genocide, ethnic cleansing and forced displacement unfolding before the eyes of the world. This moment demands from us a new stand, one unlike any before it. It is both a decisive moment and a moment of truth. Today, we renew our stand for truth and our commitment to fundamental religious, theological and moral principles. We look at our reality and take a renewed stand, responding to the voice of the Holy Spirit deep within us, listening to the call of faith in this time of genocide. We renew our message of faith, hope, and love — offering a faith-inspired vision for the time after genocide."

WHEREAS, in Kairos Palestine II, our Palestinian Christian siblings are calling Christians around the world to repentance for past inaction and to costly solidarity today, a call to "learn to do good; seek justice; rescue the oppressed" (Isaiah 1:17), and

WHEREAS Palestinian Christians, in 2009, issued an urgent call to Christians: "to engage in a process of study, reflection and confession concerning the historic and systemic deprivation of the rights of the Palestinian people, and the use of the Bible by many to justify and support this oppression," and

WHEREAS three Christian organizations, including United Methodists for Kairos Response (UMKR), have developed a Congregational Study Guide that provides guidance for in-depth study and discussion of Kairos Palestine II, in addition to valuable supplemental materials for learning, liturgy and more, and

WHEREAS, having heard the Gospel imperative to love our neighbors, pursue justice, and care for the vulnerable, we know that we cannot fulfill that call while remaining silent about the oppression of the Palestinian people and that our solidarity with our Christian siblings in Palestine is urgently needed today, and

WHEREAS the Susquehanna Conference in 2025 adopted the resolution "A Call to Respond to Inequality and Injustice," calling for its congregations to hear the call of Palestinian Christians to the worldwide Church and to learn more about the struggle of the Palestinian people for equality and liberty,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Susquehanna Conference supports the Kairos Palestine II document, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Susquehanna Conference strongly urges its congregations and all United Methodist laity and clergy of the conference to engage in study and discussion of Kairos Palestine II with the Congregational Study Guide found at the website of United Methodists for Kairos Response (UMKR) (www.kairosresponse.org), with the goal of the actions and advocacy called for in Kairos Palestine II to follow, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Susquehanna Conference urges each voting member to bring this resolution to their congregation.

Submitted by:
Lisa Bender, Justin Seward, Rev. Dr. Paul Amara, Rev. D. Wayne Bender, Deaconess Allison Francesco, Rev. Dr. Lenore Hosier, Rev. Rick Noll, Rev. Penelope Rahm, Rev. Jason Schwartzman, Rev. Paul Zieber, Don Reasoner, Phyllis Terwilliger

The Conference Board of Global Ministries recommends concurrence.

RES 8 – Gun Violence Prevention and Support of Community Violence Intervention (CVI) Programming

ACTION:

WHEREAS, "1,600 Pennsylvanians die from gun violence every year. 3,000 more are injured. This preventable catastrophe is uniquely American, and it impacts every Pennsylvanian." (https://www.ceasefirepa.org/issues/gun-violence-in-pa/) and;

WHEREAS, "while firearms are used in a small percentage of suicide attempts, they make up a significant majority of fatalities. The result: firearms are responsible for more than 900 suicides every year in Pennsylvania. No matter the reason, when it is a firearm they are more likely to die. Studies reveal that when a firearm is the method for suicide, it is fatal 9 out of 10 times. Drug overdoses, the most used method to attempt suicide, were fatal less than 1 in 10 times. That explains why firearms make only 5% of life-threatening suicide attempts, but over 50% of fatalities. " (https://www.ceasefirepa.org/issues/firearm- suicide/); and

WHEREAS, St. Paul advised: "Look not to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others." (Philippians 2:4;) and

WHEREAS, "in reaching people with support and education programs, Community Violence Intervention (CVI) Programs build resiliency among those who are most vulnerable and likely to engage in gun violence. In Harrisburg, Group Violence Intervention (GVI) programs have brought community partners, outreach workers, and public safety leaders together to build trust, offer support and interrupt violence cycles before they escalate. And across Pennsylvania, Violence Intervention and Prevention (VIP) grants have supported programs that focus on communities with elevated violence." (The Rt. Rev. Audrey C. Scanlan, Bishop of the Susquehanna Diocese of the Episopal Church in a PennLive Editorial); and

WHEREAS, Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God." (Matthew 5:9); and

WHEREAS, Our Book of Resolutions calls on "United Methodists to prayerfully address gun violence in their context." (2020/2024 Book of Resolutions, #3212, "Our Call to End Gun Violence")

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Susquehanna Annual Conference encourages its congregations to continue to be places that respond to the horrific realities of Gun Violence and be places of Gun Violence Prevention in their communities.

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED that United Methodist congregations and individual United Methodists in the Susquehanna Conference are encouraged to prayerfully consider engaging the following actions as put forth by "With One Voice: Interfaith Leaders United to End Gun Violence, a Pennsylvania-based network of interfaith leaders, ordained and lay, who believe that a community approach to ending gun violence has the greatest chance of success." (Part of the Mission Statement of "With One Voice")

1. Join the "With One Voice" movement by signing on at: https://act.ceasefirepa.org/a/interfaith-signon

2. Advocate, write, call, email, and encourage your State Congressional Representative and Senator to support funding in the Pennsylvania State Budget of "Community Violence Intervention (CVI) programs, which are proven to reduce violence by providing support to those most vulnerable to gun violence." (https://act.ceasefirepa.org/a/interfaith-signon)

3. Support legislation and have for themselves "Safe Storage practices that require firearm owners to secure their firearms when not in use - preventing school shootings, unintentional shootings, and suicides." (https://act.ceasefirepa.org/a/interfaith-signon)

4. Advocate at the local and national level for laws that prevent or reduce gun violence. Some of those measures include:

- Banning Ghost Guns and Machine Gun Converters to prevent people who can't legally buy a gun from building or modifying their own.

- Enabling Extreme Risk Protection Orders (ERPOs) to provide family members and law enforcement tools to temporarily restrict access to firearms to prevent firearm suicides and mass shootings. Closing the loophole in PA's background check system and consistent enactment of universal background checks for all gun sales." (https://act.ceasefirepa.org/a/interfaith-signon)

Submitted by:
Rev. Ryan K. Gephart, Peace with Justice Coordinator for the Susquehanna Annual Conference
The Conference Board of Global Ministries recommends concurrence.

RES 9 – Energy Stewardship as Faithful Discipleship

ACTION:

WHEREAS, Scripture proclaims, "The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it" (Psalm 24:1), and God entrusts humanity with the responsibility to care for creation (Genesis 2:15); and

WHEREAS, Rising energy costs place financial strain on local churches and conference ministries, reducing funds available for mission, ministry, and outreach; and
WHEREAS, Energy conservation and efficiency are practical, achievable steps that can reduce expenses while bearing faithful witness to our commitment to creation care; and

WHEREAS, The United Methodist Social Principles call the Church to protect God's creation, conserve natural resources, and live responsibly for the sake of present and future generations;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Susquehanna Annual Conference calls all local churches, camps, districts and conference offices, and affiliated ministries to practice energy stewardship as an expression of Christian discipleship; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that local church leaders and or trustees, and conference ministries are encouraged to complete an energy audit by the end of June 2027, using resources such as "Measure Your Energy Usage" (pa.gov) or "Energy Audits Handbook (PA Interfaith Power and Light); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that congregations and conference ministries are encouraged to set a goal of reducing overall energy use by 10 percent within two years, through actions such as adjusting thermostats, reducing unnecessary usage, upgrading lighting and equipment, improving insulation, and exploring renewable energy where feasible; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Conference members and church leaders promote education related to energy stewardship, including theological reflection, utilizing resources such as the "resources library" on the UMC Creation Justice website and Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake's "Sources, Ideas and Materials"; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Susquehanna Annual Conference affirms energy conservation as a faithful response to God's call to "act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God" (Micah 6:8), caring for creation, strengthening our ministries, and witnessing to hope for future generations.

Submitted by:
Lisa Bender, Ryan Gephart, Sue Jamison, Rob Kazinski, Kendra Mabon, Rebecca May, Dave Norris, Jean Norris, Tom Sanagorski, Mark Terwilliger, Phyllis Terwilliger, Kristen Wall-Love, Judy Young
The Conference Board of Global Ministries recommends concurrence.

RES 10 – Affirming Mental Health Awareness, Education, and Faithful Response

ACTION:

WHEREAS, the Susquehanna Conference of The United Methodist Church affirms and adheres to the Social Principles, which uphold the sacred worth, dignity, and well-being of every person, including those living with mental health conditions (¶162.X, The Book of Discipline); and

WHEREAS, mental health is an essential component of overall health and well-being, enabling individuals to realize their God-given potential, cope with the normal stresses of life, engage in meaningful work, and contribute to their communities; and

WHEREAS, mental health exists along a continuum, from flourishing and resilience to conditions requiring compassionate support and professional care, and affects individuals across all ages, backgrounds, and life circumstances; and

WHEREAS, approximately one in five adults in the United States experiences mental illness each year, and recent years have seen increased mental health challenges due to social isolation, grief, economic uncertainty, and other collective and personal stresses; and

WHEREAS, individuals and families often turn first to clergy and faith communities in times of emotional distress, and The United Methodist Church affirms the responsibility of faith communities to offer compassion, reduce stigma, encourage appropriate care, and support individuals and families affected by mental health conditions; and

WHEREAS, the Church is called to be a place of refuge, healing, hope, and wholeness, reflecting Christ's ministry of compassion for those who suffer and affirming that seeking mental health care is consistent with faithful stewardship of one's life and well-being; and

WHEREAS, national observances such as Mental Wellness Month (January), Mental Health Awareness Month (May), Suicide Prevention Month and National Recovery Month (September), and Mental Illness Awareness Week (October) provide meaningful opportunities for education, prayer, advocacy, and support;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Susquehanna Conference of The United Methodist Church encourages all congregations to recognize Mental Health Awareness Month in May, including the designation of the third Sunday in May as a Mental Health Awareness Sunday, with a special offering (Advance #4050 or other designated resource) to support mental health education, advocacy, and ministry; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that congregations are encouraged to participate in Suicide Prevention Month and National Recovery Month in September through education, prayer, and engagement with community partners, affirming hope, recovery, and the value of every life; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that during Mental Illness Awareness Week each October, congregations are encouraged to include prayers for those living with mental health conditions, their families, caregivers, mental health professionals, and all who seek healing and hope; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Susquehanna Conference encourages clergy and congregations to promote mental health awareness, reduce stigma, support access to appropriate professional care, and embody Christ's ministry of compassion, healing, and hope for all persons.

Submitted by:
Rev. Renee Ford, Ph.D., Co-Chair Mental Health Ministries Team
The Conference Board of Global Ministries recommends concurrence.

Sources:
The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, ¶162.X (Social Community)
Mental Health First Aid USA
National Institute of Mental Health

Reports

1. Conference Board of Trustees 74
2. Council of Finanance & Administration 79
3. Advance Specials 89
4. Board of Global Ministries 94
5. Board of Ordained Ministry 95
6. Board of Pensions 96
7. Camp & Retreat Ministries 97
8. Commission on Archives & History 98
9. Commission on the Beloved Community 99
10. Communications Ministry 99
11. Conference Lay Leader & Laity Leadership 100
12. Connectional Ministries 102
13. Creation Care Ministries 102
14. Disaster Response 102
15. Historical Society of the Susquehanna Conference 103
16. Mental Health Ministries 103
17. Mission u 104
18. Preachers' Aid Society 104
19. Report of the Conference Cabinet 105
20. Student Aid Fund 105
21. The Bishop's Committee on Interfaith Relationships 107
22. United Women of Faith 107
23. Volunteers in Mission 108
24. The Wesley Foundation at Penn State University 109
25. Young Peoples Ministry Council 110

Mission Updates

26. Center for Spiritual Formation 110
27. Neighborhood Center/Journey Church 111

Affiliated Ministries

28. Africa University 112
29. Candler School of Theology 113
30. Drew University Theological School 114
31. Duke University Divinity School 114
32. Everstand/Therapeutic Health (formerly Board of Childcare) 115
33. Gammon Theological Seminary 116
34. Garrett Evangeical Seminary 117
35. Methodist Theological School in Ohio 118
36. Mission Central 119
37. Pennsylvania Council of Churches 120
38. St. Paul School of Theology 121
39. United Methodist Advocacy in Pennsylvania 122
40. United Methodist Foundation of Pennsylvania 123
41. United Theological Seminary 124
42. Wesley Theological Seminary 125

1. Board of Trustees

The actions of the Susquehanna Conference Board of Trustees seek to assist in the fulfillment of the mission of the Conference through the responsible management, frugal care, and maximization of the fiscal divestment of Conference property, Resources and assets are thus provided that equip local churches to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world by growing spiritual transformational leaders, equipping congregations for vitality, creating new places for new people, and connecting with each other and the world.

Part I. Main Actions of the Board

1. The Annual Corporation meeting of the Susquehanna Conference was held on May 29, 2025. The following were elected as members of the Board of Trustees: Amanda Ridgway (Freedom Trail) in the class of 2027; and in the class of 2029, Clare Pannebaker (Mountain Valley) and Mindy Petrovcic (Mountain Valley). The 2025 Annual Conference session confirmed the other board members from previous elections.

2. At the July 7, 2025, Reorganization Meeting of the Board of Trustees, the following officers were elected for 2025-2026: Barry Robison, President, S. Jeffrey Barnes, 1st Vice-President, and Donald Rowe, Secretary. The Treasurer, Mark Knecht, was elected by the Annual Conference.

3. The Board oversaw the maintenance of five district residences, one staff residence, the Conference Center and, in cooperation with the Episcopacy Committee, the episcopal residence. In 2025, a total of $197,140 from Trustee accounts was expended and allocated as follows: $59,598 for maintenance, $36,518 for capital improvements, $40,234 for taxes, and $60,790 for utilities. This total was $345,128 less than the $542,268 reported for 2024 because 1) the Board chose to use previously escrowed closed church and district residence sale proceeds, to fund $19,263 of significant repairs and capital improvements made to existing residences in 2025, and 2) the vast majority of significant repairs and capital improvements to the residences was accomplished in 2024.

4. Due to the number of churches that continue to close, the Board continues to work with Compass to provide property management services for most of our closed church properties.

5. Facility needs of the Conference Center are also overseen by the Board of Trustees. From February, 2025, through February, 2026, the only major expense was the refurbishment of the restrooms on the Episcopal wing.

6. Attached to this report is the report of the Property and Casualty Insurance Committee, a sub-committee of the Board. Graham Company serves as our Insurance Broker and Philadelphia Insurance Company is the Insurance Carrier. The Board appreciates the work of the members of the Insurance Committee and especially chairperson Roger Woods.

7. S. Jeffrey Barnes was elected by the Board as the Conference's voting representative to the United Methodist Workers' Compensation Trust in which we participate with several other Conference-related United Methodist Corporations. Regular reports from the Trust are received.

8. On December 31, 2025, the Board had the following three restricted investments with the UM Foundation of PA: Crane Trust, market value $1,663,862, Snyder Trust, market value $1,088,898, and Kanarr/Gouldin Endowment Fund, market value of $168,591. Four percent of the average income from the Crane and Snyder Trusts is distributed annually to designated Benevolent Homes. In the year when the principal of the Kanarr/Gouldin Creative Ministry Fund reaches $100,000 as of December 31, the following year's income will be made available to the Appointive/ Missional Cabinet of the Susquehanna Conference for creative ministry projects. A total of $111,917 was distributed in 2025 from the income earned on these three investments.

9. As required in paragraph 1504.23 in The United Methodist Book of Discipline (2020/2024), the Board of Trustees continues to pay the unfunded pension liability of our closed churches from the proceeds of the

sales of those properties. Those figures are determined by employing the same calculation used in the 2022-2023 disaffiliation process.

10. As recommended by the cabinet, the Board of Trustees has been in process of reclaiming possession and control of assets of the following churches under The United Methodist Book of Discipline (2020/2024) paragraph 2549.4b, exigent circumstances:
    Curtin United Methodist Church, 305 Curtin Village Road, Howard, PA 16833-1112
    First United Methodist Church, 15 Shirley Street, Mt. Union, PA 17066-1250
    Weyant United Methodist Church, Mowery Mills and Heritage Street, Osterburg, PA 16667
    Newton-Hamilton United Methodist Church, 169 Church Street, Mt. Union, PA 17066
    Spring Run United Methodist Church, 107 Two Steeples Lane, Spring Mills, PA 16875-0000

11. The Board of Trustees is currently involved in the following court proceedings:
    (1) Lawsuit filed to reclaim possession and control of assets of the Curtin United Methodist Church so as to be used by the Susquehanna Conference for future United Methodist ministry;
    (2) Lawsuit filed against First United Methodist Church, Mt. Union, to reclaim possession and control of assets of First United Methodist Church so as to be used by the Susquehanna Conference for future United Methodist ministry;
    (3) Lawsuit filed against Weyant United Methodist Church, Osterburg, to reclaim possession and control of assets of Weyant United Methodist Church so as to be used by the Susquehanna Conference for future United Methodist ministry;
    (4) Lawsuit filed against Newton-Hamilton United Methodist Church, Mt. Union, to reclaim possession and control of assets of Newton-Hamilton United Methodist Church so as to be used by the Susquehanna Conference for future United Methodist ministry;
    (5) Legal proceedings initiated against Spring Run United Methodist Church to reclaim possession and control of assets of Spring Run United Methodist Church so as to be used by the Susquehanna Conference for future United Methodist ministry.

12. The Council on Finance and Administration, the Conference Finance office and the Conference's outside audit firm have been tasked with verifying and setting all the Conference Fund balances as of 12/31/2025. The Board of Trustees distributed proceeds from the sale of closed churches into the following accounts:

Trustee Closed Churches	Beginning Balance	Income	Expenses	Ending Balance
	$150,000	$8,509	$8,509	$150,000

Respective District Emerging Ministry Unrestricted Non-Urban

	Beginning Balance	Income	Expenses	Ending Balance
Freedom Trail	$ 409,807.58	$ 180,433.75	$ 54,732.20	$ 535,509.13
River Valley	$ 248,022.67	$ 486,802.22	$ 1,375.00	$ 713,449.89
(Former Lewisburg)	$ 381,219.06	$ 0.00	$ 381,219.06*	$ 0.00
North Central Rivers	$ 73,368.39	$ 226,617.54	$ 46,065.90	$ 253,920.03
Mountain Valley	$ 9,155.80	$ 44,663.95	$ 2,077.80	$ 51,741.95
Northern Wilds	$ 65,591.36	$ 204,288.41	$ 15,300.00	$ 254,579.77
(Former York)	$ 255,234.30	$ 0.00	$ 255,234.30*	$ 0.00

*Distributed to appropriate new districts based on closed church location after realignment

Respective District Emerging Ministry Restricted Urban

	Beginning Balance	Income	Expenses	Ending Balance
Freedom Trail	$ 38,486.65	$ 0.00	$ 0.00	$ 38,486.65
River Valley	$ 825,983.77	$ 0.00	$ 75,000.00	$ 750,983.77
North Central Rivers	$ 156,248.54	$ 28,273.07	$ 0.00	$ 184,521.61

EVC: New Church Starts/Congregational Vitalization

Beginning Balance	Income	Expenses	Ending Balance
$1,073,978.85	$ 512,877.59	$ 0.00	$ 1,586,856.44

13. Received $119,290.23 from the estate of William J. Brunner. The funds were added to the Connectional Ministries budget for mission and ministry work across the Susquehanna Conference.

14. Received $100,000 from the estate of Jeanne H. Smay. Per the terms of the bequest, the funds were added as an endowment to the Camp and Retreats Ministry budget.

15. At the request of the Disaster Relief and Volunteers-in-Mission ministries, the Board sold three of the nine VIM/DRT trailers selected by the VIM/DRT Coordinator, splitting the total proceeds of $2,800 between the two ministries. Negotiations are in process to sell a fourth trailer.

16. The Board covenanted with the North Central Rivers Superintendent to allow the Lakeville United Methodist Church congregation, placed under interim administration due exigent circumstances declared on August 3, 2024, to continue to worship only in the building until it could be determined whether or not the congregation would be able to continue, a restart could be launched at this site, or the property could be used for another United Methodist ministry. Similar covenants were made with the Freedom Trail Superintendent to establish ministries at the McKee United Methodist Church and Lemasters United Methodist Church properties. It is anticipated that action will be taken at this Annual Conference to reinstitute the Lakeville congregation. Efforts to revitalize or establish ministry at the Lemasters site were not successful and so that property will be sold. Efforts are still underway at the McKee site to revitalize or create ministry there.

17. Successfully petitioned the Orphans' Court Division of the Court of Common Pleas of Dauphin County to terminate a trust held by the former Highspire United Methodist Church, which closed November 7, 2024, and transfer the assets of the trust to the Harrisburg Grace United Methodist Church.

18. Successfully petitioned the Wyoming County Orphan's Court to claim possession of the former East Lemon United Methodist Church, Factoryville, closed June 30, 2024, so as to sell the property with proceeds to be used by the Susquehanna Conference for future United Methodist ministry.

19. Purchased 4 West Fourth Street, Williamsport, from Milton Loyer for $162,000 to continue to be used as the Annex of the Susquehanna Conference Archives.

20. As the successor entity to the real and personal property of the former Richfield United Methodist Church, the Board is working with the Juniata Valley Bank to administer the Pearl M. Basom Trust in keeping with the last joint Will and Testament of Ottomar B. Basom and Pearl Miller Basom.

21. Agreed to convey the Lenore Alexander Playground, located on the corner of Kelker and North Third Streets, Harrisburg, to The Journey United Methodist Church as part of the transfer of the Neighborhood Center property to The Journey.

22. In cooperation with the Finance Office and the Council on Finance and Administration, an Executive Administrative Assistant for the Board of Trustees was hired. This part-time position will be funded from property proceeds of closed churches.

Part II: Schedule of Property

1. Conference Center
2. Episcopal Residence
3. Staff Residence
4. Freedom Trail District Residence
5. River Valley District Residence
6. North Central Rivers District Residence
7. Mountain Valley District Residence
8. Northern Wilds District Residence
9. Camp: Wesley Forest, White Mountain Road, PO Box 35, Weikert 17885
10. Shoemaker Mission Central Hub, 571 West Eighth Street, West Wyoming 18644

11. Historical Church: Old Burlington, US 6, East Smithfield 18817
12. Historical Church: Old Stone, PA 93, west of Berwick, 18603
13. Historical Church: Rock Chapel, Old Oxford Road, Heidlersburg 17325
14. Conference Archive Annex, 4 West Fourth Street, Williamsport 17701

NOTE: Camp Penn is not owned by the Susquehanna Conference but is leased from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Part III: Sale of Property

From report deadline of March 15, 2025, to report deadline of March 16, 2026

2026

Williamstown UMC, 146 East Street, Williamstown, PA 17098. conveyed to Craig Hasson for $90,750 on February 2, 2026

Witmers UMC, 350 Witmer Road, Port Trevorton, PA 17864, conveyed to Witmer Realty, LLC, for $213,000 on January 26, 2026

Shunk UMC, 9881 Route 154, Shunk, PA 17768, conveyed to Robert P. Henderson, Jr. and Ann B. Henderson for $105,600 on January 26, 2026

Dimock Community Church, 9411 State Road 3023, Dimock, PA 18816, conveyed to Two Rivers Church for $70,000 on January 26, 2026

2025

Wesley UMC, 211 South Filbert Street, Mechanicsburg, PA 17050, conveyed to Richard E. Jordan, II, for $700,000 on December 31, 2025

West Fairview UMC and parsonage, 1201 Second Street and 109 North Street, Enola, PA 17025, conveyed to Freedom Biker Church of York, PA for $341,000 on December 22, 2025

Cortez UMC, 967 Cortez Road, Jefferson Township, PA 18436-3902, conveyed to George and Katherine Cardell for $85,000 on November 26, 2025

Shopes UMC, 2745 Waltonville Road, Hummelstown, PA 17036, conveyed to Zimmerman Corp, LLC, for $291,000, on November 20, 2025

Milan UMC, 28291 Rt 220, Main Street, Milan, PA 18831, conveyed to JDS Group Holdings, LLC, for $66,000 on November 17, 2025, after successfully petitioning the Orphans' Court Division of the Court of Common Pleas of Bradford County to clear the title to the property

Milroy UMC and parsonage, 91 South Main Street and 85 South Main Street, Milroy, PA 17084, conveyed to HPW Properties, LLC for $144,000 on November 3, 2025

Mount Zion UMC and cemetery, 590 Mount Zion Road, Dillsburg, PA 17019, conveyed to David Krall for $10,000 on October 20, 2025

Windfall UMC and parsonage, 3351-3363 Windfall Road, Granville Summit, PA 16926, conveyed to David and Amy DeCristo for $192,500 on October 20, 2025

The United Methodist Church of Chinchilla, 105 Church Street, South Abington Township, PA 18411-9363, conveyed to Northeast Child Care Center for $540,000 on October 1, 2025

Richfield UMC, Parish House, and parsonage, 82 Church Street, 87 Church Street, and 90 Church Street respectively, Richfield, PA 17086-9173, conveyed to Susquehanna Valley Mennonite Church for $350,000 on September 29, 2025

Mt. Asbury Camp and Retreat Center, 1310 Centerville Road, Newville, PA 17241, conveyed to Stephen J. Eby or assigns for $1,850,000 on September 19, 2025 **

Salem UMC and cemetery, 3437 New Lancaster Valley Road, Milroy, PA 17063, conveyed to the New Lancaster Valley Community Church for $1.00 on September 17, 2025

Wesley UMC parsonage, 203 Filbert Street Rear, Mechanicsburg, PA 17050, conveyed to Mt. Olivet United Methodist Church for $1.00 on August 11, 2025

Kunkle UMC, 177 Old Highway Road, Dallas, PA 18612, conveyed to the Kunkle Fire Company, Inc. for $1.00 on August 8, 2025

St. John's UMC, 529 Grover Road, Canton, PA 17724, conveyed to Stephen and Cuc Haffley for $68,200 on August 8, 2025

New Germantown UMC and cemetery, 3390 Big Spring Road, Blain, PA 17006, conveyed to Robert H and Mirian G Martin for $28,350 on August 7, 2025
Ohio UMC parsonage, 2578 Ashland Road, Osceola Mills, PA 16666 conveyed to Brian Carter and Kristina Emel for $159,800 on July 21, 2025
St. Paul's UMC, 600 Walnut Street, Penns Creek, PA 17842 conveyed to Jack's Mountain Community Church for $60,000 on July 2, 2025.
Ohio UMC, 2550 Ashland Road, Osceola Mills, PA 16666, conveyed to Morgan Run Community Bible Church, LLC, for $77,000 on July 2, 2025
Mt. Pisgah Trinity UMC, 5615 Mount Pisgah Road, York, PA 17406-9102, conveyed to Shree Jalaram Seva Trust, Inc. for $925,000 on June 10, 2025
Calvary UMC, parsonage and Strait House, 6 Franklin Street, 8 Franklin Street, and 18 Academy Street, respectively, Lawrenceville, PA 16929, conveyed to Larry and Diana Barnes for $187,200 on June 2, 2025
Highspire UMC, 170 Second Street, Highspire, PA 17034, conveyed to Prime Realty Solution 4U, LLC, for $288,200 on May 13, 2025
Asbury UMC, 720 Delaware Street, Scranton, PA 18509-1916, conveyed to Hope Church (PCA) for $275,000 on May 7, 2025
Warfordsburg UMC and cemetery, Palmers Lane, Warfordsburg, PA 17267, conveyed to Warfordsburg Lodge #601 I.O.O.F. for $5,000 on April 17, 2025
Carrick UMC and cemetery, 7003 Path Valley Road, Fannettsburg, PA 17224, conveyed to Michael A. Jones for $200,000 on April 14, 2025
Mt. Zion UMC and cemetery, 1392 Dresslers Ridge Road, Richfield, PA 17086, conveyed to Mount Zion Cemetery Association of Knousetown for $50,000 on March 20, 2025

*** The proceeds of the sale of Mt. Asbury Camp and Retreat Center were transferred to the Camp and Retreat Ministry of the Susquehanna Conference*

Settlements pending post report deadline of March 15, 2026

Witmers UMC parsonage, 2254 S Susquehanna Trail, Port Trevorton, PA 17864
St. Paul's UMC (Nordmont) 94 Christian Camp Road, Muncy Valley, PA 17758

NOTE: The full Chronological Record of Properties of the Susquehanna Conference Sold since 2010 can be accessed by contacting the Conference Archivist, Dr. Milton Loyer.

Part IV: Closed Churches and Cemeteries

Cemeteries

**Indicates title search under review to determine ownership*

1. Methodist Episcopal Cemetery, 104 Blain Road, Blain, PA 17006 — River Valley District
2. Williamstown Methodist Cemetery, 101-109 Cemetery Road, Williamstown, PA 17098 — River Valley District
3. Seybert Cemetery, 332 West Market Street, Williamstown, PA 17098 — River Valley District
4. Forest Emmanuel Cemetery, 4604 Winburne/Munson Road, Morrisdale PA 16858 — Mountain Valley District
5. Pennsylvania Furnace ME Cemetery, Whitehall Road, Pennsylvania Furnace, PA* — Mountain Valley District
6. Mt. Pleasant (aka Fisher) Cemetery, 941 Ridge Road, Jersey Shore, PA 17740 — Northern Wilds District
7. Prattville Cemetery, 967 Prattville Road, Leraysville. PA 18829 — North Central Rivers District
8. Green Village Cemetery, 5305 Greenvillage Road, Chambersburg, PA 17202 — Freedom Trail District

Closed Churches (reversion clauses in effect)

1. Girdland UMC, 873 Oregon Pike, Honesdale, PA 18431, interim administration under exigent circumstances
2. St. Paul's UMC (Nordmont), 94 Christian Camp Road, Muncy Valley, PA 17758
3. Union Corners UMC, 1965 Water Road, Towanda, PA 18848 (closed February 24, 2024)

Closed Churches/Properties since May 28, 2025

1. Trinity UMC, New Freedom, 101 N 2nd Street, New Freedom PA 17349, January 31, 2026
   Trinity UMC parsonage, 144 Bond Street, New Freedom, PA 17349
2. St. Paul's UMC (Nordmont) 94 Christian Camp Road, Muncy Valley, PA 17758, September 30, 2025
   St. Paul's Community Center, 3 Christian Camp Road, Muncy Valley, PA 17758

3. Witmers UMC, 350 Witmer Road, Port Trevorton, PA 17864-9552, September 21, 2025
   Witmers UMC parsonage, 2254 South Susquehanna Trail, Port Trevorton, PA 17864
4. Crever Memorial UMC 291 Main Street, Petersburg, PA 16669, July 20, 2025
5. Shopes UMC, 2652 Waltonville Road, Hummelstown, PA 17036, July 19, 2025
6. Kunkle UMC, 177 Old Highway Road, Dallas, PA 18612, June 30, 2025
7. Dimock Community Church, 9411 State Route 3023, Dimock, PA 18816, June 29, 2025
8. West Fairview UMC, 1201 East Second Street, Enola, PA 17025, June 9, 2025
   West Fairview UMC parsonage, 109 North Street, Enola PA 17025

Interim Administration exercised due to exigent circumstances since May 28, 2025

1. Mount Zion UMC, 590 Mount Zion Road, Dillsburg, PA 17109, October 20, 2025
2. Spring Run UMC, 107 Two Steeples Lane, Spring Mills, PA 16875. February 4, 2026

Respectfully submitted, Roger Woods, Chair; and Barry C. Robison, President

2. Council of Finanance & Administration

This report contains the following items, in order:

1. Audit
2. General Policy (no changes)
3. Investment Policy (no changes)
4. **Update on remaining Seedling loans**
5. **Update on Seedling Legacy Grant Program**

Item 1: Audit

The 2025 audit was performed by McKonly & Asbury. The audit and the auditor's opinion will be available through the Treasurer's Office, either digitally or in print, to lay and clergy members of the conference.

McKONLY & ASBURY Tax Assurance Consulting Accounting

April 9, 2026

Council of Finance & Administration and
Mr. Mark Knecht, Conference Treasurer and Benefits Officer
Susquehanna Conference of the United Methodist Church
303 Mulberry Drive
Mechanicsburg, PA 17050

Dear Council of Finance & Administration and Mr. Knecht:

We have audited the financial statements of Susquehanna Conference of the United Methodist Church (the Conference) as of and for the year ended December 31, 2025, and have issued our report thereon dated April 9, 2026. Professional standards require that we advise you of the following matters relating to our audit.

Our Responsibility in Relation to the Financial Statement Audit

As communicated in our engagement letter dated November 12, 2025, our responsibility, as described by professional standards, is to form and express an opinion about whether the financial statements that have been prepared by management with your oversight are presented fairly, in all material respects, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. Our audit of the financial statements does not relieve you or management of its respective responsibilities.

Our responsibility, as prescribed by professional standards, is to plan and perform our audit to obtain reasonable, rather than absolute, assurance about whether the financial statements are free of

material misstatement. An audit of financial statements includes consideration of the system of internal control over financial reporting as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control over financial reporting. Accordingly, as part of our audit, we considered the system of internal control of the Conference solely for the purpose of determining our audit procedures and not to provide any assurance concerning such internal control.

We are also responsible for communicating significant matters related to the audit that are, in our professional judgment, relevant to your responsibilities in overseeing the financial reporting process. However, we are not required to design procedures for the purpose of identifying other matters to communicate to you.

Planned Scope and Timing of the Audit
We conducted our audit consistent with the planned scope and timing we previously communicated to you.

Council of Finance & Administration and
Mr. Mark Knecht, Conference Treasurer and Benefits Officer
Susquehanna Conference of the United Methodist Church

Compliance with All Ethics Requirements Regarding Independence
The engagement team; others in our firm, as appropriate; our firm; and our network firms have complied with all relevant ethical requirements regarding independence.

To ensure our firm maintains compliance with all relevant ethical requirements regarding independence, we have developed procedures and implemented safeguards that enable us to identify and address potential threats to independence both within our firm and with any network firms or contractors we utilize. Our engagement identified the preparation of the financial statements as a significant threat to independence. To reduce this threat to an acceptable level, safeguards were applied, including the performance of an engagement quality control review by a member of our firm that was independent of the preparation of the financial statements.

Significant Risks Identified
Our audit standards require we communicate significant risks identified in the planning phase and that we design our audit to provide reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free of material misstatement whether caused by error or fraud. Accordingly, we have identified improper revenue recognition, contributions, and management override of controls as significant fraud risks.

Qualitative Aspects of the Conference's Significant Accounting Practices

Significant Accounting Policies

Management has the responsibility to select and use appropriate accounting policies. A summary of the significant accounting policies adopted by the Conference is included in Note 2 to the financial statements. As described in Note 2 to the financial statements, during the year, the Conference changed its allowance for loan loss valuation by adopting Accounting Standards Update (ASU) 2025-05, *Financial Instruments – Credit Losses (Topic 326): Improvements to the Accounting for Credit Losses*. No matters have come to our attention that would require us, under professional standards, to inform you about (1) the methods used to account for significant unusual transactions and (2) the effect of significant accounting policies in controversial or emerging areas for which there is a lack of authoritative guidance or consensus.

Significant Accounting Estimates and Related Disclosures

Accounting estimates and related disclosures are an integral part of the financial statements prepared by management and are based on management's current judgments. Those judgments are normally based on knowledge and experience about past and current events and assumptions about future events. Certain accounting estimates are particularly sensitive because of their significance to the financial statements and because of the possibility that future events affecting them may differ markedly from management's current judgments.

The most sensitive accounting estimates affecting the financial statements are the allowance for loan losses and allocation of functional expenses.

Council of Finance & Administration and
Mr. Mark Knecht, Conference Treasurer and Benefits Officer
Susquehanna Conference of the United Methodist Church
Financial Statement Disclosures

Certain financial statement disclosures involve significant judgment and are particularly sensitive because of their significance to financial statement users. The most sensitive disclosures affecting the Conference's financial statements relate to pensions (Note 7) and liquidity (Note 10).

Significant Difficulties Encountered during the Audit

We encountered no significant difficulties in dealing with management relating to the performance of the audit.

Uncorrected and Corrected Misstatements

For purposes of this communication, professional standards also require us to accumulate all known and likely misstatements identified during the audit, other than those that we believe are trivial, and communicate them to the appropriate level of management. Further, professional standards require us to also communicate the effect of uncorrected misstatements related to prior periods on the relevant classes of transactions, account balances or disclosures, and the financial statements as a whole. We are pleased to report that there are no corrected or uncorrected misstatements that were identified during the audit.

Disagreements with Management

For purposes of this letter, professional standards define a disagreement with management as a matter, whether or not resolved to our satisfaction, concerning a financial accounting, reporting, or auditing matter, which could be significant to the Conference's financial statements or the auditor's report. No such disagreements arose during the course of the audit.

Representations Requested from Management

We have requested certain written representations from management, which are included in the management representation letter dated April 9, 2026.

Management's Consultations with Other Accountants

In some cases, management may decide to consult with other accountants about auditing and accounting matters. Management informed us that, and to our knowledge, there were no consultations with other accountants regarding auditing and accounting matters.

Other Significant Matters, Findings, or Issues

In the normal course of our professional association with the Conference, we generally discuss a variety of matters, including the application of accounting principles and auditing standards, significant events or transactions that occurred during the year, operating conditions affecting the Conference, and operating plans and strategies that may affect the risks of material misstatement. None of the matters discussed resulted in a condition to our retention as the Conference's auditors.

Council of Finance & Administration and
Mr. Mark Knecht, Conference Treasurer and Benefits Officer
Susquehanna Conference of the United Methodist Church

This report is intended solely for the information and use of those charged with the governance and management of Susquehanna Conference of the United Methodist Church and is not intended to be, and should not be, used by anyone other than these specified parties.

McKonly & Asbury, LLP

Camp Hill, Pennsylvania
April 9, 2026

McKONLY & ASBURY

Item 2: General Policy

At the 2025 Session of the Susquehanna Annual Conference Session, the following general policies were adopted. (Please note: Thesse policies are compiled and updated from policies previously approved in 1997, 2012, 2018, and 2019.) They are provided here for convenience.

General Policy

Council on Finance and Administration

The Council on Finance and Administration (CF&A) makes the following recommendations to the Annual Conference for consideration and action:

1. All pastors/lay members shall call to the attention of their local administrative body (ex. Church Council, Administrative Board, Leadership Team, etc.) and local church treasurers that Shares of Ministry shall be remitted at least monthly to the Conference Treasurer along with the church's premiums for Property and Casualty Insurance, Health Insurance and Pension Payments.
   - Contributions to benevolences shall not be used for any causes other than that for which they were given.
   - In order that all phases of our church administration be conducted with good business procedure, it is expected that each local church pay their Shares of Ministry, insurance responsibilities and pension payments in full. Failure to complete these connectional responsibilities will require that the local church prepare a remedial plan to address its financial situation. This plan will be shared by the pastor with the District Superintendent and with the CF&A, and will be reviewed at the church's annual church conference until the church is 100% in compliance.
2. In the event payments of Shares of Ministry fall short of the Budget, the CF&A shall determine where to adjust the Budget.
3. In the event that funds received in the Benevolence Budget exceed actual expenditures, then the additional funds shall be distributed within Conference Benevolence as determined by CF&A.
4. The line items for Social Ministries and Health Care Ministries will be administered by a grant process by the Conference Board of Global Ministries.
5. All requests for conference funds for inclusion in the Conference's Annual Budget shall be submitted to the CF&A for review and recommendation, as according to the CF&A's budget proceedings, before being presented to the Annual Conference for adoption. Failure to submit a request may necessitate he proposed ministry being removed for consideration from the conference budget for that year. In order to be good stewards of God's resources, all requests for funds will include an evaluation of past and current ministries, and the missional reasons for new ministries. CF&A will encourage all agencies, committees, boards, and commissions to begin to work on a quadrennial budget plan in order to be more financially responsible and to be better stewards of God's resources.
6. In case of oversight of any essential budgetary item, the CF&A is authorized to make such adjustments as necessary.
7. In compliance with the 2016 Book of Discipline, the Council draws attention to disciplinary paragraph 614.5.a and b, regarding conference-wide appeals. Appeals approved by the Annual Conference must be implemented within the next conference year.
   a. No Annual Conference agency or interest, including any related agency or institution such as a school, college, university, hospital, home, housing project, or other service institution, shall make a special Conference-wide appeal to the local churches for funds without the approval of the Annual Conference upon recommendation of the CF&A, except in case of an extreme emergency, when such approval may be given by a two-thirds vote of the District Superintendents and of the CF&A, acting jointly. Neither shall special Conference-wide appeals to local churches for funds be made by such boards, interests, agencies, or institutions that are not related to the Annual Conference in which the appeal is to be made, unless approval for such an appeal is granted by the Annual Conference upon recommendation of the CF&A.

b. When application is made to the Council for the privilege of a special Conference-wide financial appeal, whether by special collections, campaigns, or otherwise, the CF&A shall investigate the application and its possible relation to other obligations of the Conference, and in the light of the facts, make recommendations to the Conference for its action and determination. If application for privilege of a special appeal is made directly to the Conference, the application shall be referred to the CF&A before final action is taken.

8. No board, commission or committee shall be entitled to payment of a deficit not previously authorized or as approved by CF&A.

9. No unused funds of any budgetary line item (unless specifically permitted by the Discipline, or action of the Annual Conference, or exempted by CF&A) can be carried over from one year to the next. Funds are only available for the budgeted year.

10. Funding for any task force established in the Annual Conference without funding from their own administrative account must be authorized by CF&A.

11. In compliance with auditing procedures recommended by the Auditor of our Conference funds, all vouchers presented to the Treasurer, including miscellaneous items, shall include the date of purchase, the name of the item or service purchased, and required signature(s).

12. Mileage for conference employees for reimbursement shall be paid at the rate set by the Internal Revenue Service. Expenses will be reimbursed only upon submission of a travel voucher.

13. Volunteers eligible for travel reimbursement for official meetings of Annual Conference agencies shall be paid at the rate set by the Internal Revenue Service. Expenses will be reimbursed only upon submission of a travel voucher. The Council strongly urges carpooling when practical.

14. Pastors shall be compensated for services rendered. Pastors shall not receive salary payments in advance.

15. The Annual Conference through Shares of Ministry shall pay for the cost of a pastor's move according to the moving policy of the Annual Conference.

16. Retired clergy or the surviving spouse of clergy shall be eligible to receive one retirement move as according to the moving policy of the Annual Conference. This retirement move unrelated to an appointment must occur within five years of the annual conference at which their retirement was recognized. When a pastor is going to or returning from sabbatical leave, leave of absence, retirement, special assignment, or incapacity leave, the cabinet shall be authorized to negotiate the amount of reimbursement for the cost of the move.

17. In keeping with good business procedure and the 2016 Book of Discipline, paragraph 258.4a, all financial income in the local church shall be counted by two or more unrelated persons.

18. Each local church will conduct an Annual Audit that will be shared with the District Superintendent and at the church's next annual charge conference for adoption and review.

19. All statistical reports shall be submitted to the Conference Finance Office by January 31. Shares of Ministry are calculated using selected statistical data submitted by each pastor on these End-of-Year reports.

20. Expenses associated with church-provided pre-school, day-care, elder-care, and college campus ministries under direct, complete and active control of the local church shall *not* be included in statistical information. These expenses will be captured in a separate form to be used for the benefit of underwriting Workers Compensation insurance, through United Methodist Workers' Compensation Trust.

21. The formula for calculating Shares of Ministry shall be recommended by the CF&A and approved by the Annual Conference.

22. In recognition that members attending the Annual Conference sessions receive some financial support through the Conference Budget, each member shall be required to pay the additional costs to attend Annual Conference at the time of the pre-registration application. This fee will be calculated annually by the Conference Sessions Committee.

23. The CF&A encourages all conference committees, agencies, boards, and committees to move to electronic forms of communication whenever possible.

24. New Church Starts and New Sites/Fresh Expressions: Over the decades of our history, we know starting new congregations that flourished and became active participants in the ministry and mission of the United Methodist Church (and its antecedents) was and continues to be a blessing, not only to our journey together, but also to the entire world. As we look to the future, it is incumbent on us to encourage, start, and support new opportunities to grow communities of faith. In order to accomplish this, and over a period of years enable these new opportunities to flourish and in turn support the shared ministry and mission of the Annual Conference, the following will guide churches in how new beginnings will figure into the calculations of the Annual Conference Financial Plan and shared by all through Shares of Ministry:

A. New Church Starts - New Church starts will have no Shares of Ministry for the first year. After one year, they will tithe their offerings (with the exceptions of restricted endowments and missional money going outside church expenses) to the Annual Conference until they are chartered. After chartering, they will be phased in to paying their full Shares of Ministry starting at 25% and increasing 25% over the following three years until their Shares of Ministry are being paid in full.

B. New Sites and Fresh Expressions - New Sites and Fresh Expressions approved by and through the local congregation, and approved by the Full Cabinet; new site/fresh expression costs in the first year will be exempted from church expenses and considered a missional expense. For the next two years, they will tithe the income of the site/fresh expression to the Conference. Following the second year, the costs associated with the new site/fresh expression will be phased into the base church's yearly expense at a rate of 25% per year until all expenses of the new site/fresh expressions is considered part of the base church's financial calculations. (Please note: The full cost of the base church appointed pastor will be considered part of the base church's calculations.)

Item 3: Investment Policy

The Council on Finance and Administration has made two changes to the conference investment policy. One is to remove references to Seedling Financial Ministry, which has discontinued operations. The other is to correct typographical errors. This policy rests solely with the Council and is not voted on by the annual conference.

Investment Policy Statement
Susquehanna Annual Conference, The United Methodist Church
2024 March 14

Definition and Purpose

In recognition of its fiduciary responsibilities and the mandate of the Book of Discipline (¶ 613.5) the **Susquehanna Annual Conference (Conference)** has developed the following Investment Policy Statement (IPS). This IPS shall comply with the policies related to conflict of interest and investment management of Conference pension and pension related funds under ¶ 1508 of the Book of Discipline. This IPS applies to all of the assets owned by the Susquehanna Annual Conference (Funds) including but not limited to the following entities:

- **Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits (CBOPHB); Conference Board of Trustees (CBT); Conference Council on Finance and Administration (CFA); and other Conference boards and agencies.**
- **Address: 303 Mulberry Drive, Mechanicsburg, Pa. 17050; and**
- **Contact person authorized to conduct business on behalf of the Investment Committee or Council: Conference Treasurer.**

The purpose of this policy is as follows:

- to establish the responsibilities of the **Investment Committee (Committee)**, as well as those of the service providers hired to help implement the IPS:
- to clearly define investment goals, and other operational guidelines.
- to establish asset allocation parameters, risk tolerance and an investment strategy that is consistent with the investment goals and guidelines.
- to establish effective communication procedures between the Committee and the investment managers; and
- to create a formal review process for reviewing this IPS.

The intent of this IPS is to provide guidelines that are specific enough to be meaningful but also flexible enough to take into account practical considerations. This IPS should be reviewed by the Committee at least annually, or in circumstances where projected spending needs or investment circumstances change materially.

The standard of care when making decisions is the Prudent Expert Standard, defined as:
"... the care, skill, prudence and diligence under the circumstances then prevailing that a prudent person acting in a like capacity and familiar with such matters would use in the conduct of an enterprise of a like character and with like aims."

Responsibilities of the Investment Committee

With regards to the Committee's responsibilities as defined in this IPS, no action identified below as a responsibility of the Committee shall be taken by the Committee without first obtaining the approval or designated authority of CFA by resolution. Therefore, the Committee shall make recommendations to CFA based on the responsibilities identified below. CFA will have final approval authority before any action can be taken on behalf of the Committee. The responsibilities of the Committee are including but are not limited to the following:

(1) to recommend to CFA principles, policies, standards and guidelines for the investment of all monies, assets and properties of the Conference.

(2) to perform all operational functions and make recommendations for changes to this investment policy to the CFA for approval.

(3) to define and develop investment goals, and other operational guidelines.

(4) to designate the investment managers and to discharge investment managers.

(5) to require all portfolios be managed with appropriate consideration to the social principles of The United Methodist Church.

(6) to monitor and evaluate the performance results and risk posture of the investment manager(s);

(7) to establish effective communication procedures between the Committee, CFA, the staff, and the outside service providers.

(8) to monitor and control investment expenses.

(9) to delegate the execution and administration of certain Committee responsibilities as appropriate to the Conference Treasurer; and

(10) to carry out any other duties required for the legal operation of the investments, including but not limited to hiring outside vendors to perform various services.

Statement of Purpose and Financial Requirements

The purpose of Conference investments is to provide financial resources that support the objectives of the Conference for which they were created. The responsible board or agency is accountable for the use of the Funds as designated by the Conference or restricted by the donors. To illustrate:

- **the Board of Trustees Funds shall be used to provide for the care, maintenance, insurance or acquisition of the real property of the Conference.**
- **the Board of Pension and Health Care Funds shall be used to provide for ongoing pension and health benefits obligations of the Conference.**
- **program Funds shall be used to advance the ministries of the Conference.**

Investment Managers and Benchmarks

To achieve its investment objectives and ensure alignment with United Methodist Social Principles, the Funds shall be allocated among one or more funds managed by Wespath, a division of the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits. Other investment managers (Additional Investment Managers) may be considered so long as they maintain the same level of qualifications and commitment to United Methodist Social Principles as Wespath. No Additional Investment Managers other than Wespath and the United Methodist Stewardship Foundation, including any legal successors thereto, (collectively Manager), shall be authorized to engage as investment managers of Conference Funds without prior approval of CFA.

Target Asset Allocations and Rebalancing Guidelines

The purpose of allocating among asset classes is to ensure the proper level of diversification and risk for each portfolio. The primary considerations in the asset allocation decision process are:

- maintaining inflation-adjusted purchasing power.
- growing the corpus of the Funds to meet future obligations.
- achieving a minimum return in excess of inflation but with minimal annual fluctuations in the corpus; and
- maintaining the longevity of the assets and their distributions while taking into consideration that there may be no additional contributions.

The following table outlines the names of the accounts with target allocation and the minimum and maximum allocation limits of each asset class:

General Cash Flow and Operating Account

	Target Allocation		
Asset Class	**Minimum**	**Target**	**Maximum**
Equities of all types	10%	30%	50%
Fixed Income Securities	30%	60%	70%
Cash and Cash Equivalents	0%	10%	55%

Reserves and Restricted Account

	Target Allocation		
Asset Class	**Minimum**	**Target**	**Maximum**
Equities of all types	40%	65%	70%
Fixed Income Securities	20%	30%	40%
Cash and Cash Equivalents	0%	5%	35%

Health and Pension Deposit Account

	Target Allocation		
Asset Class	**Minimum**	**Target**	**Maximum**
Equities of all types	0%	10%	20%
Fixed Income Securities	10%	20%	90%
Cash and Cash Equivalents	10%	70%	100%

Equities

The Investment Managers and Additional Investment Managers (collectively Manager) should maintain the equity portion of the portfolio at a risk level roughly equivalent to that of the equity market. Equity holdings may be selected from the Dow Jones 30 Industrials, Standard and Poor's 500 Index and the Russell 2000 Stock Index, and other equities listed on the New York Stock Exchange and/or the NASDAQ markets. The securities should be aimed at appreciation potential and/or income generation. The Manager is prohibited from investing in private placements, letter stocks, options, short sales, and margin transactions. No Funds shall be invested in securities whose issuers have filed a petition for bankruptcy or hedge funds.

Fixed Income

Investments in fixed income securities will be managed actively to pursue opportunities from a variety of sources. The Manager may select from appropriate obligations guaranteed by the U.S. government and its agencies, foreign government, utility stocks, preferred stocks, municipal obligations, and corporate obligations. No Funds may be invested in collateralized debt obligations, auction rate securities, or credit default swaps.

Mutual funds, commingled funds, and funds in general

When mutual funds or commingled funds are used as an investment vehicle, then it is understood the Committee has adopted the specific investment policies of the fund.

Socially Responsible Investment Guidelines

As an Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, we are committed to implementation of the socially responsible investment policies in The Book of Discipline.

"Socially Responsible Investments—It shall be the policy of The United Methodist Church that all general Boards and agencies, including the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits, and all administrative agencies and institutions, including hospitals, homes, educational institutions, annual conferences, foundations and local churches, shall, in the investment of money, make a conscious effort to invest in institutions, companies, corporations or funds whose practices are consistent with the goals outlined in the Social Principles; and shall endeavor to avoid investments that appear likely, directly or indirectly, to support racial discrimination, violation of human rights, sweatshop or forced labor, gambling, or the production of nuclear armaments, alcoholic beverages or tobacco, or companies dealing in pornography. The Boards and agencies are to give careful consideration to shareholder advocacy, including advocacy of corporate disinvestment."

Communication and Responsibility

The Committee shall provide semi-annually to the CFA, CBOPHB and CBT a written account of the investment results, accounting summary and significant developments, if any.

CFA, CBOPHB and CBT shall at least annually review the IPS, the effectiveness of the Committee and the overall results of the investments and will acknowledge in writing that they have done so.

The Manager shall provide the Committee:

- Quarterly or as necessary:
  - a report of the portfolio's holdings,
  - a review of investment performance.
  - a commentary of investment results, in light of the current investment environment and the goals and guidelines.
  - a review of the key investment decisions and the rationale for these decisions.
  - a discussion of the manager's outlook and what specific decisions this outlook may indicate.
  - any recommendations as to changes in goals and guidelines, in light of material and sustained changes in the capital market.
  - any significant change in the manager's investment outlook, ownership or key employees.
  - A report of current investment mix and variance from target (if any); and
  - A report on changes in target allocation.

Records

The CFA, CBOPHB, CBT and the Committee shall keep a proper and prudent record of all important documents, meeting minutes and other information relating to the management of the Funds. They shall be available at:

Address: 303 Mulberry Drive
Mechanicsburg, PA. 17050

Custodian of the Records: Conference Treasurer

The recommendations and approved changes to the IPS may be incorporated directly into the IPS as a revision and restatement or noted in the addendum until such time as the IPS is revised and restated.

Revised and approved March 14, 2024

Item 4: Update on remaining Seedling loans

Seedling Financial Ministries concluded operations at the end of 2024 after fulfilling its obligations to investors. Responsibility for the remaining church loans transitioned to the Council on Finance and Administration.

At the beginning of 2025, 24 Seedling loans were active. During the year, seven loans were fully paid, reducing the number of active loans to 18 at year end. To assist congregations in addressing these remaining obligations, CF&A introduced the Seedling Covenant Program, offering churches the opportunity to enter voluntary covenant agreements with interest-free repayment terms and milestone incentives designed to encourage faithful stewardship and long-term financial sustainability.

Participation in the covenant structure was strong. **Sixteen loans entered the Seedling Covenant Program,** representing the vast majority of the remaining portfolio. As of **December 31, 2025,** the **total remaining Seedling loan balance was $6,978,884.15**, with **$6,886,907.39 (98.68%) participating in the covenant program and $91,976.76 (1.32%) continuing under the original loan agreements.**

The Seedling Covenant Program was designed as a limited-time opportunity **and sunset at the end of the 2025 calendar year**. Beginning in 2026, quarterly Seedling Covenant statements will be sent to participating churches providing updates on balances, covenant milestone progress, available resources, and payment activity.

Respectfully submitted,
Shari Bellish, Kelly Kocher-Ross and Michelle Williams
Seedling Covenant Subcommittee Council on Finance and Administration

Item 5: Update on Seedling Legacy Grant Program

At the **2025 session of the Susquehanna Annual Conference**, members approved the creation of the **Seedling Legacy Grant Program**, an initiative designed to invest conference resources into the renewal and vitality of local churches.

Funding for the Seedling Legacy Grant Program is derived from **earnings generated from the Seedling loan portfolio**, which remains under the stewardship of the Council on Finance and Administration following the conclusion of Seedling Financial Ministries. The principal balance supporting this funding source at the end of 2025 is **$6,978,884.**

While the Seedling Covenant Program focused on resolving remaining loan obligations, the Seedling Legacy Grant Program represents a forward-looking investment in ministry. Guided by the theme **"Reimagine… Repurpose…Revitalize,"** the program encourages churches to pursue projects that strengthen congregational health, expand community engagement, and develop sustainable ministry models.

The program officially **launched April 15, 2026**. Churches may apply for funding to support projects demonstrating strong leadership, measurable outcomes, responsible financial planning, and alignment with the mission of The United Methodist Church.

Applications are reviewed through a structured process that includes consultation with District Superintendents and the Bishop's Cabinet with evaluation by the Seedling Legacy Grant Committee. Final funding decisions are made by the committee under the authority of the Council on Finance and Administration.

Through this program, the Susquehanna Conference seeks to steward resources in ways that encourage innovation, strengthen congregations, and support faithful ministry in communities across the conference.

Respectfully submitted,
Shari Bellish, Michelle Bodle, Kathleen Kind, Kelly Kocher-Ross, Mark Knecht and Michelle Williams
Seedling Legacy Grant Subcommittee Council on Finance and Administration

CF&A recommends the adoption of this report.

JP Bohanan, President,
Susquehanna Conference Council on Finance and Administration

3. Advance Specials

The purpose of this Conference Advance list is to promote mission within the structure or bounds of the Susquehanna Conference of the United Methodist church. These groups have been reviewed by the Missional Board as worthy ministries for second mile giving consideration by the local congregations. These "Advances" are given access to the addresses and contact information for our congregations and are authorized to solicit funds from all United Methodist congregations within this Conference. No other groups are given such access.

1.1 Beloved Community Fund

Contact: Rev. Kristopher Sledge - ksledge@susumc.org or Rev. Kevin Witt - kwitt@susumc.org

The Beloved Community Fund will help Susquehanna United Methodists connect churches to their neighbors, resist racism, promote diversity, support cross-racial appointments and build strong race relations.

1.2 Bolivia Mission Initiative

Contact: Rev. Jennett Wertz, jwertz@susumc.org 307 South St, Lewisberry, PA 17739
(h)717-212-2550; (w)717-938-2093; (c)570-295-6389

The Bolivia Mission Initiative is a multi-faceted connection with our brothers and sisters in the vicinity of Cochabamba in central Bolivia and also with the medical clinic in the La Paz/El Alto area. Children's, Medical, Evangelism, and Community developments programs are all a part of this ministry.

1.3 Daystar Center for Spiritual Recovery

Contact: Fern Wilcox, Executive Director, 125 N. 18th Street Harrisburg, PA 17106; 717-230-9898
admin@daystarrecovery.com

This ministry provides addiction recovery services and requires clients to connect with the spiritual community. They offer daily devotions, individual and group counseling, life-skills training, case management, weekly Bible studies and small group ministries.

1.4 Disaster Response

Contact: Rev. Sara Shaver, 717-766-7441 ext 3402, drc@susumc.org

Through the connectional system of the United Methodist Church and in partnership with UMCOR, the Disaster Response Ministry provides training, assistance, resources, and financial support to the congregations and communities within the Susquehanna Conference to support disaster readiness, relief, recovery, and restoration efforts prior to, during, and after a disaster.

1.5 Endless Mountain Mission Center

Contact: Tammie Storrs, PO Box 201 Troy, PA 16947 570-596-2039 tstorrs@npacc.net
Physical site address: 81 Mission Center Lane, Troy, PA

The EMMC reaches out to people in need in the Bradford County region and is committed to sharing the message of salvation in Jesus Christ. Through creating an atmosphere of trust and compassion people are ministered to in all areas of need.

1.6 Give Ye Them to Eat (GYTTE)

Contact: Rev. Marian Hartman, mhartman@susumc.org

GYTTE was founded in 1977 as a social outreach project of the Methodist Church of Mexico to combat hunger and poverty in the rural sector. The purpose of the "Give Ye Them to Eat" program (GYTTE) is to strengthen the capabilities of marginalized people and communities to meet their basic needs, and to determine and sustain a just and integrated development process. Participatory methods and development tools are used to create conditions in which change can take place from within the communities. The "Tree of Life" training center in Tlancualpican conducts workshops and hands-on opportunities in the areas of health, sanitation, animal care and breeding, agricultural methods such as terracing, composting and irrigation. Workshops also go "on the road" for VBS, Holy Week and Advent resources. The Susquehanna Conference has been sending work teams for over 20 years.

1.7 Haiti Partnership

Contact: Barbara Gay 331 Stinson Lane Tunkhannock PA 18657 570-836-3884 email: skyhaven@epix.net
Haiti Partnership Website: www.haitipartnership.com

The Haiti Partnership's mission is with the people of Haiti to form relationships with them based on mutual respect and love in Christ. VIM Teams are regularly sent, and updated information is available through the website above.

1.8 Mission Central

Contact: 5 Pleasant View Drive Mechanicsburg PA 17050 Phone: 717-766-1533
Emal: missioncentral@susumc.org

Since 2002, thousands of volunteers have come in service to "connect God's resources with human need." We process UMCOR "Relief Kits" for use around the world, provide all types of needed supplies for local and national ministries, and assist many projects that are sending God's love, locally, nationally, and around the world.

1.9 Prison Ministries within Susquehanna Conference

Contact: Rev. Kris Sledge - ksledge@susumc.org

This ministry has expanded to include Exodus Ministry. The Prison Ministries has provided camp scholarships to children of those incarcerated within our congregations, has provided counseling to inmates re-entering the community, and supports local congregations and other groups ministering to those imprisoned.

1.10 Retreat/Camping Ministries

Contact: Kevin Witt, 717-766-7441 ext 3603, kwitt@susumc.org

The Susquehanna Conference's camp and retreat ministry provides five sacred spaces whose goal is to cultivate authentic connections with Christ, community and creation. These places of holy common ground host our conference's summer camps and many religiously affiliated and nonprofit retreat groups throughout the year who are also doing good in the world. This advance supports the work of the conference at Camp Penn, Mount Asbury, Greene Hills, Wesley Forest and Sky Lake.

1.11 Sierra Leone Initiative

Contact: Rev. James Jacobs - jjacobs@susumc.org

SLI provides financial assistance to clergy in Sierra Leone through an affirmed covenant relationship between the Susquehanna and Sierra Leone Conferences and the General Board of Global Ministries.

1.12 The Center for Spiritual Formation

Contact: Rhonda Strauss 717-249-1512 ext. 249 centerformation1@gmail.com

The Center for Spiritual Formation seeks to advocate and demonstrate the disciplines of Christian Spiritual Formation through retreats, seminars, continuing education events, a two-year Ministry of Spiritual Direction Course, a two-year Lay Seminary, and a family-systems tutorial for active clergy. The Center includes a retreat center where events are held as well as the ability to bring workshops to churches located throughout the Conference.

1.13 Volunteers in Mission Advance Special

Contact: Rev. Sara Shaver, 717-766-7441 ext 3105, vim@susumc.org

VIM is a grassroots movement of United Methodists who seek to put their "Christian Love in Action." VIM offers a connectional framework through which disciples can engage in short-term mission journeys locally, nationally, and globally. VIM provides training, resources, insurance, and support to our VIM teams.

1.14 Volunteers in Mission Materials Advance Special

Contact: Rev. Sara Shaver, 717-766-7441 ext 3105, vim@susumc.org

This ministry helps with the costs of materials for VIM work including local mission, domestic and international VIM journeys.

1.15 Wesley Foundation

Contact: St. Pauls United Methodist Church, State College PA 814-237-2163
Sarah Voigt - svoigt.wesley@gmail.com

St. Paul's UMC & Wesley Foundation serves all students at Penn State University Park. The Abba Java Coffeehouse, a mission of campus ministry, serves an aggregate average of 1,000 students a week, providing free Equal Exchange Fair Trade coffee and tea as well as snacks. The Wesley Foundation also provides students a space for internship opportunities, for leadership and mission, faith exploration and worship. The Wesley Foundation at Penn State depends on Conference and Congregational support. Thank you in advance for helping us nurture and care for the students at Penn State. Please use #7100 in the memo for any donations coming through the conference.

District Advance Projects for special promotion and support within those districts (2016 BOD ¶655).

2.1 FREEDOM TRAIL DISTRICT

Altoona District Volunteers in Mission Team

Contact: Joy Shields at vimaltoona@susumc.org·

The Altoona District Mission Team began in March 2006 with Hurricane Katrina and the subsequent need for drastic and ongoing aid. Our VIM team continues to assist victims of natural disasters on the eastern side of the USA. Our VIM (volunteers-in-mission) Teams have one common goal to be "God's Builders", reaching out to help neighbors in need after a flood, tornado, or hurricane. VIM Teams have made over 49 trips and traveled to 16 different states. Altoona VIM is also involved with the Blair County Emergency Management Office in response to local disasters should they occur.

Breezewood Trucker's Ministry

Contact: Bruce Maxwell, Chaplain 814-977-6964 or maxwell.bruce@gatewaytravelplaza.com

Mission Outreach Team for truckers and travelers, through a Chaplaincy Program at Breezewood. "A Friend on the Road" newsletter is available through Bruce Maxwell, Chaplain. You may reach Bruce at maxwell.bruce@gatewaytravelplaza.com or mobile number 814-977-6964. Personal, hands-on opportunities are available.

Faith Break Media Ministry

Contact: Rev. Carol Gathagan 814-742-8209 or cgathagan@susumc.org

Mission Outreach Team for the Radio Ministry. This ministry began in October 1997. The goal is to be a gentle reminder to all people that God loves us and is with us and because of that we have hope for today and the future, no matter what. The radio ministry is heard on Q94 - 94.3 FM, WBRX-Mix- 94.7 FM, WTRN Classic Favorites 96.09, 100.7, 1340am between 10-10:45am and 3-3:35 pm on all three stations. Faith Break is also on the web at myfaithbreak.org and Faith Break on Facebook. The writer and producer of Faith Break, Broadcasting Seeds of Hope, is Rev. Carol Gathagan.

Hungry Hearts Ministry

Hungry Hearts offers Dinner Church every Thursday with a message, music and prayer, followed by a free hot meal to the diverse community of Chambersburg. This ministry also includes a weekly food pantry and clothing ministry. Hungry Hearts opens their space to social agencies that are not conveniently located for the clientele, to be present at these events.

School of Hope (First UMC Chambersburg)

Contact: The Rev. Steve Livermore, slivermore@susumc.org

School of Hope was formed out of an ecumenical partnership with First UMC and UB Salem Haitienne in Chambersburg. Both churches partner together to provide a school for 209 students in Petit Goave Haiti. The partnership also provides a home for a worshipping congregation in Chambersburg, offering ESL classes and other support for our Haitian community. In regular times, a team travels to Haiti at least once a year.

2.2 MOUNTAIN VALLEY DISTRICT

The Mommy Shoppe

Contact: Amy Ritter, Executive Director, amemorysaved@hotmail.com, 814-499-2287

The Mommy Shoppe began as a vision to help pregnant mothers who needed a hand with essentials for 35 their baby, up to kindergarten age, and to offer items free of charge. Soon after it's beginning, the age limit was quickly increased to include older children and pre-teens up to age 18. The Shoppe is open every Tuesday from 7 – 9 p.m., every Thursday from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and again at 7 – 9 p.m. for buy only shopping and volunteers. They are also open for free bag shopping every third Saturday each month from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and the Monday after that from 6 – 8 p.m. Currently, the average attendance for shopping is 65-90 families a month with 150-200+ children served a month. There are over 700 registered families. Clients include single mothers, fathers, grandparents raising grandchildren and foster parents, as well as two parent families who struggle with unemployment or under employment. In February of 2017, The Shoppe applied for 501(c)3 status and was approved. The Shoppe is a store, with all clothing tagged and sized. The families registered for free items can choose up to a bag of clothes, per child per month at no cost. The volunteers with The Mommy Shoppe are excited and humbled in realizing that this is making a difference in the community.

Wesley Foundation

Contact: St. Pauls United Methodist Church, State College PA 814-237-2163

Sarah Voigt - svoigt.wesley@gmail.com

St. Paul's UMC & Wesley Foundation serves all students at Penn State University Park. The Abba Java Coffeehouse, a mission of campus ministry, serves an aggregate average of 1,000 students a week, providing free Equal Exchange Fair Trade coffee and tea as well as snacks. The Wesley Foundation also provides students a space for internship opportunities, for leadership and mission, faith exploration and worship. The Wesley Foundation at Penn State depends on Conference and Congregational support. Thank you in advance for helping us nurture and care for the students at Penn State. Please use #7100 in the memo for any donations coming through the conference.

2.3 NORTH CENTRAL RIVERS DISTRICT

Shoemaker Mission Central HUB

Contact: HUB Coordinators: Kristi Lyons, kristiliumc@gmail.com or 570-262-0382 and Sally Kennard (570-333-4218) for furniture needs

The former Shoemaker Memorial Church, West Eighth Street, Wyoming, has been transformed into a Mission Central HUB of Mission Central, located in Mechanicsburg, PA. Under the leadership of the Kristi Lyons and the local Board of Directors, the Mission Central HUB will be a place where groups can come to assemble various types of response and relief kits, provide resources and furniture for persons in need, and eventually offer places to study and worship for folks who traditionally find it hard to enter the doors of our churches.

Elm Park African Ministry

Contact: Rev. Mike Bealla, mbealla@susumc.org 570-342-8263

With a growing number of Central African families finding homes in the Scranton Area, Elm Park has been blessed in its ministry with this community. This vital ministry provides for weekly worship services (in Swahili and English), assistance to refugee families, English as a Second Language tutoring as well as providing for a African student intern from Drew Theological School. Your gifts to this Advance Special will help support the current and evolving ministries with this growing local mission opportunity.

Greenhouse Project

Contact: Jane Risse 200 Arthur Ave. Scranton, PA 18510 570-344-9186; getGHPinfo@gmail.com

https://scrantongreenhouse.org/

Begun in 2002, The Greenhouse Project (formerly Shalom Scranton) evolved from a Shalom Ministry and is now growing a sustainable community through education, wholesome food and healthy living through programs such as: edible gardening and cooking and focusing on a health and disease prevention through diet and exercise. We operate two community gardens and a 3000 sq. ft. greenhouse in Nay Aug Park. Recipients of the 2019 Environmental Partnership Award and with many programs specially designed to serve senior citizens as well as school field trips, we offer free and low-cost education programs.

The Nescopeck Area Community Cupboard (NACC):
Address: 650 Harter Ave, Nescopeck, PA, 18635; Phone: (570) 752-3502:
Provides food to upwards of 200 families who show up at 10 AM on each second Tuesday of each month. NACC gives thousands of pounds of food away with no questions asked of the person, other than proof they are living in the Berwick Area School District.

The Holy Socks and Shoes Ministry:
Address: Berwick First 200 N Market St, Berwick PA 18603; Phone: (570) 752-2591
Provides new socks and shoes to the children of the Berwick Area School District. Holy Shoe and Sock bank: We give a new pair of shoes and socks to all children who come in ages 0 to 18.

Wyoming Valley Habitat for Humanity:
Address: 303 Market Street Kingston, PA 18704; Phone: 570-820-8002;
http://www.wv-hfh.org/ info@wv-hfh.org
Building simple, decent homes with families in need.

2.4 NORTHERN WILDS DISTRICT
Sojourner Truth Ministries
STM is a district mission into God's Frontier to build bridges between the traditional church and those disenfranchised and alienated by it. The initial portal is the Sojourner Cafe where Christ centered fellowship is shared around a table of food and drink. Touching lives with the love and care of Christ is our mission and vision.

Good Samaritan Fund (GSF)
Founded in 1988, the former Wellsboro District GSF allows churches across our district to respond to the financial crises of our community members. Disbursements from the fund are made from the district office, upon request by pastors and laity. Send contributions to the conference treasurer's office # 9060 marked "Good Samaritan Fund".

Danville-Northumberland-Sunbury Cluster Food Banks/Food Pantries
Supports Food Banks and Food Pantries in the Danville, Northumberland, and Sunbury areas. Support goes to each of the established and well-recognized food banks serving their respective communities, as well as the smaller food pantries that reach people who might not be connected to the larger food banks. Reaching out and supporting the need for food and most importantly food security.

Dwell Orphan Care of Columbia/Montour Counties:
Address: 1157 Market St, Williamsport, PA 17701 Phone: (814) 330-6804; https://www.dwellorphancare.org/
We exist to support and encourage foster and adoptive families in Central PA. While mobilizing and equipping the community and local churches so that children have a safe, loving, forever home in which to DWELL

Kingdom Kidz Puppet Ministry:
Address: 11 East Third St. Watsontown, PA 17777; (570) 838-3133; https://hiskingdomkidz.org
A volunteer ministry, mission is "Presenting quality programs through excellent puppetry and providing educational experiences to foster individual creativity in order to encourage others to make a difference and to help us to show people they matter."

Wesley Forest (Camp & Retreat Ministries):
Address: PO Box 35, 58 Wesley Forest Ln, Weikert PA 17885
Wesley Forest Camp & Retreat Center shines upon the western front of our district. Since 1961, it has been a safe haven for kids, teens, and adults of all walks of life to encounter creation, community, and Christ!

2.5 RIVER VALLEY DISTRICT

Amiracle4sure, Harrisburg, PA

Contact: Marsha Curry-Nixon 717-603-0444; amiracle4sure@gmail.com

Amiracle4sure is a nonprofit organization based in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, committed to living out Matthew 25 by serving justice-impacted individuals and their families in Harrisburg and surrounding areas. They provide mentoring for those who are still on the inside and supportive services for them as they transition home. Amiracle4sure hosts an after-school program for children with absent parents as well as providing the essential supportive services for newly released individuals returning home. Their commitment to this ministry is to be the hands and feet of Jesus to those in need. They provide training to local churches and communities who are seeking to serve justice impacted individuals in their families.

Community Cares

Contact: Beth Kempf, Executive Director, 50 West Penn Street, Carlisle, PA 17013 www.morethanshelter.org

Community Cares operates the homeless shelters in Cumberland County, one in Carlisle and one in Shippensburg. The housing crisis is one of the biggest challenges of southcentral Pennsylvania. Community Cares is addressing this crisis head on. In addition to housing assistance, Community Cares provides a wide range of social services, utility assistance, and educational programs.

Daystar Center for Spiritual Recovery

Contact: Fern Wilcox, Executive Director, 125 N. 18th Street Harrisburg, PA 17106 717-230-9898 admin@daystarrecovery.com

This ministry provides addiction recovery services and requires clients to connect with the spiritual community. They offer daily devotions, individual and group counseling, life-skills training, case management, weekly Bible studies and small group ministries.

4. Board of Global Ministries

The conference board of global ministries functions as the conference equivalent of the conference board of global ministries, the conference board of church and society, the conference board of higher education and ministry, and the conference commission on the status and role of women. We work within the conference to grow our discipleship capacity in relation to loving our neighbor. Our work in disaster relief, volunteers in mission, missions, justice, and advocacy creates opportunities for the churches, laity, and clergy of the Susquehanna Conference to grow, by the grace of God, in their ability to love their neighbor.

In 2024, we started organizing a committee on the status and role of women in the conference. At our second in-person meeting since COVID in 2025, the Reverend Jane O'Borski accepted the role of chair of the committee. Several leaders in our conference went to the Church of the Resurrection's inaugural Lead(HER) in 2025. More are going in 2026. The committee is organizing a Clergywomen in Ministry Day to mark 70 years of full clergy rights for women in the Methodist tradition. The Rev. O'Borski is also organizing listening sessions to better understand the realities and challenges women leaders in our conference face.

The Conference Board of Global Ministries continues to fund the positions of Volunteers in Mission coordinator and Disaster Response coordinator. 2025 marked a time of transition for both positions. Michelle Schwartzman and Deb Currinder both stepped down from their positions. Conference leadership hired the Rev. Sara Shaver to fill both roles. The board welcomes her leadership as we seek the best ways to love our neighbor in terms of missions and disaster response.

Our grant committee continues to perfect the process of offering grants. With the annual conference removing social ministry grants from the conference budget, we are seeking ways to use our endowments to continue to offer grants. 2026 marks a year of discernment and experimentation as we seek the best ways to steward the resources entrusted to us. We are blessed by the leadership of Grace Hanft in all this. Churches interested in applying for grants should visit our website (https://susumc.org/cbogm_grants/). We are also thankful for the faithful work of Flo Waybright and her Harvest Home for World Hunger grant team. They continue to work hard to offer grants for food ministries.

Since 2024, the Rev. Mark Terwilliger has served as our Caretaker of God's Creation coordinator, working with the United Methodist Creation Justice Ministries Movement (https://umcreationjustice.org/). We added this position to the board in response to a resolution from the 2024 Book of Resolutions. The Rev. Terwilliger and his team have one of the most popular display tables at Annual Conference. The team encourages individuals and churches to share their best stewardship practices for taking care of the earth.

Since 2009, the CBGM and our predecessors, have offered opportunities to learn about how faith relates to justice and advocacy with the General Board of Church and Society at the United Methodist Building in Washington DC. In 2026, our peace with justice coordinator, the Rev. Ryan Gephart, organized a Juvenile Justice reform Training and Advocacy conference in cooperation with the board's justice team and United Women in Faith to bring the Rev. Kendal McBroom from GBCS to the greater Harrisburg area.

The Rev. Gephart continues to lead the justice team for the board, and the group continues to grow as people come together to share their work and invite others to join them in it. Members of the justice team helped coordinate and take part in the "With One Voice" gun violence prevention event at the state capital on January 28, 2026. The justice team also organized a bus from the conference down to Washington DC to take part in GBCS's Faithful Resistance event on February 25, 2026. GBCS has noticed the work of the team and the Rev. Gephart. GBCS has charged the Rev. Gephart to create a jurisdictional GBCS event with Martha Hill of WV. He has been working hard with Martha Hill and leaders in the jurisdiction to organize justice and advocacy events in 2026.

As chair of the board, I am thankful for the hard work of our board members. I am also thankful for the generosity and faithfulness of the churches, laity, and pastors in relation to their Shares of Ministry responsibilities, the Special Sunday offerings, and to the Advance Specials-your generous support makes our work possible.

Submitted by the Rev. Andrew Burd-Harris, chair

5. Board of Ordained Ministry

The work of the Susquehanna Board of Ordained Ministry involves preparing, equipping, and supporting leaders for ministry within the local church. Beginning in 2024, the Board restructured its work to accomplish this mission more effectively, focusing on three areas: Candidacy, Clergy, and Covenant.

Candidacy – Our Board is working with the Cabinet and episcopal leadership to develop new and effective ways of recruiting gifted candidates for ministry within our conference. One initial step in this effort was a joint trip to Drew Theological Seminary. Through this experience, we hope to learn and refine our methods for identifying and encouraging new candidates. Once individuals are lifted up as candidates, our Board works to help them discern their specific call to ministry and guide them through the process of responding faithfully to that call. This year, we will see that work come to fruition in several ways. We will celebrate the ordination of new elders, commission new provisional elders, and welcome new associate members. In addition, several new local pastors and certified lay ministers will be stepping into new ministries.

Clergy – Our Board also seeks to support and equip the clergy of our conference. Last year, we intentionally highlighted the many opportunities for continuing education funding available through the Board. We are pleased to report that the clergy of our conference made excellent use of these resources over the past year. This support allows our clergy to continue growing and adapting in their ministries, which directly strengthens the work of the local church. We have also worked to provide more online educational opportunities through the Portico system and other platforms. Finally, we have sought to be good stewards of our resources by partnering with other conferences whenever practical.

Covenant – Our Board also serves an important role in ordering the life and ministry of the conference. Our Conference Relations Committee works to ensure that the ministry of the clergy of our annual conference is carried out in accordance with the Book of Discipline. In this way, we seek to ensure that safe, appropriate, and effective clergy leadership is present within our local churches.

We are humbled and grateful to be part of the work of this Board. Together, we are striving to raise up new and gifted leaders for the church, create opportunities for clergy to grow in excellence, and hold one another accountable in our shared calling to make disciples of Jesus Christ.

Thank you for your continued support and prayers.

Stephen P. Salisbury, Chair, Board of Ordained Ministry

6. Board of Pensions

The mission of the Board of Pension and Health Benefits is to care for those who care for the church and our annual conference. Our primary task is evaluating and adapting the conference offered healthcare and pension plans to meet the recipients' needs and plan for the future. In addition we follow the decisions made at sessions of our General Conference. Brothers and sisters, we work for you.

As you are all aware this year we rolled out the new Compass defined contribution retirement plan. Here is what I unfortunately learned over the first quarter of 2026. Some of our colleagues are not very diligent when it comes to reading their emails from our Annual Conference offices or from Wespath. I know you all find that very surprising. However, your Benefits Administrator, Christine Sims, has worked hard to fix some of the misunderstandings caused by that fact, and the new plan is running quite smoothly at this time.

As the board has done several times in the past, we again had an opportunity to help some of our brothers and sisters across our denominational connection to stabilize their pre-82 pensions. while at the same time assisting our own conference to reduce our overall budget. As we have stated previously, doing this we also help stabilize the local church shares of ministry.

Through the work of one of our committee members we were made aware of the needs of widows of clergy who entered into service prior to 1958 when their spouses were essentially told not to work. The BOP, working alongside the Pastoral Care Fund and the Gainer Grimm Trust, sharing equally, have committed $10,800.00 towards this need The BOP staff and committee are acutely aware of the rising health insurance costs. As a committee we are investigating how we can help stabilize the cost to our congregations and our clergy and their families. Please hold us up in prayer as we, along with our partners at Wespath, continue those efforts.

This brings us to the Past Service Rate (PSR) which we know many of you are interested in. The recommendation by Wespath for the PSR increase was suggested to be 1%. This will increase our PSR from $725 to $733.

I would like to personally express my appreciation to Mark Knecht and Christine Sims for helping and advising the committee this past year. I also need to thank each board member who has generously given of their time and expertise in dealing with very difficult decisions. Thank you for your dedication and caring for those who care for the church and our Susquehanna Annual Conference.

Richard "Rick" Conklin, Chair, Board of Pensions and Benefits

7. Camp & Retreat Ministries

Camp & Retreat Ministries have long played a vital role in faith formation and discipleship in the Susquehanna Conference. Many young people point to camp and retreat experiences as formative to their decisions of faith, Christian discipleship, and call to a spiritual vocation. As the noise around us in daily life gets louder and as the pace of life grows faster, our camp and retreat ministries serve as a crossroads of connection and an oasis away from distraction. Programs and spaces are created and designed to enable guests and participants to experience God's love and grace, to be accepted, to bravely try new things, and to be seen, heard, and respected. For so many reasons, this ministry remains vitally important.

Financial investment into our camp facilities and programs is also vitally important. Recognizing this, the Camp & Retreat Ministry Board and Staff Leadership Team have worked with Kaleidoscope, Inc, and a host of stakeholders to develop a Masterplan for facility enhancement and development at Camp Penn and Wesley Forest. A list of Phase 1 projects was identified in the fall of 2025 and will be implemented over the next 3-5 years and funded primarily from the proceeds of the sale of Greene Hills Camp and Mount Asbury Retreat Center. Phase 1 projects include:

- Complete restroom renovations and cabin interior improvements at Camp Penn.
- Renovations to the Dining Hall, Kitchen, and air conditioning in the Rec Hall and Chapel at Camp Penn.
- Renovations and air conditioning of the Wesley Forest Dining Hall.
- Construction of a new high and low ropes challenge course at Wesley Forest.
- Renovation and construction of Cabin Villages at the Welsey Forest Lakeside Area.
- Addition of outdoor creative spaces at Camp Penn.
- Addition of new program elements at the Camp Penn pool and Wesley Forest lake.

We are also excited about two new programs that have recently emerged. Pathways of Partnership began in the spring of 2025 as a series of educational and connectional workshops designed to better equip our local church leaders in engagement within their local communities and to help explore collaborative opportunities with local churches and Camp & Retreat Ministry. Beloved Community Camps began in the summer of 2025 and provide opportunities for CRM to partner with local churches in bringing a day camp experience to local communities while helping to connect the local church to new people, while extending the wide embrace of God to the underserved. In the first year, Pathways of Partnership reached over 80 leaders across the Conference, and nearly 100 children and youth in 4 different communities participated in Beloved Community Camp.

More important than numbers and statistics, the impact of camp is apparent in the stories about the profound ways that young people are experiencing God. As part of the Pathways of Partnership program, each church that sends a leader is offered one full camp scholarship to send a new camper to summer camp. "Kayla" was one of the recipients of a Pathways of Partnership scholarship last summer. Already a teenager, Kayla had never been to a summer camp and had very little involvement in the church.

After camp ended, we heard from both Kayla and one of the church leaders from the congregation that sent her. Since she returned from camp, people have noticed a change in her. Kayla said that although she was nervous at first, she ended up having a great time at camp, and she was blown away by how nice everyone was to her and to each other. Kayla also loved the music and singing, and since she returned home has been trying to teach everyone the camp worship songs she learned. Kayla can't wait to return to camp next year, and she is already inviting friends to join her!

Kayla met God at camp. The things she experienced at camp – kindness, love, and genuine worship – were different than anything she had experienced. Kayla encountered the love of Jesus and the acceptance of a community that welcomed and embraced her. This is why Camp & Retreat Ministry is vitally important – for Kayla and thousands of others like her.

Kristin Hoover, Chairperson

8. Commission on Archives & History

The purpose of the Commission on Archives and History is to collect, preserve and make available for research the records of the Annual Conference and its preceding Conferences, including the various committees and commissions of all those conferences. This includes collecting and preserving the important records of closed churches and of all those churches which have left the United Methodist Church. It includes the acquisition and preservation, where possible, of historic sites of the conferences. The ultimate purpose of the Commission is to help members of the Susquehanna Conference answer the question "how did we get the way we are?"

The records the Commission cares for are housed in two locations. The main one is the Snowden Library of Lycoming College. The secondary location is an Annex on West 4th Street in Williamsport, about two blocks from the College, provided by the Conference Trustees. Lycoming College has provided space for the Commission Archives beginning in 1907 and at least in recent memory has never charged the Commission anything for the generous space it provides. The Conference Archivist is Dr. Milton Loyer, assisted by Robert Baker, a member of the Commission. The many online databases can be accessed by going to the Annual Conference website and clicking on Resources, Archives of SUSUMC.

The Archivist overseas the entire collection. The last several years a significant portion of his time has been devoted to collecting and archiving the papers of closed churches, including in particular those of the churches which have left the denomination. There have been over 140 such churches and that number has significantly multiplied the archival work. In addition, the Commission has experienced a major increase in requests to use the collection. As a consequence the Commission now refers to the Archives as the United Methodist Archives and Research Center.

The work of the Commission is organic in that it never reaches a conclusion. There are always more artifacts to gather. Active churches produce more records every year, and closed church often "find" more records than their members thought existed. A good example of the organic nature of the work is one of the major projects this year: a new roof on Rock Chapel. The roof will last many years, but other parts of the Chapel need attention and the work of restoration continues. The Commission recognizes Cindy Sowers and Rev. Rod Miller for their deep commitment to the restoration of the Chapel.

The Commission manages the Circuit Rider Marker Program. The Marker is given to the families of clergy when she or he dies. The Markers are given by the District Superintendents, but they are procured and made available by the Commission. This was the year for renewing the supply and the Commission thanks the Rev. Brand Eaton for his stewardship of this program.

The Commission has an oral history program, now in the able hands of the Rev. Rod Miller with assistance from several others, including Jennifer Barndt. This program offers to interview retiring clergy. The interviews become part of the digital collection of the Archives thanks to recent changes in technology.

The Commission produces a very professional historical journal: The Chronicle. The journal is the vision and work of Archivist, Milton Loyer. For many years the Commission printed and distributed the journal to every church in the conference. Two years ago the Commission decided to publish the journal on line, with the exception of printed copies for those persons who have chosen to be members of the Conference Historical Society. The Commission welcomes new Society members. Please contact the Rev. Brand Eaton, President of the Conference Historical Society.

John F. Piper, Jr. Chair of the Commission

9. Commission on the Beloved Community

We live out the call to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, including great intentionality in living toward God's vision of Beloved Community represented by those of all tribes, tongues, and nations. We actively work with our Conference, congregations, and communities to establish more inclusive relationships and environments of deep valuing, which includes dismantling racism and the systems that support it. In the end, living as disciples of Jesus Christ will produce mutually fruitful growth in addressing and removing what harms and collaborating in the common good among all who come from diverse backgrounds, races, and cultures. We keep the call of love, societal justice, healing, and dignity for every child of God at the forefront helping to equip faith communities and individuals to take real steps of faith and action that move them forward into Beloved Community.

We celebrate important highlights for 2025-26. In collaboration with the Cabinet and others, a new process of support for clergy, families, and congregations is being implemented for Cross Cultural/Cross Racial appointments. A Civil Rights Journey took place in 2025 to key locations of the Civil Rights Movement to learn and better understand what happened and how Building the Beloved Community continues to be an important aspect of Christian Discipleship today. Leaders from across the Conference will be participating in our next Pilgrimage of Pain and Hope visiting places of significant importance in the Carlisle and Harrisburg region. We will meet with local leaders to learn about efforts and actions underway to respond collaboratively to racism and work for justice and reconciliation. We have launched a series of webinars open to all laity and clergy of our congregations to hear from and be dialogue with inspiring leaders living and teaching the spiritual practice of Beloved Community living. Members of the Beloved Community Commission also were part of an ecumenical organizing team providing a Summit on Urban Ministry. The Commission, also, responds to specific local church and individual requests for teaching, dialogue, and support.

Kristopher R. Sledge and Robin Filmore, Co-Chairs

10. Communications Ministry

The Communications Ministry of the Susquehanna Conference exists to invite, inform, include, instruct, and inspire clergy, laity, and congregational leaders in our shared mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Our work is rooted in helping people stay connected, understand what is happening across the Conference, and be equipped to share the story of God's work in their communities.

In 2025, the Communications Ministry focused on bringing greater clarity, consistency, and connection to how we communicate as a Conference. A key step in this work was conducting a comprehensive communications audit, listening to leaders and laity alike and evaluating our current tools, channels, and practices. This process helped identify both strengths and gaps, and is already shaping a more intentional, strategic approach to how we share information, tell stories, and connect with one another across the Conference.

A significant part of this work was the development of a refreshed Conference logo and visual identity, along with the beginning of a broader set of guidelines to help ensure that everything we share reflects who we are in a clear and unified way. This effort is helping to strengthen recognition, build trust, and more clearly communicate our shared mission across all ministries.

We also continued strengthening our core communication channels. Through a revamped format, the weekly QuikLINK newsletter remained a key tool for sharing timely updates, opportunities, and stories from across the Conference. Additionally, we sought to increase our social media engagement on Facebook and Instagram with compelling graphics and images. Through these platforms and other communications, we worked to highlight the ministry happening in our local churches, districts, and connectional ministries, while ensuring that important information reaches those who need it.

Throughout the year, the Communications Ministry provided ongoing support to Conference leadership and ministry teams, helping to communicate clearly and thoughtfully around important initiatives, events, and sensitive situations. This included working to ensure that messages are more timely, consistent, and grounded in our shared values.

Looking ahead, the Communications Ministry will continue building on this foundation by implementing insights from the communications audit, expanding storytelling that highlights lives transformed through ministry, equipping congregations with practical communication tools, and strengthening the ways we connect as a Conference. Our goal is to communicate in ways that not only share information, but also reflect the love, clarity, and purpose at the heart of our mission.

Matthew Shineman, Director of Communications

11. Conference Lay Leader & Laity Leadership

The Susquehanna Conference Board of Laity has made great strides this year in strengthening our board by adding new members, deepening our relationships and refocusing on our mission to support local congregations in better connecting with their communities.

The Board of Laity includes district lay leaders as well as those nominated for at-large positions, and our ranks have increased in the past year.

Sheryl Hart joined the board last year after being named new lay leader for the Freedom Trail district. And Fawn McCallister joined our Board of Laity last year as the new president of the United Women of Faith. Both have brought a strong sense of commitment to our mission and are eager to work together to strengthen our conference's impact in our region.

This year, the Board of Laity added three new board members, including two youths and a member at large.

At its last meeting, the Annual Conference called on conference boards of laity to add at least two youths to their ranks, and in March the Nominations Committee approved having Charlotte Carpenter and Kylie Kalena to our conference's board of laity. The youths are associated with the Bridge United Methodist Church in Bloomsburg, PA, where Kelly Kocher-Ross is pastor.

In addition, Charlotte's mother Teri Carpenter has been approved as an at-large member of the Board of Laity and is devoted to ensuring youth have a strong voice at all levels in our conference and in our churches. Charlotte and Kylie are full of ideas and energy and have proposed organizing a youth conference that could including youth from Susquehanna and Upper New York conferences. They are most excited about this idea and are ready to help with organizing and promoting the youth conference. We will be working with them to try to bring this conference to reality this year.

These new additions to our lay leadership will help revitalize our efforts to carry out the mission of our conference to "Grow, Equip and Connect" with each other and the world by ensuring youth are actively engaged in our mission.

During the political and social chaos of this past year in our country, our laity has been revitalized throughout the conference and has refocused on being a stronger support for the most vulnerable people in our communities. As lay leader, I have attempted to visit different churches to better understand our expressions of worship and our connection to the communities we serve, and I will continue these efforts in the year ahead. I will seek to visit more rural churches in addition to those within our urban areas.

Working with laity throughout the conference, we have organized forums in person and online to help educate people on the impact of ICE raids on immigrant families, and we have provided spiritual and emotional support for the many families traumatized by government actions in the past year.

We have stood with the oppressed and added our voices to those protesting the brutality of ICE raids. We also have worked to inform our communities about important issues such as gun violence as well as the urgent need for criminal justice reform, especially as it involves youth incarceration in Pennsylvania prisons. This is a vitally important issues that affects Black and Brown youth most of all, many of whom are imprisoned for non-violent offenses and for not paying fines. We are overjoyed that the Peace & Justice commission has

undertaken this issue as a priority in the coming year, and we will strongly support their efforts to end youth incarceration, especially in adult prisons.

We also have supported interfaith efforts to make voices of faith heard at the state capitol to call for stronger gun laws, and many of our laity joined the February march in the nation's capital to urge our leaders to show compassion and respect for human rights in their treatment of immigrants and refugees.

In the coming year, the conference lay leader and board of laity will continue to support initiatives that align with our Social Principles and that are organized by our Beloved Community Commission and our Peace with Justice committee.

It is clear immigration, juvenile justice and gun violence will continue to be top issues for our communities, as well as the repercussions on families from the wars raging around the world, especially in the Middle East. It is likely protests will intensify throughout the nation and the world, and laity will be compelled to help those suffering the impact in keeping with Christ's doctrine to feed the hungry, comfort the widow and orphans, and help the poor, sick and vulnerable.

In keeping with Jesus's guidance to this followers, the conference lay leader has partnered with Grace United Methodist Church to sponsor regular community dinners that include worship designed to serve Harrisburg's poorest people. We have held two dinners during the first part of 2026 at Grace UMC with plans to make them monthly events. The dinners are providing vital ministry to the Harrisburg downtown community as well as to people facing homelessness, including women who are being sheltered at Grace. We have invited Bethesda Mission, which serves homeless men, to participate in the dinners, and they have enthusiastically accepted our invitation to bring people from their shelter to enjoy a delicious meal, to fellowship and to engage in worship.

In addition to our effort to strengthen our relationships within the Susquehanna Board of Laity, we have met several times with the lay leader and board of Upper New York to forge ties with our sister conference. Rather than organize separate webinar events to allow us to engage in dialogue and to build relationships, we have agreed to support the webinars of the Beloved Community Commission in the coming months. We have reached out to let the commission know of our support, which was heartily welcomed.

As conference lay leader, I have been actively involved in interfaith efforts, including participating in the planning committee of the Freedom Seder at Beth El Synagogue in Harrisburg, as well as attending an iftar at Elizabethtown College to commemorate Ramadan.

I have been invited to attend an Eid al Fitr celebration to mark the end of Ramadan at the Hadee Mosque in Harrisburg.

Representing the Susquehanna Conference, I also am active in the monthly UMEIT training and in the Pennsylvania Council of Churches where I serve a treasurer, assisting with financial and fundraising efforts, as well as providing support for projects such as the community garden that is now being developed on its grounds to provide free food for the local community.

Looking to the next year, the lay leader and conference board of laity will seek to strengthen its procedures and outreach in the following ways:

- Establish regular bi-monthly Board of Laity meetings, ensuring our new youth members have active roles and opportunities to share their talents.
- Establish regular quarterly or bi-annual meetings with the Upper New York Board of Laity.
- Remain engage with Beloved Community Commission and the Peace & Justice commission to support their programs and events.
- Continue community outreach in Harrisburg at Grace UMC to sponsor community worship dinners.
- Work with youth board of laity members to sponsor youth event in 2026.

We believe God is moving amongst our laity and sending His Holy Spirit to galvanize us into action outside of our church walls. Our young people have brought new dynamism and expectation to our mission, and we are inspired by their dedication to make disciples of Christ for the transformation of the world.

Joyce M. Davis, Lay Leader, Susquehanna Conference, United Methodist Church

12. Connectional Ministries

The Connectional Ministries team exists to offer support and resources for clergy, laity, and congregations to be the Church by living into our mission as followers of Jesus who make new followers of Jesus. Our ultimate goal is to offer helpful resources and support as Churches discern their next faithful steps, build relationships with the community surrounding the church, engage in faith formation across all ages and stages of life, respond to disasters, and love boldly.

One of the best resources that we have to offer to the Annual Conference is Portico which is an online learning platform. Portico can be found on the Conference website or at this address https://susumc.org/portico/. Once you register on Portico you will find a catalog with a variety of courses that will benefit both lay and clergy in our shared ministries. I urge all of us to become frequent learners on Portico!

In addition to Portico, the Annual Conference provides access to Mission Insite for every church. Mission Insite delivers helpful demographic information about the people in our communities, their needs, and how we might best love our neighbors. As churches discern how to best build relationships with our neighbors, after beginning with prayer, seek out the information that Mission Insite offers.

Last year the Annual Conference approved a resolution to engage a consultant to walk us through a visioning process. As we approach this Annual Conference session we look forward to implementing the next steps so that our local churches can have the greatest impact on their communities.

The Connectional Ministries team including our Volunteers in Mission, Discovery Place, Disaster Response, Lay Excellence, Age-Level Ministries including Camp and Retreat Ministries, and our Grow- Equip team remain committed to connecting the Church with the World. Each of the members of the Connectional Ministries staff look forward to our work together with individuals and faith communities in order to encourage our growth as spiritual, transformational leaders and to help equip congregations for vitality and create new places for new people.

Kathleen Kind, Director of Connectional Ministries

13. Creation Care Ministries

The 2024 General Conference passed a historic mandate requiring every annual conference to establish a Caretakers of God's Creation Coordinator. Shortly thereafter, the Susquehanna Conference Board of Global Ministries adopted the Coordinator as a member of the Board. At the last two Annual Conference sessions, the Conference Creation Care Ministry Team has been collecting information on what local churches are doing to care for God's creation. The Team is looking to expand into every district and to include laity and clergy per the Conference's 2018 resolution to form a Creation Care Ministry Team. The Team presented a resolution, "Energy Stewardship as Faithful Discipleship", at the 2026 Conference,.

Mark Terwilliger, Caretaker of God's Creation Coordinator

14. Disaster Response

This past year we saw a change in leadership in our disaster response. We said good-bye to Deb Currinder, grateful for her willingness to share her heart for those who are suffering during disaster situations.

This past year has been a time not only of transition but also for developing a more comprehensive team so

that we will be prepared in the event of a disaster within our conference boundaries as well as being able to deploy to our neighbors. We are in the process of recruiting district coordinators to enable a more effective communication for those who have experienced a disaster.

This transition also includes intentionally working alongside the Upper New York Annual Conference. Quarterly meetings have been scheduled for our ERTs (Emergency Response Team members). Each member has been trained so that they are prepared at a moment's notice to deploy immediately. We are always encouraging those who feel called to become a part of this elite group of servants.

While we always hope and pray that a disaster won't occur, we also want to be ready.

Respectfully submitted,
Sara Shaver, Disaster Response Coordinator

15. Historical Society of the Susquehanna Conference

The Historical Society of the Susquehanna Conference promotes the study of the history of The Susquehanna Conference of The United Methodist Church and its predecessor bodies. The Society also serves to resource local churches in the preservation and dissemination of their particular histories. It works with the Conference Commission on Archives and History in collecting and preserving documents, artifacts, stories, and other data relating to the organization and history of the Annual Conference and its local churches.

In 2025, our annual journal, The Chronicle, published in cooperation with the Conference Commission on Archives and History, moved to a digital publishing platform. This was done in the interest of good stewardship and the broadest possible circulation. While a limited run of print copies is still made available to Historical Society members, the general public may view the most recent edition digitally on the Conference Archives page of the Conference website.

The Historical Society website can be viewed at https://susumchistory.org. The website provides information about the Historical Society and its mission, contact information and information on membership, as well as a blogpost with stories of historical relevance to the Annual Conference and its congregations.

The Historical Society remains committed to providing all its publications and events without additional cost to members. It likewise remains committed to resourcing all interested parties in the study of the history of Susquehanna Conference.

Brand Eaton, President

16. Mental Health Ministries

The Susquehanna Conference Mental Health Ministries Team continues to work toward strengthening awareness, education, and compassionate support around mental health throughout our conference. Over the past year, our team has remained committed to helping congregations better understand the importance of mental health as an essential part of spiritual and community wellbeing.

One of the initiatives undertaken this year has been the planning of Mental Health First Aid training opportunities within the conference. This training is designed to equip clergy and lay leaders with practical tools to recognize signs of mental health challenges, respond with care, and connect individuals to appropriate support. We believe this kind of training can play an important role in helping churches become places where people feel safe seeking help.

Throughout the year, the team provides periodic resources for congregations, leaders, and ministry teams. These materials aim to encourage conversation, reduce stigma, and offer practical guidance for supporting individuals and families experiencing mental health concerns.

In addition, the team has contributed to the conference by submitting resolutions that raise awareness about mental health needs and encourage the church to respond faithfully and thoughtfully. These efforts reflect our belief that the church has an important role to play in advocating for understanding, compassion, and access to care.

Looking ahead, the Mental Health Ministries Team continues to explore new ways to expand the reach and impact of this work. We recognize the growing need for support and education across our communities, and we are actively considering strategies to connect with more congregations and individuals throughout the conference.

We remain grateful for the opportunity to serve the Susquehanna Conference in this important ministry and look forward to continuing this work in the year ahead.

Renee Ford, Committee Chair

17. Mission u

Mission u is a biblically grounded, transformational event devoted to inspiring faithful living and mission. Co-sponsored by the Susquehanna Conference Board of Global Ministries and United Women of Faith, Mission u held a two-day school, an Express or one day in-person event, an 2-day children's school, and an online school in 2025. The theme, Practicing Hope Together, explored the ways Christ taught his disciples to embody and cultivate an honest hope that offers rest and restoration, while the Mission u children's school helped children build trust in Christ. Adult study leaders included Rev. Miguel Arenas for the in-person events and Rev. Patricia Brown for the online school. Rev. Bill Klebe led the study for the children's school

In 2026 Mission u will hold an online school on July 7, 14, 21, and 28. In-person events will be at The Inn at Lewisburg Best Western as follows: July 9, Express Day; July 10-11, Two Day in-person event for Adults and Children.

The theme for this year's adult study is A Deep Knowing—Experiencing Emanuel, and the theme for the children's study is Experiencing Emanuel. In this study we will explore times in the Bible when people experienced "God with us," especially times that involve God "calling" people to a particular action or way of being. Through those stories we will explore what these experiences can teach us about God and what God desires for this world and the ways we move through it. We are blessed to have Rev. Dr. Patricia Brown as our in-person study leader, Rev. Dr. Kathy Harvey-Nelson as our online study leader, and Rev. Bill Klebe as our children's study leader. We look forward to how they can bring the theme alive in our schools and in our lives.

Event and registration information has been provided to United Women in Faith leaders, local churches, and is available on the conference web site.

Judy Kennedy, Dean

18. Preachers' Aid Society

It is very important to the Preachers' Aid Society to offer our sincere thanks to the churches, pastors, and laity who so graciously gave to the Preachers' Aid Society Special Offering during the Annual Conference session. The $12,000 offering has been a great help to our emergency assistance funds and our ongoing efforts for the past ten years to help pastors with their seminary debt.

Our brief financial report for the year of 2025 reflects the direct emergency assistance to three pastors totaling $3,100; $616 for our annual membership letter to retired clergy only; $9,800 for our seminary debt funds for future distribution to pastors; an honorarium to our treasurer of $1,200; a gift of $1,000 to the Memorial Fund in memory of a member of our Board of Managers who served for over 35 years; and other expenses for $550.

Our yearly membership gifts have decreased in the past few years. This reduces our funds for assistance,

but those requests have also decreased. We are still committed to providing emergency assistance to the pastors of the Susquehanna Conference and their immediate family; if the needs increase, we feel confident that we will work to meet the challenges.

Thanks again for every gift, little or big, that will enable us to quietly walk alongside each other with a gift of assistance which may not be large enough to remove all needs but which is large enough to know we are not alone in our struggles.

Robert A. Graybill, President

19. Report of the Susquehanna Conference Cabinet

Significant to our work in this past year has been the understanding of valued relationships, spiritual and collegial.

Earlier this year Bishop Burgos presented telling and disappointing numbers regarding the prayer life of the local churches of the Susquehanna Annual Conference. In year-end reporting churches reported that less than half of our local churches have an active prayer ministry. As disciples of Christ, prayer is foundational to a faith life rooted in the Spirit.

At every level, leadership is often a matter of modeled desire. To that end, each of our five Conference Superintendents now lead weekly prayer each Wednesday for District pastoral leaders. It is hoped that in addition to the enhanced collegiality that joined prayer brings, pastoral leaders will take this model, or an adaptation of, to the ministry of the local church.

In addition to the programmatic opportunities and challenges of this past year there have been personnel changes that we celebrate around the Cabinet table. In July we welcomed the Rev. Dr. Michelle Bodle (Mountain Valley District) and Rev. Lysette Perez (North Central Rivers District). Rev. Brenda Leigey retired after many faithful years of service to the Susquehanna Conference.

The Susquehanna Cabinet has been enriched this conference year with the integration of voices from our sisters and brothers of the Upper New York Annual Conference. As the Cabinets of the Susquehanna and Upper New Conferences regularly meet jointly, the conversations have been robust, the support lifegiving and the sharing of lived out vocation both enlightening and challenging.

In a commitment to thoughtful imagination and spiritual innovation the appointment season was yet once again work that required greater clarity as we experience a shortage of pastors and as mergers, cooperative ministries, and multi-sites churches potentially increase. Having to do things differently always takes us into what feels like the unfamiliar and unknown and also takes us into a place of faith.

As the Cabinet often expresses, please know that no spoken words are more powerful and supportive to the work of the Cabinet table and to those who sit at it then, “We pray for you.” As we move forward together let us be in prayer with one another for the work of the local church, the Susquehanna Conference and Christ’s Kingdom.

We continue to do our work with gratefulness for the opportunity to serve, and we look forward to how we can live out the mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ, while we “Rise Up …and Live Boldy."

Gary D. Weaver, Dean, On behalf of the Cabinet of The Susquehanna Conference

20. Student Aid

The Student Aid Fund equips local churches to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world by providing financial aid for the development of transformational pastoral leaders who are prepared and qualified to lead vital congregations that impact the world and make new disciples of Christ. It exists

"to support the proclamation of the Christian Faith by assisting persons who are preparing through higher education to fulfill their call to pastoral ministry in the Susquehanna Conference of The United Methodist Church . . . in meeting the financial cost of such preparations." (from the Articles of Incorporation of the Student Aid Fund)

During 2025 the Board of Managers met on March 25, August 19, and October 28. At the August 19 meeting we evaluated applications for loans for the 2025-2026 school year.

The financial statements and records of the Student Aid Fund for 2024 were independently reviewed by Barbush, Hoffman, Short LLC, Certified Public Accountants. No discrepancies or concerns were reported.

The Board of Managers partners with several seminaries that provide a 50/50 scholarship match for students from our Conference. The seminary pays fifty percent of tuition from their own scholarship funds; the Board pays the other fifty percent as a service loan. Wesley, Drew, United, Garret-Evangelical, Duke, and Lancaster seminaries currently participate in this program.

During the 2024-2025 academic year the Fund provided seminary service loans to six individuals. Four requests have been approved for 2025-2026.

Service loans are reduced by twenty percent per year during the first five years of ministry within the Susquehanna Conference under appointment by the Bishop of the Susquehanna Annual Conference. Four pastors completed their entire five-year service period in 2025 and their loans have been completely forgiven. The total amount forgiven through service in 2025 was $74,479.55 for seventeen pastors who were serving within the Conference. Four service loans were converted to regular loans for pastors who are no longer serving under appointment in the Susquehanna Annual Conference. Regular loans are amortized over a period of ten years.

It is not always possible to secure repayment of delinquent accounts from individuals who no longer serve in the Conference. The Board maintains an agreement to pursue delinquent accounts with Commercial Acceptance Co. Five delinquent loans are currently being collected by Commercial Acceptance Co.; twelve more have been referred to them for collection. When it is not possible to secure repayment for delinquent loans, they are written off by action of the Board. During 2025 one person's loans totaling $17,324.46 were written off due to bankruptcy. The Executive Secretary is continuing to follow up with loans where payments are overdue.

All of our funds are currently invested with the United Methodist Foundation of Pennsylvania. The total liabilities and net assets of the Student Aid Fund as of December 31, 2024 was $5,801,763. This total includes the annuity on the Rev. Dr. Ronald McElwee, who died on December 11, 2024. The annuity amount of $1,393,231.83 is reflected as a receivable as of December 31, 2024. The annuity check was received on March 27, 2025 and deposited with the United Methodist Foundation of Pennsylvania.

In an effort to further encourage students to pursue a seminary education and to defray additional expenses of attending seminary, the Board decided that, effective Jan. 1, 2026, for those seminary students who are approved in the service loan program, the Student Aid Fund Board will reimburse the student's book cost, administrative fees, a laptop up to $2,000, and room & board up to the amount charged by the seminary upon submission of appropriate receipts. These reimbursements are in the form of a scholarship.

The Board continues to be concerned about the declining number of applications for assistance with preparation for ministry in our Annual Conference. We will continue to seek ways to aid Susquehanna Conference students in their preparation for ministry, consistent with the mission of the Board. We encourage continued prayer for the Lord to send workers into the harvest field.

The Board deeply appreciates the assistance and support provided by the staff of the Finance Office and by the Cabinet of the Susquehanna Annual Conference.

The Board is grateful for gifts and bequests to the work of the Student Aid Fund. Gifts may be made in honor of or in memory of an individual if desired.

If you wish to make a donation to the Student Aid Fund, or to receive further information about the scholarship application process, please contact our Executive Secretary, the Rev. Nicholas Keeney. He may be reached at nkeeney@susumc.org.

Respectfully submitted,
Richard D. Smith, President, Board of Managers of the Student Aid Fund

21. The Bishop's Committee on Interfaith Relationships

The Bishop's Committee on Christian Unity and Interfaith Relations continues to seek ways to inspire and encourage local churches to engage in cooperative, ecumenical, and interfaith ministries. Each year, the committee presents the Marty Cox Award to a group or individual who demonstrates excellence in working with other churches in their community.

Last year's award was presented to Rev. Dr. Philip T. Wanck and Rome United Methodist Church in partnership with Hezekiah's Hands, an ecumenical ministry serving Bradford County, Pennsylvania. Hezekiah's Hands helps rebuild lives through minor home repairs and yard assistance for neighbors in need. Volunteers assist with projects such as building handicap ramps, repairing railings, fixing leaky pipes, and addressing other basic home maintenance needs that allow individuals and families to live safely and with dignity.

Hezekiah's Hands exemplifies the spirit of ecumenical partnership by bringing together volunteers and skilled laborers from a wide range of faith communities. Participating churches include the Rome & North Union United Methodist Charge, the Rome Presbyterian Church, the First Presbyterian Church, the Community Alliance Church, St. Peter and Paul Roman Catholic Church, and Trinity Lutheran Church from Towanda, as well as Crossroads Church in Sayre. Through this collaboration, Hezekiah's Hands reflects Christ's call to serve others while building meaningful relationships across denominational lines. In addition to being recognized at the Annual Conference Awards Banquet, the award recipient receives a monetary gift to continue their ministry.

Beyond the annual award, the committee works to promote ecumenical and interfaith engagement across the Susquehanna Conference. This includes sharing resources, highlighting cooperative ministry opportunities, and supporting online forums that encourage collaboration among faith communities.

The committee also seeks to maintain a connection with the broader ecumenical movement by participating in the National Workshop on Christian Unity. In September 2025, we were pleased to send a representative to attend the workshop in Chicago.

Respectfully submitted,
Renee J. Ford, Committee Chair

22. United Women of Faith

For 2025, the women of our conference continued to be faithful. This was proven in so many ways including exceeding our 2025 pledge of $57,000 by $539.69 and we were also credited for an additional $23,841.53 towards the other four channels of undesignated giving. Also, $8,356 was given for designated projects, yielding $89,737.22 as our total impact in our mission to improve the lives of women, youth, and children around the world.

For 40 years, (UWF) United Women in Faith and others have supported the Neighborhood Center in Harrisburg. >Earlier this year, The Journey Church and The Neighborhood Center, are embarking on an unprecedented strategic partnership that promises to revitalize the 1801 N. 3rd Street property, reinvigorate community life, and build a future of hope and belonging for all. >taken from https://susumc.org/susquehanna-link/a-bold-

step-forward-the-journey-church-and-the-neighborhood-center-forge-historic-partnership/
Social Media in 2025 continues to be a factor in our growth. Please "like" our Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/groups/susumw and you'll be kept up to date on any events within the conference, districts and individual units.

The Susquehanna Conference UWF Team in 2025 welcomed two familiar faces to the organization. Judy Kennedy is our Vice President. She was a past UWF Conference President, Women's Division Director and a Past President of the North East Jurisdiction. Judy Grove is our Treasurer, who was a past York District President. Both women bring immense knowledge, respect and love for the United Women in Faith organization and we are honored and proud to have them.

2025 Mission u event co-sponsored with Susquehanna Conference was held in person at our one and two-day events at the new Lewisburg Inn and in four 2-hour on-line classes and attended by a total 53 people. The on-line class was led by Rev. Dr Patricia Brown and the in-person classes by Rev Dr Miguel Arenas. The study was entitled Practicing Hope Together. Mission u program studies are originated and written through the UWF National Office. The 2026 Study book is entitled Experiencing Emmanuel and events will again be held at Lewisburg Inn July 9, 10 & 11. Two-hour on-line classes led by Rev Dr Kathy Harvey-Nelson July 7, 14, 21 and 28. Our conference annual meeting was held on November 8, 2025 at St Paul UMC in Chambersburg, PA. This year's event was facilitated by Rev Dr Patricia Brown entitled Pathways to Hope. Dr Brown led the group with prayers, devotions, hymns and closed with a guided Stations of the Cross. This year's event was met with great anticipation, support and faith inspired. We were invited to join in on a group recitation and movements to The Lord's Prayer. I can tell you that there were more than a few tears, hugs and God moments during the day. God was truly in this place.

Our annual day also consists of a business meeting, at which time we reviewed finances, acknowledge our Reading Program recipients, 5 Star units, and Mission Today units. We also recognized our previous Conference Team Members. The swearing in of the new team was led by Gretchen Mackey, a former District President, mentor to many United Women in Faith members and long-time member of the St Paul UWF unit.

At the 2025 Susquehanna Conference Annual Day in Williamsport, Rev Dr Kathy Kind invited the Susquehanna Conference United Women in Faith an opportunity to host a Lunch & Learn event in which 40 women both laity and clergy had an opportunity to learn what the organization does, who they support and ways to grow in their faith.

I encourage you to get to know the organization that annually supports 120 national institutes across the US and the world, encourages studies on Climate and Racial Justice, and lives out the words we say at every meeting and event; "The organized unit of United Women in Faith shall be a community of women whose PURPOSE is to know God and experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church." Come be a part of it. Contact us today.

Respectfully submitted,
Fawn McCallister, President

23. Volunteers in Mission

This past year has been a time of transition as Michelle Schwartzman is no longer the UMVIM coordinator. It is a blessing that she is now with the Board of Global Ministries giving leadership beyond the Annual Conference as well as working alongside the ministry here.

This year there has been many opportunities to educate ourselves on the issues that are prevalent in our country and world – racism, immigration and gun control to name a few. We continue to seek ways to reflect the light of Christ while seeking justice and peace in our world.

There are several teams who have served beyond the bounds of our conference bringing help and hope in

rebuilding homes and community. There are opportunities within the bounds of our conference as well as beyond serving those in need.

As the "new person on the block" I have learned that UMVIM is more than the traditional Mission Journeys. While these are of utmost importance, the opportunity to be educated and involved in the justice work of our beloved United Methodist church is vital as well.

If you want to be a part of this exciting ministry there is always room for more.

Respectfully submitted,
Sara Shaver, Volunteers in Mission (VIM) Coordinator

24. The Wesley Foundation at Penn State University

"What's the catch?" "How can this really be free?" "Why are you doing this?" We hear these questions often as we: give out water and popcorn and snacks late at night, open our doors toward our student community through the work of Abba Java Coffeehouse, make space in our building for study rooms and student organization events, sit around a table painted with the colors of the rainbow sharing a meal and life and practices of faith, gather and give away coats and other winter items to students and community members alike, and altogether offer a place of sanctuary and rest and abundant welcome for students at Penn State University in University Park, PA. This is a glimpse of the work of the Wesley Foundation at Penn State, a veritable tree of life which sometimes looks more like a mustard-seed bush, but which has expansive roots and branches and is a home for many students year after year after year.

Over twenty years ago, St. Paul's UMC and Wesley Foundation asked the question – what does it mean to be the church today? What might it look like to show up in the lives of students, offering grace and abundant love? In these questions and dreams, a prophetic imagination arose as a group of people imagined a vision of the church that looked like a free student coffeehouse and study space; these dreams birthed Abba Java, a work that is at the very heart of, not only the Wesley Foundation, but also St. Paul's UMC and Wesley Foundation because it is our work together. After over twenty years of showing up through the work of Abba Java, students have found, through this work and witness, a different vision of the church and of people who say that they love God and neighbor. In this space, with this community, students are finding sanctuary and rest and belonging. In a world of division and uncertainty and fear, students tell us that they have found a community here that welcomes and loves them; a place where they can focus and thrive.

Here are some of the responses that students shared with us this past year:

> *"Abba Java means the world to me, it is where I feel safe, rest, and 100% embraced."*
>
> *"SAFETY! Abba Java has been my peaceful sanctuary and a reminder that love, connection, and friendship can still flourish."*
>
> *"Abba Java is my safe place, and my home away from home."*

The work of the Wesley Foundation at Penn State is transforming the way that our students, no matter where they come from, understand what it looks like to say that you love God and love your neighbor. And, they are experiencing this transformation through small things like cups of coffee and bags of popcorn, tiny interactions with a student or congregation volunteer. In the 1200 hours that Abba Java was open this year, we saw over 40,000 student visits (1000-1600/week) and gave out over 30,000lbs of food in the café and food pantry. Our priorities are people, not programs, as we continue to demonstrate with our words and our actions that we are a people shaped by Love, modeled in mundane moments by people from our church community (retired teachers, current professors, world travelers, retired pastors, scientists, mothers, musicians, engineers, business owners, and so much more) who are giving themselves to this holy work of making relationships with one another.

One of the ways that I believe we are working to impact the world around us is through our intern program, Wesley Fellows, in which a small group of students come together to journey, for a year or two or three,

discovering themselves more fully as they discern how they might respond to a call to live a life of love and service in the world around them. Through this program our interns explore the theme of vocation and reflect on how their work in the world could be a place where their passions and the needs of the world around them come together. Over this past year we have been guided by the work of Pádraig ÓTuama, who we were able to bring in as a speaker, Kate Bowler, and Krista Tippett; we have also given time to creating a rule of life and asking questions about who we are and what gives us life. It is our hope and belief that these conversations, these readings and practices, and most of all, these relationships will provide our students deep roots that they can take and plant in a new place, knowing that they will always be connected with us.

Sarah Voigt, Director and Beth Staropoli, Chair

25. Young Peoples Ministry Council

The Young People's Ministry Council (YPMC) is a team of student and adult youth leaders from across the Susquehanna Conference. Its mission is to equip young people as spiritual leaders who love and practice justice, empowering their peers to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

During 2025–2026, YPMC has been actively engaged in a variety of impactful initiatives. These include assisting in the facilitation of the Bishop's Confirmation Rally and providing "new youth worker" bags to support and equip individuals who are beginning their work in youth ministry across the Conference. The council also helps distribute YSF Grants to local churches and groups that are fostering spiritual leadership among young people.

In addition, YPMC connects with youth leaders throughout the Conference to offer resources and support, encourages and uplifts youth participation and leadership at Annual Conference, and is organizing a Conference-wide mission trip to McCurdy Ministries in New Mexico. This experience will provide opportunities for service while also helping participants learn how to lead mission trips effectively.

Looking ahead, YPMC is excited to facilitate additional gatherings and to send a delegation of youth from the Susquehanna Conference to the Global Young People's Convocation in Ireland in early 2027.

Kevin Witt
Director, Age Level & Beloved Community Ministries

Mission Updates

26. Center for Spiritual Formation

From its original inception in 1994, through the vision of Bishop Felton May, the Center for Spiritual Formation Inc. continues to grow in its reach and evolve its offerings on the mountain and beyond. Russell Hart and the Center's founders established a visionary ministry that thrives today, looking forward through a transformational lens of growing, equipping, and connecting in each of its offerings. "Centered on Jesus, focused on grace and spiritual growth" is the essence of the Center as an expanding community of spiritual leaders and learners emphasizing prayer, study, and social engagement. The Center's leadership is particularly vested in promoting diverse and inclusive participation and creating space for deep spiritual community. In all the Center does, it strives to create expanding opportunities where the grace of God can be at work to grow, equip, and connect by creating truly invitational and inclusive communities of faith.

The Center continued its' longstanding commitment to provide pastoral leadership offerings including the Pastor's Sabbath Retreats, and Benedictine Silent Retreats and other personal and group retreats throughout the year at our Orchard Hill mountain retreat in Millerstown, including the Board of Ordained Ministry. The annual New Year's online retreat was well received. An emphasis on infusing creative expressions and spiritual reflection through the Center's offerings continues to be highlighted. CREATE! continued as a creative expressions group partnership, active online year-round and open to all.

An increase in active interest and engagement through the Center is reflected through the two-year online Ministry of Spiritual Direction (MSD) program which has now equipped and graduated 198 participants to

date and has an active pool of more than 20 faculty, presenters, and team leaders in this centerpiece offering of the Center. The program continues to grow through expanded offerings in supervision and its emphasis in highlighting diversity through recruitment, faculty and teaching content. This transformational learning community reflects participants from across the US and globally.

The Center extends an invitation to all who are seeking a space for grace and a place seek the quiet still voice of God in a very noisy and unsettling world. Visit **centerformation.org** or call 717-249-1512 ext. 1006 to learn more about serving with the Center, upcoming retreats, MSD enrollment, and varied offerings committed to bringing God closer and deepen spiritual transformation in the world.

Submitted by:
Rhonda Strouse, Center Director

27. Neighborhood Center/Journey Church

After considerable time, prayerful discernment, and legal consultation, the Board of The Neighborhood Center of the United Methodist Church in Harrisburg, PA has voted to formally dissolve its corporate structure and distribute its assets to The Journey United Methodist Church and to Harrisburg Neighborhood Center, a newly launching nonprofit created to carry forward the Center's historic mission.

Founded in 1910 as a Methodist "Mission" in the City of Harrisburg, The Neighborhood Center has served immigrants, African American families, low-income children, and vulnerable neighbors for more than a century. In its earliest days, it offered English classes, vocational training, and children's programming. It established the first kindergarten for African American children in the city and later developed services for children with disabilities, teens, and young mothers. Over the decades, the Center provided food assistance, clothing distribution, childcare, and family support programs. Since formally incorporating in 1975, its mission has remained clear: to assist needy families in the inner city regardless of race, religion, creed, or national origin.

In recent years, post-pandemic staffing challenges and leadership instability made sustained operations increasingly difficult. After pausing operations in May 2024 and exploring multiple restructuring pathways, the Board determined that dissolution and asset distribution to an aligned United Methodist partner represented the most faithful way to preserve the Center's legacy and extend its impact into the future.

After a two-year discernment process, The Neighborhood Center voted to distribute its property at North 3rd and Kelker Streets to The Journey UMC, including the building at 1801 N. 3rd Street. The Journey UMC will steward these assets for continued neighborhood-based ministry.

To that end, The Journey UMC will form **Harrisburg Neighborhood Center**, a new nonprofit corporation that will be led by The Journey UMC with considerable community engagement. Harrisburg Neighborhood Center will exist to advance human flourishing within the city of Harrisburg by offering programs and services that promote dignity, stability, and opportunity for individuals and families. Its mission is to meet tangible needs through direct service and community-based initiatives that reflect compassion, consistency, equity, justice, and collaboration.

Core programming will focus broadly on meeting essential needs and strengthening families and may include food access initiatives, clothing and household support, educational enrichment opportunities, family-centered programming, and seasonal or after-school initiatives for children and youth. At its heart, Harrisburg Neighborhood Center seeks to walk alongside individuals and families in Harrisburg who desire support, empowerment, and access to the resources necessary for a thriving and flourishing life. Harrisburg Neighborhood Center will do business as The Neighborhood Center, representing a continuation of The Neighborhood Center's historic ministry in Harrisburg and retaining the Center's familiar identity for people in the neighborhood.

This new expression of ministry is a natural fit for The Journey. Since its launch in 2019, The Journey UMC has

grown into a vibrant, inclusive, multi-ethnic congregation worshipping with and serving alongside hundreds of people in Harrisburg. The Journey UMC is deeply committed to helping people find belonging, experience the liberative spirit of Jesus, seek justice, and love their neighbors. Its ministries intentionally integrate worship, discipleship, and tangible community and justice engagement, reflecting a sustained investment in neighborhood presence and service.

Throughout this process, The Journey has remained in regular consultation with Conference leadership, including the District Superintendent, Director of Connectional Ministries, and Bishop. The Susquehanna Conference Chancellor and Treasurer have provided ongoing guidance to ensure compliance with the Book of Discipline and Conference standards. All parties have been represented by appropriate legal counsel to ensure faithful stewardship, proper governance, and procedural integrity.

This moment represents not the end of a ministry, but the continuation of a 115-year United Methodist witness in urban Harrisburg — carried forward in a renewed and sustainable form for the sake of human flourishing.

Kristopher R. Sledge, Lead Pastor, The Journey UMC,
Bishop's Representative, The Neighborhood Center

Affiliated Ministries

28. Africa University

Grace and peace to you in the name of Jesus Christ.

Thank you to the congregations of the Susquehanna Conference of The United Methodist Church for your faithful and gracious support of Africa University. In 2025, Susquehanna Conference congregations generously invested at 100 percent in the Africa University Fund.

That level of steadfast commitment makes a real difference in forming disciples who love boldly, serve joyfully, and lead courageously—across Africa and around the world. Among them are six students, from Mozambique, Nigeria and Zimbabwe, progressing through their training as agriculturalists, computer and laboratory scientists, and software engineers, thanks to Susquehanna Conference endowments at Africa University.

2025 was a year of robust growth and momentum for Africa University (AU). In June, AU graduated its largest class ever—622 students from 20 African countries. In August, the university welcomed its most diverse incoming class, with students from 30 nations. They study in four colleges, a law school, and two institutes on a modern, fully debt-free campus built for learning and community.

Highlights from 2025:

- A self-funded solar power plant now supplies 100 percent of AU campus electricity, easing pressure on Zimbabwe's national grid and benefiting nearby communities.
- A new collaboration with the United Nations University Institute for Water, Environment and Health advances research in food security, sustainable agriculture, and environmental resilience. Faculty and graduate researchers are developing evidence-based responses to climate stress, water insecurity, and agricultural vulnerability—equipping communities to adapt and thrive.
- An expanded partnership supporting applied research with The United Methodist Church's Global Ministries agency focuses on at-risk agriculture and malaria prevention, strengthening rural communities.
- In partnership with United Methodist Communications, AU is training African church communicators in digital engagement and media strategy—strengthening the Church's witness across diverse contexts.
- AU's School of Law moot court team earned the honor of representing Africa at the World Round of the Price Media Law Moot Court Competition in the United Kingdom in 2026.

These milestones are directly connected to your generosity. As this quadrennium continues, Africa University

urges every congregation in the Susquehanna Conference to maintain AUF support at the 2016 budget level and work toward 100 percent funding each year. AU also encourages churches to consider becoming a "Keystone Congregation" by committing $7,000 annually in direct scholarship support for one undergraduate student—and walking alongside that student with prayer and encouragement throughout their degree journey.

Africa University remains a living expression of our worldwide connection. Your continual engagement is pivotal. Because you pray, Susquehanna United Methodists, leaders are called and formed. Because you give, research advances. Because you believe in Africa University, hope expands across nations.
Thank you for standing with AU in 2025. Together, we are shaping a generation equipped to lead Africa—and the Church—into a resilient and faithful future.

James H. Salley, President and Chief Executive Officer – Africa University (Tennessee) Inc., and Associate Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement – Africa University (Zimbabwe).
jsalley@africau.org | https://support.africau.edu | www.africau.edu

29. Candler School of Theology

As **Candler School of Theology at Emory University** continues in its second century of educating faithful and creative leaders for the church's ministries throughout the world, we are heartened by the work and witness of The United Methodist Church and look forward to our enduring partnership as the denomination moves into its next chapter with a vision to **love boldly, serve joyfully**, and **lead courageously**.

An official seminary of The United Methodist Church, Candler has a strong Methodist presence among our students, faculty and staff, while holding true to the Wesleyan value of ecumenical openness. Our student body reflects the diversity and breadth of the Christian faithful, with an enrollment of 507 from 11 countries, 42 states, 45 denominations, 34 UM annual conferences, and 50% persons of color. We see this diversity as a blessing, enriching our life together and providing the perfect context for training for relevant ministry in the 21st century—ministry that cultivates community across difference, welcomes all to contribute and belong, and embodies Christ's love in and among us.

Last fall Candler welcomed its largest incoming class in over a decade. This strong enrollment reflects years of intentional work to reimagine programs, continue to invest in faculty excellence, and offer robust scholarship support through the generosity of alumni and friends. And even more importantly, it reflects that God is still calling people to join the holy work of transforming the world in Jesus' name.

Candler offers six degrees, most of which are available in hybrid or online formats. Nearly a quarter of MDiv students participate in Candler's Teaching Parish program, earning course credit by serving as student pastors in local churches. And our proven DMin program—with a remarkably high 94% completion rate—is 90% online. These flexible options along with Candler's recognized academic excellence and hands-on learning opportunities are opening possibilities for more people to follow God's call to ministry.

Reducing financial barriers to high-quality theological education remains a top priority at Candler. This year, we are on track to award nearly $8.5 million in scholarship support across degree programs. All MDiv students receive scholarships, with those who are certified candidates for ordained ministry in the UMC receiving full tuition.

Several programs beyond our formal degrees make Candler a true hub of Christian learning. The Candler Foundry, our public theological education initiative, offers in-person and online courses, events, and certificate programs. The United Methodist Course of Study School at Candler worked with 19 annual conferences to educate licensed local pastors in 2025. The Candler Center for Christian Leadership, which trains United Methodist leaders in best business practices, now has certified facilitators in 33 annual conferences. And a recent $10 million grant from Lilly Endowment will further develop Candler's La Mesa Academy, a multicultural, multilingual program dedicated to the theological education of lay ministers.

We are preparing for a leadership transition in summer of 2026, as Jonathan Strom completes his tenure as

dean of Candler in July. We invite your prayers as we search for the school's next dean.

When we talk to Candler alumni and students about their call, one thing becomes clear: The specifics may be different, shaped by their unique gifts, contexts, and life experiences, but their drive to join God's work of transforming lives and the world is a constant. We recently launched a series called "Candler Changemakers" highlighting the range of fascinating ways our alumni are leading change as they fulfill their call. Follow along on our website (candler.emory.edu) and social media to see how God is working through them. You'll be inspired!

Office of Communications, Candler School of Theology, Emory University

30. Drew University Theological School

Drew University Theological School is a global seminary with a global student population serving the worldwide church. Drew Theological School educates and mentors pastors, preachers, deacons, activists, teachers, thought leaders, and change agents for ministry and service in the church, society, and the wider world. Building upon its Wesleyan and Methodist foundations, Drew Theological School is diverse in theology, vocations, age, as well as racial, ethnic, national, and international identities of its faculty, students, and staff. Many Drew students are just beginning their ministry, while others come to graduate theological education with prior ministry experience, reflecting an ongoing trend among theological schools in the United States and Canada. In providing theological education to the world, Drew holds in-person classes in Madison, New Jersey, classes that meet exclusively online, while others meet in hybrid fashion, i.e., partially online, partially in-person, as well as in-person Doctor of Ministry program in South Korea. Regular chapel services are offered in a hybrid way on Tuesdays and Thursdays with people participating from Seminary Hall as well as online. Chapel worship is live-streamed so that students, alumni, and friends around the world can participate.

In Fall 2025 Drew Theological School welcomed 88 new students in all degree programs, with total student enrollment (by headcount) in Fall 2025 semester being 365. Enrollment of international students at Drew is very strong at 140 students in Fall 2025. This number includes students who are studying full-time in the U.S.A. on a student Visa, students who are studying online from their home country, and students in the South Korean Cohort of the Doctor of Ministry program.

Drew's interdisciplinary degree programs provide real-world apprenticeships, promote adaptive leadership skills, and encourage innovation through team-taught core courses as well as a variety of electives that integrate theological disciplines and faith practices. The Drew faculty's shared values are infused across in the teaching, learning, and the formation of students. These values are: 1) a commitment to anti-racism; 2) gender and sexual-identity equality; 3) eco-sustainability and environmental justice; and 4) interfaith understanding and cooperation. Drew Theological School continues to experience an increase in United Methodist students, including United Methodist Global Fellows pursuing further education for ministry. UMC graduates are serving in conferences of The United Methodist Church across the United States, and especially within nearby regional episcopal areas of Greater New Jersey, Eastern Pennsylvania, Susquehanna, Upper New York, New York, and New England.

Rev. Edwin David Aponte, PhD, ThD (honorary), Dean and Professor of Religion & Culture

31. Duke University Divinity School

Duke Divinity School celebrated its 99th Opening Convocation in August 2025 with a sermon from Dean Edgardo Colón-Emeric to begin the Nicene Creed Preaching Series at Duke Divinity School. He emphasized that the Nicene Creed is both a Pentecost profession and a peace proclamation:

> "Perhaps this is the season for untangling the Nicene Creed from state theology and church theology. Perhaps this is a task for a divinity school whose mission claims to 'engage in spiritually disciplined and academically rigorous education, in service and witness to the Triune God in the midst of the church, the academy, and the world.' … Christ did not preach peace looking for recognition or awards. His life is a single extended sermon on peace. Peace is believing that our lowest point does not limit our highest

hope, because we acknowledge the power of baptism, the possibility of repentance, and the forgiveness of sin. We believe. We believe. This is a Pentecost profession, a peace proclamation, and also a praise pronouncement."

This year we have joined with Christians around the world to commemorate the 17th centennial of the Council of Nicaea and the Nicene Creed. Duke Divinity scholars and ministry leaders published the book *Trinitarian Matters: 1700 Years of Shaping Christian Identity and Practice*. The school hosted two conference events to explore and learn from Nicaea: Convocation & Pastors' School, focused for those in church and vocational ministry; and "Visible and Invisible: Surprising Encounters in Theology and the Arts," with musical performances, poetry, and artistic expressions informed by the richness of the Nicene Creed.

Through God's sustaining grace, we continue to welcome students from across the nation and around the world to be trained for faithful ministries serving God in churches, chaplaincy, and community service. In 2025, we were joined by 219 students. The Master of Divinity program gained 120 new students in both residential and hybrid programs, a 10 percent growth over last year. The Master of Arts in Christian Practice enrolled six new students; the Doctor of Ministry, 34; Master of Theology, seven; Master of Theological Studies, 32; and the Doctor of Theology welcomed five new students to campus. The Certificate in Theology and Health Care welcomed 14 students.

Duke Divinity is committed to facilitating clear and supportive pathways into theological education to encourage and equip those who are discerning a call to ministry. We confirmed an MOU with Huntingdon College, reaffirming our mutual dedication to nurturing vocations, strengthening the United Methodist tradition, and investing in the next generation of Christian leaders.

We welcomed four new faculty this year: Jonathan Tran, professor of theological ethics; Natalie Carnes, professor of theology; Matthew Whelan, associate research professor of theology; and Nina Balmaceda, Irene and William McCutchen Associate Professor of the Practice of Reconciliation and director of the Center for Reconciliation.

Duke Divinity School continues to be grateful for our ongoing participation in The United Methodist Church and partnership with this annual conference. We look forward to our ongoing work with you as we join the leading of God's Spirit in the task of preparing people for Christian ministry. To learn more about Duke Divinity School, please visit our website at **www.divinity.duke.edu**.

Respectfully submitted by
Edgardo Colón-Emeric, Dean of Duke Divinity School

32. Everstand/Therapeutic Health *(formerly Board of Childcare)*

In 2025, Everstand (formerly Board of Child Care) marked a significant milestone—our first full year under a new name and renewed vision while continuing a 150-year legacy of faithful service. What began as a network of orphanages rooted in the compassionate mission of the United Methodist Church has grown into a comprehensive child welfare agency meeting the complex needs of children and families today.

As we reflect on the year, we are reminded that while our name has evolved, our purpose remains steadfast—to stand strong with those we serve. Everstand is more than a name; it is a living promise to stand beside, to stand up for, and to stand strong with every child and family entrusted to our care. We strive to be a beacon of hope, equipping youth and families with the tools and support needed to build resilience and face life's greatest challenges with strength and confidence.

More than a century ago, the Strawbridge Home for Boys was established on land generously donated by the George and Ella Albaugh family, creating a place of care, education, and belonging for boys in need. In October 2025, Everstand commemorated this enduring legacy with the dedication of a historical mile marker near the original site in Maryland—honoring the families, leaders, and community members whose faithfulness and vision have carried the spirit of the Home for Boys forward across generations.

Today, our Strawbridge School—named in honor of the Strawbridge Home for Boys—continues this proud legacy of transforming lives. Many students come to us after struggling in traditional school settings where their needs were not fully met. At Strawbridge School, they find a supportive community that nurtures academic, social, and emotional growth while believing in their potential. By meeting essential needs and approaching behavior through a trauma-informed lens, we help students build trust, stability, and a sense of belonging. Alongside academics, they develop life skills, emotional regulation, and career readiness—gaining the confidence and resilience needed to thrive long after graduation.

Everstand's enduring partnership with the Susquehanna Conference of the United Methodist Church continues to shape and strengthen our ministry. In June 2025, the Conference deepened its connection to Everstand through the appointment of Kerwin Stetler as the Bishop's Representative to our Board of Directors, supporting the collaborative relationship between the Conference and our organization. Mr. Stetler and his wife, Kay, attend Camp Hill United Methodist Church in Camp Hill, PA.

Later in the year, Bishop Héctor Antonio Burgos-Núñez visited Everstand's Mechanicsburg campus, touring the facilities and meeting with leadership and staff. The visit created an important bridge between Everstand's social service ministry and the wider United Methodist Church. During the visit, the Conference also presented Everstand with a special gift of support. The Rev. Dr. Kathleen E. Kind, Director of Connectional Ministries, also participated in the campus tour and returned in January 2026 to meet with an Everstand leadership team to explore additional opportunities for engagement and partnership with congregations across the Conference. Throughout the year, Everstand also shared updates and stories of impact through the Susquehanna LINK. The generosity of United Methodist congregations continues to be a vital part of this shared ministry. In 2025, 71 churches within the Susquehanna Conference provided financial support to Everstand, demonstrating the deep commitment of the faith community to care for vulnerable children and families.

Each year, Everstand also celebrates the collective impact of donors, volunteers, and grant partners who advance programs that restore hope for children and families across our communities. Our volunteers make a meaningful difference in the lives of youth who have experienced trauma, abuse, or instability and who often face emotional and behavioral challenges. By investing their time, talents, and resources, they strengthen the people and programs that support healing and growth—enriching communities one family at a time.

Everstand's annual Jim Young Memorial Golf Tournament exemplifies the power of community partnership. Golfers, sponsors, and local businesses come together with unwavering commitment to foster resilience and recovery. Their generosity sustains a comprehensive continuum of care on our Mechanicsburg Campus that includes residential services, mental and behavioral health support, trauma recovery, case management, and specialized education.

As we look ahead, we reaffirm our shared commitment with the United Methodist Church to ensure that every child and family has access to the resources, relationships, and support systems necessary to heal, grow, and succeed. United in purpose, we move forward with resolve—cultivating a future grounded in hope, resilience, and lasting empowerment for those entrusted to our care.

Laurie Anne "LA" Spagnola, MSW, Everstand President and CEO

33. Gammon Theological Seminary

Gammon Theological Seminary remains the only Historically Black Theological Institution (HBTI) of The United Methodist Church. Gammon Theological Seminary's mission is to provide academic and degree-granting programs that help prepare individuals who understand their vocation as working in partnership with God in forming a just and generative world for all, for the practice of Christian ministry and public leadership.

Accreditation

- Launched Gammon's independent Master of Divinity program in 2024 as a key step toward separate accreditation with SACSCOC and ATS.

- Hosted initial SACSCOC site visit in October 2025, received affirmation of 93% compliance on all SACSCOC Standards, final review pending the June 2026 SACSCOC Board meeting. Starting the ATS Accreditation process in 2026 with a goal of full ATS accreditation awarded by December 2027.

Enrollment

- As of Spring 2026, Gammon enrolls 41 students (10 new and 31 continuing), reflecting sustained growth since the Fall 2024 launch of the independent MDiv program.
- Student body includes 30 United Methodist-affiliated students (73.2 percent), with 28 specifically identifying as UMC (68.3 percent), demonstrating Gammon's deep denominational roots.
- More than 70 percent of students are directly engaged in or preparing for ordained and licensed ministry: 42.5 percent actively discerning call and 30 percent already certified candidates or licensed local pastors.
- Student-to-faculty ratios have remained healthy (4:1 to 7:1), with more than 70 percent of students enrolled full-time each term, demonstrating stable instructional capacity and careful scaling.

Fund Development

- Secured a three-year, $975,000 capacity-building grant from GBHEM to underwrite Gammon 3.0 operational expansion and strengthen institutional infrastructure.
- Received a $375,000 grant from the William I. H. and Lula E. Pitts Foundation to support Phase III renovations, modernizing classrooms, offices, and the faculty hub for collaborative learning and academic planning.
- Obtained a $250,000 scholarship grant from The SOMA Foundation to provide current-use aid for students in the 2025–2026 academic year, directly reducing educational debt.
- Launched the "Become 1 of 1 Million" endowed scholarship campaign fund to raise $1 million in scholarship funds for Gammon students, enabling students to answer their call to ministry without incurring significant debt.

We offer profound thanks to God and to the entire United Methodist connection—bishops, cabinets, annual conferences, congregations, alumni, donors, and friends—for your faithful partnership in this season of renewal. Your prayers, apportionment support, special offerings, and generous gifts are establishing the work of our hands and making it possible for the vision of Gammon 3.0 to become a lived reality for current and future students. Together, we are strengthening Gammon as a vital, sustainable, and innovative seminary forming leaders for the church and the world.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dr. Candace M. Lewis, President & CEO

34. Garrett Evangeical Seminary

Garrett Seminary continues to embody a trajectory of growth, innovation, and deepening partnership across the connection. Rooted in its Wesleyan heritage and animated by its mission to form courageous leaders in the way of Jesus, the seminary looks toward the future with confidence and hope.

For the fifth consecutive year, Garrett welcomed an entering class that reflects sustained enrollment growth. This steady expansion signals renewed confidence in our approach to theological education and in Garrett's distinctive role within The United Methodist Church and the global Christian community. The newest students represent geographic and cultural breadth, coming from across the United States and more than twenty countries throughout the worldwide connection. They prepare for ministry in congregations, chaplaincy settings, nonprofit leadership, academia, and mission contexts, reflecting the increasingly diverse and global nature of the Church's leadership needs.

In response to the evolving realities of ministry and lifelong learning, Garrett launched The Garrett Collective, a comprehensive digital platform offering theological resources, courses, learning experiences, and stackable microcredentials. Designed to serve laity and clergy alike, The Garrett Collective expands access to high-

quality theological education in multiple languages and modalities. Content is curated and developed in partnership with annual conferences, congregations, and mission-driven organizations to address expressed needs across the connection. This initiative strengthens ongoing professional development for clergy, equips lay leaders for faithful witness, and extends Garrett's reach to communities that may not otherwise have access to formal theological study. The Garrett Collective represents a significant step toward greater accessibility, affordability, and contextual responsiveness in theological education.

The seminary also announced a historic agreement with its long-standing campus partner, Northwestern University. Through this agreement, Garrett will relocate to newly designed, state-of-the-art facilities on the southern end of campus. These buildings will support the seminary's increasingly multi-modal student body—those studying on campus, in hybrid formats, and in fully immersive online programs from across the nation and around the world. The new facilities will allow Garrett to invest more fully in vibrant residential theological formation while simultaneously expanding global access through digital and hybrid degree offerings. This agreement reflects a deep and mutual commitment between the seminary and the university, positioning both institutions for a strong and collaborative future. Most importantly, it enables Garrett to remain focused on mission-driven initiatives for generations to come.

Garrett has also experienced significant success in foundation and grant support for innovative learning and leadership initiatives. Strategic investments have strengthened The Garrett Collective, the Center for Ecological Regeneration, the Job Institute for Spiritual Formation, the National Initiative to Strengthen Hispanic Pastoral Leaders and Congregations, the Mageto Fellows Program in partnership with Africa University, and the Faith and Leadership Collaborative. Each of these initiatives extends the seminary's relationship with congregations and their leaders, resourcing the Church in areas of ecological justice, spiritual formation, intercultural ministry, global partnership, social impact, and leadership development. Together, they represent a widening circle of accessibility and impact, ensuring that theological education is responsive to the needs of diverse communities throughout the connection and beyond.

Garrett Seminary remains deeply committed to the vitality of The United Methodist Church. Through enrollment growth, digital innovation, historic institutional partnerships, and expanding grant-supported initiatives, the seminary is strengthening its capacity to serve the Church in a season of significant transition and opportunity. Guided by the conviction that God continues to call and equip leaders for this moment, Garrett looks forward to continued partnership with annual conferences, congregations, and ministries across the connection.

Submitted by:
Javier A. Viera, President

35. Methodist Theological School in Ohio

Thank you for this opportunity to bring news from MTSO.

MTSO is selected to offer Clinical Pastoral Education through CIPP
The General Board of Higher Education and Ministry of the United Methodist Church has chosen MTSO as the new academic home of the Center for Integrative Pastoral Practice, its Clinical Pastoral Education program.

The CIPP program, which GBHEM had operated since 2018, is a vital component in the preparation of future chaplains, spiritual care providers and pastoral counselors, integrating theological knowledge with practical clinical training.

CIPP@MTSO (mtso.edu/cipp) uses students' existing ministry settings for the clinical assignments required for CPE certification. It serves students who are forging ministry pathways in both traditional and non-traditional contexts.

With a Lilly Endowment grant, MTSO will help strengthen children's worship
Lilly Endowment Inc. has awarded MTSO a $1.25 million grant to establish "Kids Incorporated: Incorporating the Next Generation into the Full Life of Congregational Worship." The program is funded through Lilly

Endowment's Nurturing Children Through Worship and Prayer Initiative.

The program will empower partner congregations to better serve children and their families by enhancing children's spiritual development and increasing understanding, accessibility and engagement opportunities for children within worship settings. With a focus on children ages 4-12, MTSO is addressing developmental differences across various age groups and promoting intergenerational worship experiences.

New technology enhances the blending of in-person and online learning
Five MTSO classrooms have received significant technology upgrades, making the school's blended learning experience even better. The new tech in these "Zoom Rooms" includes 360-degree cameras and microphones for more seamless classroom discussions, along with an updated platform that records and transcribes lectures.

With MTSO's HyFlex (short for "hybrid-flexible") education, students can attend classes in person, remotely or some of both. No matter how they participate, they're engaged in an immersive real-time experience.

Respectfully submitted,
Danny Russell, Director of Communications

36. Mission Central

As we enter our 24th year of ministry, we remain deeply grateful for the faithful support of churches throughout the Susquehanna Conference. Your time, talents, generosity, and partnership have enabled us to serve more people with resources than at any point in our history.

While we are thankful to help meet so many needs, this growth also reflects the significant and increasing challenges facing our communities in recent years. Our mission of connecting God's resources with human need remains at the heart of all we do. We continually seek God's guidance as we steward these resources, remaining flexible in our operations so we can adapt and respond faithfully as needs evolve.

In 2025, we expanded our reach in meaningful ways. We partnered with more than 250 nonprofit organizations and churches and became the Northeast distribution partner for Church World Service and Lutheran World Relief, strengthening and extending their kit programs.

Our 2025 distribution highlights include:

- Disseminating more than 3,300 Cleaning Buckets, stepping into the gap to assist those impacted by devastating flooding in Texas and severe flooding and tornadoes across several Midwestern states
- Supporting more students than ever through our School Program, providing over $144,000 in resources
- Assisting more than 1,715 children in foster care across Pennsylvania
- Distributing over $2.3 million in medical equipment and supplies
- Providing more than $661,000 in kits to individuals and communities in need

As UMCOR's Sager Brown warehouse closes, the role of the seven affiliate distribution warehouses across the country – including Mission Central – becomes even more critical in responding to natural disasters and humanitarian crises. We recognize that God is positioning us to meet needs in ways we could not have anticipated, and we are committed to faithfully following that call.

Our strategic plan is currently in progress as we discern how best to grow and strengthen our impact for the future. Each day, we witness "God moments" that affirm the importance of this work – lives touched, prayers answered, and hope restored through shared generosity.

2025 WAREHOUSE DISTRIBUTION TOTALS

TOTAL WAREHOUSE MATERIAL DISTRIBUTION:	$23,398,767
TOTAL LIVES TOUCHED:	8,867,376

All this was accomplished with just six staff members and thousands of volunteers whose donated time equaled more than six additional full-time employees. Our $612,000 budget is funded entirely by individuals, churches, organizations, businesses, and grant partners. We simply could not do this work without you.

Thank you for your faithful support – through financial contributions, material donations, and the gift of your time and talents. You are truly the hands of feet of Christ, and countless lives have been transformed because of your generosity!

Respectfully submitted,
Hope Harrison, Executive Director

37. Pennsylvania Council of Churches

The Pennsylvania Council of Churches has a significant history in the landscape of the ecumenical movement within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Our relationship to the Susquehanna Conference of The United Methodist Church contributes to our impact. We are grateful for our partnership.

We are committed to helping faith communities in the effort to:

- Grow, spiritual transformational leaders
- Equip congregations for vitality and create new places for new people
- Connect with each other and the world

2025 was a year in which the Pennsylvania Council of Churches addressed a significant building structure need and created a program which far reaching significance. The Pennsylvania Council of Churches used a loan secured from the settlement of the I-83 project which involved the expropriation of property from the Council by the PennDot involving the highway expansion, and a grant awarded by the Dauphin County Local Share Gaming Grant. The project was the complete tear-off and replacement of roofs at the United Church Center. This project is nearing completion, and we expect that it should be completed by early spring. This has improved the expereince of our tenants and makes our building much more appealing to the public. We also relied on grant from The Pennsylvania Emergency Management Authority to complete security camera enhancement within and outside the building. These enhancements have enhanced our ability to do ministry in a safe and secure environment.

The Council created a community garden to address the need for healthy food options for families. We presently have a raised bed garden located on the grounds of the United Church Center. This effort began this year, starting small. The volunteers and gardeners were primarily tenants within the building. We held a celebration event in November that was open to the public, to introduce people to the garden and encourage people to consider signing up for a garden plot. This is a significant community building opportunity that encourages people to grow their own food. This is a means through which the Council is a conduit for community building and healthy eating. This year our gardeners grew tomatoes, peppers, collard green, zucchini, mustard green, callaloo, egg plant, cucumbers, watermelon, carrots, and pollinator flowers. The garden has also provided an opportunity for the Council to conserve and reclaim the area for cultivation and renewal. We have also started a relationship with the LOGOS Academy in Harrisburg, a K-3rd Grade institution. We will provide the students and their teachers with raised beds for the purpose of engaging the students in herb gardening. We are also working with congregations in the Lehigh Valley to create a church garden that will encourage urban/rural engagement and conversations and learning about cultivating food.

The Council worked with leaders in the Christian, Muslim, and Jewish communities to engage a monthly Book Study of Pamela Cooper-White's manuscript, "The Psychology of Christian Nationalism." This is an area to which the Council has given significant attention. The study also aligned with our effort to active engage interfaith partners in conversations about racism, white nationalism, and hate. This was a tremendous experience for clergy, laity and others committed to promoting peace. We have also advocated policy change on gun control

and economic measures to support a livable wage for people challenged by the economic realities facing people today. The Council has built significant partnership inclusive of Cultivating Roots which is helping us develop community gardens and the World Affairs Council of Harrisburg with whom we partnered to sponsor the congregational study of Christian Nationalism.

We are grateful for your partnership and commitment to the work of the Pennsylvania Council of Churches.

Larry D. Pickens, Executive Director

38. St. Paul School of Theology

What does God require of us? To act justly, love mercifully, and walk humbly with God. At Saint Paul School of Theology, this call from Micah 6:8 shapes everything we do—from preparing pastors to serve rural communities to fostering a beloved community where all belong. Centered in Christ and rooted in the Wesleyan tradition, we are committed to forming innovative leaders who make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

A Year of Growth and Vitality

2025 has been marked by remarkable momentum. Our Course of Study School educated 248 students—a 6% increase—with 628 course registrations, representing a 14% growth. These servant leaders are making a tangible difference: 42% serve rural communities with populations under 2,500, and 22 students serve as pastors of three or more churches. We celebrated 21 students completing the 20-course program, equipping them for licensed ministry.

Seminary enrollment grew by 9%, with a 33% increase in new students for Fall 2025. Our commitment to diversity is bearing fruit, with 29% racial diversity among students and almost even gender distribution. Students from 31 states and 220 cities connect with us through flexible online and hybrid learning options, while 16 graduates of the Course of Study School have transitioned into our degree programs.

Living Our Strategic Vision

Our Board of Trustees has recently endorsed a strategic plan that reflects our values and responds to the changing contexts of the church and the world. We are striving to become a beloved community that embodies belonging, justice, equity, and inclusion. Our new Doctor of Ministry track in Spirituality, Innovation, and Adaptive Leadership exemplifies this vision, developing change agents grounded in contemplative spirituality and equipped with emotional intelligence and intercultural competence. These same principles permeate our Master of Divinity and Master of Arts in Christian Ministry programs.

Saint Paul remains financially healthy, operating with a balanced budget, no debt, and an endowment ten times our annual expenses. This sustainability, rooted in community donations, enables us to invest in scholarships, technology, and evolving academic programs that serve our students and the church.

Looking Ahead

In 2026, we are strengthening our foundation and expanding our horizons by cultivating a vibrant alum network—a lifelong professional and spiritual home. Through mentorship, resource sharing, and collaborative ministry, we are building a dynamic ecosystem that empowers graduates from their first day of classes through retirement and beyond.

Saint Paul School of Theology invites you to join us in this journey of formation, innovation, and transformation. Together, we are preparing leaders who embody justice, mercy, and humility as they serve Christ and His church.

Jay K. Simmons, President

39. United Methodist Advocacy in Pennsylvania

Immigration was by far the most pressing issue for Pennsylvania communities in 2025 and likely will continue to be of paramount importance for our state and nation. But the advocacy coordinators have used her extensive governmental and media contacts to advance the priorities of the United Methodist Church's social principles and those of our presiding bishops as expressed in their messages to the church.

The advocacy coordinator has worked closed with community organizations with conference leaders at all levels over the past year, including taking the lead in organizing a major forum at Grace United Methodist Church in Harrisburg on October 22 to provide information about legal and other resources to help immigrant families. The event drew people from throughout Central Pennsylvania and beyond and helped connect organizations working to support immigrant families.

The event was livestreamed on social media, allowing both Susquehanna and Western PA conferences to benefit without having to travel to Harrisburg.

The Immigrant Resources Workshop was only one of a series of events the advocacy coordinator supported and helped to promote within our conferences on this issue. The coordinator helped to promote a forum with author Sarah Towle who has written about deportations and human rights abuses of immigrants. And the PA Advocacy Coordinator and her husband have sponsored a series of com

Top issues of 2025:
Among issues that the advocacy coordinator has helped to highlight have included online and in-person forums on gun violence, juvenile justice, the criminal justice system, anti-racism and poverty.

The advocacy coordinator has worked with Ceasefire PA, Moms Against Gun Violence and other groups on gun reform legislation, which has been a major issue for members of Western PA's Church & Society. Information and resources have been provided to help the group better understand the issues and who are supporters in the state legislature. And the coordinator has supported and helped to organize several meetings, marches and demonstrations calling attention to the need for sensible gun laws to better protect our communities. In April 2025, she supported a demonstration at the state capital that included UMC pastors as well as those from the Episcopal Church.

The coordinator has ensured the events were well promoted on our social media platforms and in the media, including in many of her columns for PennLive.

In addition to assisting and promoting events focused on gun violence, the PA Advocacy Coordinator has worked closely with the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission (PHRC) to address bullying and violence in schools after reports of racially motivated attacks in 2025.

The PA Advocacy Coordinator supported and promoted within our conferences several "No Hate in Our State" rallies that PHRC organized in Central Pennsylvania.

Media Promotion
The advocacy coordinator worked with pastors and laity to publish letters to the editor and op-eds in PennLive and The Patriot-News on these issues and provides information on how to reach out to legislators and other elected officials.

Support for Ministries:
The PA Advocacy Coordinator provides support for ministries involved in addressing pressing social issues from poverty alleviation to juvenile justice reform to gun violence. Among the groups the coordinator supports include:

- Beloved Community – Susquehanna Conference
- Peace with Justice, SUSUMC Board of Global Ministries

- Church & Society -- Western PA Annual Conference
- United Women in Faith – Susquehanna Conference
- UMEIT

While the Church & Society group in Western PA has been less active in 2025 due to a reorganization, the PA Advocacy Coordinator has maintained contact with its chair Dawn Lynn Check and has actively worked with the Beloved Community and Peace with Justice in the past few months leading up to a Jan. 28 event at the state capital that will include remarks from Bishop Hector Burgos-Nunez. The PA Advocacy Coordinator has promoted the event throughout both Susquehanna and Western PA Conferences and has sought to engage clergy and laity in both conferences via emails and online posts.

The PA Advocacy Coordinator helps to inform and connect ministries and conference leaders about social, political and community affairs through an active social media presence that includes:

- Pennsylvania Advocacy Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/PennsylvaniaAdvocacyUMC
- Pennsylvania Advocacy Blog: https://umadvocacypa.blogspot.com/
- Pennsylvania Advocacy Twitter: https://x.com/advocacy_united
- Information is also posted on shared laity Facebook pages.

In addition to posting articles and information about social, political and economic issues of importance to clergy and laity, the PA Advocacy Coordinator regularly shares messages from our all of our bishops on all platforms.

Maintaining governmental contacts:
The PA Advocacy Coordinates maintain contacts with key elected and appointed officials in the legislature, the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission, as well as with Gov. Josh Shapiro and Lt. Gov. Austin Davis. The coordinator is available to help secure meetings with officials as well as to assist in writing letters, emails or in phone calls to their offices.

Suggestions for 2026:
Looking ahead to 2026, the PA Advocacy Coordinator hopes to work more closely with the Western PA Church & Society group as it reorganizes with new priorities.

It is also important to identify leaders of other ministries in Western PA and to have a Western PA conference contact to improve communication and better assist pastors and laity in making their voices heard at the state capital. Ensuring representation from Western PA at events at the capital and in meeting with legislators should be a priority, and the PA Advocacy Coordinator can assist with providing information and contacts. Immigration and deportations along with increasing strains on families to provide basic needs will be major issues for UMC advocacy in the coming year. There appears to be significant progress in pushing gun control legislation with the combines efforts of Episcopal and UMC bishops, pastors and laity. And social unrest and political polarization is likely to increase. The PA Advocacy Coordinator will assist in ensuring our advocates have access to powerbrokers at the state capital and in having their voices amplified in mainstream media.

Joyce M. Davis, UMC Advocacy Coordinator

40. United Methodist Foundation of Pennsylvania

The United Methodist Foundation of Pennsylvania is dedicated to delivering excellent services and valuable information to individuals, churches, and organizations that share common religious bonds and convictions primarily within the Western Pennsylvania and the Susquehanna Annual Conferences.

As its primary activity, the Foundation has provided professional funds management in adherence to the Social Principles of the denomination since its inception. With more than $195 million under management, the Board of Directors—through its investment committee—oversees this activity with the help of the Foundation's

engaged, outsourced investment office and professional managers. The Foundation realized $8.3 million new deposits in 2025. The nearly $9 million dollars of income generated from these funds under management has allowed donors, annual conferences, congregations, organizations, and others to support vital ministries—scholarships, outreach, camping, disaster relief, food insecurity, anti-racism, ministries for various age-level groups to grow the ministry of Christ—to impact the Kingdom of God.

In addition to funds management, the Foundation board and staff members collaborate to design program activities and make decisions that expand the Foundation's impact. Some highlights from 2025 included webinars, presentations on planned giving to local churches, and training sessions through the Foundation's School of Leadership. The Foundation reached more than 250 individuals and more than 119 churches through its program offerings in 2025. In-person church visits to discuss funds management, legacy giving, and account reviews increased by 89.47% in the past year.

Like the School of Leadership and in-person presentations, grant making is another adjunct aspect of the Foundation's ministry. In 2025, the Foundation awarded $172,000 for a total of 21 grants to churches and organizations. Additionally, the Love A Child Fund—which provides grants to churches in the Susquehanna Annual Conference involved in children's ministry—awarded a $5,604.74 grant.

The Foundation's Annual Meeting, held at the Pittsburgh Marriott North in Cranberry Township in May 2025, provided an opportunity for interested stakeholders and constituents to celebrate the ministry of Christ through the Foundation. The meeting included a summary review of the financials and investments, highlights of the Foundation's impactful work, and a moving testimony from a recipient of the Andrew W. and Jane Stewart Smith Seminary Scholarship Fund—a gift from the Smith Family for students attending a United Methodist approved seminary.

The Board of Directors continues to execute its 2024–2027 Strategic Plan that calls for a review of the Foundation's operations in connection with the member and how its legal structure may need to be changed so the Foundation can better support its mission beyond simply a legal connection. Additionally, the Foundation's mission was refined to be more donor-focused during the strategic planning process.

In late 2025, the Foundation began the process of relocating its office from downtown Pittsburgh to its new location in Sewickley—15 miles north of the city.

The United Methodist Foundation of Pennsylvania is blessed in being a supporting organization of the Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference and in serving the regions of both Western Pennsylvania and Susquehanna. It remains committed to the principles of Christian stewardship and it continues to provide responsible and faithful investment management for churches and agencies, planned giving opportunities to support Christian ministries, and education and support in financial stewardship and leadership as followers of Jesus Christ.

D. Edward Bailey, CAP®, Executive Director

41. United Theological Seminary

Since 1871, United Theological Seminary has prepared faithful and fruitful Christian leaders who make disciples of Jesus Christ. In the 2024-25 fiscal year, the seminary served 642 graduate students, 275 doctoral and 375 masters,* reflecting approximately 30 percent enrollment growth since 2021 and placing United among the largest United Methodist seminaries in the United States.

A diverse community of many denominations, races and nationalities, United welcomed students from 38 states, 24 nations, and 54 denominations, with United Methodists representing the largest denominational group within the student body.

Academics

United's academic programs remain grounded in the historic Christian faith, scriptural holiness, and a commitment to the renewal of the church, preparing graduates to serve with wisdom, integrity, and hope.

United introduced a Doctor of Theology in 2024 to support pastor-scholars called to ministry at the intersection of the church and academy. The new degree program welcomed 13 students in its first year.

The seminary's Doctor of Ministry program continues to attract experienced ministry leaders seeking advanced professional education focused on faithful leadership. In the 2024-25 school year, 262 students participated in the mentor-led program.

Master's programs include eight houses of study, serving nearly 200 students in the United States and around the world, with programs offered in English, Spanish and Korean. In July 2025, 11 students attended the first Contextual Ministry Retreat for the African House of Study, held at the Kenya Methodist Conference Center in Nairobi. The Hispanic House of Study will celebrate its first class of graduates in May 2026, with candidates from across the United States, Mexico, Colombia, and Peru.

Through rigorous scholarship, intentional mentoring, worship, and community life, as well as practical engagement with the church's needs, academic life at United advances the seminary's vision of *Spirit-led leaders, a Christ-like Church, and a transformed world.*

Finances

United continues to focus on reducing the educational debt of its students. The Fresh Wind Campaign to raise $10 million for the endowment is expanding scholarship opportunities for current and future students. The campaign has raised more than $9 million toward this goal, by the grace of God and through the generosity of alumni/ae, churches, and friends of the seminary.

Looking Ahead

United enters the coming years with gratitude for God's faithfulness and confidence in God's future. Several senior leaders have answered new calls, and President Dr. Kent Millard has announced his retirement effective June 30, 2026, concluding ten years of service marked by encouragement, vision, and stability. A Presidential Search Committee is at work to identify United's next president, who will begin service on July 1, 2026.

Trusting God's promise spoken through the prophet Isaiah, "I am about to do a new thing" (Isaiah 43:19), United remains committed to preparing Christian leaders who boldly proclaim the gospel and make disciples of Jesus Christ. Thanks be to God!

**12-month unduplicated headcount enrollment for the 2024-25 fiscal year from July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025.*

Dr. Kent Millard, President

42. Wesley Theological Seminary

As I complete my tenure as president of Wesley Theological Seminary, I am confident in handing the leadership to Dr. Carla Works, the 11th President of our school. Dr. Works, Dean and Woodrow and Mildred Miller Professor of Biblical Theology at Wesley DC, is a distinguished New Testament scholar, educator, and church-centered theologian.

Wesley Theological Seminary (Wesley DC) remains steadfast in its mission to equip persons for Christian ministry and leadership in the church and the world, to advance theological scholarship, and to model a prophetic voice in the public square. In a season marked by institutional change, civic uncertainty, and renewed hope for the United Methodist Church, Wesley DC actively forms leaders who are spiritually grounded, intellectually rigorous, and engaged with the world God loves through the following programs.

Master of Divinity, Master of Arts, Master of Theological Studies Degrees: Wesley DC offers Master of Divinity, Master of Arts, and Master of Theological Studies degrees through residential, hybrid, and fully online formats. Our programs serve a diverse student body representing a wide range of denominations, cultural contexts, and vocational callings. Across all modalities, Wesley DC emphasizes ministerial formation that integrates theological depth, spiritual practice, and contextual engagement. https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/study/

Doctor of Ministry Degree: Wesley DC remains one of the largest Doctor of Ministry programs in the United States and serves experienced ministerial leaders from across the world. In May 2025, ten chaplains from southern Africa graduated through a landmark partnership with Africa University, reflecting Wesley DC's growing global reach. Our DMin tracks for military chaplains continue to grow, including through a renewed partnership with the U.S. Army Institute for Religious Leadership. New tracks in Church Leadership Excellence, Soul Care, Global Church Leadership, and others begin in 2027. Learn more about how you can grow in wisdom and leadership at: **https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/doctorofministry/program/.**

Course of Study: As the regional Course of Study school for the Northeast Jurisdiction, Wesley DC delivers the full Course of Study curriculum online. Scholar-practitioners teach these courses, equipping Local Pastors across the denomination with flexible, high-quality preparation for ministry. **https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/degree-programs/course-of-study/**

Ministry Certificates and Lifelong Learning: Wesley Pathways for Ministry offers online courses and certificates to help you discover your passion for ministry and strengthen your leadership skills, whether you are a layperson or a pastor. Courses and certificates help people gain ministry and leadership skills for church, community, and specialized ministry settings. Many courses/certificates are stackable for master's or doctoral credit and/or can be taken for CEUs. **https://www.wesleypathways.com/**

Office of Admissions: Are you ready to explore your next faithful step? The Admissions Office regularly holds in-person and online open houses for potential master's and DMin students, and admissions officers are available to answer your questions and help you discern. **https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/admissions/explorewesley/**

The Hub for (Re)imagining Ministry: Is your church ready to engage new generations or journey toward thriving in new ways? The Hub is currently accepting applications for its Engaging Young Adults nationwide, virtual cohort for congregations beginning August 2026, and will be recruiting new cohorts of congregations for Bringing Church Home (helping churches better accompany and support parents/caregivers in sharing their faith) and Children of Faith (helping churches center children in worship and formation) in fall 2026. The Hub is also entering into partnerships with UMC districts and annual conferences, equipping leaders to experiment, learn, and adapt faithfully in their local contexts. https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/wesley-innovation-hub/
The Lewis Center for Church Leadership: The Lewis Center welcomed Rev. Dr. Jonathan Page as its new Director in 2025. Dr. Page brings deep experience in leadership development across ecclesial and secular contexts and is guiding the Center into its next chapter of service to the Church. Through its widely read Leading Ideas newsletter and the Leading Ideas Talks podcast, the Lewis Center reaches thousands of leaders across the denomination. **https://www.churchleadership.com/**

The Henry Luce III Center for the Arts and Religion: The Luce Center welcomed Rev. Timothy Chon, MDiv, MFA as its new Director in 2025. Since Spring 2025, the Luce Center, which serves as a vital intersection of theology, creativity, and public imagination, has presented four exhibitions in the Dadian Gallery. In 2025, the Luce Center completed a major studio renovation that expanded capacity to support multiple artists-in-residence simultaneously. The Center welcomed professional Artist-in-Residence Khaleelah Harris alongside new Student Artists-in-Residence, strengthening its commitment to nurturing artists at every stage of practice. **https://www.luceartsandreligion.org/**

Center for Public Theology (CPT): CPT builds on its nearly fifty-year legacy by equipping faith leaders for thoughtful, courageous public witness. In collaboration with the Florida Annual Conference and with support from Trinity Wall Street, CPT leads a Public Theology Fellowship addressing immigration and public witness in politically diverse congregations. CPT continues to offer its flagship course, Faith and Politics in the Public Square, which remains open to seminarians nationwide. The course brings participants to Washington, DC for sustained engagement with policymakers, journalists, scholars, and activists. This year's cohort engaged leaders including Senator Chris Coons, NPR's Michel Martin, Judge Thomas Griffith, and Tope Folarin of the Institute for Policy Studies—preparing leaders to serve faithfully amid rapidly shifting public realities. **https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/ice/programs/public-theology/**

Community Engagement Institute): CEI forms leaders for justice-centered, community-rooted ministry. In March 2025, CEI hosted Fostering Urban Vitality and a Heart for the City, a two-day urban ministry conference in Baltimore, with support from City Seminary of New York and the Lilly Endowment. CEI offers traditional courses and immersive travel seminars open to all master's-level students. With grants from the General Board of Global Ministries, CEI continues to offer the Heal the Sick Health Minister's Certificate. Since its inception, the program has trained more than 500 health ministers across 38 states and seven countries. In Spring 2026, CEI will offer Trauma-Informed Congregations, equipping leaders to address trauma with theological, cultural, and communal wisdom. **https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/ice/about-us/overview-2/**

Wesley Theological Seminary remains deeply committed to the United Methodist Church and to the formation of leaders who serve with humility, imagination, and courage. As the Church continues to discern its future, Wesley stands ready—faithful to its mission, responsive to the moment, and hopeful in God's ongoing work. For the Church. For the world. For such a time as this.

Call us: (202) 885-8659 Email us: admissions@wesleyseminary.edu
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Submitted by:
Lyvonne Briggs, Director of Strategic Communications and Marketing

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2026 Journal Correction Form

To publish a Journal without errors is virtually impossible. Please assist us by notifying us of any errors which should be corrected in the next edition.

Your cooperation in calling this to our attention is appreciated and helpful. Thank you.

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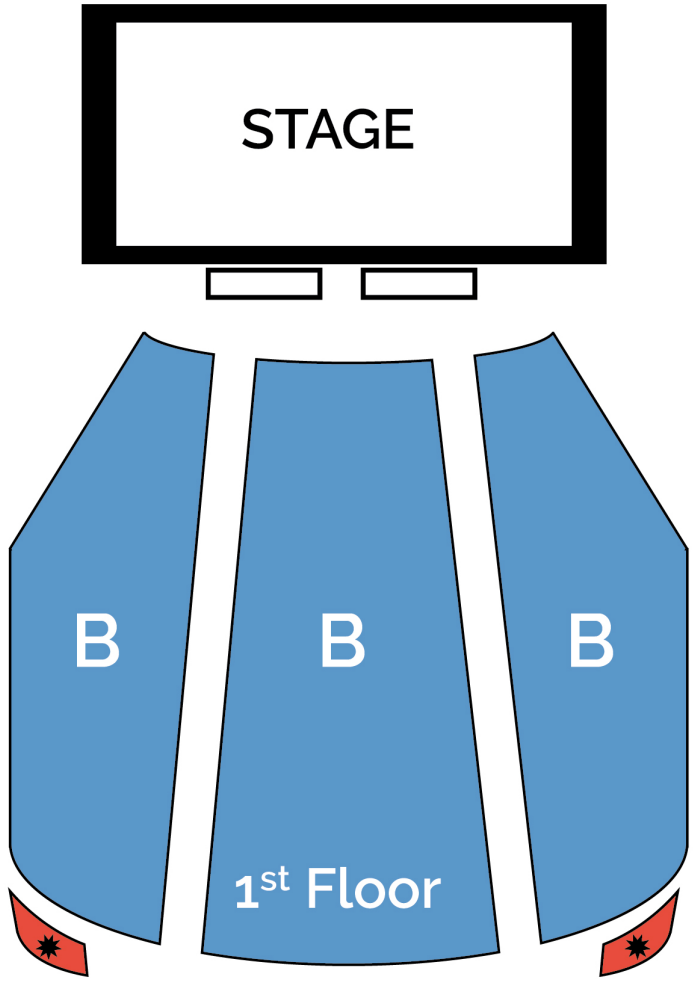

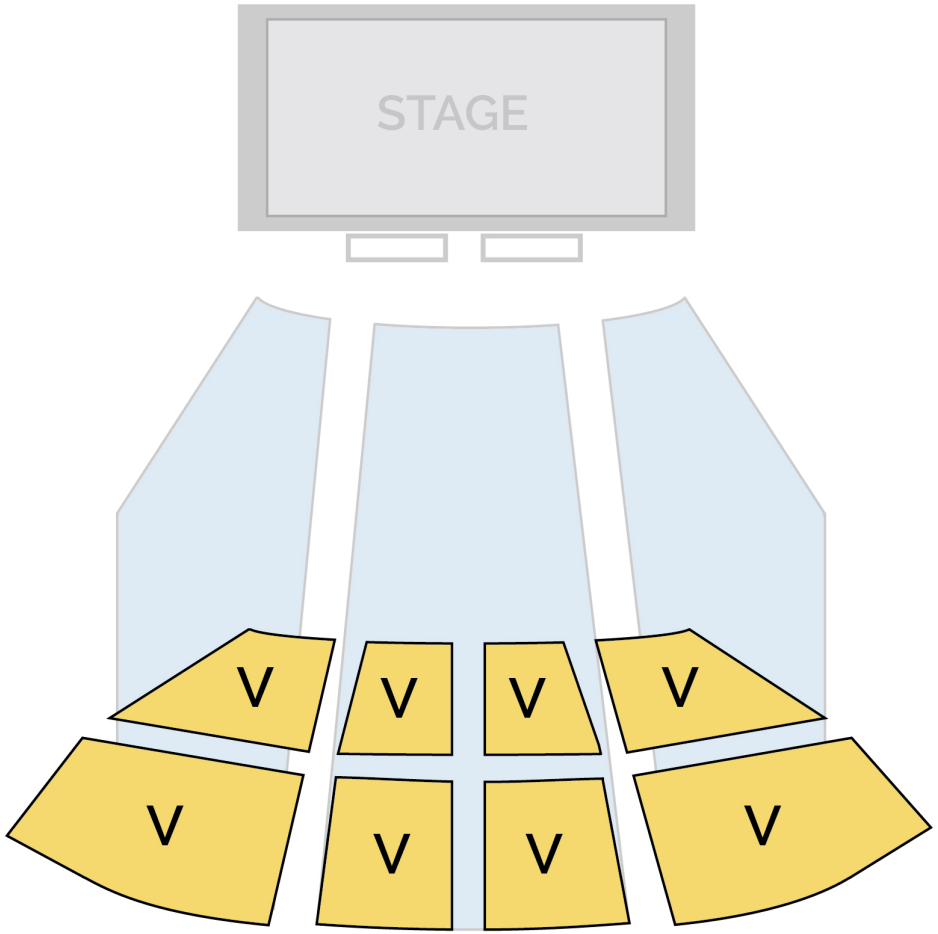

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