

# ONE MATTERS

SGAUMC | 2024 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

## Book of Recommendations and Reports

---

**June 2-4, 2024 Tifton, GA**

The 160th Session of the South Georgia Annual Conference

# The 2024 Book of Recommendations and Reports

## Table of Contents

<b>Section 1 – Preparing for Annual Conference .....</b>	<b>4</b>
1. Agenda .....	4
2. Bishop Graves’ Welcome Letter .....	7
3. Conference Secretary’s Letter .....	8
4. How to Make a Motion and Parliamentary Procedures .....	9
5. Information for Conference Members and Visitors .....	11
6. UGA Tifton Campus Conference Center Directions and Alternate Routes.....	13
7. Special Offering Information .....	14
8. Mission Outreach Emphasis/AC Emails & Additional Information.....	15
9. Healthflex and Wellness Information .....	16
 <b>Section 2 – Recommendations.....</b>	 <b>18</b>
1. Conference Board of Trustees .....	19
2. Commission on Equitable Compensation .....	22
a. Statement of Purpose, Policies, and Procedures .....	22
b. Minimum Salary .....	24
c. Equitable Compensation Churches .....	26
d. List of Churches with Unpaid Benefits Bills Greater than 180 Days .....	26
e. Equitable Compensation Supplementing Beyond Minimum Salaries .....	27
f. Conference Arrearage Policy .....	27
3. Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits.....	30
a. Pre-1982 Pensions and Benefits.....	30
b. Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP).....	31
c. Personal Investment Plan (PIP).....	32
d. The Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP).....	33
e. Health Insurance Program (Healthflex) .....	33
f. Wellness Initiative.....	35
g. South Georgia Annual Conference Clergy Mental Health .....	35
h. Accumulating Debt for Clergy Benefits .....	36
i. 2025 Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan .....	36
j. Resolution on Rental/Housing Allowances for Retired or Disabled Clergy for 2025.....	40
k. Funding Reserve Trust for Post-Retirement Clergy Benefit Funds.....	41
i. Statement of Income and Expenses .....	42
ii. Actuarial Valuations .....	42
iii. Health Reimbursement Account Rates.....	42
4. Council on Finance and Administration.....	43
a. Comparison Report .....	44
b. Report of Receipts and Disbursements .....	46
c. Budget Factors and Special Offerings.....	50
d. Pensions and Health Benefits Cost .....	53
e. Recommendations Regarding Cabinet.....	53
f. Budget for 2025 .....	54
5. Standing Rules Changes.....	57
a. Registration and per diem .....	58
b. Appendix F: Regarding Proceeds from sale of abandoned or discontinued church property	58
 <b>Section 3 – Consent Calendar .....</b>	 <b>59</b>
<i>Reports are in alphabetical order</i>	
1. Africa University.....	60
2. Archives and History/Arthur J. Moore Museum.....	60
3. Board of Laity .....	61

a.	United Methodist Men .....	63
b.	United Women in Faith .....	64
4.	Board of Ordained Ministry .....	65
a.	Overview of the 2023-2024 Year .....	65
b.	Ministerial Education Fund.....	66
5.	Communications.....	68
6.	Conference Center.....	68
7.	Conference Personnel Committee .....	69
8.	Congregational Development.....	69
9.	Discipleship Ministries.....	70
a.	Overview of Connectional Ministries.....	70
b.	Outreach.....	75
i.	“Three Star Church” Challenge.....	76
ii.	Carruth Mission Awards.....	77
iii.	Advance Specials.....	78
iv.	Advance Special Guidelines.....	80
v.	Covenant Relationship Program.....	80
c.	Witness.....	82
i.	General Evangelists Approval.....	82
ii.	Fully Connectional Churches .....	83
iii.	Witness Awards.....	86
iv.	Evangelistically Fruitful Congregations.....	86
10.	Epworth By The Sea .....	87
11.	Faith Connect Federal Credit Union .....	90
12.	Georgia Pastors’ School.....	92
13.	Georgia United Methodist Foundation, Inc.....	93
14.	Higher Education and Collegiate Ministry.....	94
a.	General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.....	94
b.	Schools of Theology .....	95
i.	Boston University School of Theology .....	95
ii.	Candler School of Theology .....	96
iii.	Drew University Theological School .....	97
iv.	Duke Divinity School .....	97
v.	Gammon Theological Seminary .....	99
vi.	Garrett Theological Seminary.....	100
vii.	Saint Paul School of Theology .....	100
viii.	United Theological Seminary .....	102
ix.	Wesley Theological Seminary.....	103
c.	UMCommission on Higher Education and Ministry .....	104
15.	Hinton Rural Life Center.....	112
16.	Lake Junaluska Assembly, Inc. ....	114
17.	Magnolia Manor.....	115
18.	Committee on Memoirs.....	117
19.	Methodist Home for Children and Youth .....	118
a.	The Foundation of the Methodist Home.....	120
20.	Open Door Community House, Inc.....	121
21.	Professional Administrators of the United Methodist Connectional Structure.....	123
22.	St. Joseph’s/Candler .....	123
23.	Vashti Center, Inc.....	125
24.	Wesley Community Centers of Savannah, Inc.....	126
25.	Wesley Glen Ministries .....	127

# **PREPARING FOR ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

*The South Georgia Conference of  
The United Methodist Church*

---

**2024 Annual Conference Session**

---

**June 2-4, 2024  
Tifton, Georgia**

# 2024 Annual Conference Working Agenda

*\*(Subject to Change)*

**The South Georgia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church**

**June 2-4, 2024**

**Theme: “One Matters” Luke 15**

**University of Georgia Conference Center, Tifton, Georgia**

## **Sunday, June 2, 2024**

**4:00 PM Registration and Credential Pickup Opens**

*(Conference Center)*

*(Sunday registration closes at 6:15pm)*

**4:00 PM Service of Ordination & Commissioning Rehearsal**

*(Tifton First United Methodist Church, Sanctuary)*

**6:30 PM Opening Worship Service with Holy Communion**

*(Conference Center, John Hunt Auditorium)*

Sermon: Bishop David Graves

Special Offering: *South Georgia Higher Education & Campus Ministry*

## **Monday, June 3, 2024**

**7:45 AM Registration Reopens**

*(closes at 9:30 am; limited registration re-opens at 1:30 pm)*

**8:30 AM LAITY ORIENTATION** *(Conference Center, Hunt Auditorium)*

**8:30 AM CLERGY SESSION** *(Conference Center, Ballroom)*

**9:45 AM CONFERENCE BUSINESS SESSION**

*(Conference Center, Hunt Auditorium)*

*And Are We Yet Alive*

Convene and Welcome

Introductions *(Bishop Graves)*

Presentation *(Episcopacy Committee)*

Organizing Motions *(Mrs. Meredyth Earnest)*

Setting the Bar of the Conference

Election of Secretarial Staff

Adoption of the 2024 Conference Agenda

Action on 2024 Consent Calendar *(Mrs. Meredyth Earnest)*

One Matters Moment

Presentation: Proposed Standing Rules Changes *(Rev. Dr. Marcus Tripp)*

John Wesley Moment *(Rev. Dave Hanson)*

Global Ministries Presentation (*James Keech, Mission Advocate, SEJ*)  
Episcopal Address  
One Matters Moment

**12:00 PM Lunch Break**

**2:00 PM CONFERENCE BUSINESS SESSION** (*Conference Center, Hunt Auditorium*)

One Matters Moment  
Board of Ordained Ministry (*Rev. Michael Culbreth*)  
    Introduction of Extension Clergy  
    Receiving New Clergy  
Presentation: Committee on Nominations (*Mrs. Meredyth Earnest*)  
Update from General Conference (*Rev. Doreen Smalls, Mr. Richard Shinhoster*)  
Church Closings (*Dr. Paula Lewis, Dean of the Cabinet*)  
John Wesley Moment (*Rev. Dave Hanson*)  
Update on Bishop's Priorities (*Panel Presentation*)  
    Connectional Ministries & Congregational Development reports  
One Matters Moment

**4:55 PM ORDER OF THE DAY**

Invitation to complimentary BBQ dinner by The Methodist Home (*Ms. Alison Evans*)  
Conference Announcements and Recess

**5:00 PM Dinner Break**

The Methodist Home BBQ (*Conference Center, Ballroom*)

**7:00 PM ORDER OF THE DAY: Service of Ordination with Commissioning**

(*Tifton First United Methodist Church, Sanctuary*)  
Sermon: Bishop Debra Wallace-Padgett,  
*Resident Bishop, Holston and North Alabama Conferences*  
Offering: *South Georgia Conference Clergy Care Fund*

**Reception Honoring the 2024 South Georgia  
Conference Ordination & Commissioning Class**  
(*Tifton First United Methodist Church, Fellowship Hall*)

**Tuesday, June 5, 2024**

**8:30 AM MORNING WORSHIP**

(*Conference Center, Hunt Auditorium*)  
Sermon: Rev. Doreen Smalls

**9:00 AM CONFERENCE BUSINESS SESSION**

(*Conference Center, Hunt Auditorium*)  
One Matters Moment

Action on Nominations (*Mrs. Meredyth Earnest*)  
Action on Standing Rules (*Rev. Dr. Marcus Tripp*)  
Conference Board of Trustees (*Rev. Dr. Jimmy Asbell*)  
Pension and Health Benefits (*Rev. Dr. Ben Martin*)  
Conference Lay Leader Address (*Mr. J. Knapp*)  
Recognition of Fully Connectional and Evangelistically Fruitful Churches  
Service of Commissioning for the Office of Deaconess  
One Matters Moment

**11:30 AM**      **ORDER OF THE DAY: Golden Anniversary Awards/Retiree Recognition**

**12:00 PM**      **Conference Announcements and Lunch Break**

**1:00 PM**      **Gathering for Families of the Deceased** (*Conference Center, Atrium*)  
*Visitation with families of those whom we will remember is encouraged*

**2:00 PM**      **ORDER OF THE DAY: Memorial Service with Holy Communion**  
(*Conference Center, Hunt Auditorium*)  
Sermon: Rev. Dr. Rick Lanford  
Offering: *South Georgia Fund for Special Relief*

**3:15 PM**      **CONFERENCE BUSINESS SESSION**  
(*Conference Center, Hunt Auditorium*)  
One Matters Moment  
Special Recognition: GNTV (*Rev. David Wood*)  
Equitable Compensation (*Mrs. Suzanne Jones*)  
Setting of Minimum Salary  
Council on Finance and Administration (*Rev. Dr. Shane Green*)  
2025 Conference Budget  
Statistician's Report (*Mrs. Suzanne Jones*)  
Annual Conference Program Committee  
Invitation to the 2025 Annual  
Conference  
August 2024 Special Session Announcements (*Bishop David Graves*)  
Closing Motions and Announcements

**5:00 PM**      **ORDER OF THE DAY: Service of Sending Forth**  
(*Conference Center, Hunt Auditorium*)  
Fixing of the 2024-2025 Appointments

**5:30 PM**      **Adjournment *Sine Die***

*\*Please note: This is the Working Agenda as of the publication of the Book of Recommendations and Reports. It is subject to change. The final agenda will be placed online, provided to conference members at registration, and voted on during the opening business session.*

# The United Methodist Church

SOUTH GEORGIA AREA



**David W. Graves**  
Resident Bishop

Dear Lay and Clergy Members of the Annual Conference, Conference and Agency Leaders,

I look forward to being with the wonderful people of South Georgia as we gather around our theme, “One Matters.” I invite everyone across the South Georgia Conference to the Opening Worship service on Sunday, June 2 at 6:30 pm where I will preach a message focused on our theme entitled, “Lost People Matter to God!”

A special thanks to those in Tifton who are working to prepare for a great experience. Our Opening Worship Service, Memorial Service, and all of our business sessions will be held at the UGA Tifton Campus Conference Center.

The Ordination service will be held in the beautiful sanctuary of Tifton First United Methodist Church. We rejoice that four people will be ordained and one person commissioned during the service Monday evening, God is at work among us, and we celebrate those who are responding to God’s call. The special offering at this service will go to support clergy mental health. Thanks for your generous support of our future clergy. I have invited Bishop Debra Wallace-Padgett to preach the Ordination Service. She is the bishop of the North Alabama and Holston Conferences. We are happy to welcome her home.

Our special offering will be taken for our college campus ministries and Wesley Foundations in South Georgia. I am so thankful for the impact these ministries have on the lives of college students each and every day. The transforming power of Jesus Christ is evident on our campuses. Last year the weekly student reach of our Wesley Foundations across all of our campus ministries in Georgia averaged over 4,000 students per week. Thanks for your generous support of these life-changing ministries.

We will devote time to the business of the annual conference, hear reports, one matters moments, the Laity Address from our Conference Lay Leader, J. Knapp, and the fixing of appointments.

This *Book of Recommendations and Reports* represents the combined work of scores of laity and clergy in our conference. We thank each of them for their service to South Georgia.

I am grateful to each of you for the many ways you live into our mission of making disciples. Join me in prayer as we continue to make Kingdom work a priority in our conference. Let us continue to positively change our corner of the world because we know that every One Matters.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David W. Graves".

David W. Graves, Resident Bishop  
The South Georgia Episcopal Area, The United Methodist Church



## A Note from the Conference Secretary

Dear Lay and Clergy Members of the South Georgia Annual Conference,

The Annual Conference Program Committee and the Local Arrangements Committee are pleased to welcome you to Tifton, Georgia and the University of Georgia Conference Center for the 2024 South Georgia Annual Conference Session. As we gather June 2-4 around the theme of “One Matters,” we will highlight the parables of Luke 15.

An outstanding volunteer team from the South Central District is preparing to host our conference in a spirit of hospitality and with careful attention to our logistical needs. We are grateful for the leadership of our Local Arrangements Co-Chairs, Mr. Lamar Martin and Mrs. Kelly Roberson. During the past year, many faithful persons have worked to create meaningful services of worship, areas to display the varied ministries of our conference and beyond, prepare for the technology and media needs, and develop an agenda that allows us to conduct our business in a worshipful spirit of Christian conferencing.

Our opening worship service, memorial service, and all business sessions will be held in the Conference Center. The Service of Ordination with Commissioning will be held at Tifton First United Methodist Church. Childcare for the conference is also being graciously arranged by the Local Arrangements Committee.

The majority of the business items for Annual Conference are contained in this *Book of Recommendations and Reports* (BOR). One of the purposes of the BOR is to allow you to read the recommendations and reports before you arrive for the conference. A good delegate is a prepared delegate! A working conference agenda may be found within this BOR, but please note that if there are any adjustments to the agenda you will always find the most recent version on the conference website.

There may be some reports that did not make the publication deadline for the BOR. These reports will be posted on the website as they are available, and communication will be sent to members alerting them of any late-additions to our business materials. Both the BOR and any additional reports will all be important to have with you in Tifton. Please download them onto your digital device and/or print out the materials you need.

For those who wish to remotely follow the actions of the annual conference as a guest, we will stream the business sessions and worship services live at [www.sgaumc.org](http://www.sgaumc.org).

Pre-Registration for conference voting members runs from April 1 - May 10. On-site Registration opens at 4:00 pm Sunday afternoon in the main lobby of the Conference Center.

There is a \$20 registration fee for all lay and clergy members of the Annual Conference. Retired clergy not serving a church and clergy on medical leave are exempt from paying this fee.

During our time in business sessions, we will observe the “bar” of the conference. Only conference members with proper credentials (noted by the correct color nametag) will be allowed to sit within the bar area. Tellers will be available to assist you with seating.

I am excited about the plans that have been put in place by Bishop Graves, our Program Committee, our Worship team, and countless others. We look forward to seeing you in Tifton as we gather once again as the United Methodists of South Georgia!

Grace and Peace,



Meredyth K. Earnest  
Conference Secretary

# **How to Make a Motion**

Keep this handy and refer to it often; it will help you in the Annual Conference Session.

Parliamentary procedure is based on a general regard for the rights of the majority to make decisions in deliberative groups, the rights of a minority to be heard, and the rights of individual members to discuss and vote on issues. Rules are meant to provide that the simplest and most direct method of making decisions in an organization is by making motions (or resolutions, as they are called in more formal form). Secondary motions exist to deal with the main motion or to meet some immediate need of the organization.

## **HOW TO SPEAK TO THE CONFERENCE**

1. Move to the nearest microphone.
2. Wait to be recognized by the Chairperson. You will be called on by the number of the microphone at which you are standing.
3. Step up where you can speak directly into the microphone.
4. Announce your name, membership (clergy or lay), and church first, and let the Chairperson repeat them before you proceed.

## **HOW TO MAKE A MOTION**

1. Write out your amendment or other proposal in advance.
2. Indicate exactly where the change belongs – what words come out and what words are added.
3. Sign your name.
4. As soon as you finish reading your motion into the microphone, hand it to a teller to deliver it to the secretary seated on the platform.
5. If you must make a motion without preparation, write it down and send it to the secretary immediately afterward.

## Parliamentary Procedures

HOW TO UNDERSTAND PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE						
TO DO THIS	YOU MUST SAY	INTERRUPT SPEAKER	SECOND NEEDED	MOTION DEBATABLE	AMENDABLE	VOTE NEEDED
<b>MAIN MOTIONS ARE TOOLS USED TO INTRODUCE NEW BUSINESS</b>						
Introduce Business	"I move that..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	majority
Take up matter previously tabled	"I move that we take from the table..."	No	Yes	No	No	majority
Reconsider matter previously voiced	"I move that we reconsider"	No	Yes	No	No	majority
<b>SECONDARY MOTIONS IN ORDER OF PRECEDENCE</b>						
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 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 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
<b>HOW TO UNDERSTAND PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE</b>						
TO DO THIS	YOU MUST SAY	INTERRUPT SPEAKER	SECOND NEEDED	MOTION DEBATABLE	AMENDABLE	VOTE NEEDED
Amend a 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	Yes	majority
<b>INCIDENTAL MOTIONS GROW OUT OF THE BUSINESS THE CONFERENCE IS CONSIDERING</b>						
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

# Information for Conference Members and Visitors

The next few pages contain information you will find helpful as you make plans to come to Tifton. Additional information and changes will be posted on the conference website, [www.sgaumc.org/annualconference](http://www.sgaumc.org/annualconference). Please contact us if you have any questions.

Meredyth Earnest, Conference Secretary  
Lamar Martin & Kelly Roberson, Co-Chairs, Local Arrangements

---

**Venue:** All conference business, as well as the opening and closing worship services and the Memorial Service, will be held at the UGA Tifton Campus Conference Center (15 R D C Rd, Tifton, GA 31794). The Service of Ordination with Commissioning will be held at Tifton First United Methodist Church (107 W 12th St, Tifton, GA 31794). Driving & parking directions can be found at [www.sgaumc.org/annualconference](http://www.sgaumc.org/annualconference).

**Parking:** Parking is free at the Conference Center.

**Registration:** Pre-registration is from April 1-May 10. On-site registration and credential pick up begins Sunday afternoon, June 4, at 4:00 p.m. in the lobby of the Conference Center. The registration fee for all pastors and lay members to Annual Conference is \$20. Retired clergy not serving a church are exempt from this fee.

**Hotels:** For a list of hotel options, please visit [www.sgaumc.org/annualconference](http://www.sgaumc.org/annualconference).

**Childcare:** Childcare for infants through 5th grade will be provided. Infant through pre-school childcare will be held for all worship services and business sessions. Elementary age childcare (completed Kindergarten - 5th grade) will be available for business sessions only. PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED. For more information and to register, visit [www.sgaumc.org/annualconference](http://www.sgaumc.org/annualconference).

**Displays:** Various conference boards, committees, commissions, councils, teams, and related agency displays will be located throughout the Conference Center. The displays interpret and celebrate the program ministries of the South Georgia Annual Conference.

**Lunch at ABAC:** Lunch will be available for those interested at the ABAC dining hall (which is adjacent to the Conference Center) Monday and Tuesday. You may purchase your lunch tickets in the lobby of the Conference Center. Transportation to and from the ABAC Dining Hall for lunch will be provided. Meet the buses right outside the main entrance to the Conference Center.

**Expenses/Per Diem:** Clergy and lay delegates who represent a local church shall have their expenses (including registration) paid by the local church (this includes retired clergy who are serving a church). Lay delegates who represent an organization and Extension Ministers shall have their expenses paid by the organization they represent. Retired clergy not under appointment and clergy on disability shall receive a per diem. Lay members who do not represent a local church or conference organization shall receive a per diem on the same basis. Retired local pastors who are not serving a church do not qualify for a per diem.

**Annual Conference Session will be streamed online:** Even those who are not able to be in Tifton for the 2024 Annual Conference Session can still be a part of the three-day event. All worship services and business sessions will be streamed online. Please note that only those in attendance will be able to vote. Visit [www.sgaumc.org/annualconference](http://www.sgaumc.org/annualconference) for a detailed agenda and link to the

streaming (beginning June 2 with the opening worship service). Make sure to tell others in your church.

**Social Media:** Daily recaps, as well as an entire Annual Conference wrap-up plus a bulletin insert to use in telling the story of the Annual Conference session, will be posted online at [www.sgaumc.org](http://www.sgaumc.org). Individuals can also follow the conference on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/sgaumc](http://www.facebook.com/sgaumc)) or Instagram ([www.instagram.com/sgaumc](http://www.instagram.com/sgaumc)) for real time information during the conference session. The hashtag for the conference is #sgaumc.

**Special Events:** Special events and banquets are coordinated by various groups in our conference. Visit [www.sgaumc.org/annualconference](http://www.sgaumc.org/annualconference) for a complete list. The Methodist Children's Home invites all clergy and lay members for a complimentary BBQ dinner at the Conference Center on Monday evening.

**Voting Rights for Lay and Clergy Members:** Your official voting credentials, which you will receive on site, will let the voting tellers know of your eligibility to vote. Lay Members can vote on the business matters of the annual conference. You will note below that all clergy can vote on business matters, but the Book of Discipline stipulates that only Full Clergy Members (Elders and Deacons) can vote in the clergy session.

Lay Members of the Annual Conference: Lay membership shall be composed of the Lay Members elected by their charges, at-large delegates of the district selected by their district superintendent, the Conference Lay Leader, Conference President of United Methodist Men, Conference President of United Women In Faith, Conference President of the Council on Youth Ministries, Lay Delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conference, Diaconal Ministers, Lay Staff of the Conference Office of Connectional Ministries, Lay Chairpersons of Conference Committees, Commissions, Councils, Teams or Boards, District Lay Leaders, District Presidents of United Methodist Men, District Presidents of United Women In Faith, District Presidents of United Methodist Youth, and one youth and one young adult by each District.

Clergy Members of the Annual Conference: Clergy delegates include Full Elders, Full Deacons, Associate Members, Provisional Elders, Provisional Deacons, Full-time Local Pastors, Part-time Local Pastors, Retired Elders, Retired Deacons, Retired Associate Members, and Retired Provisional Members who retired before 2013.

The Discipline does not allow Retired Local Pastors to be clergy delegates or vote (§320.5); however, Retired Local Pastors who have been serving under appointment leading up to Annual Conference can serve as clergy delegates and vote. All clergy delegates and lay members of the Board of Ordained Ministry (BOM) may attend the Clergy Session, but only ordained clergy in full connection and lay members of the BOM may vote at the Clergy Session.

**Change in Lay Member:** If there has been a change in the lay member representing your local church/charge, please make sure to pass this information on to the correct person. Please share the change with Meredyth Earnest at [meredyth@sgaumc.com](mailto:meredyth@sgaumc.com), or let your district office know.

**Questions:** For questions regarding the business of Annual Conference, please contact Meredyth Earnest at [meredyth@sgaumc.com](mailto:meredyth@sgaumc.com). For questions regarding local arrangements or for general inquiries, please contact Kelly Roberson at [kelly@sgaumc.com](mailto:kelly@sgaumc.com).

***For the latest Annual Conference Session information,  
visit [www.sgaumc.org/annualconference](http://www.sgaumc.org/annualconference).***

# UGA Tifton Campus Conference Center

## Directions and Alternate Routes

**Address:** The UGA Tifton Campus Conference Center is located at 15 RDC Road / Tifton, Georgia 31793.

### **Main Routes**

- **From South** -- I-75 to Exit 64 (ABAC Exit). Turn Left and First Left
- **From North** – I-75 to Exit 64 (ABAC Exit). Turn Right and First Left

### **Alternate Route from North:**

Take Exit 66 (Brighton Road). Turn Left. At STOP sign turn Left, RDC Road is on Right past the Georgia Forestry Station

### **Alternate Routes from South**

**Alternate Route 1:** Go to Exit 66 (Brighton Road). Turn Left. At STOP sign turn Left. RDC Road is on Right past the Georgia Forestry Station.

**Alternate Route 2:** Take Exit 63A or B. At top of either ramp turn Left. Follow road to Carpenter Road (on either Exit Carpenter Road is the First Red Light). At Carpenter Road turn Right. Go to Davis Road (approximately ½ mile past the Tifton Water Tower and YMCA). Take Davis Road to the Red Light (you will pass the ABAC Campus on the Left). At the light turn Left. Turn at the First Right (RDC Road).

### **Alternate Route from the Hotels (On Hwy 82):**

Go west on Hwy 82. At Lowes (Carpenter Road) turn Right. Go approximately 2 miles (through two red lights) to Davis Road (approximately ½ mile past the Tifton Water Tower and YMCA). Take Davis Road to the Red Light (you will pass the ABAC Campus on the Left). At the light turn Left. Turn at the First Right (RDC Road).

# SPECIAL OFFERING

TO BENEFIT UM COLLEGES & WESLEY FOUNDATIONS IN SOUTH GEORGIA



## OUR MINISTRIES

Your gifts will help support the following South Georgia Ministries:

- Andrew College
- Coastal College of Georgia Wesley
- Columbus State Wesley
- Georgia Southern Wesley
- Georgia Southwestern Wesley
- Valdosta State Wesley
- Macon Wesley (serving Mercer & Middle Georgia State University)
- Wesleyan College

## WHY GIVE?

Incredible things are happening on campuses across the state of Georgia! Last year the weekly student reach (discipleship + worship) averaged over 4,000 students per week. Over 90% of those are experiencing United Methodism for the very first time!

The 2024 Annual Conference special offering will benefit the UM colleges and Wesley Foundations of the South Georgia Conference through the Commission on Higher Education and Campus Ministry. The UMCommission provides support, funding, administration, and long-term vision casting for these campus ministries and United Methodist schools.

**3 WAYS  
TO GIVE**



As an offering during AC's opening worship on June 2nd



[www.sgaumc.org/specialoffering](http://www.sgaumc.org/specialoffering)

**SCAN  
TO GIVE**



## Mision Outreach Emphasis

Agencies within the bounds of our Annual Conference are changing lives each and every day. They know and believe that every ONE MATTERS! They are the hands and feet of Jesus Christ as they help to meet the most basic of needs. We are grateful for their work and want to show our gratitude. Each of the agencies listed below will have a collection box in the lobby of the Conference Center. They have selected items that will help them in their day-to-day operation. So choose one or choose several, and let's help fill up their boxes!

### **Magnolia Manor**

jigsaw/word search puzzles, Kleenex, personal hygiene items (soaps, shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste)

### **Methodist Home**

personal hygiene items (body wash, shampoo, conditioner, lotion)

### **Open Door**

art supplies: small paint brushes, small canvas panels (sizes 8X10, 5x7, and 4x4)

1" clear view notebooks, books for journaling

### **Vashti**

Edge Control, styling gel, hair grease, braid and twist-out strengthening crème, shea butter, mango butter, Cantu products, Coil, Kink & Curl Styling Crème, hair detangler brushes, shower caps, bonnets, scalp oil, Luster's Pink Oil Moisturizer, shampoo and conditioners (Mielle Organics, Cantu and/or Camille Rose, Aussie Moist), hair pins, wide tooth combs, rat tail combs

### **Wesley Community Centers**

latex-free gloves, diverse books for children ages 1 - 4 years old, construction paper, arts and crafts materials, 1" 3-ring binders, hypoallergenic baby wipes, postage stamps

### **Wesley Glen**

art/craft supplies (colored pencils, adult coloring books, etc.), Kleenex, personal hygiene items (soaps, shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste), disposable gloves, flushable wipes

---

## **Lunch at ABAC**

The UGA Tifton Campus Conference Center sits adjacent to ABAC College. Lunch will be available for those interested at the ABAC dining hall Monday and Tuesday. You can purchase your lunch tickets in the lobby of the Conference Center. Transportation to and from the ABAC Dining Hall will be provided. Meet the buses right outside the main entrance to the Conference Center.

---

## **AC Emails & Additional Informational**

**[www.sgaumc.org/annualconference](http://www.sgaumc.org/annualconference)**

Not all reports are available for the printing of this *Book of Recommendations and Reports*. As these reports become available, they will be placed on the conference website at the address listed above. In addition, an email will be sent reminding you to check the website. If you are not receiving emails about Annual Conference, please reach out to Cindy Rollins at [cindy@squamc.com](mailto:cindy@squamc.com).





## Take the Health Check for Savings and Better Well-Being



### Savings

Take the Health Check and avoid paying extra on next year's HealthFlex deductible.

- Individual deductible—**avoid paying \$250 extra**
- Family deductible—**avoid paying \$500 extra\***

You and your spouse (if in HealthFlex) must *both* complete the Health Check to avoid paying extra.



### Better Well-Being

The Health Check online health assessment identifies common concerns around nutrition, sleep, activity, stress and more. Based on your Health Check results, Virgin Pulse® has the ability to provide personalized recommendations for health coaching, Journeys® and other HealthFlex well-being programs that can help you achieve your goals. Health coaching is provided by Virgin Pulse at no extra cost to you.



### Quick—Easy—Confidential!

Complete the Health Check in 15 minutes or less. If you did the Blueprint for Well-ness® biometric screening, your health data is uploaded automatically into your Health Check—for faster, more accurate data entry.

Health Check is confidential! Your church, annual conference, employer and Wespath cannot see your Health Check results and other health information, and Virgin Pulse and its health coaches are bound by federal HIPAA laws on patient privacy.

### Health Check At-a-Glance

#### WHO

Participants and spouses in HealthFlex

#### WHAT

Health Check online health assessment (administered by Virgin Pulse)

#### WHEN

**January 1 – August 31**

#### WHY

Avoid paying extra; improve your well-being; explore health coaching and other wellness resources

#### HOW

Take by computer, tablet or smartphone


#### WHERE

The **Virgin Pulse app** or [www.virginpulse.com/login](http://www.virginpulse.com/login). Go to the **Health** tab.

*Participation in HealthFlex well-being programs is voluntary.*

*\* Households with family coverage in the H5000 plan in 2025 who do not complete Health Check in 2024 will have their deductible and individual out-of-pocket maximum increased so the deductible and out-of-pocket max are the same amounts.*





## BFW Overview

**WHAT:** The BFW health screening includes a blood draw and a few measurements such as blood pressure and waist circumference. You'll receive personalized data on 30 health factors.

**WHY:** Earn \$100\*

**REGISTER:** It is **strongly recommended** that you register for this event. Walk-ins are very limited. There are two ways to register:

- **Online:** Log in to your [Virgin Pulse®](#) account and find **Blueprint for Wellness** under the "Benefits" tab or through **Benefits Access** (for participants).
- **Phone: 1-855-623-9355**  
Employer group:  
**Wespath2024**

**ALTERNATIVES:** If you can't attend the BFW event, you can complete the BFW at a Quest Diagnostics® facility at not cost to you. Registration is required. The [Well-Being Programs FAQs](#) includes additional ways to complete the BFW if you can't get to this event or a Quest facility.

## Blueprint for Wellness® (BFW) Details

- **Wellness Credits**  
Earn 20 Wellness Credits for each of seven health measures that meet the American Heart Association's recommended range or are improved over your previous year's BFW results. Seven qualifying health measures = 140 Wellness Credits total. Participants and spouses in HealthFlex can *each* earn **\$100\***—and up to **140 Wellness Credits** depending on results. Earn 150 Wellness Credits before the end of the year and receive an additional \$150\*.  
*If you missed the BFW last year, you're still eligible for Wellness Credits for achieving healthy results, and you'll have a baseline next year.*
  - **Fast Overnight**  
Fasting overnight gives the most accurate results. Ask your doctor or other primary care provider (PCP) if it's safe for you to fast.
  - **Confidential Results E-mailed and Mailed Directly to You**  
Share with your PCP.
  - **Health Check**  
Don't forget to take the Health Check to avoid a higher deductible in 2025.
- Reasonable alternatives or waivers will be made available for those who cannot achieve recommended or improved measures due to an underlying medical condition. Requests for a reasonable alternative may be made by:
- **E-mail—[healthteam@wespath.org](mailto:healthteam@wespath.org)**
  - **U.S. mail—Wespath Benefits and Investments**  
Attention: Incentive Request, 1901 Chestnut Avenue, Glenview, IL 60025

*Participation in HealthFlex well-being programs is voluntary.*

*\* Incentive rewards are provided in "Pulse Cash," the "rewards currency" for HealthFlex—you must be enrolled in Virgin Pulse to earn and redeem Pulse Cash. Pulse Cash is delivered straight to your Virgin Pulse account and can be transferred to your checking account or redeemed for gift cards, merchandise or charitable donations. The IRS considers wellness incentives as taxable income. Please consult your tax advisor.*

# RECOMMENDATIONS

*The South Georgia Conference  
of The United Methodist Church*

---

**2024 Annual Conference Session**

---

**June 2-4, 2024  
Tifton, Georgia**

1 **RECOMMENDATION 1- Conference Board of Trustees**

2 2023 ANNUAL REPORT FOR  
3 THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF  
4 THE SOUTH GEORGIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF  
5 THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, INC.

6 March 01, 2024

7  
8 In addition to our two standing meetings, your Conference Trustees held numerous called meetings and email  
9 consultations throughout the year as we sought to faithfully and effectively serve the Annual Conference. Our report  
10 will cover the expected property and investment details, but as this report has been submitted prior to the  
11 Rescheduled 2020 General Conference, I remind the Annual Conference that the Trustees remain committed to  
12 providing a path for departure for churches that determine that they must, as a matter of conscience, leave the United  
13 Methodist Church because of actions of the General Conference related to homosexuality, or the actions or inactions  
14 of the South Georgia Annual conference related to these issues. Your Conference Trustees remain committed to our  
15 previous position, enabling churches to wait to make this important decision based on actual information rather than  
16 possibilities. We believe that better decisions can be made when more complete information is available. It remains  
17 our desire and we encourage all churches to make decisions based on facts rather than fear of the possibilities. Our  
18 resolution can be found in the Conference Journal from 2022. Our position was reaffirmed by the Trustees at the  
19 2023 Annual Conference. While disaffiliations and departures have consumed a great deal of time and energy for  
20 the Conference Trustees, we continue to maintain resources and facilities supporting our mission of making  
21 disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

22  
23 REAL PROPERTY

24 Title to the seven James A. and Virginia Willingham Wood Homes in Epworth Acres on St. Simons Island is held  
25 by the Trustees.

26  
27 Title to the two Office of Connectional Ministries parsonages in Epworth Acres is held by the Trustees. These  
28 properties are maintained by the Trustees with funds from the Office of Connectional Ministries Maintenance Fund  
29 which is invested at the Georgia United Methodist Foundation.

30  
31 The Trustees believe that the amount held in the OCM Maintenance Fund will be sufficient to take care of all future  
32 expenses related to the parsonages and the OCM office building.

33  
34 Five homes for retired ministers at Magnolia Manor in Americus are governed by a joint agreement between the  
35 Trustees of the South Georgia Conference and the Trustees of Magnolia Manor.

36  
37 Title to the Episcopal Residence at 522 Waverly Park Drive; Macon, Georgia, is held by the Conference Trustees.

38  
39 MAINTENANCE AND INSURANCE OF REAL PROPERTY

40 Maintenance and Insurance for the Office of Connectional Ministries Parsonages and Office is paid by the Trustees  
41 with funds from the OCM Maintenance Fund. Expenditures in 2023 totaled \$40,892.53

42  
43 The renovated OCM building continues to serve the Conference in many important ways, most notably our camping  
44 ministry.

45  
46 Maintenance and Insurance for the James A. and Virginia Willingham Wood Homes is paid by the Trustees with  
47 funds generated by payments made by residents of the homes and income from investments restricted for that  
48 purpose. Expenditures during 2023 totaled \$38,64.64.

49  
50 Maintenance and Insurance for the retired ministers' homes at Magnolia Manor, Americus is paid by Magnolia  
51 Manor from funds remitted by the residents of the homes.

1 Maintenance, Insurance and Mortgage payments for the Episcopal Residence are overseen by the Trustees. Funds  
2 for this purpose are provided by the General Council on Finance and Administration and the South Georgia Annual  
3 Conference. The total expenditures for maintenance and insurance during 2023 was \$54,022.33.  
4

5 FUNDS ADMINISTERED BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

6 All Funds invested in accordance with the Social Principles.

- 7 1. THE TOOLE FUND – Income from an original gift of \$1,000.00 by Mrs. C. L. Toole in memory of Dr.  
8 Toole was designated by the donor to be paid annually to the Conference Board of Missions. As of  
9 December 31, 2023, the Fund had an inventory value of \$6,779.40. Income for 2023 of \$186.28 has been  
10 paid to the South Georgia Committee on Missions.  
11
- 12 2. THE FUND OF SPECIAL RELIEF – This Fund originated in 1830 to be used for ministers of the  
13 Conference as the name indicates. Stipulation has been made that three-fourths of the annual income be  
14 distributed by the Trustees to the Conference Committee charged with administering the Fund and the  
15 remaining one-fourth be added to the corpus of the Fund. Inventory Value of this Fund as of December 31,  
16 2023 \$175,357.79. Total income for 2023 was \$4,818.30. \$3,613.73 (75%) was paid to the Treasurer of the  
17 Fund of Special Relief, and \$1,204.57 (25%) was added to the corpus of the fund.  
18
- 19 3. MELTON CHILDREN’S HOME FUND – This Fund was created by the estate of Eddie Clark Melton  
20 through the Georgia Railroad Bank and Trust Company of Augusta, Georgia, in January 1985. On  
21 December 31, 2023, the corpus of this Fund was \$17,882.27. Income for 2023 was \$491.35 and has been  
22 paid to the Methodist Home for Children and Youth.  
23
- 24 4. CATCHINGS ESTATE TRUST FUND – This Fund was created under the will of Julia Cone Catchings,  
25 dated June 1, 1906. The corpus of the Fund is “to be held by the Conference Trustees for, and the income  
26 therefrom applied to the relief of such infirm, dependent and friendless persons as may in their judgment,  
27 be worthy and deserving of aid.” Under these terms, distribution of the annual income has been made to  
28 five causes in 2023. The corpus of the fund as of December 31, 2023, was \$80,585.56. Checks in the  
29 amount of \$442.85 each have been made payable to the following Conference causes and institutions:  
30 a. Golden Cross Fund – Conference Treasurer  
31 b. Magnolia Manor  
32 c. The Methodist Home  
33 d. Necessities – Conference Board of Pensions  
34 e. Fund for Special Relief  
35
- 36 5. COVINGTON CAMPING SCHOLARSHIP FUND – This trust fund was established in 2002 through a  
37 bequest from the estate of Zlypha B. Covington of Thomasville, Georgia, in memory of her parents, John  
38 Nathaniel Bowman and Annie Renfroe Bowman and is to be used for camping scholarships. The initial  
39 corpus of this Fund was \$11,640.00. The annual income is forwarded to the South Georgia Conference  
40 Office of Connectional Ministries to be used for deserving children and youth who participate in the  
41 camping program at Epworth By The Sea. The value of the Fund on December 31, 2023, was \$23,636.60.  
42 Income of \$646.46 was paid to the Office of Connectional Ministries.  
43
- 44 6. COWART FUND – The Annual Conference received an undesignated bequest from the Estate of Mrs.  
45 Wilma Cowart of Effingham County. The 2007 Annual Conference passed a resolution designating this  
46 fund for:  
47 a. New Congregational Development  
48 b. Legal Expenses  
49 c. Assistance for persons leaving the ministry  
50 d. Discontinued or abandoned property, and  
51 e. Future capital needs of the Annual Conference.

1 These designations remain in effect unless changed by future action of the Annual Conference.

- 2
- 3 7. HARNBERGER FUND – The Annual Conference received an undesignated bequest from the estate of
- 4 Mr. and Mrs. Clyde Harnberger of Macon. This fund is governed by the same 2007 resolution as the
- 5 Cowart Fund.
- 6
- 7 8. BIRCHALL FUND – The Annual Conference received an undesignated bequest from the estate of Mrs.
- 8 Eloise Birchall of Macon. The 2013 Annual Conference designated \$100,000.00 of this amount to be added
- 9 to the capital projects needs of the Annual Conference with the remainder to be held as a contingency until
- 10 designated for future uses.
- 11
- 12 9. MAJOR GIFTS FUND – In order to account for the Cowart, Harnberger and Birchall gifts according to
- 13 the expense categories established by the Annual Conference, the Trustees have consolidated the
- 14 accounting for these gifts under the Major Gifts designation. As of December 31, 2021, the balance
- 15 remaining in the designated categories was as follows:
- |  | Balance as of       | Percentage of |
|--|---------------------|---------------|
|  | 12/31/2023          | Fund          |
| 16 New Congregational Development              | \$0.00              | 0.0 %         |
| 17 Legal Expenses                              | \$84,717.55         | 8.2%          |
| 18 Assistance for persons leaving the ministry | \$39,066.76         | 3.7%          |
| 19 Discontinued or abandoned properties        | \$30,484.42         | 2.9%          |
| 20 Future capital needs                        | \$758,918.28        | 72.5%         |
| 21 Contingency                                 | <u>\$131,842.76</u> | <u>12.6%</u>  |
| 22   | \$1,046,555.01      | 100.00%       |
- 23
- 24 10. WOOD HOMES FUND – This fund has accumulated from gifts, grants, rents, fees, etc., from the seven
- 25 James A. and Virginia Willingham Wood homes at Epworth Acres on St. Simons Island. It is used to
- 26 maintain these homes. Balance in the Wood Homes account at Morgan Stanley and checking account as of
- 27 December 31, 2023, totaled \$1,207,838.37.
- 28
- 29
- 30 11. OFFICES OF CONNECTIONAL MINISTRIES (“OCM”) PARSONAGES FUND – This is the fund
- 31 discussed above which was created from the proceeds of the sale of two of the Office of Connectional
- 32 Ministries Parsonages and the amount remaining in the Parsonage Reserve Fund which had been held by
- 33 the Annual Conference. The balance in this fund on December 31, 2023, was \$525,370.10.
- 34
- 35 12. EPISCOPAL RESIDENCE RESERVE FUND – If the entire budget item for the maintenance and
- 36 insurance of the Episcopal Residence is not spent in a given year, the unused funds are placed in the reserve
- 37 fund. Expenses vary from year to year, so this practice provides a cushion against major expenses which
- 38 may exceed the budget in a given year. The balance in this fund on December 31, 2023, was \$176,802.34.
- 39
- 40 13. TRUSTEES’ EXPENSE FUND - This fund comes from the Conference budget and is used for accounting,
- 41 financial, travel, and internal business of the Board of Trustees of the South Georgia Conference of the
- 42 United Methodist Church, Inc. Expenditures from the fund in 2023 totaled \$4,511.
- 43

44 LEGAL TITLE

45 The correct legal name of the Board of Trustees corporation is The Board of Trustees of the South Georgia Annual

46 Conference of the United Methodist Church, Inc.

47

48 All gifts, grants, and bequests should be designated accordingly. Any gifts or bequests of real property should be in

49 fee simple, and title should be vested in the above-named corporation.

50

51 Respectfully presented,

52 Rev. Dr. Jimmy R. Asbell, Jr. President

1 BOARD MEMBERSHIP

2 Trustees (Directors) of the Corporation with ( ) noting year of first election.

3 Julia Magda (16), Glenn Martin (15), Tommy Mason (13), Cecil Haywood (20), Beverly Copeland (20), Amy  
4 Fletcher (20), Jimmy R. Asbell, Jr. (20), John Brooks (21), Kee Evans (22), Cathy Tucker (22), Kathryn Dennis  
5 (23), Wade Herring (23)

6  
7 Officers of the Corporation:

8 Rev. Dr. Jimmy R. Asbell, Jr., President

9 Tommy Mason, Vice President

10 Amy S. Fletcher, Treasurer

11 Glenn Martin, Secretary

12  
13 Ex-officio members are:

14 Cater C. Thompson, Conference Chancellor

15 Suzanne Jones, Director of Administrative Services, Conference Treasurer, Conference Statistician

16  
17 **RECOMMENDATION 2 – Commission on Equitable Compensation**

18  
19 **REPORT #1**

20 **Statement of Purpose, Policies, and Procedures**

21  
22 I. PURPOSE:

23 In keeping with the duties and responsibilities set forth in *The Book of Discipline, 2016*, the Commission on  
24 Equitable Compensation of the South Georgia Conference understands its purpose as follows:

- 25
- 26 A. To affirm the basic and traditional United Methodist principle that each pastoral charge is responsible for  
27 setting and paying the salary(ies) of its minister(s).
- 28 B. To develop a plan of adequate ministerial support of those who have committed their lives to the itineracy.
- 29 C. To establish a minimum standard schedule for ministerial support in the Conference.
- 30 D. To encourage pastoral charges to provide adequate salary support to which their pastor is entitled.
- 31 E. To administer a system of assisting those charges which are unable to provide that minimum standard  
32 through a supplement which is paid monthly to the church/charge treasurer.
- 33 F. To recommend to the Annual Conference for their approval that Equitable Compensation funds be used to  
34 supplement base compensation beyond the minimum base compensation schedule when the Commission feels  
35 that the mission and ministry of the annual conference will be served best by so doing. (§625.6 *The Book of*  
36 *Discipline, 2016*)

37  
38 II. POLICIES REGARDING ADMINISTRATION OF MINIMUM SALARY SUPPLEMENT: (§625.9 *The Book*  
39 *of Discipline, 2016*)

40  
41 A. QUALIFYING REQUIREMENTS FOR CHURCHES/CHARGES:

- 42 1. The Fall Charge Conference sets the pastor’s total compensation (including salary and accountable  
43 reimbursable expenses) for the ensuing year. In consultation with the District Superintendent, the Charge  
44 Conference shall examine this salary in the light of the minimum standard set by the Annual Conference. If  
45 the salary set by the Charge Conference is below the minimum standard for the pastor, the Charge  
46 Conference shall request the District Superintendent to file for a minimum salary supplement. This  
47 application should be signed by the pastor and two lay persons from each charge.
- 48 2. Each church/charge which applies for minimum salary supplement is **required** to conduct an approved  
49 financial stewardship program. **The pastor shall see that each church/charge fulfills this expectation.**

- 1 3. Other than new church starts, any local church or charge requesting equitable compensation which has  
2 additional paid staff other than the pastor must document in writing with their request the specific need for  
3 additional staff.
- 4 4. Each church/charge shall furnish a parsonage or housing allowance for the pastor and family in keeping  
5 with guidelines established by the Annual Conference.
- 6 5. The maximum supplement from the Commission on Equitable Compensation should not exceed 50% of the  
7 pastor's salary, except in special situations approved by the District Superintendent and this committee.
- 8 6. No local church or charge shall receive minimum salary supplements for more than five consecutive years,  
9 except in special consideration approved by this committee.
- 10 7. It is the responsibility of every charge receiving equitable compensation funds to report these funds on the  
11 pastor's W-2 for the year.
- 12 8. Equitable Compensation support is only available to churches which are part of the South Georgia  
13 Conference. Churches which disaffiliate are not eligible to receive funds. Payment will end the month the  
14 Annual Conference votes to approve a church's disaffiliation.

15  
16 B. QUALIFYING REQUIREMENTS FOR PASTORS:

- 17 1. The minimum salary supplement shall apply only to pastors serving full-time (with the exception of full  
18 conference members serving less than full-time, in keeping with ¶342.2, *The Book of Discipline, 2016*):  
19 Full Conference Members, Associate Members, Probationary Members, Provisional Members, and Local  
20 Pastors. Retired Supply Pastors shall qualify up to the amount established by the Annual Conference.
- 21 2. If at any time a change of status of the pastor occurs which would affect his/her minimum salary payments  
22 (i.e., loss of a dependent, marriage, birth of a child, salary change, change in conference relationship,  
23 change in appointment, etc.), it is the responsibility of the pastor to notify the District Superintendent. The  
24 District Superintendent shall then notify the Commission and the Conference Treasurer.
- 25 3. Definition of "dependent" shall be any person in the pastor's family who is considered a dependent on the  
26 pastor's income tax returns.
- 27 4. Special cases will be considered when the District Superintendent presents a request. If an appointment  
28 does not normally qualify for minimum salary supplement and the District Superintendent feels it is  
29 warranted (mission situations, specialized ministries, etc.), the case will be considered and an appropriate  
30 amount decided upon by the Commission.

31  
32 III. EQUITABLE SALARY SUPPORT FOR NEW CHURCH STARTS:

- 33  
34 A. The Commission on Equitable Compensation currently provides a maximum of \$50,000.00 for new church  
35 starts, to be used over a period of five years. Distribution over the five-year period will be at the discretion of  
36 the Director of Congregational Development and the District Superintendent, in consultation with the local  
37 leadership. We recognize that perhaps as much as half of the total could be used in the first year. This  
38 supplement is contingent upon the annual evaluation and recommendation of the Director of Congregational  
39 Development and the District Superintendent. As the processes of new church starts and the Office of  
40 Congregational Development change, we are reviewing how our funds can be used effectively to assist new  
41 church starts.

42  
43 It would be expected:

- 44 1. That any new church should become self-supporting, in regards to salary, within five years.
- 45 2. That all new churches would be served by a full-time pastor with several years of pastoral experience and  
46 possibly some specialized training, and therefore might have a salary above normal minimum salary level  
47 for their conference status.
- 48 3. That pastors and local leaders would be required to file the same annual application forms as other  
49 applicants for supplements from the Commission on Equitable Compensation.
- 50 4. That new church starts would not receive supplement from the Commission on Equitable Compensation  
51 during the second five-year period, except in unusual circumstances, as requested by the Cabinet on an  
52 annual basis.



1 IV. PROCEDURES FOR APPLICATION AND DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS:  
2

- 3 A. The Pastor and District Superintendent are responsible for filing all requests for minimum salary supplements  
4 for the charges in his/her district and for notifying the Treasurer and Chair of the Commission of any changes  
5 during the year.
- 6 B. In August, the Administrative Services Office will send application forms to each District Superintendent. After  
7 the salaries for the ensuing year have been set by the Charge Conferences, the District Superintendent will  
8 supply application forms to be completed to the appropriate persons of each charge. Completed forms shall then  
9 be returned to the District Superintendent for his/her approval. The District Superintendent will then forward all  
10 applications to the Conference Treasurer and Commission Chair, no later than December 1. No checks will be  
11 issued until applications have been processed by the Commission on Equitable Compensation. The Commission  
12 shall return incomplete applications.
- 13 C. Each application should include:  
14 1. Completed forms including appropriate signatures.  
15 2. Copies of the requested budgets for the two years shown on the form; \*  
16 3. Copy of actual income and expenses for the current year. \*  
17 4. Indication of what financial stewardship program the charge is using, and the results of that program.  
18 \*Applications from a charge or a church on a charge must include budgets and financial reports for each  
19 church on the charge.
- 20 D. Prior to conducting the Fall Charge Conference, the District Superintendent shall notify the officials of each  
21 charge that they are encouraged to set the next year's salary above the minimum to which their pastor is  
22 entitled. If the salary is set below the minimum salary standard, the District Superintendent shall inform the  
23 charge that they should file an application for minimum salary supplement to be paid to their pastor by the  
24 Annual Conference.
- 25 E. The District Superintendent or Commission on Equitable Compensation may require that a church or  
26 charge enter into negotiated agreements as a condition of receiving Equitable Compensation. Such  
27 agreements generally include a plan for coming off Equitable Compensation within five years, and may  
28 include other benchmarks for attendance and funding.
- 29 F. The Conference Treasurer is responsible for the disbursement of funds on a monthly basis. The funds will be  
30 deposited directly to the bank account of church (or charge) receiving the supplement prior to the first day of  
31 the month for that month. No paper checks shall be issued.
- 32 G. The Conference Treasurer and the District Superintendent shall inform each other of any changes that occur  
33 within the district of which he/she may not otherwise be aware.
- 34 H. The Commission realizes that errors can be made. In the event of error, either overpaid or underpaid, funds  
35 should be returned immediately to the Conference Treasurer for correction. The pastor shares the responsibility  
36 with the Commission in seeing that the payments are correct.

37  
38 **REPORT #2**

39 **Minimum Salary Scale for January – December 2025**  
40

41 The Commission on Equitable Compensation is recommending no increase for 2025 in minimum salary. We have  
42 struggled to balance the needs of our clergy for appropriate wages with the ability of our churches to pay the rising  
43 costs of clergy, both salary and pension and rising insurance costs. Congregations are very concerned about funding  
44 for present ministries. Minimum salary has risen more than 20% since 2010. More and more of our churches cannot  
45 afford a full-time pastor. Cost of benefits is a major factor.  
46

47 We hope that every church will consider a raise, or at least a bonus, for their pastor in 2025, particularly with rising  
48 inflation. We recommend that minimum salary amounts be as follows:

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2025</u>
Full Conference Members	\$48,489	\$48,489
Probationary and Associate Members	43,539	43,539
Full-time Local Pastors	40,814	40,814
 ADDITIONAL BENEFITS:		
Spouse (or first dependent, if not married)	700	700
First dependent, if married (second, if not married)	600	600
Each additional dependent	500	500

1  
2 We call your attention to the legislation of the 2016 General Conference which affects Equitable Compensation  
3 payments to Full Conference Members serving “less than full-time” (§342.2 "Support for Ministers Appointed to  
4 Pastoral Charges Who Render Less than Full-Time Service. Each pastor who is in good standing and who is  
5 appointed by the Bishop for less than full-time service under the provision of §338.2 shall have a claim upon the  
6 Conference Equitable Salary Fund in one-quarter increments according to the guidelines established by the Annual  
7 Conference Commission on Equitable Compensation.”)

8  
9 We also call attention to ¶1506.14 which states “Pension and benefit contributions are the responsibility of the salary  
10 paying unit of a participant in the Clergy Retirement Security Program and the Comprehensive Protection Plan...”  
11 (*The Book of Discipline, 2016*). This legislation makes the Commission on Equitable Compensation responsible for  
12 paying its share of the minister’s pension and benefits.

13  
14 In order to maintain the proposed minimum salary scale, the Commission on Equitable Compensation has a budget  
15 request of \$104,500 for the year 2025. The amount requested is a 45% decrease from 2024. It is evident that our  
16 churches have worked very hard to financially support their pastors. It is also clear that our Bishop and Cabinet have  
17 kept in mind the conference relationship of our pastors and the fiscal capability of local churches in the appointment  
18 making process. We commend the churches, the Bishop and the Cabinet for their strong efforts in this area.  
19

2025 Budget Requests

Salary Support	\$58,000
New Church Starts	17,000
Appointment Grants	5,000
CRSP, CPP Benefits	9,500
HealthFlex Benefits	15,000
Committee Expenses	<u>0</u>
TOTAL	\$104,500

20  
21 This budget request is based on the following assumptions:

- 22 1. That churches paying minimum salary and below will raise salaries by at least the amount that the minimum  
23 standard is raised.
- 24 2. That the District Superintendents will continue to work closely with each charge paying the minimum scale or  
25 less to ensure that at least a raise of the amount proposed in the standard will be adopted by each charge.
- 26 3. That the responsibility of the pastor’s salary rests with the local church. Each church shall work to ensure and  
27 maintain adequate salary support.
- 28 4. That a strong minimum salary program will have a ripple effect throughout the churches paying above the  
29 minimum; thus, the Conference will be providing a standard by which all churches may be guided in setting an  
30 equitable salary for pastors in 2025.

31  
32 The Commission reminds the Annual Conference of the work of the Clergy Workload Task Force in 1998. This task  
33 force report, which was approved by the Annual Conference, pointed out that a minimum number of members to  
34 sustain a full-time work load and be able to provide support for a full-time pastor was 150 members, with 100 in

1 average worship attendance. This is a very delicate and sensitive area of concern. All of us want our churches to  
 2 provide full services. At the same time, other churches feel they have been called upon to support pastors at smaller,  
 3 neighboring churches to a level which challenges the ministry of their own congregation. **The purpose of Equitable**  
 4 **Compensation is not to delay decisions churches need to make about their own size, activity, and ability to**  
 5 **financially support a full-time pastor.** We believe those discussions best occur within the local church, as the  
 6 members look realistically at their own situation to determine if they should call upon funds from the offering plates  
 7 of sister congregations.

8  
 9 We wish to commend all the District Superintendents, Local Church Committees on Pastor/Parish Relations,  
 10 Committees on Finance, Administrative Boards, and others who have worked diligently over the past years to help  
 11 many churches to sustain salary levels in keeping with our covenant in The United Methodist Church.

**REPORT #3A**

**List of Churches Receiving Equitable Compensation Salary Funds in 2023**

<b>Districts</b>	<b>Churches</b>	<b>Total</b>
Coastal	Asbury	\$11,280.00
Coastal	Encounter (Effingham)	22,916.63
Coastal	Speedwell	18,134.04
South Central	Bemiss	4,416.88
South Central	Harper's Chapel	18,872.04
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$75,619.59</b>

**REPORT #3B**

**List of Churches with Unpaid Benefits Bills  
 Whose Balance is Greater Than 180 Days Payment  
 as of December 31, 2023**

**These Churches Eliminated Their Debt in 2023**

<u>District</u>	<u>Church</u>	<u>12/31/2022</u>	<u>12/31/2022</u>
Coastal	Greater Trinity	1,732.12	0.00
Coastal	Grace (Brunswick)	397.77	0.00

**These Churches' Debt Was Reduced in 2023**

<u>District</u>	<u>Church</u>	<u>12/31/2022</u>	<u>12/31/2023</u>
Northwest	South Columbus	97,822.03	96,494.73
Coastal	Canaan Community	37,326.23	29,326.23
Coastal	Pinkney Chapel	10,368.98	4,096.38
North Central	Howard Chapel	39,831.99	31,627.36
North Central	Joycliff	72,186.77	64,011.77
Northeast	Horse Creek	9,897.66	1,296.36
Northeast	LifeSpring	6,654.12	2,941.62
Coastal	Mosaic	65,056.12	60,556.12
South Central	Harper's Chapel	49,067.37	45,685.97
North Central	Piney Mount	31,940.71	26,440.71
Northeast	Brannen Chapel	28,244.26	22,244.26

<b><u>These Churches' Debt Remained the Same</u></b>			
<u>District</u>	<u>Church</u>	<u>12/31/2022</u>	<u>12/31/2023</u>
Northwest	Midway	4,495.12	4,495.12
<b><u>These Churches' Debt Increased in 2023</u></b>			
<u>District</u>	<u>Church</u>	<u>12/31/2022</u>	<u>12/31/2023</u>
Northeast	St Andrews (Horse Creek Charge)	17,912.63	18,022.47
Northwest	Sylvania	3,053.05	0.00
South Central	Mary's Chapel	429.66	557.22
South Central	Sweetwater	2,596.43	3,141.23
Southwest	Palmyra Road	1,773.00	2,753.00
North Central	Jeffersonville	1,540.00	3,220.00
North Central	Asbury	70.00	490.00
North Central	Riverside	0.00	10,553.61
Coastal	St. Luke	0.00	2,730.00
South Central	Live Oak	0.00	1,773.30
Northeast	Oak Grove	0.00	1,679.88
South Central	Wareboro	0.00	1,260.00
Northeast	Lamb's Chapel	0.00	1,021.60
North Central	Salem	0.00	539.38
South Central	Patterson	0.00	460.53
Northeast	Stillmore	0.00	336.00
South Central	Oak Grove (Broxton Circuit)	0.00	242.93
Southwest	Wenona	0.00	168.00
Southwest	Ty Ty	0.00	161.01
Northwest	Stephen's Chapel	0.00	88.20
<b>Total balances over 180 days due</b>		<b>479,013.02</b>	<b>438,414.99</b>

**REPORT #4**

**Equitable Compensation Funds Being Used  
to Supplement Salaries Beyond Minimum Salary**

*The Book of Discipline, 2016 ¶625.6* provides that an annual conference can approve the use of Equitable Compensation Funds to supplement the base compensation beyond the minimum base compensation schedule upon the recommendation of the Equitable Compensation Commission when the Commission feels the use of such funds is in the best interest of the mission and ministry of the annual conference.

In 2023, such funding was provided to Bemiss UMC and Speedwell UMC.

**REPORT #5**

**Conference Arrearage Policy**

**Background:**

Recognizing that the South Georgia Conference has experienced, for several years, an alarming amount of arrearages owed to our active pastors, the Equitable Compensation Committee submits this policy as an effort to protect both our clergy and the annual conference. Since direct billing of pension was initiated in 2006 (insurance has been direct billed for more than 25 years), there have been more than \$1 million in shortfalls when local churches did not meet the compensation owed to pastors (typically unpaid health insurance premiums or the church's share in pension costs). When a local church does not meet its obligations, the other local churches in the conference must pay the bill through the apportionment system.

1 In 2012, the General Conference invited conference equitable compensation committees to develop an arrearage  
2 policy for the protection of clergy and the annual conference when a church or charge is unable to pay the full  
3 compensation due to a pastor, whether cash salary, housing, health insurance, or pension obligations.  
4 The policy below outlines our proposal to the South Georgia Annual Conference to adopt a policy which includes:  
5 - A process for notification when compensation is in arrears  
6 - Courses of action when an arrearage occurs  
7 - A statute of limitations for claims against the Annual Conference  
8 - Provisions for reporting the churches whose arrearages have required disbursement from conference funds to  
9 compensate pastors

10  
11 It is our hope that this policy can both ‘bring into the light’ some issues of financial concern as well as set our  
12 conference on a course to rectify a growing problem of arrearages.  
13

14 **Introduction**

15 ¶624.2. in *The Book of Discipline (2016)* allows for each annual conference to establish an arrearage policy to deal  
16 with the situations that arise or that have arisen in the past. ¶625.2.d entitled *Equitable Compensation*, also  
17 references the conference arrearage policy. Below is ¶624.1 where it states:

18 ¶624. *Payment Obligation – 1. Each church or charge has an obligation to pay the base compensation, the*  
19 *benefits adopted by the annual conference, and other ministerial support (including housing) adopted by the*  
20 *charge conference, to its pastor(s). If it becomes apparent that a church or charge will be unable to so provide*  
21 *the base compensation, support, and benefits adopted by the charge conference, the church or charge SPRC*  
22 *chair, finance chair, or treasurer, shall immediately notify, both in writing and verbally, the pastor, district*  
23 *superintendent and congregation. This communication shall indicate all avenues explored to meet the base*  
24 *compensation, support, and benefits, including requesting consideration for a short-term emergency subsidy*  
25 *grant from the Equitable Compensation Fund (¶625.7). If it becomes necessary to reduce a pastor's*  
26 *compensation, it shall occur at the end of the conference appointment year.*  
27

28 **The 2018 session of the South Georgia Annual Conference adopted the following Arrearage Policy in**  
29 **accordance with ¶¶624.2. and 625.2d of *The Book of Discipline (2016)*.**  
30

31 1. Local church treasurers receive a monthly statement on pension and insurance obligations. Beginning in January  
32 2018, quarterly statements will be sent to all pastors and S/PPRC chairs to identify all pension and insurance  
33 obligations that are due. When the local church treasurer becomes aware that the church will be unable to  
34 provide to the pastor full payment of a regularly scheduled payroll or housing allowance installment, or to remit  
35 to the Conference Treasurer full payment for regular direct billed benefit payments such as pension and health  
36 care, the church treasurer shall immediately notify both verbally (within 24 hours) and in writing/via email  
37 (within 3 days) the Pastor, the Lay Leader, and the Chairs of S/PPRC, Finance, Trustees, and the  
38 Administrative/Church Council of the impending arrearage. Upon receipt of such notice, the Chair of S/PPRC  
39 and/or the Pastor shall immediately (within 3 days) notify the District Superintendent of the impending arrearage.  
40 It is the pastor’s responsibility to keep copies of all such written notifications, and to provide additional written  
41 confirmation to the District Superintendent when an arrearage has taken place. Failure to document salary or  
42 benefit arrearages may result in a loss of compensation and/or forfeiture of pension and benefits.  
43

44 2. Upon receipt of notice of a pending arrearage, the Chair of S/PPRC shall immediately (within 24 hours) call a  
45 meeting of the Pastor, Lay Leader, and Chairs of Finance, Trustees, and the Administrative/Church Council to  
46 discuss the financial situation and seek remedies to prevent an arrearage from occurring.  
47

48 Such remedies might include:

- 49 a. Drawing from invested funds, including short-term borrowing from designated funds,
- 50 b. An emergency appeal for special giving from the congregation,
- 51 c. Other sources

1 According to *The Book of Discipline (2016)* ¶624, such remedies cannot include a reduction in the Pastor's  
2 compensation until the beginning of the next Conference year.

- 3
- 4 3. If, after consultation among the Lay Leader and Chairs of S/PPRC, Finance, Trustees, and the  
5 Administrative/Church Council, it becomes apparent that the church may be facing a long-term financial crisis,  
6 the Chair of S/PPRC shall notify in writing the Pastor and District Superintendent that:
  - 7 a. A temporary Equitable Compensation Subsidy Grant may be necessary to maintain compensation for the  
8 remainder of the Conference year, or
  - 9 b. A change in pastoral compensation or appointment may be necessary at the beginning of the following  
10 Conference year.
- 11
- 12 4. If the local church becomes delinquent in the pastor's cash compensation plus housing (i.e. more than 30 days  
13 delinquent), the District Superintendent shall notify the Commission on Equitable Compensation, which on its  
14 own initiative may do any or all of the following, but not limited to:
  - 15 a. Meeting with the local church and pastor to seek resolution of the issue.
  - 16 b. Developing with the local church a payment plan so that the pastor receives full payment of compensation  
17 by the end of the conference year.
- 18
- 19 5. If a local church becomes delinquent in the payment of the pastor's direct billed pension and benefits (i.e. more  
20 than 30 days delinquent), the Conference Treasurer shall notify the District Superintendent, and the  
21 Commission on Equitable Compensation. The local church shall submit a payment plan to the Conference  
22 Benefits Officer, including the District Superintendent and the Committee on Equitable Compensation. The  
23 plan submitted must ensure that the Conference receives full payment of pension and health benefits by the end  
24 of the conference year.
- 25
- 26 6. It is the responsibility of the pastor to provide evidence of an arrearage by providing documentation such as:  
27 Treasurer's Reports, Charge Conference reports of adopted salary and compensation, check stubs, W-2 forms.  
28 A note accompanying such documentation shall be signed by the Pastor, S/PPRC Chair, Trustee Chair,  
29 Treasurer, and Administrative/Church Council Chair
- 30
- 31 7. The statute of limitations for filing a claim for funds from the Annual Conference (i.e. notification to the District  
32 Superintendent of the arrearage) for any salary arrearage is one year from the date of the initial arrearage. Once  
33 an appointment ends the Pastor no longer has claim on the local church for compensation funds (¶342.4).
- 34
- 35 8. An Administrative Complaint may be filed against a pastor who fails to report an arrearage according to the  
36 time lines established in this policy.
- 37
- 38 9. Churches which are in arrears to the Annual Conference with respect to benefits payments will be reported in  
39 the Annual Conference Journal as "churches receiving equitable compensation." These specific churches will be  
40 reported based on the following methodology:
  - 41 a. Benefits balances "greater than 180 days" at the end of the current year to the end of the previous year.
  - 42 b. Any church whose "greater than 180 days balance" increased based on item (1) will be reported as a  
43 "church receiving equitable compensation."
  - 44 c. Continuing our conference's practice, funding for such churches will be provided via the "Benefits  
45 Underpayment" line item in the conference budget until exhausted. Additional funds will be paid out of  
46 conference reserves. These payments shall be considered as payments on behalf of the local church, and the  
47 conference retains the right to have these payments reimbursed by the local church.

48  
49 Respectfully submitted,

50  
51 Mrs. Suzanne Jones, Dir. of Administrative Services

1                   **RECOMMENDATION 3 – Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits**  
2                                   **BOARD OF PENSION AND HEALTH BENEFITS**  
3

4           Caring for the pension and health needs of those who have and are faithfully serving the church continues to be the  
5           mission of the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits and of Wespath.

6  
7           The task of our Conference Board of Pensions and our Administrative Services Office is to fully implement these  
8           caring ideals of our annual conference. In order to put these ideals into practice, the following practices and policies  
9           are adopted:

10  
11           1) The Administrative Services Office will bill churches/agencies directly for the cost of the following plans (if  
12           their minister is a participant):

- 13                   • Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) for full-time & ¾-time ministers
- 14                   • United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP) for ½-time and ¼-time ministers
- 15                   • Health insurance (HealthFlex) for active ministers serving full-time

16  
17           2) The Conference will continue to bear, on the decimal apportionment system, the financial responsibility for the  
18           following:

- 19                   • Pension liability for the Pre-82 Pension Plan (mainly PSR increases)
- 20                   • the Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP)
- 21                   • the health insurance program (HealthFlex) for ministers on disability
- 22                   • Post-retirement medical funding for Pre-65 retired ministers

23  
24           Agencies which do not receive apportionments will be billed directly for the CPP related to any clergy staff  
25           appointed to that agency.

26  
27           3) Wespath will bill churches/agencies directly for the minister’s personal contribution to the United Methodist  
28           Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP).

29  
30           The Denominational Average Compensation (DAC) for 2025 will be \$80,297. The Conference Average  
31           Compensation (CAC) for 2025 will be \$91,193. These figures are based on salary plus 25% for housing.

32  
33                                   **REPORT #1**  
34                                   **PRE-1982 PENSIONS AND BENEFITS**  
35                                   **(FORMERLY CONFERENCE CLAIMANTS)**  
36

37           Since 1982, ministerial pensions have been funded each year by the church or agency which a minister serves. PRE-  
38           1982 PENSIONS is the term used to describe the funding of pensions for those ministers, both active and retired, who  
39           have years of service credit prior to 1982. The South Georgia Conference met its obligation to fund the Pre-’82  
40           Pension in 2019. Actuaries tell us we are never “fully funded”, as funding depends on investment performance and  
41           mortality, among other items. Nonetheless, we expect only modest payments on this account in coming years.

42  
43           Pre-’82 pensions are provided at a Past Service Rate (PSR). Essentially, you multiply the number of years served by  
44           the PSR to arrive at an annual pension. Beginning in 2014, any increase in the past service rate for Pre-82 pension  
45           benefits must be fully funded in advance of the increase. For service rendered prior to January 1, 1982, *the following*  
46           *rates are anticipated for 2025:*

47  
Retired Full Members, Associate Members and Local Pastors                   ***\$831.00 per service year***  
Widows or Widowers of Participants   ***\$582.00 per service year***

1 These rates are an increase of 2% from the current PSR of \$815.00. We are pleased to report that our level of  
2 payment into the Pre-'82 plan should enable us to have annual increases of 2%, without the need to apportion those  
3 increases.  
4

5 **REPORT #2**  
6 **THE CLERGY RETIREMENT SECURITY PROGRAM (CRSP)**  
7

8 **Employer contribution for 3/4- and Full-Time ministers**  
9

10 The 2004 General Conference adopted a new pension plan for ministers called the Clergy Retirement Security  
11 Program (CRSP), which offers a unique two component benefit design that began on Jan. 1, 2007. The core  
12 program, which is provided to all eligible clergy (including deacons), consists of separate defined benefit and  
13 defined contribution plans. These components, which combined with Social Security and personal savings, are  
14 designed to replace 75% - 100% of income at retirement, assuming participants are contributing to Social Security  
15 and have saved some funds personally (either through the United Methodist Personal Investment Plan, also known  
16 as UMPIP, or other savings).

- 17 • A “defined benefit retirement plan” promises a specific dollar amount at retirement regardless of market  
18 conditions or investment performance. At the beginning of CRSP, the Defined Benefit portion of CRSP was a  
19 benefit equal to 1.25% of the Denominational Average Compensation (DAC) at the time of retirement  
20 multiplied by the number of years of credited service in the plan. Changes to the plan made at the 2012 General  
21 Conference have set the benefit equal to 1.0% of the DAC beginning January 1, 2014. The prior CRSP benefit  
22 formula will remain effective for all covered service prior to January 1, 2014.
- 23 • A “defined contribution retirement plan” promises that a defined amount of money will go into an active clergy  
24 person’s account annually. The Defined Contribution portion of CRSP had a benefit equal to 3% of the  
25 minister’s “Pension Plan Compensation” each year through December 2013. The “Pension Plan Compensation”  
26 for each minister is the taxable salary plus non-taxable contributions to a 403 (b) plan and a section 125  
27 cafeteria plan plus 25% of the above for housing. If a parsonage is not provided, the actual amount the minister  
28 receives for housing will be included. Beginning January 1, 2014, the Defined Contribution contributed by the  
29 Church is now 2% of the “Pension Plan Compensation” with an additional 1% matching contribution if the  
30 minister contributes at least 1% to UMPIP. Ministers contributing at 1% to UMPIP will have church  
31 contributions to the Defined Contribution Plan equal to 3%. Those opting not to participate will receive church  
32 contributions equal to 2%.  
33

34 ***We recommend that the minister’s pension be billed to their local church/agency as follows:***  
35

- 36 1. Beginning January 1, 2015, the defined benefit portion of CRSP (CRSP DB) will be assessed to churches based  
37 on a specific percentage of the clergy’s “Pension Plan Compensation”. The actual percentage to be used will be  
38 calculated by the conference after consultation with the actuaries at Wespath. Churches will then be charged for  
39 their share of the CRSP DB based on their current appointment status and salary information. Changes to  
40 appointments and salaries midyear will be reflected in the billing at the time of the change.
- 41 2. Each church having a participating clergy will be assessed 3% of their clergy’s “Pension Plan Compensation,”  
42 which will go directly into their clergy’s designated account at Wespath to fund the defined contribution portion  
43 of CRSP based on the decision of the minister to participate in the minimum contribution requirements for  
44 matching funds; and
- 45 3. The amounts calculated for the two parts of CRSP will be billed to the church or salary-paying unit.  
46

47 Pastors and/or Church Treasurers who experience any billing problems are asked to contact the Conference  
48 Administrative Services Office.  
49  
50  
51  
52



1 **Employer contribution for ½ time and ¼ time ministers**

2 The 2013 Annual Conference approved that the benefits for ministers serving 1/2 time or 1/4 time appointments will  
3 be provided by the United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (a defined contribution plan). These benefits are  
4 described in Report # 3 under United Methodist Personal Investment Plan.  
5

6 **EXTENSION MINISTRY APPOINTMENTS**

7 Under the CRSP pension plan, church-related institutions and agencies can sign an agreement with Wespath to offer  
8 the United Methodist Personal Investment Plan for the employers' portion of the minister's pension, or they can sign  
9 an agreement with the Conference Board of Pensions and Health Benefits (CBOPHB) in order to allow their active  
10 ministers to participate in the Clergy Retirement Security Program. Church-related institutions and agencies which  
11 choose to enroll their active ministers in CRSP through the South Georgia Conference will be responsible for the  
12 costs associated with their minister's participation in the plan. Church-related institutions and agencies are also  
13 encouraged to enroll their active ministers in the Comprehensive Protection Plan. Ministers appointed to extension  
14 ministries are reminded that when their compensation changes, they need to notify Wespath and the Administrative  
15 Services Office in order for their pension contributions to be calculated properly.  
16

17  
18 **REPORT #3**

19 **UNITED METHODIST PERSONAL INVESTMENT PLAN (UMPIP)**

20  
21 **Employer contribution for 1/4- and 1/2-time ministers**

22  
23 As of January 1, 2014, ministers serving less than 75% appointments are no longer eligible to participate in the  
24 CRSP, and will be enrolled in UMPIP as their primary pension plan. Churches will be billed 14% of the minister's  
25 pension plan compensation (salary + housing, see Report #2) which would be directly deposited in the minister's  
26 account subject to the minister's personal participation of a 1% match. Those choosing not to participate would only  
27 receive 13% in their UMPIP account. Churches will be billed by the Administrative Services Office for the church's  
28 cost of the minister's participation in UMPIP. (Wespath will direct bill the churches for the minister's personal  
29 pension contribution.)  
30

31 **Minister's Personal Pension Contribution**

32 Beginning in January 2007, the Personal Investment Plan was modified, and the new name is United Methodist  
33 Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP). Ministers covered by the Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) are urged  
34 to pay a minimum of 3% of their salaries into their United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP) accounts  
35 with Wespath. UMPIP contributions can be tax deferred ("Before Tax Contribution") or tax paid ("After Tax  
36 Contribution") based on an agreement with the church prior to the beginning of the year. An additional option is to  
37 have contributions invested in a Roth account. Wespath will continue to send bills directly to churches and church-  
38 related institutions and agencies for their minister's contributions into UMPIP. Contributions to UMPIP over the  
39 minimum 1% matching contribution will continue to be encouraged of all ministers as an important part of their  
40 retirement planning.  
41

42 **Auto-Enroll Program**

43 Your Board of Pensions has been concerned for some time over the number of pastors who do not contribute to their  
44 own retirement through UMPIP. We believe many of the pastors who do not contribute fail to do so simply because  
45 they never completed the necessary paperwork. We began auto-enrolling clergy in the UMPIP program beginning in  
46 the fall of 2017 for 2018 compensation. Auto-enrollment will assume a 1% contribution. Clergy are able to opt out of  
47 enrollment, so we will not force those who intentionally have not enrolled. Very few clergy do opt out. We will  
48 continue to auto-enroll clergy in this plan. Auto-enrollment will bless many of our clergy by enabling them to provide  
49 for their retirement.  
50

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

**REPORT #4**  
**THE COMPREHENSIVE PROTECTION PLAN (CPP)**

In 2025, the Contribution Rate for CPP shall be 3% of the Active Participant’s Plan Compensation for the year, not to exceed twice the Denominational Average Compensation (DAC). Plan Compensation for the Comprehensive Protection Plan is the same as it is for the Clergy Retirement Security Program, which is defined in Report #2. Based on this rate and the DAC, the maximum contribution for each full-time minister will be \$4,818 for 2025. The South Georgia Conference pays for CPP through the apportionments. So, the amount each church pays for the Comprehensive Protection Plan will not usually be equal to the actual cost of CPP for their minister(s).

26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50  
51  
52

*It is recommended that funding for the Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP) be as follows:*

- (1) CPP will be apportioned to the charges based upon the same “decimal” which is used for the other apportionments.
- (2) Each local church treasurer is urged to make a monthly payment of the CPP apportionment to the Administrative Services Office with their other apportionments.
- (3) Participating agencies will be directly billed 3% of plan compensation for any clergy appointed to the agency.
- (4) The Director of Administrative Services shall remit payments on a monthly basis to Wespath on behalf of all pastors covered by the Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP).

**REPORT #5**  
**HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM**  
**(HEALTHFLEX)**

In 2025, the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits will continue to offer a health benefit program. Health insurance is not mandated by the General Conference, but we wish to provide these benefits as long as they are affordable. In a group policy, the cost of premiums is directly related to prior claims experience. Our group is relatively small and older, which usually leads to higher claims, and thus higher costs. The premium increase in 2025 (4.2%) is lower than in 2024 (6.7%) due to an improved claims experience. Participation in the Conference health insurance program (HealthFlex) is mandatory for persons in the following categories who are under full time appointment:

1. To the Local Church:
  - A. Members of the South Georgia Annual Conference appointed to full-time service who are:
    - a - an elder in full connection (*2016 Discipline*, ¶338.1);
    - b - an associate member (*2016 Discipline*, ¶321.3);
    - c - a provisional member on the elder track (*2016 Discipline*, ¶326);
  - B. A full-time local pastor who is under episcopal appointment to a charge located in the South Georgia Annual Conference (*2016 Discipline* ¶318.1);
  - C. An ordained elder or ordained clergy from other annual conferences or other Methodist denominations appointed to a local church within the South Georgia Annual Conference (*2016 Discipline*, ¶346.1); or,
  - D. A clergy member from another denomination under episcopal appointment to a local church within the South Georgia Conference as defined by the *2016 Discipline*, ¶346.2.
2. To an Extension Ministry:

An ordained elder, an associate member, or a probationary member (other than a missionary) appointed beyond the local church within the connectional structure to a unit of the South Georgia Annual Conference (*2016 Discipline*, ¶344.1(a)(1)) with pension responsibility by the Annual Conference. This includes members who are serving as district superintendents, connectional ministries directors and staff, congregational development officers, assistant to the bishop, conference treasurer, director of ministerial services and other appointments with salaries funded by the Annual Conference.

1 ACTIVE MINISTERS

- 2 1. All ministers covered under the mandatory participation rules will have 100% of the cost of their premium  
3 billed directly to the local churches they are serving.  
4 2. The cost of health insurance for participants on incapacity leave and receiving disability benefits from the  
5 Comprehensive Protection Plan who are in a mandatory participation category will be paid by the Conference  
6 through the apportionments.  
7 3. Salary-paying units of Extension Ministers (including Conference Evangelists) must pay the full cost of the  
8 premiums in order for them to participate in the health insurance program (HealthFlex).  
9

10 HEALTHFLEX PREMIUMS FOR 2025

11  
12 The premium for the “default” plan (CDHP C2000) is \$1,153/month in 2024; in 2025, the premium will increase to  
13 \$1,202/month. This 4.2% increase (\$49/m) is related to higher claims in 2023. Our lower “claims experience” in 2017,  
14 2018, and 2019 helped keep our premiums in line, but 2020, 2021 and 2022 were not as good. **In our continuing  
15 effort to help local churches, the Conference Board of Pensions will pay \$50.00 per month towards the premium  
16 of the clergy person. The amount billed to local churches is expected to be \$1,152/month.** We are using rebate funds  
17 from “good claims experience” years to offset these premium increases. Because these rebate funds are being depleted,  
18 we have lowered the annual rebate in an effort to extend the number of years that any rebate can be offered. These  
19 rebates came from premiums paid by churches and pastoral families. **In addition, the Board of Pensions offered a  
20 rebate on HealthFlex to clergy families for the very first time in 2023 and continued that rebate into 2024;  
21 however, in 2025, there will be no rebates offered for family coverage. As expected, these rebates were not  
22 sustainable more than a couple of years.** At the same time, we are compelled to note that clergy participation in  
23 wellness programs offer our best option for increased clergy health and lower premiums. For more information on our  
24 wellness programs, download the brochure at <https://www.wespath.org/assets/1/7/5663.pdf>, or visit Virgin Pulse  
25 through your Benefits Access account.  
26

27 Our claims experience in 2023 was 93.0% overall (meaning for every dollar we paid in premiums, the insurance paid  
28 out \$0.93 in claims). In 2022, claims were \$0.96 for every dollar in premiums. These high claims not only result in  
29 increased premiums; they make it unlikely any other insurance carrier will bid for our business. We are faced with  
30 paying high premiums or not offering insurance coverage.  
31

32 Our clergy population is older than the average insured group. As long as our conference wishes to provide health  
33 insurance for pastors in a group plan, we will struggle with these costs. Our carrier, HealthFlex, does provide  
34 numerous wellness benefits and incentives to live healthier, as well as coaching and other assistance to those wishing  
35 to get healthier. These could produce better health in our clergy, which would benefit the clergy as well as lower our  
36 claims. Our participation in these wellness incentives is low. Pastors must overcome their resistance to participation in  
37 their own wellness if we are to continue providing health insurance.  
38

39 MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

40  
41 USING THE HEALTHFLEX EXCHANGE:

42 Beginning in 2011, our “active plan” (for participants under age 65) was changed to a Consumer Driven Health Plan  
43 (CDHP), a type of health insurance plan that allows the participant to use a health reimbursement account (HRA) to  
44 pay certain health care expenses directly, while a high-deductible health plan protects them from catastrophic medical  
45 expenses. This model resulted in significant savings for the conference, and delayed premium increases for 3 years.  
46 The Conference Board of Pensions monitored the type of plans available and their costs, and decided to participate in  
47 the private HealthFlex Exchange in 2017.  
48

49 Participating in the Exchange allows participants to choose from several health plans instead of only one. Each plan  
50 has its own deductibles, coverages, and costs. In addition, the Exchange provides dental and expanded vision  
51 coverage. Participants are more likely to find a plan which suits their particular needs.  
52

1 *We will continue to participate in the HealthFlex Exchange in 2025.*

2  
3 SOUTH GEORGIA CONFERENCE WEBSITE: [www.sgaumc.org](http://www.sgaumc.org)

4 The Administrative Services section of the Conference website includes many useful forms and articles regarding  
5 pension, health insurance, flexible spending accounts, and related matters. In addition, the Housing Allowance  
6 Resolution for Retired or Disabled Ministers is available on the website.

7  
8 **REPORT #6**  
9 **WELLNESS INITIATIVE FOR SOUTH GEORGIA**

10  
11 The Conference Board of Pensions continues to embrace better health and “wellness” for our ministers and laity.  
12 Because of the increasing cost of health care and the increasing number of our participants with chronic illnesses, the  
13 Board of Pensions realizes that by emphasizing “wellness” and working to improve the health of our clergy we will  
14 not only improve the ability of clergy to be in ministry but should, in the long term, have an effect on the rising costs  
15 of insurance. To say this differently, the key to lowering premiums for our health insurance is to increase the health  
16 and well-being of our clergy.

17  
18 We encourage ministers to become more responsible for their health-related behaviors. Virgin Pulse is included in  
19 each of the health plans, with varying rewards based on participant behavior. Information on enrolling in Virgin Pulse  
20 can be obtained on the South Georgia Conference website or by contacting the Administrative Services Office at 478-  
21 738-0048.

22  
23 HealthFlex is further encouraging active participants to be more responsible for their health. We expect to continue the  
24 requirement that all participants in the active HealthFlex plan must take the Health Check (formerly HQ Health  
25 Quotient) by August 31, 2024 to avoid increased 2025 individual deductibles. If a participant's spouse is covered under  
26 the active plan, both the participant and the spouse must separately take the Health Check by August 31, 2024, to  
27 avoid an increased 2025 deductible for the spouse/family. Health Check is accessed through the Virgin Pulse app or  
28 website.

29  
30 We encourage all ministers to have a wellness exam annually. Guidelines related to wellness exams by age groups are  
31 on the South Georgia Conference website, [www.sgaumc.org](http://www.sgaumc.org).

32  
33 The annual “Blueprint for Wellness” (BFW) offered by our insurer not only provides a needed service, but also has a  
34 cash incentive for active participants! Participants can have the BFW done at Annual Conference, at a Quest lab  
35 nearby (please schedule this through your Wespeth Benefits Access portal online), or have a blood -check kit mailed to  
36 their home. In many cases, this free bloodwork will replace the bloodwork your doctor orders, at no cost to the  
37 participant. Contact the Administrative Services office for more information.

38  
39 **REPORT #7**  
40 **SOUTH GEORGIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE**  
41 **CLERGY MENTAL HEALTH**

42  
43 This year the Clergy Mental Health Task Force has continued to work for the well-being and health of our clergy and  
44 leaders in the South Georgia Conference. We have provided training opportunities for our clergy in the form of  
45 Clergy Days Away. We offered a one-day training at the Pastoral Institute in Columbus on “Care to the Caregiver:  
46 The Cost of Caring in Your Calling.” Rev. Thomas Waynick reminded participants to care for themselves as they care  
47 for others. Along those same lines, Cameron Bishop presented the second of our “Leading Through Trauma”  
48 workshops at Camp Tygart where we learned to recognize and acknowledge the results of second-hand trauma many  
49 clergy experience in their roles.

50  
51 One of the most exciting projects was done in collaboration with the Task force for Diversity, Inclusion and  
52 Vitality. We were recipients of a grant from the COOR Action Fund. We funded four different clergy mental health

1 events with a kickoff event being held with Dr. Ron Bell and three follow-up events with minority clergy: Hispanic,  
2 African American, and Female. All of these events have focused on mental health and self-care. We have hoped to  
3 create a safe space to, “be with colleagues and just keep the focus on mental health.” This self-care and wellness  
4 initiative is the start of something bigger in the conference and we are glad to partner across task force work groups to  
5 collaborate on ways to help our clergy members stay emotionally healthy.

6  
7 **REPORT #8**  
8 **ACCUMULATING DEBT FOR CLERGY BENEFITS**  
9

10 Your Conference Board of Pensions continues to be concerned about the accumulated clergy benefits debt. We have  
11 direct-billed the pastor’s pension to local churches/agencies since 1982, and the pastor’s health insurance since 2003.  
12 As we have shared in recent years, we have churches which have not paid, and are not paying, the health insurance and  
13 pension for their pastor(s). These benefits are part of the pastor’s compensation, and are an obligation of the local  
14 church. When they are not paid, other churches in the Annual Conference must step in and make the payments, or the  
15 pastor will lose his/her insurance and/or pension. There is a fallacy in thinking that “the Conference” will pay these  
16 benefits – in reality, whenever the Conference pays a bill, it does so with funds from local churches. In a very real  
17 sense, this debt of clergy benefits is not owed to the Conference but to the other churches in the Conference.

18  
19 In this report, we state again our long-standing practice, and ask that our pastors, churches, and all officers and  
20 members of the South Georgia Annual Conference acknowledge:

- 21 • The cost of a pastor’s pension is part of his/her annual compensation, and is the responsibility of the local  
22 church/charge to which he/she is appointed;
- 23 • The cost of a pastor’s health insurance is part of his/her annual compensation, and is the responsibility of the local  
24 church/charge to which he/she is appointed;
- 25 • Responsibility for paying pension and insurance expenses incurred during a pastor’s appointment does not end  
26 with the pastor being appointed to a new charge/church. The liability remains, is a responsibility of the local  
27 church, and must be paid;
- 28 • Our Standing Rules provide that if a church closes, any pension/insurance debt remaining shall be paid using  
29 proceeds from the sale of church property;
- 30 • Any funds withheld from a pastor’s pay in order to pay personal insurance or personal pension contributions on  
31 behalf of that pastor must be remitted monthly, and cannot, in any circumstance, be held by the local church.

32  
33 Debt on unpaid benefits was \$525,829.86 at the end of 2023 (a decrease of \$59,959.19 from end of 2022, or 10%).  
34 When we first raised this issue, accumulated debt was \$1.1 million. Almost half of the unpaid benefits debt has been  
35 settled since 2016. We applaud those church and organizations which have paid down or paid off their debt. This level  
36 of indebtedness, though reduced, remains unsustainable. It is improper for churches to fail to pay their pastor’s  
37 benefits. Churches cannot just walk away from this obligation. It is inappropriate to shove the bill off on other  
38 churches. The Conference has asked our Bishop and Cabinet to make full payment of clergy benefits a matter of  
39 pastoral appointment, and to consider payment of benefits on the same level as payment of salary in determining  
40 whom to appoint to a local church. We ask pastors and church leaders to look at their benefits bills and pay any  
41 accrued debt as a matter of both obligation and faithfulness. The Equitable Compensation committee has been asked to  
42 partner with the CBOP, and the cabinet in educating and mentoring churches on paying this liability.

43  
44 **REPORT #9 – 2024 COMPREHENSIVE BENEFIT FUNDING PLAN SUMMARY**  
45 **SOUTH GEORGIA CONFERENCE**  
46

47 The 2016 Book of Discipline ¶1506.6 requires that each annual conference develop, adopt and implement a formal  
48 comprehensive funding plan for funding all of its benefit obligations. The funding plan shall be submitted annually to  
49 Wespeth Benefits and Investments (Wespeth) for review and be approved annually by the annual conference,  
50 following the receipt and inclusion of a favorable written opinion from Wespeth. This document is only a summary of  
51 the information contained in the actual signed funding plan and does not contain all the information required for a

1 comprehensive view of the conference's benefit obligations. You may request the full contents of the 2024  
2 comprehensive benefit funding plan from the Administrative Services Office.

#### 3 4 **CLERGY RETIREMENT SECURITY PROGRAM (CRSP)**

##### 5 **Defined Benefit (DB) and Defined Contribution (DC)**

###### 6 7 Plan Overview:

8 The Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) is an Internal Revenue Code section 403(b) retirement program  
9 providing lifetime income and account flexibility designed for those who serve as clergy of The United Methodist  
10 Church. The plan is designed to provide participants with one portion of their overall retirement benefits. CRSP  
11 replaced the Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP) effective January 1, 2007, which had previously replaced the Pre '82 Plan  
12 for service rendered prior to January 1, 1982. CRSP consists of two components: · A defined benefit (DB) plan—  
13 which provides a monthly benefit at retirement based upon years of credited service to the Church and a defined  
14 contribution (DC) plan—which provides a retirement account balance established and funded by the annual  
15 conferences.

###### 16 17 Current funding plan information:

18 The Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP DB) annuities total liability as of January 1, 2022 is \$2.285 billion,  
19 while total plan assets are \$2.829 billion, resulting in a current plan funded ratio of 124%. The South Georgia  
20 Conference portion of the liability is 1.6818% and the 2024 contributions is \$0. Additionally, General Conference  
21 2012 approved a change to CRSP that provides each annual conference the discretion to determine whether to cover  
22 three-quarter and/or half-time clergy. The South Georgia Conference has elected to continue to cover clergy serving  
23 75%+ under CRSP.

24  
25 Effective January 1, 2014, the CRSP DC plan was reduced from a 3% to a 2% of plan compensation non-matching  
26 contribution. Clergy can earn up to an additional 1% CRSP DC contribution by contributing at least 1% of their plan  
27 compensation to UMPIP; therefore, if a participant contributes at least 1% of plan compensation to UMPIP, the  
28 individual will receive a contribution of 3% to CRSP DC. The 2024 CRSP DC contribution is anticipated to be  
29 \$309,300 and will be funded by direct billing to churches/employers.

#### 30 31 **MINISTERIAL PENSION PLAN (MPP)**

###### 32 33 Plan Overview:

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

###### 39 40 Current funding plan information:

41 The Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP) annuities' total liability as of January 1, 2022 is \$3.665 billion, while total plan  
42 assets are \$4.758 billion, resulting in a current plan funded ratio of 130%. There is no required contribution for 2024.  
43 The South Georgia Conference's percentage of the total liability is 1.4726% of the total.

#### 44 45 **PRE-82 PLAN (PRE-82)**

###### 46 47 Plan Overview:

48 Supplement One to the Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP), also known as the Pre-82 Plan, provides clergy  
49 with a pension benefit for their years of ministry with The United Methodist Church prior to 1982. The Pre-82 Plan  
50 was replaced by MPP effective January 1, 1982. If a clergyperson retires within the conference (and does not  
51 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.

Increases to the Past Service Rate (PSR) must be paid for in full at the time of implementation.

**Current funding plan information:**

The 2024 PSR approved by the South Georgia Conference is \$815. The 2025 PSR recommended to the South Georgia Conference will be \$831. This is a 2% increase over 2024 rate. Future increases will be made as the CBOP feels that the budget and other funding sources will allow the increase; however, we have funded the Pre-'82 plan at an amount that Wespath indicates will allow for regular 2% increases in the future.

The contingent annuitant percentage is recommended to remain at the 70% level.

**ACTIVE HEALTH BENEFIT PROGRAM**

**Program overview:**

The South Georgia Conference offers a self-funded HealthFlex active health benefit to its active eligible participants.

**Current funding plan information:**

The total cost of the program for 2024 is anticipated to be 2,017,031 and will be funded by direct billing to churches/employers. It is anticipated that increases for future years will average 3%, as continued prudent health management by conference clergy and dependents moderates health care cost increases. The number of eligible primary participants decreased from January 1, 2023 to January 1, 2024 by 70. The 2024 rate increased by 6.2% which was higher than the expect 3%; however, 2025 will see a rate increase of only 4.2% moving closer to the expected.

**Additional Plan Sponsor Funded coverage (if applicable):**

The South Georgia Conference has elected to provide health benefits coverage to the following groups during periods where, without plan sponsor-funded premiums, the participants would not be provided coverage or benefits. The projected annual cost for Clergy or Lay on disability as of 12/31/24 is \$96,334.

**POST RETIREMENT MEDICAL BENEFIT PROGRAM (PRM)**

**Program overview:**

Through the Post Retirement Medical Trust established in 2022, retirees are offered an HRA funded through VIA Benefits to assist retirees in purchasing "Medicare supplement" insurance. This is available to clergy and conference lay staff who were 55 as of July 1, 2022 and able to meet the minimum participation time of 10 years as well as serving the South Georgia Conference with a minimum of 10 years.

**Current funding plan information:**

Based on the most recent PRM at the time of this funding plan dated **12/31/2021**, the following is the funded position of the PRM benefits:

1		
2	1. Expected Post Retirement Obligation (EPBO) net plan sponsor cost	\$17,176,362
3	2. Accumulated Post Retirement Obligation (APBO) net plan sponsor cost	\$16,402,332
4	3. Assets (in plan and outside) designated for PRM	\$17,176,362
5	4. Service cost (SC) net plan sponsor cost	\$100,930
6	5. Unfunded APBO, [3.-2.]	\$(774,030)
7	6. Ongoing funding contribution for 2024	\$0

8  
9 These values are based on a 3.5% long-term discount rate, a 0.0% long-term expected rate of return on assets, and a  
10 valuation medical trend (inflation rate) of 0.0% with an ultimate medical trend (valuation rate) of 0.0% beginning in  
11 2019.

12  
13 **COMPREHENSIVE PROTECTION PLAN (CPP)**

14  
15 **Plan Overview:**

16 The Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP) provides death, long-term disability and other welfare benefits for eligible  
17 clergy of The United Methodist Church and their families. It is an Internal Revenue Code 414(e) “church plan”  
18 funded by plan sponsor insurance premiums. Generally, clergy are eligible to participate in CPP if they satisfy the  
19 eligibility requirements, including full-time appointment with plan compensation of at least 25% of the  
20 Denominational Average Compensation (DAC). The South Georgia Conference also covers participants with three-  
21 quarter time appointments and clergy on disability.

22  
23 For 2024, the South Georgia Conference has an expected required contribution to the Comprehensive Protection Plan  
24 of \$309,300, which is anticipated to be funded by apportionments. A decrease of 5% is expected in the coming years.  
25

26 **UNITED METHODIST PERSONAL INVESTMENT PLAN (UMPIP)**

27  
28 **Plan Overview:**

29 The United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP) is an Internal Revenue Code section 403(b) defined  
30 contribution retirement savings plan for clergy and lay employees of The United Methodist Church and affiliated  
31 organizations. Participants may make before-tax, Roth and/or after-tax contributions through payroll deductions.  
32 Participant contributions, various optional plan sponsor contributions and investment earnings comprise the  
33 individual’s retirement account balance.  
34

35 **Current funding plan information:**

36 Conference office lay employees working an average of 30 hours per week or more are eligible after 12 months for a  
37 plan sponsor funded pension contribution of 9% of salary. Lay employees are encouraged to make contributions  
38 toward their retirement through payroll deductions to the UMPIP. The conference’s estimated contribution for 2024 is  
39 \$70,383 and will be funded by the conference budget, paid through apportionments.  
40

41 The South Georgia Conference, as of January 1, 2024 is planning on sponsoring the UMPIP for clergy serving one-  
42 quarter and one-half time and are eligible for a pension contribution of 14% of plan compensation. The Conference’s  
43 estimated contribution for 2024 is \$70,900 and will be funded via direct billing to churches.  
44

45 **OTHER DEFINED CONTRIBUTION (DC) OBLIGATIONS**

46  
47 **Plan overview:**

48 The South Georgia Conference currently offers the following DC benefit to lay employees: UNUM Long Term  
49 Disability and Death Benefit. The estimated contribution for 2024 is \$22,486 funded by apportionments. The  
50 expected average increase in future years is expected to be 3% per year.  
51  
52



1 **Plan overview:**

2 The South Georgia Conference currently offers the following DC benefits to lay and clergy staff: Accidental Death  
3 Benefits. The estimated contribution for 2024 is \$1000 funded by apportionments. The anticipated average increase  
4 in future years is expected to be 0.0% per year.

5 **Plan overview:**

6 The South Georgia Conference offers the following DC benefit to retiring clergy: Retirement Gift. The estimated  
7 contribution for 2024 is \$40,000 funded by apportionments. The South Georgia Conference does not recognize this as  
8 an ongoing obligation. The current gift may not continue if either a better way to help retirees is determined, or the  
9 funding becomes too expensive to continue.

10  
11 **CONCLUSION:**

12  
13 The 2024 Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan and this summary document incorporates, to the best of our  
14 understanding, the South Georgia Conference’s obligations and funding requirements of the benefits provided to the  
15 clergy and lay employees of the South Georgia Conference.

16  
17 The 2025 Funding plan is not available at the time of this publication.

18  
19 **REPORT #10**  
20 **RESOLUTION RELATING TO RENTAL/HOUSING ALLOWANCES FOR RETIRED OR DISABLED**  
21 **CLERGY PERSONS OF THE SOUTH GEORGIA CONFERENCE FOR 2025**

22  
23 The South Georgia Conference (the “Conference”) adopts the following resolutions relating to rental/housing  
24 allowance for active, retired, terminated or disabled clergypersons of the Conference.

25  
26 **WHEREAS**, the religious denomination known as The United Methodist Church (the “Church”), of which this  
27 Conference is a part, has in the past functioned and continues to function through ministers of the gospel (within  
28 the meaning of Internal Revenue Code section 107) who were or are duly ordained, commissioned, or licensed  
29 ministers of the Church (“Clergypersons”);

30  
31 **WHEREAS**, the practice of the Church and of this Conference was and is to provide active Clergypersons with a  
32 parsonage or a rental/ housing allowance as part of the gross compensation;

33  
34 **WHEREAS**, pensions or other amounts paid to active, retired, terminated, and disabled Clergypersons are considered  
35 to be deferred compensation and are paid to said active, retired, terminated, and disabled Clergypersons in  
36 consideration of previous, active service; and

37  
38 **WHEREAS**, the Internal Revenue Service has recognized the Conference (or its predecessors) as the appropriate  
39 organization to designate a rental/housing allowance for Clergypersons who are or were members of this  
40 Conference and are eligible to receive such deferred compensation;

41  
42 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:**

43  
44 **THAT** an amount equal to 100% of the pension or disability payments received from plans authorized under *The Book*  
45 *of Discipline of The United Methodist Church* (the “*Discipline*”), which includes all such payments from  
46 Wespath (the pension agency of The United Methodist Church) during calendar year 2025 to each active,  
47 retired, terminated or disabled Clergyperson who is or was a member of the Conference, or its predecessors, be  
48 and hereby is designated as a rental/housing allowance for each Clergyperson; and

1 **THAT** the pension or disability payments to which this rental/housing allowance applies will be any pension or  
2 disability payments from plans, annuities, or funds authorized under the *Discipline*, including such payments  
3 from Wespeth and from a commercial annuity company that provides an annuity arising from benefits  
4 accrued under a Wespeth plan, annuity, or fund authorized under the *Discipline*, that result from any service a  
5 Clergy person rendered to this Conference or that an active, a retired, terminated or a disabled Clergy person of  
6 this Conference rendered to any local church, annual conference of the Church, general agency of the Church,  
7 other institution of the Church, former denomination that is now a part of the Church, or any other employer  
8 that employed the Clergy person to perform services related to the ministry of the Church, or its predecessors,  
9 and that elected to make contributions to, or accrue a benefit under, such a plan, annuity, or fund for such  
10 active, retired, terminated or disabled Clergy person's pension or disability as part of his or her gross  
11 compensation.  
12

13 **NOTE:** The rental/housing allowance that may be excluded from a Clergy person's gross income in any year for  
14 federal income tax purposes is limited under the Internal Revenue Code section 107(2) and regulations there under  
15 to the lesser of: (1) the amount of the rental/housing allowance designated by the Clergy person's employer or other  
16 appropriate body of the Church (such as this Conference in the foregoing resolutions) for such year; (2) the amount  
17 actually expended by the Clergy person to rent or provide a home (plus other qualifying expenses) in such a year; or  
18 (3) the fair rental value of the home, including furnishings and appurtenances (such as a garage), plus the cost of  
19 utilities in such year. Retiring clergy may want to consider spanning major purchases such as a home over several  
20 years to take best advantage of this exclusion.  
21

22 Submitted by:  
23 Dr. Ben C. Martin, Chair, Conference Board of Pensions  
24 Eleanor J. Dickson, Conference Benefits Officer  
25

#### 26 **FUNDING RESERVE TRUST FOR POST-RETIREMENT CLERGY BENEFIT PLANS**

27  
28 At the Annual Conference Session in June 2022, the South Georgia Annual Conference (Conference) established a  
29 Funding Reserve Trust for Post-Retirement Clergy Benefit Plans (Trust) in order to secure retiree healthcare funding  
30 for an uncertain future. The Trust became effective July 1, 2022. Ministers and South Georgia Conference lay staff  
31 who were currently in the retiree healthcare plan, plus active ministers and South Georgia Conference lay staff who  
32 were 55 or over on July 1, 2022 and who were able to earn at least the minimum benefit before their retirement are  
33 included in the Trust. The Trust assumed responsibility from the Conference for funding retiree healthcare for  
34 pastors over 65 and South Georgia Conference lay staff.  
35

36 The Trust was initially funded in late 2022 with \$22,770,580 that the Conference had set previously set aside for  
37 retiree healthcare and benefits. By the end of 2022, due to market fluctuations, the balance in the Trust was  
38 \$22,649,979.25. At the end of 2023, the balance in the Trust grew to \$24,564,674. The financial results for 2023  
39 are shown below in Report #1.  
40

41 The trust operates with an independent Board of Trustees that relates to and shares some members from the  
42 Conference Board of Pension (CBOP).  
43

44 Retirees under 65, who are eligible for funding but are still on the active health plan, will be paid through the Post-  
45 Retirement medical apportionment until the time they are eligible for Medicare and HRA funding.

**REPORT #1**  
**FUNDING RESERVE TRUST FOR POST RETIREMENT CLERGY BENEFITS**  
**STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENSES**  
**For the Fiscal Year Ending December 31, 2023**

Opening Balance, January 1, 2023	\$22,649,979
<b>Income</b>	
Interest	494,507
Dividends	289,516
Unrealized Gain/Loss on Investments	1,755,372
Realized Gain/Loss on Investments	-23,719
MSP Billing to Local Churches; Working FT Active on Medicare (>65)	55,286
Via Benefits Mgt Fees Billed to Local Churches for MSP Clergy	480
Total Income	2,571,442
<b>Expenses</b>	
Investment Fees	144,119
Via Benefits Insurance Premiums	504,295
PCORI Fees	780
Via Benefit Management Fees	7,554
Total Expenses	656,748
<b>Total Income over/(under) Expenses</b>	<b><u>\$1,914,695</u></b>
<b>Ending Balance, December 31, 2023</b>	<b>\$24,564,674</b>

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24

**REPORT #2**  
**ACTUARIAL VALUATION**

Every other year, the Funding Reserve Trust for Post-Retirement Clergy Benefit Plans engages an actuary to calculate the Expected Post-Retirement Benefit Obligation (EPBO) or present value of all future post-retirement medical benefit payments for participants covered by the Trust. As of December 31, 2023, the EPBO for the clergy post-retirement medical plan funded by the Trust is \$15,659,887. This calculation has a number of assumptions included but an important one is that benefits will remain at the current HRA rates as provided in Report #3. Any future increases to the HRA rates would impact the EPBO and reduce the current surplus of funds available above the EPBO.

The complete actuarial report is available upon request by contacting the Administrative Services Office.

**REPORT #3**  
**HEALTH REIMBURSEMENT ACCOUNT RATES**

Since January 1, 2013, the South Georgia Conference has used the services of Via Benefits (formerly One Exchange) to provide supplemental insurance policies to ministers who retired from the South Georgia Conference and their spouses who are eligible for Medicare. Health Reimbursement Accounts (HRAs) are established with Via Benefits (formerly One Exchange) to help cover the cost of the insurance based on previous participation in HealthFlex and years of service in the South Georgia Conference. When the Funding Reserve Trust for Post-Retirement Clergy Benefit Plans took over responsibility for these plans, the Trust continued the relationship with Via Benefits.

1 **Beginning January 1, 2024, the rates are set at:**  
 2 20 years of service/participation in South Georgia plan - **\$2,760 annually**  
 3 10-19 years of service/participation in South Georgia plan - **\$2,070 annually**  
 4 less than 10 years of service/participation - **no contribution**  
 5

6 These amounts are subject to change as determined by the Trust. From time to time, the Trust will survey retirees  
 7 concerning the actual cost of their supplemental insurance. This information is used as one of the determining  
 8 factors of the rates.  
 9

10 Submitted by:  
 11 Mr. Harley Lawson, Chair, Board of Trustees, Funding Reserve Trust for Post-Retirement Clergy Benefit Plans  
 12 Eleanor J. Dickson, Conference Benefits Officer  
 13

14 **RECOMMENDATION 4 – Council on Finance and Administration**

15 **REPORT #1**

16  
 17  
 18 The Council on Finance and Administration appreciates the generosity of South Georgia United Methodists! This  
 19 report shows but a portion of the ways our churches have extended themselves financially to be instruments of grace.  
 20

21 **In 2023, payment of apportionments increased to 90.5%, above the 2022 rate of 85.3%.** The South Georgia  
 22 Annual Conference gave a total of \$20,548,440 in all funds sent through the Conference Treasurer in the calendar year  
 23 2023, an increase of \$1,464,295 overall compared with 2022. The increase was in benefits payments as other receipts  
 24 declined year over year. We are grateful to the churches of the South Georgia Conference for their partnership.  
 25

**2022 SUMMARY OF FUNDS RECEIVED**

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Received on Apportionments	7,636,716	7,102,266
Received on District Apportionment or Advance Specials	2,213,234	1,327,494
Received From Benefits Billings and Other Funds	<u>9,234,195</u>	<u>12,118,680</u>
Total Receipts	<u>\$19,084,145</u>	<u>\$20,548,440</u>

**COMPARISON REPORT AS OF DECEMBER 2023**

<b>APPORTIONMENTS</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>%</b>
	<b>BUDGET</b>	<b>RECEIPTS</b>	<b>PAID</b>	<b>BUDGET</b>	<b>RECEIPTS</b>	<b>PAID</b>
Conference Benevolence	909,906	846,288	93%	909,720	843,807	93%
Congregational Development	304,763	277,756	91%	146,126	136,237	93%
Clergy Support	1,665,257	1,549,402	93%	1,470,621	1,372,891	93%
Pre-1982 Pensions	0	358	0%	0	0	0%
CPP (Post-1982)	725,000	662,341	91%	641,045	598,150	93%
Post-Retirement Medical	120,000	113,138	94%	11,000	22,475	204%
Health Flex (Disability)	130,000	120,468	93%	110,000	102,721	93%
Administrative Expense	1,270,978	1,152,176	91%	1,294,680	1,190,448	92%
SEJ Mission and Ministry Fund	20,713	19,596	95%	17,220	16,220	94%
GA Wesley Min. & UM Colleges	723,201	661,889	92%	723,201	663,328	92%
SGA Episcopal Office	245,971	227,807	93%	216,369	200,646	93%
SGA Episcopal Residence	30,000	27,836	93%	20,000	19,191	96%
World Service	1,166,215	1,005,264	86%	1,066,125	961,155	90%
Africa Univ. Fund	37,950	33,047	87%	34,693	31,468	91%
Black College Fund	168,798	146,080	87%	154,311	139,980	91%
Gen Admin. Fund	143,618	124,617	87%	131,292	118,908	91%
Gen. Episcopal Fund	404,538	345,117	85%	428,089	378,508	88%
Inter-Denominational Co-op Fd.	5,049	4,430	88%	4,616	4,199	91%
Ministerial Ed. Fund	365,261	319,106	87%	333,913	301,936	90%
<b>Received on</b>	<b><u>\$8,437,218</u></b>	<b><u>\$7,636,716</u></b>	<b><u>91%</u></b>	<b><u>\$7,713,021</u></b>	<b><u>\$7,102,266</u></b>	<b><u>92%</u></b>
<b>Apportionments</b>						

**% of TOTAL RECEIPTS ON APPORTIONED ITEMS:**

2022 90.5%

2023 92.1%

INCREASE (DECREASE) 1.60%

**NON-APPORTIONED FUNDS**

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
District Apportionments (except for missions - Lane 6)	1,363,002	1,116,106
General (*) and Annual Conference (**) Special Offerings:		
Human Relations Day*	410	1,361
UMCOR Sunday*	18258	2,500
Native American Awareness*	234	1,106
Magnolia Manor Sunday**	7,372	2,210
Peace with Justice Sunday*	851	140
Wesley Glen Day**	10,356	872
Golden Cross Day**	913	400
Christian Education Sunday**	315	100
Methodist Children's Home Day**	14,196	4,325
World Communion Sunday*	371	1,225
Vashti Day**	6,152	480
Wesleyan College Day**	430	205
United Methodist Student Day*	587	1,390
UM Global Aids Fund Day	300	150
Six Lane Advance Specials:		
Africa Church Growth - Lane 1	5,124	2,367
World Hunger Specials - Lane 2	7,656	2,669
Mission Personnel - Lane 3	24,066	5,378
Mission Projects - Lane 4	47,371	6,993
UMCOR - Lane 5	331,524	91,697
Conference/ District Specials - Lane 6	272,412	58,721
South Georgia's Plus Lane	74,509	14,078
Designated Funds (no advance special credit)	<u>26,825</u>	<u>13,022</u>
Total District Apportionments,	<u>\$2,213,234</u>	<u>\$1,327,494</u>
Special Sundays & Advance Specials		
Other Funds Received:		
Health Flex Non-Apportioned Receipts	2,822,994	1,833,192
Clergy Retirement Security Plan	2,581,968	1,901,693
Miscellaneous Receipts on Budget Items	104,519	340,305
Net Investment Earnings	-820,768	581,875
Connectional Ministries	382,296	753,480
(Camps, Events, and other items)		
Pension Funds (including Pitts Funds)	205,858	1,368,795
Bequests	35136	60,495
Other Designated Receipts (Including Pass Through Items)	<u>3,922,191</u>	<u>5,278,845</u>
Total Other Funds Received	<u>\$9,234,195</u>	<u>\$12,118,680</u>

**APPORTIONMENTS & PERCENTAGE PAID BY DISTRICT**

Coastal	Rev. Scott Hagan	1,616,623	104.98%
North Central	Rev. Paula Lewis	1,422,982	110.50%
Northeast	Rev. Scott Hagan	812,159	111.19%
Northwest	Rev. Doreen Smalls	1,215,827	84.43%
South Central	Rev. Paula Lewis	908,997	112.32%
Southwest	Rev. Doreen Smalls	1,124,653	99.66%
Conf level adj.		<u>1,025</u>	
<b>Total</b>		<b><u>\$7,102,266</u></b>	

1 Giving performance in 2023 was materially influenced by the payment of apportionments from disaffiliated churches.  
 2 Apportionments from churches that disaffiliated in 2022 were calculated on the 2022 budget, which was higher than  
 3 the 2023 budget, creating a greater opportunity for total payments in excess of 100% of the 2023 budget.  
 4

**REPORT #2  
 REPORT OF RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS**

5  
 6  
 7  
 8 In keeping with Standing Rule 6.1.1, we provide a report of receipts and disbursements. Our report summarizes each  
 9 line of the Conference budget for 2023. The 2023 Budget amounts shown on the “Receipts on Apportionments”  
 10 lines reflect the amount apportioned to churches for 2023 as well as receipts from churches who disaffiliated in  
 11 2022, i.e., “prepaid apportionments”. Since all of the non-budgeted funds that we receive are designated, and most  
 12 of them are disbursed the following month, we have summarized them in groups. Some designated receipts are not  
 13 disbursed until this office is authorized to do so by the committee or organization involved. If you are interested in  
 14 more details, copies of the audited financial statements of the South Georgia Conference are available on the  
 15 conference website, [www.sgaumc.org](http://www.sgaumc.org), under “Administrative Services” then “Financial Statements.” The budgets of  
 16 various conference offices are also posted on the conference website.

**2023 Summary of Budget Receipts & Disbursements**

		<b>2023</b>	<b>December 31, 2023</b>	
		<b>Budget</b>	<b>Year to Date</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Type A: Items Paid Based On Expenses</b>				
<b>Conference Benevolences</b>				
Connectional Ministries	Receipts on Apportionments	450,995	418,318	92.75%
	Miscellaneous Receipts		190	
	Disbursements	450,995	363,164	80.53%
Arthur J. Moore Museum	Receipts on Apportionments	139,738	129,613	93.01%
	Miscellaneous Receipts		0	
	Disbursements	139,738	104,430	74.73%
Board Of Laity	Receipts on Apportionments	4,000	3,710	92.75%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	4,000	347	8.68%
Hispanic/Latino Affairs	Receipts on Apportionments	314,987	292,165	92.75%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	314,987	290,085	92.09%
<b>Total</b>	Receipts on Apportionments	909,720	843,807	92.75%
<b>Conference</b>	Miscellaneous Receipts	0	190	
<b>Benevolences</b>	Disbursements	909,720	758,026	83.33%

		<b>2023</b>	<b>December 31, 2023</b>	
<b>Type A: Items Paid Based On Expenses (continued)</b>		<b>Budget</b>	<b>Year to Date</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Congregational Development</b>				
New Congregational Development	Receipts on Apportionments	146,126	136,237	93.23%
	Miscellaneous Receipts		740	
	Disbursements	146,126	67,112	45.93%
<b>Clergy Support</b>				
District Superintendents' Expense	Receipts on Apportionments	1,098,996	1,025,962	93.35%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	1,098,996	822,468	74.84%
Conference Board Of Pensions	Receipts on Apportionments	46,650	43,550	93.35%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	46,650	62,308	133.56%
Comprehensive Protection Plan	Receipts on Apportionments	641,045	598,150	93.31%
	Miscellaneous Receipts		64,707	
	Disbursements	641,045	417,982	65.20%
Health Flex - Disability	Receipts on Apportionments	110,000	102,721	93.38%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	110,000	74,921	68.11%
Post-Retirement Medical	Receipts on Apportionments	11,000	22,475	204.32%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	11,000	22,475	204.32%
Benefits Underpayment	Receipts on Apportionments	90,000	84,019	93.35%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	90,000	82,772	91.97%
Equitable Compensation	Receipts on Apportionments	189,300	176,720	93.35%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	189,300	99,740	52.69%
Pastoral Counseling Service	Receipts on Apportionments	10,000	9,335	93.35%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	10,000	0	0.00%
Conf. Bd. of Ordained Ministry	Receipts on Apportionments	35,675	33,304	93.35%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	35,675	12,667	35.51%
<b>Total Clergy Support</b>				
	Receipts on Apportionments	2,232,666	2,096,237	93.89%
	Miscellaneous Receipts		64,707	
	Disbursements	2,232,666	1,595,333	71.45%
<b>Administration</b>				
Conf. Council on Finance & Admin.	Receipts on Apportionments	3,050	2,804	91.95%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	3,050	617	20.22%
Human Resources/ Personnel	Receipts on Apportionments	28,956	26,625	91.95%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	28,956	22,314	77.06%



		<b>2023</b>	<b>December 31, 2023</b>	
<b>Type A: Items Paid Based On Expenses (continued)</b>		<b>Budget</b>	<b>Year to Date</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Administrative Services	Receipts on Apportionments	729,373	670,653	91.95%
	Miscellaneous Receipts		140	
	Disbursements	729,373	651,609	89.34%
Communications Office	Receipts on Apportionments	236,468	217,430	91.95%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	236,468	187,025	79.09%
Annual Conference Expenses	Receipts on Apportionments	123,770	113,805	91.95%
	Miscellaneous Receipts		15,844	
	Disbursements	123,770	74,206	59.95%
Retired Ministers - per diem	Receipts on Apportionments	18,000	16,551	91.95%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	18,000	7,150	39.72%
At-Large Lay Delegates - per diem	Receipts on Apportionments	26,000	23,907	91.95%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	26,000	17,160	66.00%
Conference Secretary & Journal	Receipts on Apportionments	24,413	22,448	91.95%
	Miscellaneous Receipts		20,470	
	Disbursements	24,413	20,240	82.91%
Committee on Memoirs	Receipts on Apportionments	1,200	1,103	91.95%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	1,200	1,677	139.74%
Conference Trustees	Receipts on Apportionments	5,350	4,919	91.95%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	5,350	4,511	84.31%
Workers Compensation Insurance	Receipts on Apportionments	12,000	11,034	91.95%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	12,000	6,028	50.23%
Strategic Initiative Team	Receipts on Apportionments	3,000	2,758	91.95%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	3,000	0	0.00%
Leadership Forum	Receipts on Apportionments	3,000	2,758	91.95%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	3,000	2,250	74.99%
Gen & SEJ Delegate Expense	Receipts on Apportionments	6,000	5,517	91.95%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	6,000	5,517	91.95%
Nominations	Receipts on Apportionments	900	828	91.95%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	900	0	0.00%

		<b>2023</b>	<b>December 31, 2023</b>	
<b>Type A: Items Paid Based On Expenses (continued)</b>		<b>Budget</b>	<b>Year to Date</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Episcopal Committee	Receipts on Apportionments	1,200	1,103	91.95%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	1,200	0	0.00%
Contingency Funds	Receipts on Apportionments	27,000	24,826	91.95%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	27,000	682,681	2528.45%
Legal Fees	Receipts on Apportionments	45,000	41,377	91.95%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	45,000	41,377	91.95%
<b>Total Administration</b>	Receipts on Apportionments	1,294,680	1,190,448	91.95%
	Miscellaneous Receipts		36,454	
	Disbursements	1,294,680	1,724,361	133.19%
<b>SEJ Mission and Ministry</b>	Receipts on Apportionments	17,220	16,220	94.19%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	17,220	17,220	100.00%
<b>Totals For Type A Items</b>	Receipts on Apportionments	4,600,412	4,282,948	93.10%
	Miscellaneous Receipts		102,091	
	Disbursements	4,600,412	4,162,052	90.47%
<b>-----</b>				
<b>Type B Items Based on Money Received</b>				
Georgia Wesley Min. & UM Colleges	Receipts on Apportionments	723,201	663,328	91.72%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	723,201	663,328	91.72%
Episcopal – S. Ga Office Expense	Receipts on Apportionments	216,369	200,646	92.73%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	216,369	200,646	92.73%
Episcopal – S. Ga Residence Expense	Receipts on Apportionments	20,000	19,191	95.95%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	20,000	19,191	95.95%
World Service	Receipts on Apportionments	1,066,125	961,154	90.15%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	1,066,125	961,155	90.15%
Africa University Fund	Receipts on Apportionments	34,693	31,468	90.70%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	34,693	31,468	90.70%
Black College Fund	Receipts on Apportionments	154,311	139,980	90.71%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	154,311	139,980	90.71%

		<b>2023</b>	<b>December 31, 2023</b>	
		<b>Budget</b>	<b>Year to Date</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Type B Items Based on Money Received</b>				
<b>(continued)</b>				
Episcopal General	Receipts on Apportionments	428,089	378,508	88.42%
Church Apportionment	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	428,089	378,508	88.42%
General Administration	Receipts on Apportionments	131,292	118,908	90.57%
Fund	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	131,292	118,908	90.57%
Interdenominational	Receipts on Apportionments	4,616	4,199	90.97%
Cooperation Fund	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	4,616	4,199	90.97%
Ministerial Education	Receipts on Apportionments	333,913	301,936	90.42%
Fund	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	333,913	301,936	90.42%
<b>Totals For</b>	Receipts on Apportionments	3,112,609	2,819,318	90.58%
<b>Type B Items</b>	Miscellaneous Receipts		0	
	Disbursements	3,112,609	2,819,318	90.58%
<b>2023 Totals</b>	Receipts on Apportionments	7,713,021	7,102,266	92.08%
<b>On The Decimal</b>	Miscellaneous Receipts		102,091	
	Disbursements	7,713,021	6,981,370	90.51%

**REPORT #3**  
**BUDGET FACTORS and SPECIAL OFFERINGS**

We make the following recommendations:

1. We recommend that the 2025 apportionments assigned to each local church in the Conference be determined by the following formula:

- A. FINANCIAL FACTOR - 65%

The figures for 2022 and 2023 of the total expenditures of each local church as reported in the annual statistical table (filed with GCFA), minus the following items:

- amounts paid on apportionments,
- the amounts paid on principal and interest on indebtedness, loans, mortgages, etc.,
- the amount paid for building and improvements (not including loans and mortgages),
- other benevolences paid by the local church,
- excess "catch-up" payments on overdue benefits bills,
- and the amounts paid on General and Conference Advance Specials.

The adjusted total of the expenditures for each local church shall be divided by the adjusted total expenditures of all local churches in the Conference for the years 2022 and 2023 (omitting the same respective items) to find the percentage of total expenditures by the local church. This percentage figure will then be multiplied by .65 to furnish the financial factor.

- B. MEMBERSHIP FACTOR - 35%

The membership of each local church at the end of 2022 and 2023 as reported in the annual statistical table (filed with GCFA) shall be divided by the total membership of the Conference at the end of those same years to find the percentage of total membership in the local church for each of these years. This percentage figure will then be multiplied by .35 to furnish the membership factor.

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33

C. FINAL DETERMINATION

The membership factor and financial factor for each year are added together. The factors for the two years are averaged to arrive at the percentage to be used in figuring the church's share of each apportionment for 2025.

2. Apportionment Determinations for New Church Starts:

- A. We recommend adding grants from Congregational Development (CD) or district funds (not including Equitable Compensation Supplements) to the list of deducted items prior to calculating Conference apportionments.
- B. We recommend that new church starts begin paying apportionments in the January following the date of official constitution.
- C. We recommend that 100% of the Conference budget be apportioned to the existing churches prior to calculating any new church that is in a phase-in period.
- D. Churches will be phased in over a 3-year period: one-third in the first year, two-thirds in the second year, and their full share in the third year.

3. We recommend the apportionment figures be provided to local churches in the following manner:

- As soon as possible after Annual Conference, the Administrative Services Office will calculate the "preliminary apportionments" for each local church based on the statistical reports turned in by the local churches the preceding January. These "preliminary apportionments" will be mailed to pastors and treasurers of the local churches.
- Upon receipt of the "preliminary apportionments," pastors and treasurers should examine their apportioned amounts carefully. If the church believes an error on its statistical report has resulted in incorrect apportionments, it must report any corrections to the statistical report to the Administrative Services Office by the date set by that office, printed on the "preliminary apportionments" sheet.
- If any statistical reports have been corrected, the Administrative Services Office will re-calculate the apportionments for the entire Annual Conference. These "final apportionments" will be mailed to pastors and churches before the end of August.
- After the final apportionments are prepared, no further corrections will be made to the statistics or conference apportionments until the following year.

4. We recommend that the following special days be observed in 2025 with an offering as called for by *The Book of Discipline* and/or by the Annual Conference:

Human Relations Day	January 12 *
Vashti Day	February 2 **
Andrew College Sunday	February 9 **
UMCOR Sunday	March 9 *
Native American Awareness	April 13 *
Magnolia Manor Sunday	May 11 **
Peace With Justice	May 25 *
Wesley Glen Day	June 15 **
Golden Cross Sunday	August 17 **
Methodist Children's Home	September 14 **
World Communion Day	October 5 *
Wesleyan College Day	November 9 **
United Methodist Student Day	November 23 *

\* General Church Offerings  
 \*\* Annual Conference Special Offerings (churches may observe on another day if it fits their schedule).

5. For 2025 we recommend the travel rate of .45 cents per mile for each Board, Commission, Committee, and Council of the Conference, for automobile travel required in Conference work. We recommend conference staff be reimbursed at the IRS rate, since their miles are a job requirement. We note IRS rules that mileage for charitable purposes may be reimbursed at .14 per mile tax free in 2025, and any reimbursement above that amount is taxable income for the recipient.

34  
35  
36  
37  
38

- 1 6. ¶258.4(b) *The Book of Discipline, 2016* and the South Georgia Standing Rules and Structure, Section 6.1.7,  
2 mandate fidelity bond coverage for local church treasurers. The Council reminds all local churches of the  
3 importance of having adequate fidelity bond coverage for treasurers and others handling church funds. Due to  
4 the prevalence of coverages available to church through comprehensive insurance plans, the Conference no  
5 longer provides any bonding for local church treasurers.  
6

7 We request that the following officials be bonded in the indicated amount, that the respective board or agency  
8 pay the bond, and that these bonds be held in the Administrative Services Office.  
9

Director of Administrative Services	\$1,000,000.00
Staff of Administrative Services Office	\$1,000,000.00
Treasurer, Conference Trustees	\$25,000.00

- 10  
11 7. Unless approved through the budget and expense approval process, no financial liability shall be made upon the  
12 annual conference without the express authorization of the Council on Finance and Administration and the  
13 Annual Conference. The Conference Treasurer/Director of Administrative Services is authorized to sign any  
14 contract on behalf of the Annual Conference not otherwise authorized by the currently effective Book of  
15 Discipline of The United Methodist Church or the Standing Rules of the conference. The Council on Finance  
16 and Administration may designate other persons to sign contracts with financial implications on behalf of the  
17 conference for specific purposes or amounts. All ordinary business contracts shall be reviewed and signed by  
18 the Conference Treasurer/Director of Administrative Services.  
19
- 20 8. In compliance with ¶617.2 of *The Book of Discipline, 2016*, we ask each agency receiving financial support  
21 from Conference Benevolences, or from any authorized conference-wide appeal, to make a complete report of  
22 all receipts and disbursements for the fiscal year ending in 2023. A certified public accountant is to audit the  
23 books of all agencies, except those whose receipts and expenditures are handled by the Administrative Services  
24 Office on a voucher basis, and a copy of the audit is to be filed with the Administrative Services Office.  
25
- 26 9. We commend the promotional emphasis given to the observance of World Service Sunday in the Church School  
27 and request that funds raised in this observance be so designated and sent to the Administrative Services Office.  
28
- 29 10. We call attention to these actions of the Annual Conference relating to expenses of the Annual Conference  
30 session:  
31 • Standing Rules 3.4.1 & 3.4.2 stipulate that the Administrative Board/Council of each church and the boards  
32 of other conference groups shall pay the expense of their lay and clergy delegates to the Annual Conference  
33 sessions.  
34 • The 2011 Annual Conference (volume 1, page 572) approved a registration fee beginning with the 2012  
35 Annual Conference of \$20 for all lay and clergy members (excluding retired clergy unless the retired clergy  
36 are serving an appointment in retirement). The original motion has no exception for virtual annual  
37 conference sessions.  
38 • We recommend that the amount of \$65 per day of attendance at Annual Conference be paid to retired  
39 clerical members not serving an appointment who sign for their attendance at Annual Conference and apply  
40 for this benefit. This will comply with Standing Rule 3.4.1 which states: “retired clergy members and/or  
41 clergy on incapacity leave who do not serve appointments and who attend are to receive assistance with  
42 their expenses from the Annual Conference, provided by the Council on Finance and Administration.”  
43 Retirees who are under appointment shall have their expenses paid by the local church, in the same manner  
44 as active clergy.  
45 • We recommend that the amount of \$65 per day of attendance at Annual Conference be paid to at-large lay  
46 members of the Conference (who are determined by each district to equalize lay membership with clergy  
47 membership) who sign for their attendance at Annual Conference and apply for this benefit. (See Standing  
48 Rule 3.4.2.)  
49
- 50 11. We recommend that the Annual Conference reimburse the costs to attend the General Conference for the first  
51 alternate lay and first alternate clergy delegates based on submittal of receipts and signed expense report to the  
52 Administrative Services Office. The rate of reimbursement for the first alternate lay and first alternate clergy  
53 delegates must not exceed the daily per diem rate set by the General Commission on General Conference.  
54

- 1 12. We call attention to Standing Rule 6.1.7, which reads as follows: “Every Charge **shall** provide Worker’s  
2 Compensation Insurance Coverage for their minister and **all other staff members.**”  
3  
4 13. We call attention to ¶614.5 of *The Book of Discipline, 2016*, which stipulates that special conference-wide  
5 appeals for funds shall have the approval of the Annual Conference upon the recommendation of the Council on  
6 Finance and Administration, except in case of an extreme emergency when such approval may be given by a  
7 two-thirds vote of the District Superintendents and of the Council, acting jointly.  
8  
9 14. We recommend that once approved by the Annual Conference, all budgets are fixed for the ensuing year.  
10 Exceptions to this policy may be granted by the Council on Finance and Administration with the proper  
11 documents to justify the request in keeping with ¶¶613.8 & 9 of *The Book of Discipline, 2016*.  
12  
13 15. Balances from Undesignated and Unrestricted Funds: Balances from undesignated and unrestricted funds  
14 (excluding funds under the management or control of the Board of Trustees or the Board of Pension and Health  
15 Benefits) may be disbursed on the authorization of the Council on Finance and Administration, or by vote of the  
16 Annual Conference, and shall be administered by the Conference Treasurer. The Executive Committee of the  
17 Council on Finance and Administration is empowered to act in the case of an emergency. Undesignated and  
18 unrestricted funds disbursed between session of the Annual Conference shall be reported at the next Annual  
19 Conference session.  
20

21 **REPORT #4**  
22 **PENSIONS AND HEALTH BENEFITS COST**  
23

24 We are grateful that the amount of unpaid benefits debt has dropped from \$1.1 million in 2016 to \$525,830 at the  
25 end of 2023. We remain concerned about the amount of debt owed by churches to the Annual Conference for unpaid  
26 health insurance and pension benefits for their pastor. Effectively, those churches not paying their full benefit costs  
27 have borrowed \$525,830 from the other churches in the annual conference. We appreciate the efforts of the Board of  
28 Pensions and the Commission on Equitable Compensation to collect on this debt. We thank the Cabinet for adjusting  
29 appointments to a level which churches can financially support. More of our churches are catching up with unpaid  
30 benefits payments, but many of those with benefit debt have failed to address it. We respectfully ask churches with  
31 benefits debt to pay their bills. (See the report of the Commission on Equitable Compensation for a list of churches)  
32

33 **REPORT #5**  
34 **RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE CABINET**  
35

36 Salaries for District Superintendents and for the Director of Connectional Ministries are determined by a formula so  
37 that the salaries paid by local churches set the salary of District Superintendents. When we had nine districts, the  
38 formula averaged the 27 highest salaries of churches across the conference at the beginning of the preceding year  
39 (three per district). The 2014 Conference voted to consolidate to six districts. The 2016 Conference voted to move to  
40 the top 18 church salaries (three each for six districts) using this schedule: 2016 – 27 churches, 2017 – 24 churches,  
41 2018 – 21 churches, 2019 – 18 churches. For 2025, the Council of Finance and Administration recommends that the  
42 2025 and 2026 salary be continued from 2024 and fixed at \$121,789, which was based on the average salary of the  
43 18 highest local church salaries as of the beginning of 2023. Fixed salaries for two years would provide salary  
44 stability for District Superintendents and help in the future transition of annual conferences during a period of  
45 significant fluctuation in the composition of the churches comprising the top 18 of the conference.  
46

47 The Council recommends that for 2025 the amount of \$15,000 be set aside for each District Superintendent (\$7,500  
48 by district) to cover all accountable reimbursements. This will include travel, continuing education expenses, and  
49 any other business-related out-of-pocket expenses. Each District Superintendent will be able to draw from this fund  
50 only by voucher of actual miles traveled and/or specific expenses. We recommend that \$15,000 be budgeted for  
51 Cabinet meeting expenses in 2025. These funds are only drawn on by voucher of actual miles traveled and/or  
52 specific expenses.  
53

54 Housing for Superintendents is the responsibility of each District. We commend the Districts for maintaining  
55 District Parsonage Funds (for District Parsonage Indebtedness and Maintenance) and a District Operational and  
56 Program Fund. We remind the District leadership that the moving expenses and annual conference attendance  
57 expenses of the District Superintendents are paid by the District to which they are appointed.  
58

1 The money to pay the salaries, accountable reimbursement expenses, and Cabinet meeting expenses for the District  
2 Superintendents is included in the Clergy Support section of the budget as District Superintendents' Expense. Clergy  
3 Support is paid from receipts on the apportionment assigned to the churches of the Conference and is a priority  
4 claim.

5  
6 Such part of the salary that the Cabinet, Director and Associate Directors of Connectional Ministries, Director of  
7 Administrative Services, Director of Congregational Development, Director of Ministerial Services, Chaplains and  
8 other clergy employees of the Conference pay to cover the actual cost of those utilities and other housing-related  
9 expenses necessary to operate and maintain the respective parsonages, or their residence if a parsonage is not  
10 provided, is hereby designated as a housing expense. Housing and Utility Resolutions will be prepared by the  
11 various clergy employees of the Conference and copies maintained by the Director of Administrative Services.

12  
13 **REPORT #6**  
14 **BUDGET FOR 2025**

15  
16 The Council on Finance and Administration (CF&A), in keeping with ¶614, *The Book of Discipline, 2016*, presents  
17 the following budgets of anticipated income and proposed expenses for all funds to be apportioned to churches or  
18 charges. The Budget has been reorganized into two types of budget items:

- 19 Type A - This group includes the various budget items which are paid based on vouchers (or when the  
20 expense is incurred) and Southeastern Jurisdiction apportionments.  
21 Type B - This group includes items in the budget which are paid out based on the apportionments collected.  
22 This group includes the budget for Georgia Wesley Ministries & UM Colleges, the Episcopal  
23 Office, and the General Church apportionments. The total collected each month is paid out to the  
24 agency or office.

25  
26 The Council expresses appreciation to the various conference committees and conference offices which have  
27 worked with the Council to keep our expenses reasonable and in keeping with our revenues. Churches have called  
28 on us to be prudent in our spending, and we are thankful for the cooperation we have received in this effort. **Since**  
29 **2010, the Conference budget has decreased more than 65%, over \$8.1 million.** The Council is grateful that  
30 apportionments retain broad support among the majority of churches in South Georgia. **185 of 277 churches paid**  
31 **100% or more of their askings in 2023.**

32  
33 We recognize that concern over the direction of the national and international church may impact apportionment  
34 payments. We are concerned with churches that believe withholding local askings somehow “sends a message” to  
35 the general church. Because most of our apportionments are for local and regional ministries, the ones hurt by such  
36 withholding are our retired pastors and widows, our disabled pastors, our active clergy, and those ministries in South  
37 Georgia which we fund (such as our summer camps and college campus ministries).

38  
39 At the end of 2023, our undesignated reserves totaled \$6,755,647 (unaudited figure), up by \$0.9 million at the end of  
40 2022. Much of these reserves are in the form of unrealized market gains, not in actual cash. The value of these  
41 reserves will move up and down depending on market conditions. Our normal target for undesignated reserves is  
42 three month’s expenses for the Annual Conference (approx. \$1.4 million). As we face ongoing economic uncertainty  
43 plus continuing issues with the pandemic, rising inflation, and the general uncertainty of the future of The United  
44 Methodist Church, maintaining these reserves seems prudent.

45  
46 The CF&A recommends a 2025 budget to be apportioned which is a decrease from the 2024 budget of 35.0 percent.  
47 **The amount to be apportioned to local churches for 2025 will be \$3,559,229.** The total conference budget  
48 includes both an apportioned amount of \$3,559,229 and amounts that rely on the use of reserves and other income  
49 sources of \$786,753. The total conference budget for 2025 is \$4,345,982.

50  
51 **PROJECTED RECEIPTS FOR 2025**

SOURCE OF RECEIPTS:	PROJECTED RECEIPTS:	NOTE #:
1. Apportionments based on 83 % collections of Type A & B items	\$2,954,160	1
2. Income from Reserves and Other Income	786,753	1
3. Income from Registration Fees	21,000	2
4. Investment Income	25,000	3
5. Miscellaneous Receipts	<u>85,000</u>	
TOTAL PROJECTED RECEIPTS	\$ 3,871,913	

	<b>2023 Approved Budget</b>	<b>2025 Projected Budget</b>	<b>2025 Use of Reserves/ Other Funds</b>	<b>2025 Apportion ed Budget</b>	<b>Note #:</b>
<b><u>Type A: Paid Based on Expenses</u></b>					
<b>I. Conference Benevolences</b>					
Connectional Ministries	391,258	339,124	136,224	202,900	
Hispanic/Latino Affairs	293,941	161,941		161,941	
Arthur J. Moore Museum & Archives/History	136,773	106,773		106,773	
Board of Laity	1,000	1,000		1,000	
<b>Total Conference Benevolences</b>	<b>822,972</b>	<b>608,838</b>	<b>136,224</b>	<b>472,614</b>	
<b>II. Congregational Development</b>					
Congregational Development	146,126	141,481	100,000	41,481	
<b>Total Congregational Development</b>	<b>146,126</b>	<b>141,481</b>	<b>100,000</b>	<b>41,481</b>	
<b>III. Clergy Support</b>					
District Superintendents' Expenses	531,955	531,955	13,329	518,626	
Conference Board Of Pensions	46,000	63,800	60,000	3,800	
Comprehensive Protection Plan	369,000	344,000	344,000	0	
HealthFlex - Clergy on Disability	110,000	110,000	110,000	0	
Post-retirement Healthcare	11,000	11,000	11,000	0	4
Benefits Underpayment	90,000	45,000	0	45,000	
Equitable Compensation	189,300	104,500		104,500	
Pastoral Counseling Service	10,000	0		0	5
Conference Board of Ordained Ministry	20675	20675		20,675	
<b>Total Clergy Support</b>	<b>1,377,930</b>	<b>1,230,930</b>	<b>538,329</b>	<b>692,601</b>	
<b>IV. Administration</b>					
Conference Council on Finance & Admin.	1,000	500		500	
Human Resources/Personnel	24,395	23,534		23,534	
Administrative Services Office	681,539	638,000		638,000	
Communications Office	224914	183500	8,200	175,300	
<b><u>Other Conference Administrative Areas</u></b>					
<b>1. Annual Conference Session Expenses:</b>					
Annual Conference Program & Arrangements	104,300	54,300		54,300	
Retired Ministers - per diem	12000	7000		7,000	
At-Large Lay Delegates - per diem	0	0		0	



2. Conference Secretary & Journal	24,963	22,234		22,234	
3. Committee on Memoirs	1,200	0		0	
4. Conference Trustees	4,850	4,300	4,000	300	
5. Worker's Compensation Insurance	12,000	10,000		10,000	
6. Leadership Forum	1,000	1,000		1,000	
7. Strategic Initiative Team	500	500		500	
9. General and SEJ Delegate Expense	6,000	3,000		3,000	
10. Committee on Nominations	0	0		0	
Episcopal Committee	500	0		0	
Legal Fees	45,000	24,000		24,000	6
Contingency Funds	0	0		0	
<b>Total Administration</b>	<b>1,144,161</b>	<b>971,868</b>	<b>12,200</b>	<b>959,668</b>	
<b>V. SEJ Mission and Ministry</b>	<b>17,220</b>	<b>7,220</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7,220</b>	
<b><u>Type A Totals: Paid Based on Expenses</u></b>	<b>3,508,409</b>	<b>2,960,337</b>	<b>786,753</b>	<b>2,173,584</b>	
<b><i>Type B: Paid Based Funds Received</i></b>	<b>2023 Approved Budget</b>	<b>2025 Projected Budget</b>	<b>2025 Use of Reserves/ Other Funds</b>	<b>2025 Apportion ed Budget</b>	<b>Note #:</b>
GA Wesley Ministries & UM Colleges	550,000	450,000		450,000	
Episcopal – S. Ga Office Expense	228,867	174,867		174,867	
Episcopal – S. Ga Area Residence Expense	20,000	0		0	
<i>General Church Apportionments</i>					7
1. World Service Fund	599,494	391,361		391,361	
2. Africa University Fund	18,076	11,800		11,800	
3. Black College Fund	80,768	52,727		52,727	
4. Episcopal - General Church Apportionment	177,535	115,898		115,898	
5. General Administration Fund	71,185	46,471		46,471	
6. Interdenominational Cooperation Fund	15,835	10,337		10,337	
7. Ministerial Education Fund	202,482	132,184		132,184	
<b><u>Type B Totals: Paid Based on Funds Received</u></b>	<b>1,964,242</b>	<b>1,385,645</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,385,645</b>	
<b>Total Conference Budget</b>	<b>5,472,651</b>	<b>4,345,982</b>	<b>786,753</b>	<b>3,559,229</b>	<b>-1,913,422</b>
Projected deficit if collect 90%/spend 100% of Type A and Type B items	-547,265	-434,598			8

1  
2  
3  
4

1 **Budget Notes:**  
2

- 3 1- The CF&A has projected that our collections on apportionments will be 83% which is the same actual  
4 collection rate as 2023, removing disaffiliation collections, which skew the collection rate upward. Collection  
5 rate on reserves and other income items is 100%. The blended collection rate is 86%.  
6 2- The registration fee income is calculated based on a registration fee of \$20.  
7  
8 3- The CF&A will use our investment income and reserves to help cover any shortfall in receipts.  
9  
10 4- The Annual Conference voted in 2022 to establish the Retiree Healthcare Funding Trust. This reduced this  
11 apportionment to a small amount needed for retirees under the age of 65 who are not eligible for the retiree  
12 healthcare plan.  
13  
14 5- The Conference Pastoral Counselor is on medical leave, and this office will not be filled. The budget has been  
15 reduced accordingly.  
16  
17 6- The past 4 years we have put collected but unspent legal fees apportionment into a designated reserve. Building  
18 up this reserve allows us to lower the annual apportionment while still being prepared for an expensive legal  
19 issue.  
20  
21 7- CFA recommends payment of general church apportionments in these amounts during this period of uncertainty  
22 caused by the inability of the General Conference to meet and adopt a budget.  
23  
24 8- If we collect 83% and spend 100%, there will be a deficit. Because we prepare our budgets so far in advance,  
25 almost every year some items included in the projected budget may not be spent. In addition, Type B items are  
26 not paid at 100%; they are paid at the rate collected, so they do not add to any deficit. If our budget expenditures  
27 exceed our rates of collection on the budget, then investment earnings, the contingency fund, and perhaps some  
28 conference reserves will have to be used in order to pay all of our obligations. It is possible that the 2025 budget  
29 may be adjusted ad interim based on the results of 2024 departures.  
30

31 Submitted by,  
32 Dr Shane Green, Chair  
33 Suzanne Jones, Conf. Treasurer, Dir. of Administrative Services  
34

35 **RECOMMENDATION 5 – Standing Rules Changes**

36 **Annual Conference, June 2024**  
37

38  
39 The Conference Committee on Standing Rules met and reviewed needed revisions to the Conference’s rules. In  
40 addition to the ones listed below, several editorial changes need to be made to the Standing Rules before publication  
41 in the 2024 Journal. Before listing the substantive changes we recommend, we offer a list of these editorial  
42 corrections for informational purposes.  
43

44 First, all references to “United Methodist Women” should be changed to “United Women in Faith.” Next, in  
45 Appendix F, the reference to Paragraph 2548.3 should read Paragraph 2549.3. Finally, Standing Rule 3.3.4 should  
46 be left intentionally blank, as it has been since the deletion of the Conference Committee on Courtesies by 2023  
47 Annual Conference action. Doing so will defer an extensive renumbering of the Standing Rules until a thorough  
48 review and further changes can be made.  
49

50 The two recommendations below represent any substantive changes now put before conference members for  
51 consideration.  
52

53 *-Submitted by: Rev. Dr. Marcus Tripp, Chair.*  
54

55 New language is in **bold and italics**. Proposed removals are in ~~strike through~~. A rationale for each proposed change  
56 is found at the end of each recommendation.  
57  
58



# CONSENT CALENDAR

*The South Georgia Conference of  
The United Methodist Church*

---

**2024 Annual Conference Session**

---

**June 2-4, 2024  
Tifton, Georgia**

1 **REPORT 1 – Africa University**

2  
3 **AFRICA UNIVERSITY REPORT – 2024 SOUTH GEORGIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

4  
5 **Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace**  
6 **will be with you. Philippians 4:9 (NRSV)**

7  
8 Africa University greeted 2024 with bold faith and eager confidence because of the goodness of United Methodists  
9 who are faithful, generous, and enthusiastic about investing in changing lives and communities.

10  
11 Thank you, South Georgia Annual Conference, for your steadfast witness. Through faithfulness and generosity, the  
12 South Georgia Conference grew its investment in the Africa University Fund (AUF) apportionment to 83.57 percent  
13 of the asking for 2023. Your unwavering engagement has helped Africa University to evolve into the cornerstone  
14 institution for The United Methodist Church’s mission of disciple-making for transformational impact in Africa and  
15 beyond.

16  
17 As United Methodists fortify themselves for a vital and vibrant witness beyond the 2020 General Conference in  
18 2024 and its outcomes, Africa University urges the members of the South Georgia Conference to:

- 19 • **Support Africa University’s effort to secure General Conference approval of Report #4.**
- 20 • **Encourage your conference to continue to invest in the Africa University Fund at 100%, using as**  
21 **your goal, the amount approved at the 2016 General Conference—\$9,368,872 million for the 2017-**  
22 **2020 quadrennium.**
- 23 • **Help identify at least two (2) churches (keystone congregations) in your conference that will commit to**  
24 **provide second mile gifts of \$6,500 each or \$13,000 in total for annual scholarships for two**  
25 **undergraduate students. (This will help address any shortfall in giving to the Africa University Fund.)**

26  
27 In 2023, sustained by the generous, steadfast support of The United Methodist Church, Africa University:

- 28 • Provided more than \$2M in scholarships and financial aid grants to students who would otherwise fail to  
29 access higher education.
- 30 • Enrolled 2,219 young women and men from 26 African countries.
- 31 • Launched its second new academic unit in less than a year—the College of Engineering and Applied  
32 Sciences—with a first cohort of 279 students.
- 33 • Highlighted innovations, such as lozenges made from the indigenous *Zumbani* plant, and IT solutions to  
34 reduce food waste and make vital research findings more accessible to those who need the information.
- 35 • Saw its alumni swell to more than 12,000 serving in 32 African countries, with the addition of 954  
36 graduates in June.

37  
38 Africa University is grateful for your support and for your profound commitment to being the church in the world.  
39 We hope good news like this propels the South Georgia Conference to keep on reaching out—to the one, the least,  
40 and the lost, whether near or a world away—with the love of Jesus Christ.

41  
42 Thank you, South Georgia Conference, for your investment in the Africa University Fund apportionment. Thank  
43 you for helping to ensure that all our students enjoy safe, first-rate learning and living facilities as they acquire the  
44 knowledge and skills needed to increase food security, overall health, good governance, abundance, and peace in  
45 their communities. Let us keep on doing this important work and may the God of peace be with you!

46  
47 *James H. Salley, Associate Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement and President/CEO of Africa University*  
48 *(Tennessee) Inc.*

49  
50 **REPORT 2 – Archives and History/Arthur J. Moore Museum**

51 Advance Mission #6767

52  
53 *Archives ensure that the records of today are preserved for future generations. People can then use the records to*  
54 *study and understand the life, ideas and thoughts of their original creators, linking the past, present and future.*

- 55  
56 1. Archives ensure that historically significant records are systematically described and, wherever possible,  
57 available for a **variety of research uses**, including teaching purposes, building plans, publications,  
58 television and radio programs, plays, and legal proceedings;

2. Archives serve as **society’s collective memory**. They provide evidence of the past and promote accountability and transparency of past actions;
3. Archives help people to understand their history and the role of particular organizations, individuals and movements in shaping that past. **Knowledge of the past creates a better future;**
4. Archives help to foster and promote a **sense of community and identity;**
5. Archives **safeguard the rights of individuals** within a democratic country and provide a vehicle by which to measure government accountability through maintaining vital records created and received by that government

**The Archives & History/Museum Committee’s efforts have continued in the following areas:**

- Recognition of Fifty Years of Service Awards  
The recipients of the 2024 Golden Anniversary Award are Rev. Charles E. Cravey, Rev. David C. Johnson, Rev. Holland L. Morgan, Rev. Emmett M. Morgan, and Rev. J. William Ryan.
- Visitor Information for 2023
  - 5923 visitors
  - 57 tours
  - 517 adults participated in programming
  - 611 youth participated in programming (not including Camp Connect)
  - Led programming for approximately 510 Camp Connect campers
- Archive & Research
  - Archival staff continue to provide quality research from our library & the archives of the South Georgia Conference. Twenty-seven research requests were fielded in 2023.
  - Archival Staff assessed and accessioned 436 square feet of archival records
  - Welcomed South Georgia Conference researcher Gail McKay to conduct extensive research
- Friends of Methodist Heritage - 2023
  - The goals of the Friends of Methodist Heritage are to support the Arthur J. Moore Methodist Museum with funds, volunteers and patronage
  - Officers include: Vickie Bandy (President), Judith Bagarozzi (Vice-President), Darlene Goodier (Treasurer), Cindy Angelich (Secretary), Becky Bridges (Member at Large), Debbie Yancey (Member at Large)
  - The Friends of Methodist Heritage disbanded in May 2023 due to organizational changes.
- Moore Methodist Museum
  - Sixty-one items were accessioned into the Arthur J. Moore Methodist Museum collection. Items that were added in 2023 include:
    - An extensive, vintage Fontanini nativity
    - Joy: The New Creation album created by the youth team of the South Georgia Conference
    - South Georgia Conference church plates from Lynmore, Ingleside, and Vineville UMC
    - Nine needlepoint nativities created by Bettye Cochran

Anne Packard, Curator & Archivist  
 Arthur J. Moore Methodist Museum  
 100 Arthur J Moore Drive | St Simons Island, Georgia 31522  
 912-638-4050 | apackard@epworthbythesea.org

**REPORT 3 – Board of Laity**  
**2024 Board of Laity Report**

It is my honor to serve as your Conference Lay Leader and to be in partnership with you in ministry, as together we seek to transform the world for Jesus Christ through the South Georgia Annual Conference. This journey is one that requires devotion, dedication, discipline, and prayer to be effective in the work we are called to do. And it requires all of us, each one. Because, as our conference theme states, “One Matters.”

Your Conference Board of Laity strives to provide support and resources for you and your congregation, while amplifying your voice in your district and the conference. The Board of Laity is comprised of representatives from boards and agencies that encompass the life of the laity across the South Georgia Conference. Our members include representatives from the United Women in Faith, United Methodist Men, our District Lay Leaders, and our Dean of the Cabinet. We work in collaboration with our conference staff, our District Superintendents, our local church clergy and directly with our bishop, with a singular mission: to support, equip, and resource the laity across the conference.

1 As part of that effort, our Office of Connectional Ministries has developed “One Matters” Resources, to support you  
2 and your local congregation in your disciple-making efforts. There are Church Revitalization Tools available to you.  
3 Resources for revitalizing Outreach ministries and Witness ministries. All of these and more, *MUCH* more, are  
4 available to you and your local congregation. But it is up to you to take advantage of these resources. If you need  
5 some assistance, all you have to do is reach out. Your entire Board of Laity and conference staff are eager to help  
6 you. If you haven’t yet set aside some time with undivided attention, to familiarize yourself with the conference  
7 website, I cannot encourage you strongly enough, to make this a priority. The training is there, for leadership  
8 positions and committees; Stewardship, Finance, Trustees, SPRC – you’ll find tremendous tools for strengthening  
9 our laity made available to every church – you just have to take advantage of them.

10  
11 Your Laity Cabinet continues to meet monthly, with the bishop. As we adapt to our new configuration of districts,  
12 this group has taken on even greater importance, in partnership with our District Superintendents. These District Lay  
13 Leaders are working together to strengthen the connection between churches, between districts, and even between  
14 conferences. If you do not know your District Lay Leader, it is important that you reach out and make that  
15 connection.

16		
17	Coastal District	Scott Cleaveland
18	North Central	Harley Lawson
19	Northeast	John Ray
20	Northwest	Robert Campbell
21	South Central	Denise Rooks
22	Southwest	Karen Forrester
23		

24 We are living into a new landscape of the SGA Conference and really, of the Church. If we will tear ourselves away  
25 from lamenting what we think we’ve lost and instead just take a look at what God is laying before us, we will see  
26 there is more opportunity ahead than there ever was behind. Now is the time to put the distractions behind us, and  
27 come together as the body of Christ. The pruning is done, let’s get busy shaping the new growth that is already  
28 under way.

29  
30 I hope you are following the work of Anne Bosarge and the “Fresh Expressions” training she is leading. Anne is  
31 helping expand an effort to teach us new ways of reaching people – people often outside the traditional reach of your  
32 church. I hear people often say the church is becoming less relevant in the world today. In my opinion, people today  
33 are *starving* for some “centering” in their lives, for the sense of purpose that only a relationship with Christ can  
34 bring – and the church is God’s vehicle for initiating that relationship. We just have to rethink what “church” looks  
35 like today, just as Paul did in his time.

36  
37 I’ve shared with you before, preaching on Ascension Sunday, Rev. Leigh Ann Raynor shared a story that says that  
38 on the day Jesus ascended to heaven to return to His Father, he passed an angel in the clouds who asked him, “Jesus,  
39 where are you going?”

40 “Back to be with my Father,” Jesus said.

41 “But I thought you were going to bring salvation to the whole world!” the angel said, “I thought you were going to  
42 bring them back to God!”

43 “I have,” Jesus answered, “The Atonement is complete. My work on earth is finished.”

44 “But who is going to be your witness and go out into the world and spread the Good News and tell people you love  
45 them, and to show them the way?”

46 “They are”, Jesus said motioning toward his disciples.

47 The angel looked down on the rag-tag group of disciples: simple fishermen, a sinful tax collector, one filled with  
48 doubt...he looked at Jesus, looked back again at the disciples, turned and asked, “Do you have a plan B?”

49  
50 South Georgia, there is no Plan B. There is only the original plan, and that is that Christ would leave His work, His  
51 ministry, in the hands of His disciples. That’s us.

52  
53 This mission that Christ gave has been passed down through the generations, starting with those first Disciples and a  
54 few faithful women and landing here in this conference. The laity are not some part of the church, some part of the  
55 plan. You ARE the church, you ARE the plan!

56  
57 It’s a daunting task, but that’s the task to which we are called – to carry on the ministry of Jesus. It is a special  
58 function, one that has been set aside for you and me, the laity.

59  
60 It is a bright new dawn across our SGA Conference, and it marks the time for us to stand up and reclaim what  
61 rightfully belongs to the laity – we must step up and accept responsibility and accountability for leading our local

1 churches! God has laid before us an opportunity to fulfill John Wesley’s vision and embrace the full partnership we  
2 are called to be in with our clergy. Together, we can bring new life to a church that is lay-led and clergy-supported.  
3 This opportunity now rests firmly within our grasp.

4  
5 The ministry of the laity has moved to center-focus in churches and communities across South Georgia. Fully  
6 recognizing “One Matters,” we must intentionally find a place for every person in every congregation, to serve in  
7 ministry. We must take what we gain in worship and with the Holy Spirit, carry that into our homes and places of  
8 work. Go out into the mission field, into our circles of influence, preaching the message of the gospel everywhere  
9 we go – and paraphrasing Francis of Assisi: when absolutely all else fails, use words.

10  
11 I want you as the laity of the South Georgia Conference, to always remember who you are. Each of us has been  
12 called to serve our local church, and every one of us must answer that calling by finding someplace to serve in  
13 ministry. 100% of the people of every church, are called to serve in ministry. There is a need and a place for each of  
14 us.

15  
16 It is up to the Laity to become more involved; to take responsibility for leadership in our churches and to encourage  
17 one another, and ensure every person in our churches finds a place to serve in meaningful ministry. As we  
18 prayerfully prepare to serve effectively, may we have open minds and willing spirits to do God’s will. It is important  
19 that we faithfully work with our pastors as partners in ministry, to fulfill the mission of the church.

20  
21 I encourage each of you to be deliberate in taking time for prayer, study, and training so that we are equipped to  
22 meet the challenges of our calling. Together, we will continue to make disciples of Jesus Christ, for the  
23 transformation of the world.

24  
25 In this, may all who come behind us find us faithful.

26  
27 Respectfully submitted,

28  
29 J. F. Knapp, III  
30 Lay Leader  
31 South Georgia Conference

## 32 33 **REPORT 3A – United Methodist Men**

### 34 35 United Methodist Men’s 2024 Report to the South Georgia Conference

36 The South Georgia Conference United Methodist Men celebrated over 30 years of support for Andrew College by  
37 again providing significant donations towards United Methodist Student Scholarships. In 2023 alone, the UMM's  
38 fund that became known as the Roy Lifsey Memorial Scholarship Fund for Students at Andrew College had given  
39 \$102,368.47 to benefit South Georgia Methodist Students. The endowment fund was originally a result of the vision  
40 of the late Mr. Roy Lifsey, a Past Conference President of the SGAUMMen who was instrumental in the creation of  
41 the General Commission of UMMen. An annual gift award was made back in June of \$7,500.00 and before the end  
42 of 2023, the remaining corpus of the Roy Lifsey Memorial Endowment was transferred to Andrew College under  
43 the condition that it is proceeds would continue to be used under the same guidelines. It was the men and the local  
44 units within the South Georgia Conference that made these scholarships possible over the previous 3 decades and on  
45 into the future.

46  
47 Another significant UMMen’s endowment is The Colonel Jack H. Braucht (USAF Retired) Memorial Scouting  
48 Grant Fund. Colonel Jack Braucht served in the Air Force for 35 years, during which time he served in WWII and  
49 the Korean War, retiring as a Colonel. Braucht was a civil service employee at Robins Air Force Base during the  
50 Vietnam War. He retired from RAFB as deputy chief of the airborne radar and electronic warfare inventory  
51 management division. He was an Eagle Scout and a member of the Order of Arrow and was active in the Middle GA  
52 Council of the Boy Scouts. While involved in scouting, he earned the distinguished Eagle, the Silver Beaver, and the  
53 Methodist Badge and participated in the World-Wide Jamborees in Tokyo, Japan and Ludvika, Sweden. As a  
54 member of the Warner Robins FUMC, he endowed a fund with the South GA UMMen to continue his support for  
55 scouting.

56  
57 The purpose of this grant is to provide funding support for a local scouting unit affiliated with a Methodist Church in  
58 undertaking a project that will benefit the local community area in fulfillment of a stated objective. The scouting unit  
59 must provide at least 50 percent of the cost of the program to be undertaken with these supporting funds.



1 One award will be made for a calendar year and the grant will not exceed \$1,000. Grant applications and supporting  
2 documentation will be received by September 30<sup>th</sup> for awards to be made in January of the following year. To apply,  
3 contact Donald Rhodes derglh@yahoo.com for an application.  
4

5 Looking ahead, please welcome and support Mr. Cleveland (Cleve) White Jr. as our incoming Conference President  
6 of UMMen. Cleve has already attended the 2024 SEJ training meeting and the National Association of Conference  
7 Presidents to be well-prepared for his term. His email address is blusky2018@outlook.com. He has already had a  
8 Zoom meeting with our Bishop and the District Superintendents.  
9

10 In His Service,  
11 Don Barnes, Conference President of South GA United Methodist Men  
12 <https://www.sgaumc.org/umm>  
13 Email: don.barnes56@gmail.com  
14 Mobile: 229-805-3456  
15

### 16 **REPORT 3B – United Women in Faith (United Methodist Women)** 17

18 The year 2024 finds United Women in Faith celebrating 155 years in mission. “United Women in Faith seeks to  
19 connect and nurture women through Christian spiritual formation, leadership development, creative fellowship, and  
20 education so that they can inspire, influence, and impact local and global communities.” Following this mission  
21 statement, the women of South Georgia United Women in Faith recognize “One Matters” and seek to find ways to  
22 provide meaningful connections in gatherings on the local, district, and Conference levels.  
23

24 South Georgia Conference United Women in Faith certainly enjoyed gathering for Mission u July 14-16, 2023 at  
25 Epworth by the Sea. Rev. Jimmy Cason led us in an inspiring study of the Lord’s Prayer. A children’s study with  
26 Kara Turk and youth study with Courtney Howell were based on the same scripture. Rev. Issac Salgado and United  
27 Women in Faith team member Paty Salgado shared a program on “How to Serve a Community of Immigrants.”  
28 Rev. Abra Lattany-Reed led a thought-provoking workshop on “Diversity.” Patsy Thomas and Laurie Jo Upchurch  
29 shared reflections in “A Sermon in Pairs.” Rev. Tony Crosby provided wonderful music for the event. Our second  
30 Moonlight Walk raised funds for several mission needs.  
31

32 The Social Issues Workshop was held at National Mission Institution Open Door Community House in Columbus  
33 on August 5, 2023. ODCHE Executive Director Kim Jenkins and her staff were gracious hostesses for the event.  
34 Director of Development and Marketing Cathy Horne presented video clips featuring several of the people that the  
35 NMI serves. Rev. Dr. Adrienne Burgess inspired, encouraged, and challenged us by sharing on the theme “Social  
36 Action - Start from the Heart.” Attendees packed book bags and hygiene kits with supplies purchased by donations  
37 for children of the center’s Mathews Promise Academy and afterwards enjoyed a tour of the facility  
38

39 Wesley Community Centers Executive Director Tammy Mixon-Calderon and her staff welcomed us to their  
40 wonderful National Mission Institution for our Annual Meeting on October 21, 2023. Tammy’s sharing of the  
41 Centers’ work and future plans were awe-inspiring. United Women in Faith General Secretary and CEO Sally  
42 Vonner shared words of encouragement via video. Members voted on the budget and the pledge, elected and  
43 installed new members on the Conference Leadership Team, and recognized outgoing officers. Agnes McKinney  
44 and Patsy Thomas were elected as nominees for the National Board of Directors. Before heading home, attendees  
45 enjoyed a tour of the facility.  
46

47 In an effort to designate more funds for Mission Giving while providing quality leadership development for local  
48 and district officers, the Leadership Team made the decision to combine training for district officers and local  
49 officers in a virtual training event. Times call for creative thinking and trying new things and our women are pros at  
50 doing this.

51 January 2024 found us with a new theme, “Food, Faith, and Fellowship.” Faith and fellowship provided guidance as  
52 we began a new venture in February with an Online Book group discussion on So You Want to Talk About Race.  
53 Rev. Earnest Campbell is leading the group in sharing meaningful conversations on the subject of race.  
54

55 At the time of this writing, we look forward to many special times together. Spiritual Growth Retreat 2024 will take  
56 place on March 8-10 at Epworth by the Sea. Anne Bosarge will lead us in the Theme “Becoming More Loving.”  
57 Several of us will be attending the Southeastern Jurisdictional Event in Chattanooga, Tennessee on April 19-21. The  
58 women of South Georgia will celebrate one of our own, Laurie Jo Upchurch, being consecrated as a deaconess at  
59 General Conference. July 19-21 will find us returning to Epworth for our Mission u event. Studies for adults, youth

1 and children will be based on the theme “Welcome Home” where participants will explore how we can know God  
2 as an intimate friend who welcomes us.

3  
4 Although we have experienced some trying circumstances this year, one can see that we have experienced some  
5 beautiful moments. Each one continues to give as much as she can to support women, children, and youth. With an  
6 “each one, reach one” mandate and understanding that one matters, local women continue to invite others to join in  
7 focusing on the needs of women, children and youth. United Women in Faith offers every woman the opportunity to  
8 inspire, influence, and impact her community.

9  
10 Tara Jones, President  
11 South Georgia Conference United Women in Faith  
12

## 13 **REPORT 4 – Board of Ordained Ministry**

### 14 **REPORT #1**

#### 15 **OVERVIEW OF THE 2023-2024 YEAR**

16  
17 Our Conference Theme, “One Matters,” comes from Jesus’ parables contained in Luke 15. Each of the parables in  
18 this chapter is a reminder to those in leadership that even just one matters. In doing this, Jesus was echoing the  
19 concern Ezekiel had over those who were supposed to be finding and gathering God’s people, but were not (see  
20 Ezekiel 34). How did Jesus remind us? One thing he kept doing was reminding everyone of the great joy in heaven  
21 when one who belongs to God is found and led to him. Don’t we all need to be reminded of the joy associated with  
22 our calling?  
23

24 The purpose of the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, District Committees, mentors, Staff-Parish Relations  
25 Committees, local churches, Superintendents, and the Office of Ministerial Services is to find men and women who  
26 are willing to dedicate their lives to the idea that each one matters.  
27

28 We have the awesome privilege of recommending to the clergy session and the annual conference those to be  
29 commissioned and ordained to the ministries of elder and deacon and for admission into conference memberships as  
30 clergy. Shannon Baxter is recommended to be ordained as a deacon in full connection. Mike Bankston, Pam  
31 Johnston, and James P. Owens are being recommended to be ordained as elders in full connection. Payton Stone is  
32 being recommended for commissioning as a provisional elder and provisional membership in the annual conference.  
33 We offer to them our congratulations and are truly excited about their ministry.  
34

35 We continue to see new ways people are entering into ministry. One instance of this in South Georgia is through the  
36 CLM (Certified Lay Ministry) program. Unprecedented numbers of people are receiving advanced training in  
37 ministry with the idea that lay ministry has been God’s big idea from the beginning. God is also providing new places  
38 for people to serve, including “fresh expressions” of “church”, house churches or “home” groups, and new church  
39 plants that focus on people and not constructing buildings. We are following the path that British Methodism has  
40 been taking for a while. Some of these new communities of faith will be led by clergy, but taking these clergy in new  
41 directions in terms of fulfilling their call. Other communities will be led by laypersons and lay teams. Whoever *leads*  
42 the work of these emerging faith communities, the success of these endeavors will depend upon a lay movement of  
43 God into kingdom work.  
44

45 As people are being enlisted into ministry in new ways, some of these hear God’s call into full-time ministry and/or  
46 licensed or ordained ministry. We are partnering with the Commission on Higher Education and Collegiate Ministry  
47 to bring the resources of the Peed Scholarship into our endeavors to provide ministry internships. These ministry  
48 internships, which we have offered over the last several years, allow young men and women to “try on” ministry and  
49 to be mentored in the process.  
50

51 Our United Methodist seminaries, including nearby Candler School of Theology and Duke Divinity School, are  
52 offering unprecedented financial resources and funding that other seminaries frankly do not offer. With the  
53 Ministerial Education Fund, Peed Scholarship, and scholarship assistance offered by UM Seminaries, it is possible to  
54 obtain an M.Div. debt-free. UM Seminaries have also retooled their Masters of Divinity programs to allow a fully  
55 remote learning experience. The University Senate of the United Methodist Church now allows a fully online M.Div.  
56 degree in preparation for ordination.  
57

58 In short, we are creating new entry points into ministry, and at the same time, removing barriers. It is a joy to be  
59 involved in finding the one who matters and to equip others so they can be involved in finding the one who matters.

1  
2 I am grateful for those who have given leadership in the work of the Board of Ordained Ministry: our Board Chair  
3 (Michael Culbreth), Registrar (Jeff Cook), Secretary (Meredyth Earnest), and our District Committee Chairs,  
4 Secretaries, and Registrars. We could not do our work without them. Kate Tyler, who is the administrative assistant  
5 for the Office of Ministerial Services, as well as the Executive Assistant to the Bishop, offers invaluable service.  
6

7 I am grateful also for the Clergy Mental Health Task Force which meets regularly and has planned events to help  
8 those in ministry continue thriving in the midst of challenges. Make sure you are taking care of yourself as you care  
9 for others—because you also matter.

10  
11 **REPORT #2**  
12 **MINISTERIAL EDUCATION FUND**

13 The Ministerial Education Fund (MEF) is one of the great strengths of The United Methodist Church in regard to  
14 theological education and the preparation of clergy. Twenty-five (25) percent of the funds raised by the MEF  
15 apportionment remains in the annual conference for scholarship assistance for seminary students, licensed local  
16 pastors, diaconal ministers, and persons in certified ministries; however, the administrative costs of the Board of  
17 Ordained Ministry are to come from the annual conference, not the MEF. In most conferences, the MEF is used as  
18 follows (General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, Board of Ordained Ministry Handbook, Chapter 17; see  
19 also Para. 635.2w of *The Book of Discipline 2016*.)  
20

21 Student Financial Aid  
22 Continuing Education  
23 Call and Enlistment  
24 Formation within Orders of Elders & Deacons, Fellowship of Local Pastors/Associate Members  
25 Clergy Care  
26

27 Of the seventy-five (75) percent of the MEF, which comes to the general church, eighty-three (83) percent supports  
28 the thirteen (13) United Methodist seminaries. The balance of these funds support the work of the Division of  
29 Ordained Ministry in general services to the church, scholarships for seminary students, certification programs,  
30 Course of Study, and training of new district superintendents.  
31

32 Apportionments paid to the MEF will go first to support students in seminary, Course of Study, and License for  
33 Pastoral Ministry. The South Georgia Conference Board of Ordained Ministry will continue to make sure that  
34 apportioned income staying within South Georgia will be used for all the purposes listed above. **Every church is**  
35 **encouraged to pay 100% of the Ministerial Education Fund apportionment. This will keep the student**  
36 **financial aid amounts high and will prevent our seminary students and Course of Study students from**  
37 **incurring additional debt.**  
38

39 MEF reserves are being used to support the Board of Ordained Ministry mandated tasks of creating and supporting  
40 the Order of Elders, Order of Deacons, Fellowship of Local Pastors/Associate Members, the Residence in Ministry  
41 programs for provisional/commissioned ministers, recruitment of new ministers, and continuing education programs  
42 that contribute to the development of clergy.  
43

44 **Student Financial Aid Information**

45 The Board of Ordained Ministry administers the MEF for the South Georgia Conference. The primary use of the  
46 MEF in South Georgia is in Student Financial Aid for seminary, Course of Study, and college students who are  
47 certified candidates. To receive aid from the South Georgia Conference, there is an assumption that the student will  
48 serve in our conference. Students must agree to notify promptly the MEF Chair in the event that they decide to:

- 49 • withdraw from candidacy
- 50 • withdraw from the ministry
- 51 • withdraw from membership in the United Methodist Church
- 52 • decide to serve in another Annual Conference, or drop courses.  
53

54 In that event, further grants will not be made without resumption of academic progress and intention to pursue a  
55 ministry career. In the case of seminary students, students must be enrolled in a seminary approved by the University  
56 Senate of the United Methodist Church.  
57

58 **The following rates are for the 2024-2025 school year, beginning summer semester 2024.**

- 1 A. Master of Divinity Degree and/or Basic Graduate Theological Studies fulfilling the primary requirements for  
2 ordination under *The Book of Discipline 2016* as well as subsequent editions of *The Book of Discipline* (Deacon  
3 and Elder under our current ordering of ministry). Applicants must be certified candidates.  
4 RATE: \$150 per semester hour (with a maximum of \$3,600 per year for a total of three (3) years).  
5
- 6 B. College Students: Applicants must be certified candidates.  
7 RATE: \$50 per semester hour or \$40 per quarter hour.  
8
- 9 C. Course of Study for Local Pastors:  
10 RATE: \$425 per course for Basic Course of Study; \$700 per course for Advanced Course of Study.  
11

### 12 **Licensing School for Pastoral Ministry**

13 The cost will be absorbed by the Ministerial Education Fund, with the exception of a registration fee paid by the in-  
14 conference student.  
15

### 16 **Distribution of Funds**

17 The Student Financial Aid Application can be found on the Ministerial Services section of the Conference website,  
18 [www.sgaumc.org](http://www.sgaumc.org). The distribution of Ministerial Education Fund monies for college, seminary and other graduate  
19 school students is *ex post facto* or after the fact of academic credit. Students must complete the Academic Credit  
20 Claim Form, to be signed by the registrar/dean of the school and send it to the MEF Committee Chair.  
21

### 22 **Special Funds**

23 Through the South Georgia United Methodist Foundation, Inc., several generous people have created a trust for  
24 ministerial education. Application for these funds may be made by writing to the Georgia Commission on Higher  
25 Education and Campus Ministry.  
26

### 27 **Steps for Receiving Ministerial Education Funds**

- 28 A. Each student, district superintendent and financial aid officer completes the application form, which verifies that  
29 the student is eligible. It will not have to be completed again unless there is a change from college to seminary  
30 or a change from one college to another or from one seminary to another seminary.  
31
- 32 B. Prior to receiving the funds for the first quarter or semester, the student will sign a Statement of Intent to serve  
33 in the South Georgia Conference of the United Methodist Church and notify the MEF Chair if their intention  
34 changes.  
35
- 36 C. Please note that funds are sent AFTER credit is earned. The only exception to this is when there is an  
37 arrangement with the seminary for the funds to go directly to the institution and the student's account, in which  
38 case the funds are distributed after the official drop/add day for the semester.  
39
- 40 D. The student is responsible for the verification of academic hours credited, by submitting an Academic Credit  
41 Claim form, signed by the registrar or dean, to the Office of Ministerial Services. The Academic Credit Claim  
42 form will be kept as a record of funds distributed.  
43

44 The Board of Ordained Ministry and the Office of Ministerial Services are grateful for the privilege to work with  
45 seminary students, course of study participants, college students and candidates for ministry in the South Georgia  
46 Annual Conference. Seminary debt remains a limiting factor for many pastors. The full payment by every church of  
47 the Ministerial Education Fund apportionment allows pastors to keep their educational debts lower than they might  
48 otherwise be. The generosity of the churches of our annual conference contributes to the creation of more effective  
49 pastors for the South Georgia Conference.  
50

51 The South Georgia Representative of the Ministerial Education Fund is the Reverend Dr. Jay Harris,  
52 [jharris@sgaumc.com](mailto:jharris@sgaumc.com).  
53

54 Respectfully Submitted,  
55 Rev. Dr. Jay Harris  
56 Director, Office of Ministerial Services  
57

58  
59

## REPORT 5 – Communications

### Office of Communications

The focus of Conference Communications remains the same: to advance the kingdom of God by utilizing the tools of communication in diverse and creative ways. The Advocate; conference website; news stories; videos; individual consults with clergy and laity; local church, district and conference trainings; crisis management; emails; webinars; social media; and promotional program materials represent a sample of the annual conference tools of communication. We are constantly working to communicate the mission and vision of the annual conference to tell the story of how every one matters!

The conference website, [www.sgaumc.org](http://www.sgaumc.org), and the South Georgia Advocate, [www.sgaumc.org/advocate](http://www.sgaumc.org/advocate), our official online news source, continue to provide the main flow of information for the Annual Conference - from news and event registrations to the conference calendar, resources, and more. You can sign up for conference communications at [sgaumc-email.brtaapp.com/subscribe](mailto:sgaumc-email.brtaapp.com/subscribe).

You're invited to join the conversation, share resources, and be the first to know breaking news by following the South Georgia Conference on social media. Thousands of South Georgia United Methodists are part of the community on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/sgaumc](http://www.facebook.com/sgaumc)), X - formerly Twitter (@SGAUMC), Instagram ([instagram.com/SGAUMC](http://instagram.com/SGAUMC)), and Vimeo ([www.vimeo.com/sgaumc](http://www.vimeo.com/sgaumc)).

The Office of Communications continues to partner with other offices to resource the Annual Conference and local churches in unique and fruitful ways. New this year, district communications was brought under the umbrella of conference communications. Rev. Stephanie Smith is providing communication support to the districts, including helping with the district newsletter.

It is an honor for our office to walk alongside our ministry partners. We work closely with Bishop David Graves to communicate important information to the Annual Conference. In conjunction with the Administrative Services Office, the Communications Team is an integral part in managing the conference console, which houses the conference database, conference and district websites, email platform, and registration system. The database is used to manage clergy and lay leadership information, pastoral records, create forms, provide reports for conference and district offices and also populates the conference and district websites. The Communication Team also provides ongoing support to conference and district staff as well as local churches in the area of crisis communications.

The communications team also plays a vital role in the logistical planning of the Annual Conference Session, including assistance with the *Book of Recommendations* and the *Journal*.

Kelly Roberson serves as the Director of Communications. Allison Lindsey handles social media on a contractual basis. Stephanie Smith is working with district communications, and Suzanne Akins provides additional conference communication support.

## REPORT 6 – Conference Center

On behalf of the Task Force that was selected to guide the efforts in building the new Conference Center for the South Georgia Conference, I am happy to give this brief update. So much has changed since we began this project late in 2008. As you know, there have been several delays in the meeting of General Conference, a number of church disaffiliations, changes in church and Conference leadership, etc. For sure, times change and needs change but the God and Father of Jesus Christ remains the same-yesterday, today and forever.

The following is the financial report:

Total raised: 1,868,102.08

Total expenses: 204,242.31

Cash on hand: 1,663,859.77

Money raised: 904,941.49

Trustee fund: 758,918.28

May God bless Bishop Graves, the South Georgia Conference and The United Methodist Church!

Hal Brady

Task Force Chair

## REPORT 7 – Conference Personnel Committee

The South Georgia Annual Conference Personnel Committee once again celebrates the dedicated and resourceful people on our staff who make it their ministry to support the local congregations of the South Georgia Conference. This year brought opportunities for the Conference to grow and change. The Moore Methodist Museum experienced transition in becoming an outreach of Epworth by the Sea. The Museum staff became employees of Epworth, but have worked closely with the Annual Conference in archiving records of departing churches.

Suzanne Jones transitioned from a shared, contracted employee to a regular part-time employee working between Macon and remotely from her home office in Alabama. She continues to streamline office procedures, working to reduce paper and manual operations, thus reducing cost and making the office operations more efficient. She and Laura Hatcher have worked to update the conference accounting system and change reporting to the industry standard GAAP reporting. Laura has sacrificed many hours away from her family this past year to make certain that the conference continues to excel in the care of the conference funds in an effort to receive a favorable audit opinion. Suzanne Akins, the leadership team and others have planted seeds and led many children and youth to God through sold-out sessions of Camp Connect and packed Confirmation weekends.

Cindy Rollins was hired as the District Administrative Assistant and is working to provide support to both the churches and District Superintendents.

Through Connectional Ministries, Anne Bosarge and Stephanie Smith continue working with others to build new congregations in areas where there has been a loss of churches through disaffiliations. Mallery Hale replaced Gracie Martin in providing support to Anne and the Connectional Ministries team in the important work of rebuilding our Conference.

The staff of the Conference, both seasoned and new, need your continued prayers as both the structure of the Conference and the needs of their work are ever-changing. It is a time when great things can happen in our Conference when following God’s direction!

Respectfully submitted,  
Cathy Tucker  
Committee on Conference Personnel

## REPORT 8 – Congregational Development

### 2024 Congregational Development Report Annual Conference

The Lewis Center for Church Leadership published 7 trends impacting the church for 2024 on Jan. 2 of this year. Of the seven trends listed, I was encouraged to see several of them already being focused on in SGA in the last year. Among those are:

- **Small is beautiful.** “Fresh Expressions, micro churches, house churches, and small online communities have an undeniable appeal in this time when so many are distrustful of institutions.”
- **Expanding roles for lay leaders.** “Laity have always played an instrumental role in carrying forth the ministry of the church. This is truer today than ever.”
- **The need for new models of faith formation.** “The established church finds itself in a liminal space in which time-tested approaches to faith formation are inadequate to the challenges of the post-pandemic, post-attractional reality, yet many leaders are unsure about what will take their place. In light of the other trends discussed above, it may be that emerging models of faith formation will be less ‘place based,’ more reliant on relational mentoring and experiential learning, intergenerational, and holistically connected to mission and service-learning opportunities.”

The future of the church is here and being lived out in SGA in new and exciting ways. We are engaging more people in new ways that are more accessible, more intimate, and more inviting to people who have never had a faith home before. We are training up laity to respond to God’s calling and releasing them to lead faith communities, ministries, and discipling relationships that introduce others to faith in Christ. Instead of thinking “bigger and wider” we are thinking “smaller and deeper” and training people to become disciples who grow the church relationally through incarnational discipleship, the way Jesus modeled for us.

Among the ways the Holy Spirit has been doing new things in SGA this year are:

1  
2 **New Faith Communities:** Two new faith communities have formed in Thomasville and Valdosta. They have been  
3 doing the work to plant missionally and healthy with teams of active and engaged lay people following the leading  
4 of the Spirit to move the mission forward. They are looking forward to consecrating soon!

5  
6 **Fresh Expressions of Church:** We have started Dinner Churches that allow people from all walks of life to connect  
7 over a shared meal and Jesus story. We have small groups of people meeting and connecting with the Gospel  
8 through their shared hobbies.

9  
10 **Church at Home:** Instead of seeing those who engage digitally as “second class worshipers,” we have created  
11 shared communities of faith meeting at home and connecting with a host church across digital networks. They are  
12 more than just worship consumers, these digitally-connected groups have become an integral part of a shared  
13 discipleship strategy with the home churches and host churches supporting and encouraging one another.

14  
15 **Lay Leadership Development:** We walked through a Lay Planter’s Academy last fall with 8 participants who  
16 wanted to explore what God might be doing in and through them in this new season. Seeds were planted for new  
17 ministries that will be led by these newly equipped lay leaders. In addition, we continue to offer Basic (30  
18 participants) and Advanced (52 participants) Lay Servant classes as well as people continuing on into Certified Lay  
19 Ministry (10 participants). Laity are responding to God’s call regularly and being equipped to lead in new ways in  
20 their context.

21  
22 **Established Churches:** In addition to starting new things, we have continued to work with individual established  
23 churches to reset themselves on mission, develop healthy discipleship practices, assist in leadership development  
24 and team culture, and overcome mindsets that are keeping them stuck.

25  
26 **Grants to Churches:** We have instituted a new grant process this year and have given away money for churches  
27 meeting one of our three priorities:

- 28  
29 - **Outreach Innovation-** Creating ministry in the community, outside the walls of the church  
30 - **Host Church Needs-** Resourcing host churches to reach out to and disciple those in connected home  
31 churches and fresh expressions  
32 - **New Faith Communities-** Resources for individuals or churches/charges who are working to start a new  
33 faith expression with the intent to reach new people  
34 - **New Church Starts-** Funding for new faith communities intending to charter and form an established  
35 worshiping community

36  
37 We have invested funding in new and on-going projects in Brunswick, Warner Robins, Columbus, Valdosta,  
38 Ashburn, and Rincon.

39  
40 This is an exciting time to be part of Congregational Development in SGA and we live into the future of the church  
41 and become who God created us to be!

## 42 **REPORT 9 – Discipleship Ministries**

### 43 **REPORT 9A – Overview of Connectional Ministries**

44  
45 Connectional Ministries – Par. 608 of the 2016 *Book of Discipline* states each annual conference is responsible to  
46 focus and guide the mission and ministry of The United Methodist Church within its boundaries by:

- 47  
48 1. Envisioning the ministries necessary to live out the mission of the church in and through the  
49 annual conference;  
50 2. Creating and nurturing relationships and connections among the local, district, annual conference, and  
51 general church ministries;  
52 3. Providing encouragement, coordination, and support for the ministries of nurture, outreach, and witness in  
53 districts and congregations for the transformation of the world;  
54 4. Ensuring the alignment of the total resources of the annual conference to its mission;  
55 5. Developing and strengthening ethnic ministries, including ethnic local churches and concerns;  
56 6. Providing for advocacy and monitoring functions to ensure that the church is consistent with its  
57 stated values.  
58

1 The local church is the primary location for the formation of disciples who work to transform the world with the  
2 love of Christ. Connectional Ministries exists to provide resources and support to the local churches for this  
3 important work. Connectional Ministries team members and staff create and offer opportunities for training and  
4 provide resource materials for laity and clergy; encourage relationships and connections among churches, districts,  
5 the annual conference and the global church; support and develop ethnic ministries; and advocate for those who  
6 need support.

### 8 **Connection, Collaboration, and Alignment**

9 The Office of Connectional Ministries intentionally fosters collaborative leadership efforts within the churches,  
10 district, and the annual conference. As a result, there is an increase in the alignment of resources and ministry within  
11 the annual conference.

### 13 **Connectional Ministries Program Staff include:**

14 Kelly Roberson serves as the Assistant to the Bishop & Director of Conference Ministries/Communications.  
15 Suzanne Akins serves as the Director of Camping & Retreats. Rev. Abra Lattany-Reed serves as Director of  
16 Diversity and Justice Ministries, directing the Conference's strategic effort in diversity, equity, belonging, and  
17 advocacy, helping implement these practices in all areas of Conference and local church ministry. Anne Bosarge  
18 serves as Director of Leadership Strategies and Local Church Resources and oversees the development,  
19 implementation, and evaluation of resources to align with the Conference's mission and strategic ministry goals and  
20 priorities. She supports and assists local churches to be invitational and missional and provides oversight to lay  
21 leadership training. Rev. Daniel Medina is the Director of Hispanic/Latino Affairs.

### 23 **Leadership Development**

24 Leadership development is essential in helping South Georgia churches become the disciple-making mechanisms  
25 they need to be to grow the kingdom. We are doing that in several ways.

27 This year we have equipped 11 churches with training in discipleship and vision-setting through our Reset and  
28 Clarity House cohorts. We have consulted with 7 additional churches on how they can increase their impact in their  
29 local context through a recommitment to our mission, to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the  
30 world. We are excited to see the fruit this foundational work will bring about in the future as these churches and  
31 leaders impact their corner of the world for the kingdom!

33 We continue to develop lay leaders through Lay Servant and Certified Lay Ministry. This year 31 people have taken  
34 the Basic Lay Servant course both in-person and online. Another 46 people have gone on to take the Advanced  
35 course and have become Certified Lay Servants. Our Certified Lay Ministry continues to grow as we have offered  
36 two different courses this year with 7 people completing the course. Five of those have already been approved by  
37 their District Committee on Ministry this year as well. These lay leaders are helping us grow and start new things  
38 around the conference.

40 Pastors moving to new appointments are offered the opportunity to be "On Boarded" with their new church. Leader  
41 on-boarding experiences can jump-start new leader transitions and spare months of hearsay and frustration. With the  
42 help of a trained facilitator, this launching process can instill vitality and help participants discover shared values by  
43 revealing the collective wisdom that is already present in the church leadership. Allison Lindsey, Meredyth Earnest,  
44 and Anne Bosarge serve as the South Georgia Conference's certified facilitators.

46 Safe Sanctuaries Training remains a valuable resource provided by Connectional Ministries to local churches, aimed  
47 at preparing leaders to protect children, youth, and vulnerable adults. In response to the recent updates to the  
48 Conference Safe Sanctuaries policy, the Nurture Team has developed a new training video to better reflect the latest  
49 safety protocols and practices. This new training, and all other resources, are accessible on the Conference website  
50 ([www.sgaumc.org/safesanctuaries](http://www.sgaumc.org/safesanctuaries)).

52 Leadership training resources are available online for local church leadership positions as well as general ministry  
53 and leadership tools. These can be found at: [www.sgaumc.org/leading-the-local-church](http://www.sgaumc.org/leading-the-local-church).

### 55 **Nurture**

56 The primary goal of the Nurture Team is to assist local churches in discipleship making efforts. Connectional  
57 Ministries seeks to support local church nurturing efforts by sponsoring disciple-forming experiences, primarily  
58 through the camping and retreat events held at Epworth By the Sea. Suzanne Akins is the staff person related to the  
59 Nurture Team.



1 In October 2023, the annual Youth Workers Winter Retreat convened at Epworth By The Sea. Crafted by and for  
2 youth workers, this retreat aimed to foster a sense of community among peers within the South Georgia Conference.  
3 Recognizing the dynamic nature of youth ministry, the retreat emphasized the importance of resources,  
4 relationships, and collective worship for the sustained effectiveness of staff. Teaching sessions were led by Revs.  
5 Jay and Cathy Tucker, with Rev. Trevor Ward guiding the worship activities throughout the weekend. The event's  
6 programming was organized by a task force comprising youth directors from local churches.  
7

8 The 23rd annual "Join the Journey" Confirmation Retreat took place from March 1-3, 2024, with 140 confirmands in  
9 attendance. Featuring clergy and lay leaders from across the South Georgia Conference leading workshops and  
10 sharing insights on God's grace from the main stage, attendees were exposed to diverse perspectives within the UM  
11 denomination and the journey of faith. Bishop Graves kicked off the event and delivered the closing worship  
12 sermon. The Confirmation Retreat serves as a complement to local church classes, allowing middle school students  
13 to explore what it means to follow Christ.  
14

15 Camp Connect is the summer camping ministry of the South Georgia Conference reaching elementary through high  
16 school students. It's not just about fun; it's about making a real impact on campers' lives. Many college students who  
17 serve on the Leadership Team end up pursuing careers in ministry because of their experiences at Camp Connect. A  
18 CIT (Counselor in Training) program was piloted with 10 high school graduates participating. CITs were able to  
19 hone leadership skills, deepen their faith, and forge lasting connections with elementary campers in this dynamic  
20 week-long opportunity. Thanks to partnerships with groups like Hope 1312 Collective and Royal Family Kids, our  
21 ministry extends beyond local churches to include special camps for foster children. Suzanne Akins is the Camp  
22 Director.  
23

24 The Nurture team remains dedicated to supporting KidzQuest, a fall retreat designed for 3rd to 6th-grade students.  
25 The 21st annual event held in September 2023, with the theme "Roller Coastin': Trusting God through the Ups,  
26 Downs, Twists and Turns," featured worship with members of the Camp Connect summer staff, powerful messages  
27 by Clayton Poland, and emcee entertainment by Brandon "Hey Ya" Rushin.  
28

29 The Encounter Retreat, a three-day weekend event for middle and high school students, was held in November 2023  
30 at Epworth By The Sea. Drawing over 200 attendees from across the South Georgia Conference and beyond,  
31 participants enjoyed time on the coast along with teaching by Albert Williams III, Wesley Foundation Director at  
32 Georgia Southern University. Centered around the theme of "Stories," Williams delved into the parables shared by  
33 Jesus, guiding students to recognize their own narratives within the grander story of God. Worship was led by  
34 students from the Wesley Foundation of Georgia College and State University.  
35

### 36 **Outreach & Missions**

37 Kelly Crane chairs the Outreach Team, and the Mission Team is chaired by Dr. Wright Culpepper. The Mission and  
38 Outreach Teams assist in and participate in specific focuses and projects hosted by Connectional Ministries.  
39

40 The key function of the Outreach Team is to resource local churches around missional outreach, both globally and  
41 locally. A major area of outreach for this team is around disaster response.  
42

43 The Outreach & Mission discipleship teams, along with Rev. Garth Duke-Barton, Conference Secretary of Global  
44 Ministries, are also a connecting link with the General Board of Global Ministries/UMCOR. From missionaries  
45 serving all around the world to supporting health and welfare ministries within the bounds of the Annual  
46 Conference, this team touches many areas of human suffering as expressions of God's love.  
47

48 The Outreach Team oversees the Renfro Trust Grant process. This grant is provided by the Southeastern Jurisdiction  
49 and in 2023 was awarded to Wesley UMC in Taylors County in the Northwest District. This brick and mortar grant  
50 is awarded annually to rural churches within the jurisdiction for physical improvements to enhance or create  
51 opportunities for mission and ministry. For more information and an application, visit [www.sejumc.org/renfrotrust](http://www.sejumc.org/renfrotrust).  
52

53 The mission team will explore ways we can work with the North Katanga Annual Conference and share with local  
54 churches the culture of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and ways that churches can connect with the people  
55 and ministries of the North Katanga Annual Conference.  
56

### 57 United Methodist Volunteers in Mission

58 United Methodist Volunteers in Mission, SEJ is the short-term mission sending agency of the Southeastern  
59 Jurisdiction of the United Methodist Church. UVMIM exists to promote, encourage and enable Christians to  
60 exemplify "Christian Love in Action" through short-term mission service at home and abroad.

1  
2 UMVIM provides opportunities for service by developing and nurturing relationships with domestic and  
3 international leaders. We continually nurture our contacts with these leaders to respond to the needs of local  
4 communities and provide comprehensive training resources for team leaders to help them prepare their teams for the  
5 mission field.

6 Rev. Shannon Baxter is the Conference UMVIM Coordinator who relates to the United Methodist Volunteers in  
7 Mission, SEJ.

8  
9 Global Ministries

10 Global Ministries is the international mission, humanitarian relief and development organization of The United  
11 Methodist Church. It works with partners and churches in more than 115 countries to equip and transform people  
12 and places for God’s mission. Global Ministries connects congregations, conferences, other organizations and  
13 individuals to extend their mission outreach by sending missionaries, supporting evangelism and church  
14 revitalization, and improving the health of communities and individuals around the world. To find out more go to  
15 their website at <https://umcmmission.org/learn-about-us/>.

16  
17 One of the most well-known parts of the GBGM serves as the humanitarian relief and development arm of The  
18 United Methodist Church, the United Methodist Committee on Relief – UMCOR – assists United Methodists and  
19 churches to become involved globally in direct ministry to persons in need. UMCOR comes alongside those who  
20 suffer from natural or human-caused disasters – famine, hurricane, war, flood, fire or other events—to alleviate  
21 suffering and serve as a source of help and hope for the vulnerable. UMCOR provides relief, response, and long-  
22 term recovery grants when events overwhelm a community’s ability to recover on their own. UMCOR also provides  
23 technical support and training for partners to address emerging and ongoing issues related to disaster relief,  
24 recovery, and long-term health and development. To find out more go to their website at  
25 <https://umcmmission.org/umcor/>.

26  
27 Rev. Garth Duke-Barton, Conference Secretary of Global Ministries, serves as a connecting link between the  
28 Annual Conference and Global Ministries.

29  
30 Disaster Response

31 The South Georgia Conference responds to catastrophic events through the dedication and commitment of United  
32 Methodists across South Georgia. The key to building our capacity has been through resources: financial (generous  
33 monetary giving), material (relief supplies), human resources (the volunteers being the hands and feet of Jesus), and  
34 connectional resources (partnerships with other conferences and with the general church through UMCOR).

35  
36 Mr. Luis Morales serves faithfully as our Conference Disaster Response Coordinator and ERT trainer. He has  
37 coordinated training events as well as volunteer teams working in affected areas. We are grateful for his  
38 commitment as a volunteer to this ministry.

39  
40 Our disaster response team remains very connected. In addition to leadership from Luis, most regions have their  
41 own coordinator. These volunteers have a passion for disaster response ministry and allow the conference to respond  
42 more efficiently in the event of damaging weather. They held teleconferences as they planned disaster responses.  
43 Kelly Crane (Coastal & Northeast Districts) and Glenn Martin (Northwest & Southwest Districts). Luis is managing  
44 the North Central and South Central Districts as we search for a new coordinator in that area.

45  
46 In January 2024, Ted Warnock and Glenn Martin participated in UMCOR’s Disaster Response train-the-trainer  
47 event to become certified as trainers here in South Georgia.

48  
49 Trained teams led by our District Disaster Response Coordinators returned to Florida after Hurricane Ian and came  
50 out in force after Hurricane Idalia struck Valdosta area last year. In addition, teams responded to tornado events in  
51 North Georgia where they tarped roofs and performed chainsaw work and debris removal. South Georgia United  
52 Methodists collectively assisted over 40 households and one church. Over 240 ERT volunteers logged over 2,200  
53 hours in 2023.

54  
55 **Witness**

56 Rev. Danita Knowles chairs the conference Witness Team. The team supports local church efforts to reach new  
57 people with the gospel, lead persons to profess faith, and equip persons to become disciples who lead others to  
58 Christ. The Witness Team also gives oversight to the Carl and Ruth Looney Scholarship, the Denman Evangelism  
59 Awards and the Conference Evangelists.

1 **Advocacy**

2 Mrs. Denise Rooks is the chair of the Advocacy Committee. The work of Advocacy seeks to inform, equip and  
3 advocate for justice and equality by partnering with or raising awareness to other areas of advocacy. Focuses have  
4 included: Creation Care, Diversity and Inclusion: Getting the Conversation Started, and Words that Heal, Words that  
5 Hurt (COSROW). This year the Advocacy Team supported a retreat called "Christian Leadership for a Climate-  
6 Changed World" sponsored by the Georgia Interfaith Power and Light (GIPL). Members also participated in online  
7 workshops around ableism sponsored by the Disabilities Ministry of the United Methodist Church. Rev. Abra  
8 Lattany Reed serves as staff support to this team.

9 -  
10 **Hispanic/Latino Ministries Report**

11 The pastors serving in the Spanish-speaking congregations of the South Georgia conference continue to be active in  
12 their communities through Christian witness in every place and circumstance that they are needed.

13  
14 This kind of ministry is our intentional response to the commandment of Jesus Christ when He said: "Go and make  
15 disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19). The Holy Spirit inspires us as on the day of Pentecost, in Jerusalem, when  
16 people from everywhere were allowed to hear the Gospel in "their own language" (Acts 2:6). These teachings from  
17 the Scripture encourage our ministry to people of Hispanic/Latino language, and culture.

18  
19 Our congregations, ministries, and our worship services were affected by the pandemic. But that crisis brought new  
20 and creative opportunities to serve and reach people for Christ and His Church. Worship services, Bible studies,  
21 messages, prayer meetings, devotional times in homes, and other activities of local interest have found new ways to  
22 be offered. Today our congregations are growing in attendance, Christian knowledge, and commitment.

23  
24 Some of our activities at the conference level are:

- 25 • Pastors meet once a month via Zoom to share information, have a Bible study, and pray.
- 26 • Last Fall we celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month and shared our culture in different ways throughout the  
27 conference and local churches.
- 28 • We had seminars for pastors and leaders on Wesley, Methodism, and Hispanic society. Professor Will  
29 Faircloth led these seminars. Also, we were trained in a discipleship program called "How to Become a  
30 Disciple Maker."
- 31 • We started our Lay Leadership Program in Spanish in 2014. Currently, we have around 38 people in three  
32 different levels of training and education.
- 33 • Our Walk to Emmaus in the Spanish language has been an important program of inspiration and training in  
34 our conference. Many men and women have returned to their churches motivated and challenged to reach  
35 others for Christ with God's love. The Hispanic "Walk" of South Georgia is not only inspiring in our area  
36 but people from other places in the US, Puerto Rico, Mexico, Dominican Republic, and Bolivia have come  
37 to "walk" with us.
- 38 • An important event of our ministries is the Hispanic Rally - a day of worship, bible study, and fellowship  
39 where all the congregations get together and enjoy seeing each other in a celebration like this.
- 40 • A Hispanic Ministries Taskforce has been formed with church leaders from our congregations to share  
41 vision and mission, and to share joys and concerns.
- 42 • We have contacted our United Methodist agencies as Global Ministries and the National Plan for Hispanic  
43 Ministries to get advice and resources needed for this important ministry.
- 44 • The Wesley Foundation and a donor have provided to each pastor with a collection of all Wesley Works in  
45 Spanish.

46  
47 The ministry to our Hispanic brothers and sisters sometimes can be difficult to assess but continues to produce  
48 immense good and blessing to all that are involved. Please pray and support this ministry.

49  
50 Daniel Medina, O.S.L.

51 Associate Director of Connectional Ministries for Hispanic/Latinx Affairs

52  
53 **Multicultural and Ethnic Ministries**

54 Rev. Abra Lattany-Reed was appointed to serve as the Director of Diversity and Justice Ministries on July 1, 2022.  
55 In this role, Abra directs the Conference's strategic efforts in diversity, equity, belonging, and advocacy and helps  
56 implement these practices in all areas of Conference and local church ministry. In the Fall of 2022, Bishop Graves  
57 named a Bishop's Task Force on Diversity, Inclusion, and Vitality. This group has been meeting with Rev. April  
58 Casperson, a deacon in the West-Ohio Conference and Rev. Ronald Bell, an elder with Minnesota Conference, both  
59 are leading ministry consultants in the area of social principles and justice. This past year, the task force has spent

1 considerable time studying the different dimensions of diversity within South Georgia, claiming the call to focus on  
2 missional opportunities and assisting pastors and congregations develop their individual and collective cultural  
3 competency. This group is working and committed to fully implementing a holistic and impactful equity and  
4 inclusion strategy across the conference and is focused on initiatives to create a culture of inclusion at all levels of  
5 the Church.  
6

### 7 **Clergy Mental Health**

8 This year the Clergy Mental Health Task Force has continued to work for the well-being and health of our clergy  
9 and leaders in the South Georgia Conference. We have provided training opportunities for our clergy in the form of  
10 Clergy Days Away. We offered a one-day training at the Pastoral Institute in Columbus on "Care to the Caregiver:  
11 The Cost of Caring in Your Calling." Rev. Thomas Waynick reminded participants to care for themselves as they  
12 care for others. Along those same lines, Cameron Bishop presented the second of our "Leading Through Trauma"  
13 workshops at Camp Tygart where we learned to recognize and acknowledge the results of second-hand trauma many  
14 clergy experience in their roles.  
15

16 One of the most exciting projects was done in collaboration with the Task force for Diversity, Inclusion and  
17 Vitality. We were recipients of a grant from the GCORR (General Commission on Religion and Race) Action Fund.  
18 We funded four different clergy mental health events with a kickoff event being held with Dr. Ron Bell and three  
19 follow-up events with minority clergy: Hispanic, African American, and female. All of these events have focused on  
20 mental health and self-care. We have hoped to create a safe space to "be with colleagues and just keep the focus on  
21 mental health." This self-care and wellness initiative is the start of something bigger in the conference, and we are  
22 glad to partner across task force work groups to collaborate on ways to help our clergy members stay emotionally  
23 healthy.  
24

### 25 **Consultations**

26 The Connectional Ministries staff is available to local church leaders for consultation around issues and challenges  
27 specific to your setting. We can facilitate planning retreats or staff retreats, collaborate around Safe Sanctuaries  
28 protocols and incidents, offer communication strategies, age-level ministries, and congregational vitality. We have  
29 proven that our connections are crucial and consulting work can be very fruitful through virtual platforms. We are  
30 connecting clergy and laity to resources within the denomination along with fostering connections to learn from one  
31 another.  
32

33 The Connectional Ministries staff is your apportionment dollars at work. Assistance and travel expenses are  
34 provided through the financial support and connectional giving of our local churches through payment of conference  
35 apportionments. These past few years have proven just how much we can accomplish using technology to resource  
36 our local churches in creative ways. We are here to serve you. Please contact Connectional Ministries if we can be  
37 supportive of your disciple-making efforts.  
38

39 Respectfully submitted,  
40 Kelly Roberson, Director of Conference Ministries/Communications  
41

## 42 **REPORT 9B – Outreach**

43  
44 The generosity of South Georgia United Methodists in their mission giving makes an impact in the Kingdom of God  
45 every single day. Mission giving keeps with our mission to "make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of  
46 the world."  
47

48 The first mile, or priority, continues to be for the local church to fulfill their commitment to the World Service Fund,  
49 Conference benevolences and other apportioned funds.  
50

51 Second Mile giving goes above and beyond. Second Mile giving is an exciting and significant element of the  
52 stewardship program within our connectional system at both the General Church and Conference levels. Second  
53 Mile stewardship - through The Advance - fosters partnerships between those who give and those who receive.  
54 Through Advance gifts, persons determine and support their own individual and local congregation's giving  
55 priorities. 100% of each gift to projects vetted through The Advance goes to the project chosen.  
56

57 Second Mile giving is twofold: General Advance Projects (Lanes 1-5) and Conference Advance Specials (Lane 6 &  
58 the PLUS Lane).  
59

1 General Advance Projects around the world are approved by Global Ministries to solicit and receive Second Mile  
2 gifts. In 2023, the South Georgia Annual Conference gave a total of \$434,000 to the General Advance, which  
3 included \$24,338 in missionary support and \$98,887 given to UMCOR/US Disaster Response.

4  
5 Conference Advance Specials are projects geographically located within the bounds of the South Georgia  
6 Conference. They have been screened by the Conference Outreach Team and authorized by the South Georgia  
7 Annual Conference to solicit support from local churches. Conference Advance Special received \$385,426 in  
8 giving.

9  
10 During the 2023 Annual Conference Session, a special offering in the amount of \$18,814 was collected to benefit  
11 church planting and revitalization.

12  
13 Showing the strength of our connection, South Georgia United Methodists responded generously to various  
14 catastrophic events across the US. Through generous donations by individuals and churches within our Conference,  
15 South Georgia gave \$50,000 to the Kentucky Annual Conference and \$27,023 to the Tennessee-Western Kentucky  
16 Conference to help with relief and recovery following a string of deadly tornadoes in Kentucky in December 2021.

17  
18 **REPORT #1**  
19 **“Three Star Church” Challenge**

20  
21 Local churches are challenged by the South Georgia Conference Outreach Team to achieve stars of excellence in  
22 Second Mile Giving by:

- 23  
24
- 25 • Sharing faithfully in the total mission of the church by paying 100% of apportionments;
  - 26 • Investing a minimum of \$25 in at least one fruitful ministry listed in each of the Six Lanes of the Advance;  
and
  - 27 • Boldly extend your generosity in support of at least one ministry listed under the PLUS Lane
- 28

29 We are thankful to the following churches for their generous mission giving. Qualifying “Three Star Churches”  
30 receive a Certificate of Achievement from their District Superintendent.

**Three Star Churches 2023**

<b>Coastal District</b>		Horse Creek	36402
<b>Church Name</b>	<b>Church No.</b>	Haven-Munnerlyn	36420
Richmond Hill	15120		
St Luke (Savannah)	15240	<b>Northwest District</b>	
Jekyll Island	19100	<b>Church Name</b>	<b>Church No.</b>
St Simons	19270	Buena Vista	42010
Connexion	19600	Wesley (Taylor Co Charge)	42295
		Upatoi	42420
<b>North Central District</b>			
<b>Church Name</b>	<b>Church No.</b>	<b>South Central District</b>	
Davisboro (Davisboro/New Hope Charge)	23070	<b>Church Name</b>	<b>Church No.</b>
Allentown	23230	Mount Zion (Mt Zion/Midway Charge)	51204
Danville	23231	Baxley	56010
Sandersville	23240	Hopewell	56032
Martha Bowman	24270	St Peters	58111
Mulberry Street	24280	Tifton First	58340
Park Memorial	24290	Shiloh (Lowndes Co)	58370
Pitts Chapel	24300	St Mark (Douglas)	59160
Shurlington	24330	Homerville	59190
Warner Robins	24410		
Joycliff	24460	<b>Southwest District</b>	
		<b>Church Name</b>	<b>Church No.</b>
<b>Northeast District</b>		Cordele First	61110
<b>Church Name</b>	<b>Church No.</b>	Wenona	61352
St John (Coleman Chapel/St. John Charge)	33064	Woodland	67182
Ebenezer (Nepsey/Warren Charge)	33520	Bethel	67190
Keysville	33550	Westtown	67430
Pittman Park	36300	Reynolds Chapel	67460
New Hope (New Hope-Hubert Charge)	36350	Moultrie	68190
Hubert	36351	Pavo	68441

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28

**REPORT #2**

**Carruth Mission Awards 2023**

The Carruth Mission Awards were inaugurated in honor of Mrs. August and Rev. Carlton Carruth for their many years of faithful service and support of missions. Two "Three Star Churches" from each district receive the Carruth Mission Award for outstanding achievements in each of the following categories:

1. Highest total amount given to missions
2. Highest per capita amount given to missions

District recipients for 2023 are listed below:

<b>DISTRICT</b>	<b>CHURCH</b>	<b>HIGHEST TOTAL GIVEN</b>
Coastal	St Simons	\$ 5,696.04
North Central	Mulberry Street	\$12,557.00
Northeast	Pittman Park	\$ 6,518.05
Northwest	Upatoi	\$ 3,208.00
South Central	Homerville	\$ 4,388.00
Southwest	Cordele First	\$ 6,512.00
<b>DISTRICT</b>	<b>CHURCH</b>	<b>HIGHEST PER CAPITA</b>
Coastal	Jekyll Island	\$ 41.81
North Central	Davisboro (Davisboro/New Hope)	\$177.29
Northeast	Keysville	\$ 28.11
Northwest	Wesley (Taylor Co.Charge)	\$153.85
South Central	St. Peters	\$ 47.30
Southwest	Pavo	\$ 29.61

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50  
51  
52  
53  
54  
55

**OVERALL WINNERS**

**HIGHEST TOTAL GIVEN**

Mulberry Street 12,557.00

**HIGHEST PER CAPITA**

Davisboro (Davisboro/New Hope) \$\$177.29

**REPORT #3**

**Advance Specials**

Advance Specials are those approved Mission projects and personnel which local churches, groups, classes and individuals are encouraged to support. This entails giving beyond apportionments, World Service and/or Conference Benevolences.

Local congregations, individuals, and groups are encouraged to be faithful in helping to financially undergird these bold and creative ministries. By designating seven categories through which persons are encouraged to channel their gifts, donors are helped to consider a broad spectrum of needs. These seven categories or channels are:

1. Africa Church Growth and Development
2. World Hunger and Poverty
3. Mission Personnel
4. Global Mission Projects
5. United Methodist Committee on Relief
6. Conference Advance Specials
7. PLUS Lane (Conference Special Support)

Below is a sampling of projects recommended for Second Mile giving for Lanes 1-5. to help you meet the Three Star Church challenge requirements. Additional projects can be found at <https://advance.umcmmission.org>. A helpful Advance e-catalog is available. Learn more about Global Ministries' areas of impact, where they work, and see a full list of projects and missionaries in this catalog. In addition, we have included a full list of Lane 6 (Conference Advance Specials) and PLUS Lane (Conference Special Support) below.

**LANE 1: AFRICA CHURCH GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT**

Kamina Orphanage (North Katanga)	No. 1750
Wings of the Morning (North Katanga)	No. 1697
Babyfold Children's Home	No. 1744
Quessua Mission Boarding School	No. 1746

**LANE 2: WORLD HUNGER/POVERTY**

North Katanga (Kamisamba Farm)	No. 2824
World Hunger/Poverty	No. 2823
Faith Based Advocacy to End Hunger	No. 2820
Living Gifts: Heifer International	No. 2818

**LANE 3: MISSION PERSONNEL SPECIALS**

Lorraine Charinda (missionary in North Katanga)	No. 3913
Ntambo, Gaston Nkulu (missionary in North Katanga)	No. 3914
Ntambo, Jeanne Kabove (missionary in North Katanga)	No. 3915
Missionaries Around the World	No. 3863

*For information on Global Ministries missionaries, visit [umcmmission.org](http://umcmmission.org).*

**LANE 4: WORLD & NATIONAL MISSION PROJECTS**

SEJ United Methodist Volunteers in Mission Work Teams	No. 4847
Appalachian Regional Ministries	No. 4802
Global Health Action, Atlanta, GA	No. 4895
Hinton Rural Life Center, Hayesville, NC	No. 4801
Society of St. Andrew, Big Island, VA	No. 4836

1	<b>LANE 5: UNITED METHODIST COMMITTEE ON RELIEF (UMCOR)</b>	
2	International Disaster Response	No. 5885
3	US Disaster Response	No. 5886
4	Refugee Response	No. 5858
5	Sager Brown Depot	No. 5864
6	<i>We encourage you to visit the UMCOR's website, <a href="http://www.umcor.org">www.umcor.org</a>, for updated news.</i>	
7		
8	<b>LANE 6: CONFERENCE ADVANCE SPECIALS</b>	
9		
10	<b>I. United Methodist Colleges and Wesley Foundations</b>	
11	Andrew College, Cuthbert	No. 6608
12	GA United Methodist Commission on Higher Education	No. 6647
13	Wesley Foundation – Coastal Georgia	No. 6616
14	Wesley Foundation – Columbus State	No. 6625
15	Wesley Foundation – Valdosta State	No. 6665
16	Wesley Foundation – University of Georgia, Athens	No. 6644
17	Wesleyan Disciples at Wesleyan College	No. 6611
18		
19	<b>II. South Georgia Area Conference Advance Specials</b>	
20	Camp Connect	No. 6607
21	Faithworks: Cancer Network of Hope	No. 6688
22	Faithworks: Homeless Day Service Center	No. 6678
23	Faithworks: Homeless Transition Home	No. 6672
24	Faithworks: Open Doors	No. 6674
25	Faithworks: Sparrows Nest	No. 6794
26	Green Bough House of Prayer	No. 6778
27	Macon Outreach at Mulberry General Fund	No. 6728
28	Magnolia Manor – Americus	No. 6603
29	Magnolia Manor – Coast	No. 6614
30	Magnolia Manor – Columbus	No. 6772
31	Magnolia Manor – League of The Good Samaritan	No. 6602
32	Magnolia Manor – Macon	No. 6605
33	Magnolia Manor – Macon County	No. 6720
34	Magnolia Manor – Marion County	No. 6612
35	Magnolia Manor – Midway	No. 6771
36	Magnolia Manor – South (Moultrie)	No. 6661
37	Magnolia Manor – St. Marys	No. 6662
38	Magnolia Manor – St. Simons	No. 6623
39	Methodist Children’s Home – Coastal (St. Marys Campus)	No. 6780
40	Methodist Children’s Home – Columbus Campus	No. 6620
41	Methodist Children’s Home – North Central (Macon Campus)	No. 6613
42	Methodist Children’s Home – Northwest (Americus Campus)	No. 6699
43	Methodist Children’s Home – South Central (Valdosta Campus)	No. 6783
44	Moore Methodist Museum	No. 6767
45	Open Door Community House Capital Funds	No. 6775
46	Open Door Community House, Columbus	No. 6606
47	South Georgia Church Planting & Revitalization	No. 6615
48	South Georgia Storm Recovery (Disaster Response)	No. 6796
49	South Georgia UMVIM (Volunteers in Mission)	No. 6651
50	The Vashti Center, Thomasville	No. 6627
51	Wesley Community Centers, Savannah – Walkathon	No. 6668
52	Wesley Community Centers – Program	No. 6621
53	Wesley Glen Ministries	No. 6655
54		
55	<b>PLUS Lane: OTHER CONFERENCE SPECIALS</b>	
56	Caring Connection Chaplaincy	No. 7663



1	Global Frontier Missions	No. 7616
2	Good News TV	No. 7615
3	Light for the Nations Ministries (Rev. Mike Ricker)	No. 7687
4	Living Water Ministries	No. 7740
5	Mission on The Move	No. 7731
6	Unto the Least of His (Rev. Bobby Gale)	No. 7672

7  
8 Voluntary Discontinuance

9	Epworth By The Sea	No. 6639
10	Lifeline Ministries, Inc.	No. 7781

11  
12 **REPORT #4**

13 **Guidelines for Advance Specials**

14 Procedures for Submitting Advance Specials Gifts

- 15
- 16 1. Send all gifts for Advance Mission Specials to the Conference Director of Administrative Services (3040  
17 Riverside Dr., Suite A-2 - Macon, GA 31210), not directly to the project or person.
  - 18 2. List each Advance Mission Special gift carefully on the local church remittance form, writing in the name  
19 and the number of the project. This ensures proper transmission and credit.
  - 20 3. Please use your church code number in order to reduce the possibility of crediting the wrong church for the  
21 gift. Each church's assigned code number can be found on the monthly statement from the Conference  
22 Treasurer/Administrator.
  - 23 4. Remit gifts for Advance Specials monthly. Remember salaries of missionaries and expenses of mission  
24 agencies must be paid each month.
  - 25 5. When a local church establishes a Covenant Relationship of support for a missionary, notify the  
26 Conference Secretary of Global Ministries so that appropriate records may be maintained. If a local church  
27 plans to give a specific amount to a mission project within the bounds of South Georgia, please inform the  
28 agency about the decision so it can be anticipated as a source of income.

29  
30 **REPORT #5**

31 **The Covenant Relationship Program**

32  
33 The mutual relationship called Covenant calls for the church to participate in the work of a missionary or deaconess  
34 through financial and prayer support and for that mission worker to share with the church firsthand experiences  
35 in mission. When a covenant is established, missionaries covenant to communicate with supporting congregations  
36 by letter at least three times per year about the ongoing ministries, needs, progress, and stories of their places  
37 of assignment.

38  
39 The Covenant Relationship Program is one of three financial support bases for United Methodist mission personnel  
40 commissioned by the General Board of Global Ministries. Primary importance is the World Service Fund to which  
41 congregations contribute through their apportionments. Second is the undesignated Pledge to Mission of local  
42 United Methodist Women's units. The third base of support is second-mile giving through the Covenant  
43 Relationship Program of the Advance for Christ and His Church.

44  
45 Special projects related to missionaries and their work are supported as an "extra" beyond the Covenant  
46 Relationship.

47  
48 Every church in every place is encouraged to live out the disciple-making vision of the South Georgia Conference  
49 by faithfully entering into a covenant relationship with a missionary commissioned and sent by The United  
50 Methodist Church on our behalf.

1 **How to Enter into A Covenant Relationship**

2 Contact your Conference Secretary of Global Ministries, the Advance Field Representative in your jurisdiction, or  
3 the Covenant Relationship Office at the General Board of Global Ministries (umcmmission.org) for an application and  
4 suggestions of mission personnel who need financial support.  
5

6 **Advance Special Guidelines**

7 According to *The Book of Discipline*, "there may be a Conference Advance program, established and carried out in  
8 the same spirit of partnership as the general Advance program. A Conference Advance Special gift is one made to a  
9 Conference Advance Special project within the bounds of the Annual Conference upon recommendation by the  
10 Conference Board of Global Ministries or its equivalent structure and consistent with the goals of The Advance."  
11 (*The Book of Discipline*, 2016, Par. 655.1)  
12

13 Churches and individuals shall give priority to the support of the World Service and Conference Benevolences and  
14 other apportioned funds. Advance giving shall be voluntary and in addition to support of apportioned funds. (*The*  
15 *Book of Discipline*, 2016, Par. 819.5).  
16

17 **1. ELIGIBILITY**

- 18 A. Projects shall conform with the Disciplinary provisions for Conference Advance Specials.
- 19 B. Projects seeking approval shall be located within the bounds of the Annual Conference or  
20 episcopal area.
- 21 C. Projects seeking approval should be in accord with the highest priorities of the Annual  
22 Conference's mission ministries and consistent with the goals of the Advance.
- 23 D. Projects shall be able to demonstrate an adequacy of the following:
  - 24 1. Personnel
  - 25 2. Facilities
  - 26 3. Funding Plan (Advance Special giving is voluntary in nature. It is expected that a project  
27 not be entirely dependent upon such giving, but a reasonable amount of financial support  
28 should be cultivated from other sources, including persons participating in the program.)
- 29 E. Conference Advance Special projects shall demonstrate an on-going liaison relationship with a  
30 conference missional agency, or the General Board of Global Ministries on Conference request,  
31 to assure the project maintains consistency with the Conference Advance Special criteria.
- 32 F. Ecumenical projects shall have United Methodist representation on the governing board to be  
33 eligible for consideration as a Conference Advance Special.
- 34 G. A financial statement of 12 months activity by the project shall be provided upon request by the  
35 Conference Outreach Team (or its equivalent structure) at the time of application. If the project  
36 has not been in operation for 12 months or has not begun at the time of application, a projected  
37 budget for 12 months may be requested.
- 38 H. An annual request for initiation of, or continuation of, a volunteer project beyond the bounds of  
39 the South Georgia Episcopal Area shall be required from the appropriate judicatory office in the  
40 designated area.  
41

42 **2. APPLICATION PROCESS**

- 43 A. Conference Advance Special applications may be submitted by any of the following: local  
44 church, District Board of Missions (or equivalent agency), District Connectional Ministries  
45 Council or Conference Connectional Ministries.
- 46 B. An ecumenical project shall submit its application in consultation with the Superintendent of the  
47 district in which it resides, the United Methodist representation on its governing board and any  
48 appropriate agency.
- 49 C. The steps leading to approval include the following:
  - 50 1. The application should be submitted to the Conference Secretary of Global Ministries by  
51 January 31.
  - 52 2. The application will be presented to the full Conference Outreach Team (or equivalent  
53 agency) in its Spring meeting or at such time as seems practical. In special circumstances  
54 the Executive Committee of the Conference Outreach Team (or its equivalent structure),

1 on recommendation of the Conference Secretary of Global Ministries, may act on an  
2 application prior to Annual Conference.

- 3 3. Projects receiving the recommendation of the Conference Outreach Team (or equivalent  
4 structure) are printed in the Annual Conference Book of Recommendations and  
5 submitted to the Annual Conference for its approval. Approved projects are then listed in  
6 the Annual Conference Journal.  
7

8 3. APPLICATION

- 9 A. Download the application at [www.sgaumc.org/advance-special-guidelines](http://www.sgaumc.org/advance-special-guidelines).

10 4. FINANCES

- 11 A. Approval of a project should indicate a reasonable expectation of financial support from  
12 congregations and individuals within the Annual Conference. By approval, the Annual  
13 Conference assumes a responsibility to assure that a Conference agency or other group will  
14 develop communication and cultivation to achieve support.  
15 B. Projects shall provide the Conference Outreach Team (or equivalent structure) with a financial  
16 statement upon request.  
17 C. After approval, Conference Advance Specials should be properly identified by the code number  
18 assigned by the Conference Treasurer's office and used in all publications and publicity,  
19 including the Annual Conference Journal and remittance forms.  
20

21 5. RENEWAL FOR CONTINUATION

- 22 A. Download the renewal form at [www.sgaumc.org/advance-special-guidelines](http://www.sgaumc.org/advance-special-guidelines).

- 23 6. All projects shall be reviewed for approval annually, following the applicable steps in Section B.

- 24 7. As of January 1, 2009, the Advance Special status number(s) will be immediately discontinued if the  
25 Advance Special Renewal Form is not submitted on an annual basis by the January 31 deadline each year.  
26

- 27 8. If you know you would like to discontinue your status, please complete the Conference Advance Special  
28 Discontinuance Form found at [www.sgaumc.org/advance-special-guidelines](http://www.sgaumc.org/advance-special-guidelines).  
29

30 9. DISTRICT ADVANCE SPECIALS

- 31 A. "With the approval of the Annual Conference, a district within the conference may authorize and  
32 promote Advance Specials for church extension and missionary needs within the district..." (The  
33 Book of Discipline, 2016, Par. 654.4)  
34 B. The proposed project needs to be located within the bounds of the District.  
35 C. The proposed project must be recommended to the Annual Conference for approval.  
36 D. The District Board of Missions may inform the Conference Secretary of Global Ministries by  
37 following the process listed in Sections A and B for Conference Advance Specials. All projects  
38 submitted in this manner will be approved as Conference Advance Specials.  
39  
40  
41

42 10. APPROVAL of ADVANCE SPECIALS FOR EMERGENCY REASONS

- 43 A. Contact the Conference Secretary of Global Ministries.  
44

45 Guidelines can also be found on the conference website at [www.sgaumc.org/advance-special-guidelines](http://www.sgaumc.org/advance-special-guidelines).  
46  
47

48 **REPORT 9C – Witness**

49 **REPORT #1**

50 **General Evangelists Approval 2024**

51 Clergy of the Annual Conference who are led to give themselves wholly to the calling of evangelism may be  
52 approved by the Conference to serve in the capacity of a General Evangelist. These persons must be recommended  
53  
54

1 by the Witness Team in consultation with the Board of Ordained Ministry and have the annual affirmation of the  
2 Annual Conference to continue as General Evangelists. A General Evangelist serves under full appointment in the  
3 position.  
4

5 The following persons are recommended for approval by the South Georgia Annual Conference for the year 2024-  
6 2025 as General Evangelists:  
7

- 8 • Rev. Mike Ricker: Light for The Nations Ministry  
9

10 The following person is recommended for Associate Evangelist. Associate Evangelists in full-time ministry are  
11 retired ministers or laypersons in full-time evangelism.  
12

- 13 • Rev. Beverly Flowers  
14

15 The Witness Team receives reports from the General Evangelists, believes in the effectiveness of the work they are  
16 doing and heartily recommends that the above persons be approved as General and Associate Evangelists for the  
17 coming year.  
18

19 Rev. Danita Knowles, Witness Team Chairperson  
20

21 **REPORT #2**  
22 **Fully Connectional Churches for the Year 2023**  
23

24 We commend the following congregations for demonstrating their support of United Methodist ministries both  
25 locally and globally by giving 100% or more of their apportionments. These gifts make possible a wide range  
26 of disciple-making ministries within each district, across our annual conference, and around the world. We are  
27 grateful for the gifts of all who provide financial support as, together, we work to make disciples and grow the  
28 kingdom of God. We designate these congregations as **Fully Connectional Churches**.  
29

30 **CONGREGATIONS GIVING MORE THAN 100%**  
31

32 <b>Coastal District</b>	33 <b>Church No.</b>	34 <b>% Paid</b>
35 Garden City	15190	100.69
36 St Luke (Savannah)	15240	100.87
37 Wesley Monumental	15260	100.07
38 Pinkney Chapel	19231	101.39
39 Grace (Brunswick)	19400	103.67
40 Emory Chapel	19420	101.70
41		
42 <b>North Central District</b>	43 <b>Church No</b>	44 <b>% Paid</b>
45 Airline-Bethel	23412	114.24
46		
47 <b>Northeast District</b>	48 <b>Church No</b>	49 <b>% Paid</b>
50 Lamb's Chapel	33351	100.08
51 Cobbtown	36090	100.01
52 Pittman Park	36300	100.13
53 Habersham	36362	100.01
54 Horse Creek	36402	101.94
(Charlestown/Mt. Zion/Springhead Circuit)	36452	100.07

1			
2	<b>Northwest District</b>	<b>Church No.</b>	<b>% Paid</b>
3	Sardis (Lumpkin Charge)	42302	100.13
4			
5	<b>South Central District</b>	<b>Church No.</b>	<b>% Paid</b>
6	St. Peters	58111	129.89
7	Blackshear First	59030	100.03
8	Homerville	59190	104.17
9	Gilchrist Park	59310	100.28
10			
11			
12	<b>Southwest District</b>	<b>Church No.</b>	<b>% Paid</b>
13	Cordray Community	67273	100.10
14	Evelyn	68440	100.02

**FULLY CONNECTIONAL CHURCHES GIVING 100%**

<b>Coastal District</b>		Sandersville	23240
Encounter	15080	Tennille	23300
Richmond Hill	15120	Tabernacle	23301
Garden City	15190	Piney Mount	23370
Isle of Hope	15220	Wrightsville First	23400
St. Luke (Savannah)	15240	Airline-Bethel	23412
Wesley Monumental	15260	Howard Chapel	23500
Asbury (Savannah)	15350	Montrose	23570
Speedwell	15390	Bethel (Moore's Chapel/Bethel Charge)	23661
Goshen	15400	Irwinton/Toombsboro	24080
Jesup First	16160	Asbury (Jeffersonville/Asbury Charge)	24091
Morgans Chapel	19020	Centenary	24140
Arco	19050	Heritage	24230
New Hope	19061	Martha Bowman	24270
(Haven Sheffield/New Hope Charge)		Mulberry Street	24280
Jekyll Island	19100	Park Memorial	24290
Darien	19140	Pitts Chapel	24300
Pinkney Chapel	19231	Shurlington	24330
St Simons	19270	Vineville	24360
Horse Stomp	19370	Warner Robins First	24410
Waverly	19372	Trinity (Warner Robins)	24430
Grace (Brunswick)	19400	Joycliff	24460
Emory Chapel	19420	Smith Chapel	24461
Connexion	19600	Rogers	24600
<b>North Central District</b>		<b>Northeast District</b>	
Snow	21152	Coleman Chapel	33060
Grovania	21154	St John	33064
Perry	21300	(Coleman Chapel/St John Charge)	
Rochelle	21360	Mount Vernon	33220
Brewton	23050	Long Pond	33222
Thomas Chapel	23053	Stillmore	33270
Davisboro	23070	Lamb's Chapel	33351
(Davisboro/New Hope Charge)		Ebenezer (Nepsey/Warren Charge)	33520
Allentown	23230	Nepsey -Warren	33523
Danville	23231	Keysville	33550
Wesley Chapel	23233	Sharpe's Chapel	33560
(Allentown/Danville/Wesley Circuit)		Brooklet	36050

Cobbtown	36090	Powersville	44380
Bethany (Girard Charge)	36110	Wesley Chapel	44382
Bethesda (Girard Charge)	36113	(Powersville-Wesley Charge)	
Pearson's Chapel	36162	Crowell	44392
Vidette	36211		
Rocky Ford	36260	<b>South Central District</b>	
Bethel Brick	36280	Mount Olivet	51203
Pittman Park	36300	(Helena/Mt Olivet Charge)	
Sylvania	36320	Mount Zion	51204
New Hope (New Hope-Hubert Charge)	36350	(Mt Zion/Midway Charge)	
Hubert	36351	Midway	51205
Fair Haven	36360	(Mt Zion/Midway Charge)	
Habersham	36362	Shelton Chapel	51310
Oak Grove (Simmons Charge)	36380	Baxley First	56010
Nannie E. Williams	36381	Graham	56011
Horse Creek	36402	Hopewell	56032
Brannen Chapel	36410	Surrency	56310
Haven-Munnerlyn	36420	Bethel (Surrency)	56311
Asbury (Waynesboro Charge)	36422	Harper Chapel	56600
Charlestown	36450	Dodges Chapel	56801
Springhead	36451	Chula	58050
(Charlestown/Mt Zion/Springhead Circuit)		St Peters	58111
Mount Zion	36452	Community	58281
(Charlestown/Mt Zion/Springhead Charge)		Tifton First	58340
Union (Bulloch County)	36520	Shiloh (Lowndes Co)	58370
Friendship (Burke County)	36541	Bemiss	58430
Hagan	36581	Blackshear First	59030
Sikes Chapel	36690	Broxton	59040
		St Mark (Douglas)	59160
<b>Northwest District</b>		West Green	59161
Byromville	41090	Homerville	59190
Drayton	41093	Waycross	59300
Graves	41131	Gilchrist Park	59310
Leslie	41230	Winona Park	59350
Vienna	41390	Scott's Chapel	59420
Shiloh (Vienna-Shiloh Charge)	41391	Axson	59472
Sasser	41430	Bickley	59560
Buena Vista	42010	Manor	59580
The Ridge	42030		
Asbury (Columbus)	42040	<b>Southwest District</b>	
Epworth (Columbus)	42070	Cordele First	61110
St Mary's Road	42160	Rebecca	61350
South Columbus	42190	Wenona	61352
Cuthbert	42250	Midway (Cordele)	61450
Charing	42292	Avalon	67020
Mauk	42293	Edison	67081
Wesley (Taylor Co Charge)	42295	Bainbridge First	67110
Lumpkin	42300	Boston	67150
Providence (Lumpkin Charge)	42301	Oak Grove	67152
Sardis (Lumpkin Charge)	42302	(Boston/Oak Grove Charge)	
Midland	42320	Brinson	67160
Olive Branch	42362	Jakin	67161
Ellerslie	42371	Iron City	67164
Collinsworth-Corinth	42410	Woodland (Cairo Charge)	67182
Upatoi	42420	Friendship (Cairo Charge)	67183
Byron	44020		

Bethel	67190	Reynolds Chapel	67460
Camilla	67200	Funston	68081
Dixie	67220	Moultrie First	68190
Ozell	67222	Sumner	68260
Faceville-Sylvania	67250	Pinson Memorial	68330
Damascus	67272	Evelyn	68440
Cordray Community	67273	Pavo	68441
Burns Memorial	67322	Poulan	68770
Bethpage	67402		
Westtown	67430		

1  
2

**REPORT #3**  
**Witness Awards for the Year 2023**

**Largest Net Gain in Membership in 2023**

<b>District</b>	<b>Net Gain</b>	<b>Church</b>	<b>Pastor</b>
Coastal	65	St Simons Island	Thomas Jones
North Central	15	Vineville	Jimmy Asbell
Northeast	12	Pittman Park	Jonathan Smith
Northwest	15	Midland	Stephen Brinkman
South Central	12	Tifton First	William “Chip” Grantham
Southwest	23	Bethel (Grady Co)	William Byram

**Largest Number of Professions of Faith in 2023**

<b>District</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Church</b>	<b>Pastor</b>
Coastal	15	Isle of Hope	Stephen Grantham
North Central	13	Martha Bowman	Mark Magoni
Northeast	8	Sylvania First	Dorsia Atkinson
Northwest	13	Midland	Stephen Brinkman
South Central	4	Central (Fitzgerald)	R. Christopher Ramsey
South Central	4	Tifton First	William “Chip” Grantham
Southwest	4	Bainbridge First	Melissa Traver

**Best Ration of Professions of Faith in 2023**

<b>District</b>	<b>Net Gain</b>	<b>Church</b>	<b>Pastor</b>
Coastal	15	Nesby Chapel	Bessie Cohen
North Central	7	Tabernacle	Cathy Green
Northeast	6	Oak Park	William Lee
Northwest	16	Asbury (Columbus)	Michael Powell
South Central	2	Harper Chapel	Dargenae Patterson
Southwest	.97	Moultrie First	Richard Wright

3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13

**REPORT #4**  
**Evangelistically Fruitful Congregations**

The mission of the church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ. A significant dimension of the disciple-making process is that of leading people to make a commitment to God through baptism and profession of faith in Jesus Christ. Reaching new persons with the gospel is at the very heart of every church’s purpose. Conference awards will be presented to the congregations with the most professions of faith and the highest net gains in membership. Also, we are recognizing every local church showing a net gain in membership for 2023 by designating them as *Evangelistically Fruitful Congregations*.

1

Coastal	North Central	Northeast	Northwest	South Central	Southwest
Darien	Centenary	Lifespring	Asbury (Columbus)	Bemiss	Bethal (Grady Co)
Emory Chapel	Heritage	Mt Vernon	Dawson	Bethel	El Faro
Goshen	Martha Bowman	Nannie Williams	Ellerslie	Central (Fitzgerald)	Pavo
Mosaic	Mulberry Street	Oak Park	Epworth (Columbus)	Graham	Reynolds Chapel
Nesby Chapel	Perry	Pittman Park	Graves	Patterson	
Richmond Hill	Sandersville	Portal	Midland	St. Mark (Douglas)	
St Luke (Savannah)	Swift Creek	Sylvania First	Olive Branch	Tifton First	
St. Simons Island	Tabernacle		Parrott	Waycross First	
Trinity (Savannah)	Vineville		South Columbus	West Green	
Wesley Monumental	Wrightsville First		St Paul		
			The Ridge		
			Wesley (Taylor Co)		

2

3

## REPORT 10 – Epworth By The Sea

4

### Annual Report

5

#### President and CEO Report:

6

Epworth has made a remarkable recovery from 2022, which was our first full year of hosting guests, after the ship salvage workers departed in December 2021. You may not be aware, that we had to continually reschedule groups during 2021, because the ship removal kept getting delayed. We invited those groups back to Epworth at a greatly reduced rate to let them know that we cared about them and wanted them to continue to come to Epworth. This is just one of the reasons our revenue was down in 2022 compared to 2019. Down \$522,000, 10.5%. We just did not have as many groups. The pandemic was continuing to affect our groups and guests. But the groups did return in 2023. We hosted over 700 groups which 160 were groups who have never been to Epworth or had not been in several years. This represented over 115,000 guests. That lets me know that our marketing dollars are making a difference.

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

Epworth By The Sea assumed the management of the Arthur J. Moore Methodist Museum April 1, 2023. Since disaffiliation began, the Museum staff has assessed approximately 180 churches and 3 districts records and has archived the required documents. I am always encouraged to see the rich history of all churches in the Methodist tradition. Curator Anne Packard and her Assistant Cindy Angelich are doing yeoman’s work and treating each of these churches and districts with the respect they deserve.

17

18

19

20

21

22

During 2023, we completed the renovation of the Reynolds Apartments and Rooms. The Brown Classrooms 5-6 were renovated with new lighting, flooring, ceiling tiles and paint. The Gholson Pre-School windows were replaced. A natural gas generator was purchased to keep the Pitts Office, Lobby, Dining Rooms and Kitchen running when there is a power outage. Various HVAC systems were replaced during the year among other mechanical items. The Porte Cochere project was begun and completed at the end of 2023. This has improved drainage, easy access to the Walker Lobby during inclement weather and slowed the vehicular traffic down. It is a wonderful addition.

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

Resurfacing the tennis courts will begin in early 2024 and two pickle ball courts will be added. There will be one tennis court and two pickle ball courts. Exterior security cameras will be added in several locations. They are a must with the environment we live in today. Let’s pray that we will not need them, only that we have them.

30

31

32



1 We welcomed a new auditor in 2023-Mauldin & Jenkins. Epworth continues to have a “clean” audit and the 2022  
2 audit was no exception. I want to give a special recognition to Jolie Chaney-Accounting Supervisor/Human  
3 Resources Director. When we had to secure a new auditor I knew a lot of work was going to fall in her lap. Our last  
4 auditor had performed our audit since 1990 and Ms. Chaney pretty much had them trained. Well, she had to take this  
5 one on and I appreciate the work she did. It was very frustrating for her and she did a marvelous job dealing with it.  
6

7 I also want to give Wayne Racz credit not only for his fundraising expertise, but for doing work for the auditor in  
8 order for them to complete the audit. He had to literally establish new schedules associated with our endowment.  
9 Hopefully going forward the audit will not take as long and everyone will be on the same page. Their  
10 recommendations do not change the fact that we had a clean audit and no serious situations. That is a testimony to  
11 how seriously we conduct the business side of this ministry.  
12

13 I am proud of all of our staff. We try hard to instill in them what Epworth is all about. It is just not a job, it is a  
14 ministry that they embrace. 23 of the 52 Epworth employees have been employed for at least 15 years and another 5  
15 have been here over 8 years. Two of our ARAMARK employees have many years of service at Epworth. April  
16 Hubbard has been employed for 36 years and Karen Parshley has been employed 32 years. For any organization to  
17 be successful, you have to have a loyal staff. The staff at Epworth is the reason we have been successful. All the  
18 staff that I have recognized today is the reason we are successful in what we do. Of all the accomplishments  
19 Epworth has achieved, the one I am most proud of is our staff. Loyalty goes a long way with me and they know they  
20 can depend on me just like I depend on them. I have hired them all and I know they will be there when Epworth  
21 needs them. Kelly Maloy-Director of Reservations; Junior Lamb-Director of Maintenance; Nancy Moncus-Director  
22 of Housekeeping and Kaylee Crane-Director of Food Service all need to be commended for the fine work they do  
23 each and every day.  
24

25 On one of the historical markers Bishop Moore installed on our grounds in the early 1950’s describes the grand  
26 opening of Epworth By The Sea on July 25, 1950-over 73 years ago. 800 Methodists gathered on the banks of the  
27 Frederica River for a shore dinner and then Bishop Moore preached. He ended his sermon by stating that “Young  
28 and old tarry amid these sacred surroundings and go forth to face the morning.” I can truly say, and each of you  
29 should be very proud, that literally hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, in those 73 years have “tarried these  
30 sacred surroundings and gone forth to face the morning.” That very fact only occurs because Epworth By The Sea  
31 has always been a special place that when we begin each morning our mission is to Provide a Christian Place for  
32 Worship, Study and Fellowship.  
33

34 Respectfully submitted,  
35 Joel Willis  
36 President/CEO  
37 Epworth By The Sea  
38

39 **Executive Vice-President Report:**

40 Epworth By The Sea is an unparalleled Christ-centered hospitality ministry impacting lives for Jesus Christ by  
41 providing a premier conference and retreat center for worship, study and fellowship. Located in St. Simons Island,  
42 Georgia, on 100 acres on the banks of the Frederica River, Epworth offers a unique combination of conference,  
43 retreat and camping ministries on one campus. It is also a popular vacation destination for individuals and families.  
44 This mission of Epworth is captured in a recent prayer request we received at the Wright Prayer Tower, open 24  
45 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year: “I love this place! I came years ago for youth camp. I am  
46 recovering from breast cancer. I got it at 29 years old. Please will you pray that if it’s God’s will, he will allow me to  
47 have children. Pray for physical and emotional healing. And for my husband. Thank you.” It was my honor to pray  
48 for this young lady.  
49

50 Epworth is open to all denominations and non-denominational churches, US Military, local, state and federal  
51 agencies, groups and individuals whose goals are consistent with Epworth’s purpose. Countless individuals have  
52 accepted Christ, renewed their spirits and gone into fulltime ministry or become lay leaders of their churches  
53 because of their experiences at Epworth.  
54

55 One of the new groups we recently started hosting is Lighthouse Family Retreat. They are “a faith-based non-profit  
56 that exists to strengthen every family living through childhood cancer. [They] host restorative retreats and develop  
57 helpful resources so that families and their support systems can find hope in God and help in their fight.” One retreat

1 mom shared, “Cancer is an ugly storm but this retreat has been a ray of light in the middle of it.” Another family  
2 said, “Lighthouse gave us a renewed sense of hope, faith, and love for each other and the Lord.” Epworth is blessed  
3 to provide Lighthouse with a holy environment to support and encourage these families and children.  
4 We hope you will visit Epworth soon. Come experience the peace, connection and beauty God offers on our  
5 campus. You are always welcome.  
6

7 Rev. Wayne Racz,  
8 Executive Vice-President,  
9 Director of Spiritual Formation,  
10 Church Relations & Development  
11 wracz@epworthbythesea.org

12 **2024 PROGRAMMING NEEDS AND PROPERTY IMPROVEMENTS: \$588,000**

13 PROGRAMMING NEEDS TOTAL: \$20,000

- 14 • Miss Ella’s Camp for Special People:  
15 To assist with a camp designed for physically and mentally challenged adults.  
16
- 17 • Scholarship Fund:  
18 Assists families needing scholarship support for their child to attend summer camps, retreats and Bible  
19 studies.  
20

21 PROPERTY IMPROVEMENTS TOTAL: \$568,000

- 22 • Food Serving Lines, Salad Bars and Drink Stations: \$350,000  
23 Replace existing serving line, salad bars and drink stations for enhanced quality and presentation.  
24
- 25 • Resurface Tennis Courts: \$90,000  
26 Reconfigure courts to include two pickle ball courts and one tennis court.  
27
- 28 • Re-roof Employee Dining Room and VIP House: \$28,000  
29
- 30 • Outside Security Cameras: \$25,000  
31 High definition cameras at various locations for security and incident issues.  
32
- 33 • Various Mechanical Equipment: \$75,000  
34 During the course of the year, HVAC systems, commercial hot water heaters, pumps and motors fail and  
35 need to be replaced.  
36

37 **Epworth By The Sea Board of Trustees: Terms Expire June 30**

38 **Class of 2024:** Thad Haygood, Justin Martin, Mark Masee, Gilbert Miller, Kelly Murray and Cheney Robinson

39 **Class of 2025:** Roland Daniel, Paul DeMersseman, Baxter Hurley, Randall Ozment, Warren Plowden and Emmy  
40 Temples

41 **Class of 2026:** Tom Carruth, Charlie Dorminy, Bill Harris, David Rush, Dan Underwood and Reggie Williams

42 **Class of 2027:** Lee Bush, Russell Jacobs and Cathy Tucker  
43

44 **Ex-Officio Trustees:**

45 Suzanne Akins, Director of Camping & Retreat Ministries (South GA UM Conference)

46 Don Barnes, United Methodist Men’s President (South GA UM Conference)

47 Bishop David Graves, Bishop in Residence (Alabama West Florida/South GA UM Conference)

48 Tara Jones, United Methodist Women’s President (South GA UM Conference)

49 J. Knapp, Conference Lay Leader (South GA UM Conference)

50 Scott Hagan, Coastal and Northeast District Superintendent (South GA UM Conference)

51 Joel Willis (Epworth By The Sea President/CEO)

52 Wayne Racz (Epworth By The Sea Executive Vice President)

53 Jolie Chaney (Epworth By The Sea Board of Trustees Treasurer)

54 Mallery Hale (Epworth By The Sea Board of Trustees Secretary)  
55

1 **Emeritus Trustees:**  
2 Charles Adams, Tom Johnson and Jim Rush

3  
4 **2023-2024 Officers:**  
5 Mark Massee (Chair), Chaney Robinson (Vice-Chair), Joel Willis (President/CEO), Wayne Racz (Executive Vice  
6 President), Mallery Hale (Secretary) and Jolie Chaney (Treasurer)

7  
8 **Endowment Foundation, Inc. Trustees:**  
9 Russell Jacobs (Chairman), Bill Daniel, Bill Harris, Ralph “Sandy” Jernigan, Justin Martin, Wayne Racz, Joel  
10 Willis, Kelly Murray (Ex-Officio), Jolie Chaney (Ex-Officio Treasurer) and Mallery Hale (Ex-Officio Secretary)

11  
12 **Report 11– Faith Connection Federal Credit Union**

13 The former United Methodist Connectional Federal Credit Union legally became the Faith Connection Federal  
14 Credit Union in May of 2023, which was approved by our federal agency, the National Credit Union  
15 Administration. The Board advocated changing our name to best continue serving Methodist laity and clergy in  
16 Georgia, Florida and Alabama. We have 64 years of serving Methodists with advantageous financial services.

17  
18 Faith Connection Federal Credit Union currently serves over 3,000 members, has total loans of almost \$20 million  
19 and has total assets of almost \$34 Million. Membership is open to Methodist laity, ministers, staff, their families and  
20 other ministries serving within Methodism. Our services include:

- 21
- 22 ✓ Low interest credit cards
- 23 ✓ Auto loan buying service with incentives
- 24 ✓ Mortgage Loans
- 25 ✓ Church Loans and Accounts
- 26 ✓ Financial counseling to help manage one’s budget
- 27 ✓ Checking, Savings and Share Certificates of Deposit

28  
29 Member loan products allowed your Faith Connection Federal Credit Union to give back to the Annual Conferences  
30 through our scholarship program, numerous sponsorships, agency donations, church ministries, UMCOR and  
31 Methodist affiliated children’s homes.

32  
33 “Helping members afford life” is more than a tag line! Our STAFF and BOARD strives to provide services that  
34 encourages Christian Stewardship!

35  
36 We invite you to be part of our next 64 years of serving Methodist heritage believers!

37  
38 Rev. Max Caylor, Chair

39

<b>Assets</b>	<b>Summary as of 12/31/2022</b>	<b>Summary as of 12/31/2023</b>
Cash	\$358,107.26	\$194,713.64
Loans To Members	\$17,521,690.39	\$18,446,511.44
Loan Participation	\$1,469,169.85	\$1,152,596.92
Allowance for Loan Losses	-\$76,621.84	-\$82,605.92
Other Receivables	\$41,146.17	\$40,041.95
Investments	\$13,062,689.88	\$13,058,796.63
Accrued Income	\$56,543.12	\$90,086.23
Prepaid Exp & Defer Charges	\$35,741.45	\$81,503.06
Fixed Assets	\$733,618.23	\$766,338.12
All Other Assets	\$0.00	\$0.00

<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$33,202,084.51</b>	<b>\$33,747,982.07</b>
---------------------	------------------------	------------------------

**Liabilities**

Accounts Payable	\$12,330.65	\$138,276.68
Dividends Payable	\$0.00	\$0.00
Notes Payable	\$0.00	\$0.00
Taxes Payable	\$265.68	\$299.17
Accrued Expenses	\$114,093.11	\$137,252.77
Deferred Credits	\$0.00	\$0.00
Other Liabilities	\$37,657.00	\$48,909.55

<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$164,346.44</b>	<b>\$324,738.17</b>
--------------------------	---------------------	---------------------

**Equity**

Shares of Members	\$30,052,919.39	\$30,122,152.49
Reserves	\$682,937.04	\$682,937.04
Undivided Earnings	\$2,241,315.55	\$2,301,881.64
Net Income	\$60,566.09	\$316,272.73

<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>\$33,037,738.07</b>	<b>\$33,423,243.90</b>
---------------------	------------------------	------------------------

<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Equity</b>	<b>\$33,202,084.51</b>	<b>\$33,747,982.07</b>
---------------------------------------	------------------------	------------------------

**Income Statement**

Summary as of 12/31/2022

Summary as of 12/31/2023

Interest on Loans	\$944,838.77	\$1,068,974.57
Income on Investments	\$182,660.80	\$414,438.56
Fees & Charges	\$118,688.47	\$125,154.03
Other Operating Income	\$111,578.52	\$316,320.84

<b>Operating Income</b>	<b>\$1,357,766.56</b>	<b>\$1,924,888.00</b>
-------------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------

**Operating Expenses**

Compensation	\$554,710.02	\$579,653.06
Employee Benefits	\$200,736.73	\$188,802.87
Travel & Conference	\$24,488.05	\$45,655.72
Association Dues	\$12,853.13	\$12,953.10

Office Occupancy	\$56,371.77	\$58,632.83
Office Operations	\$99,550.97	\$101,936.36
Education & Promotion	\$41,965.77	\$84,083.59
Loan Servicing	\$73,435.19	\$74,145.98
Prof & Outside	\$194,313.23	\$231,937.45
Provision for Loan Losses	\$20,500.00	\$42,500.00
Member Insurance	\$0.00	\$0.00
Federal Operating Fee	\$5,016.64	\$5,621.62
Interest on Borrowed	\$0.00	\$59.84
Cash Short/Over	\$0.00	\$25.01
Annual Meeting	\$2,565.06	\$5,294.72
Miscellaneous	\$7,989.93	\$10,918.39
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,294,496.49</b>	<b>\$1,442,220.54</b>
Income From Operations	\$63,270.07	\$482,667.46
Income Before Dividends	\$63,270.07	\$482,667.46
Dividends	\$65,676.15	\$166,394.73
Gain/(Loss) on Assets	\$62,972.17	\$0.00
Net Income	\$60,566.09	\$316,272.73

1  
2  
3 **REPORT 12 – Georgia Pastors’ School**  
4 **Georgia Pastors’ School Report for 2023**  
5

6 This past year’s GPS was held July 17-20 at Epworth By The Sea - St. Simon’s Island, GA. Our theme was titled  
7 spiritual growth.  
8

9 Teaching was provided by Pastor Juanita Rasmus, co-pastor of St John’s UMC Houston, Texas. She is author of  
10 Learning to Be: Finding Your Center After the Bottom Falls Out. Johnny Sears also led us. He is Director of the  
11 Academy for Spiritual Formation and Emerging Ministries at The Upper Room in Nashville, TN. John Wesley said  
12 it best, “How is it with your soul?” God calls us to answer that question routinely as reiterated throughout the  
13 school by both presenters.  
14

15 Bishop Robin Dease and Bishop David Graves shared preaching responsibilities. Their dynamic preaching was  
16 given to us on Monday and Tuesday nights and Thursday morning. They truly blessed us with the Word of God.  
17 Angie Carr and Rev. Tony Crosby from the South, Georgia Conference led us in inspirational music.  
18

19 This year’s Pastors’ School will take place July 15-18 at Epworth. Our theme is “The Old Story for a New Day”  
20 centered around making the Gospel relevant for today.  
21

22 Speakers for this year are as follows:

23 Rev. Dr. Rodrigo Cruz (DS for Central East District and lead pastor of The Nett Church)

24 Rev. Ted Goshorn (Pastor of Mulberry Street UMC, Macon, church community organizer)

25 Rev. Dr. Teresa L. Fry Brown (Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and Bandy Professor of Preaching – Candler  
26 School of Theology)

1  
2 We are very thankful for all those who participated to make our school enjoyable. That is, our speakers, preachers,  
3 board, staff at Epworth, and all clergy and their families.  
4

5 Georgia Pastors' School provides inspiration, education, fellowship, fun and relaxation for clergy and their families.  
6 Cost is \$120.00 for early bird registration. Spouse registration is free and retired clergy can attend for \$30.00.  
7 For more information on registration and lodging google georgiapastorsschool.org.  
8

9 Sincerely,  
10 Rev. Matt A. Murphy, Chairperson

## 11 **Report 13 - Georgia United Methodist Foundation, Inc.**

### 12 *Our Purpose is Your Mission*

13  
14 The Georgia United Methodist Foundation serves as a nonprofit extension agency of The United Methodist Church.  
15 The Foundation's value proposition is rooted in our purpose and mission, which is not replicated by any other  
16 financial institution available to Methodists in Georgia.  
17

18 The purpose of the Georgia United Methodist Foundation is to partner with churches, nonprofits, individuals, and  
19 families in direct support of the ministries and mission of the church. In this way, the Foundation is a ministry  
20 partner as we seek to live out our mission to provide advanced faith-based financial solutions for investing, lending,  
21 training, and planned giving.  
22

23 Importantly, the Foundation delivers advanced faith-based financial solutions in partnership with Wespath  
24 Institutional Investments. This partnership enables the Foundation to offer Georgia Methodists access to a respected  
25 team of Wespath advisors who manage one of the largest reporting faith-based pension funds in the world. Wespath  
26 and its subsidiaries manage nearly \$26 billion in assets for more than 100 institutional clients as of December 31,  
27 2023. The work of the Foundation, in partnership with Wespath, enables Georgia Methodists to be good stewards of  
28 the financial resources entrusted to them by God while living out a strong Christian witness through socially  
29 responsible investment practices.  
30

31 For almost half a century, the Foundation has partnered with individuals and institutions to mobilize their financial  
32 resources. Here are some important highlights of the Foundation's ministry as of December 31, 2023:  
33

- 34 • Assets Under Management: \$234.7 million
- 35 • Number of Georgia churches and organizations with investment accounts: 175
- 36 • Number of investment accounts, including churches, organizations, trusts, endowments, scholarships, and  
37 donor-advised funds: 340
- 38 • Investments in the Certificate Program: \$42.7 million
- 39 • Number of 1-, 2-, 3-, and 4-year certificates in the Certificate Program: 906
- 40 • Net loans for 63 Methodist-related churches and entities: \$34.5 million
- 41 • Scholarship funds distributed in 2023: \$89,135  
42

43 Thank you for your support of the Foundation. Please reach out if we can assist you as an individual or family or if  
44 we can be helpful to your church, nonprofit, school, college, or university.  
45

46 To learn more, please contact the Georgia United Methodist Foundation:  
47

48 Phone: 770-449-6726  
49 Email: [info@gumf.org](mailto:info@gumf.org)  
50 Web: [gumf.org](http://gumf.org)  
51  
52

1 Respectfully submitted,  
2  
3 Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Coppedge-Henley, President and CEO  
4 Rev. Dr. Rick Lanford, Regional Vice President (Retires effective June 30, 2024)  
5 Ruth A. Knox, Chair of the Board of Trustees  
6 Rev. Doreen Smalls, Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees  
7

8 Editor’s note: During its December 6, 2023 meeting, the Georgia United Methodist Foundation Board of Trustees  
9 unanimously approved the Search Committee’s recommendation to elect Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Coppedge-Henley as  
10 the Foundation’s fifth President and CEO, effective January 9, 2024. Coppedge-Henley succeeds Rev. Keith E.  
11 Lawder, who returned to his prior role as President and CEO on an interim basis following the departure of Mathew  
12 A. Pinson.

## 13 **REPORT 14 – Higher Education and Collegiate Ministry**

### 14 **REPORT 14A – General Board of Higher Education and Ministry**

15  
16  
17 The General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM) embraces the ministry of learning and leadership  
18 formation in the Wesleyan and United Methodist tradition and serves Christian leaders who are shaped by a process  
19 of intellectual engagement, spiritual and character formation, and leadership development.  
20

21 In 2023, GBHEM launched a new mission to bring people together to **discern, learn, and lead** for the Church and  
22 the Academy. The updated mission reflects GBHEM’s desire to create a world where everyone is living fully into  
23 God’s call on their lives. We strive to equip and empower those who engage with us as we prayerfully make progress  
24 toward our shared mission and ministry goals.  
25

26 GBHEM programs like Exploration, Journey Towards Ordained Ministry (JTOM), and Passage UMC, support the  
27 development of Methodist leadership in The United Methodist Church. Passage UMC, a central tracking solution for  
28 candidates and clergy, tracks progress toward vocational goals in the United Methodist Church, making the  
29 operations and procedures of the ministry credentialing process easier while simultaneously increasing transparency  
30 in the credentialing process. GBHEM spent a tremendous amount of time observing the needs of users of the original  
31 UMCares, and then built a user experience that provides clarity and confidence so that the focus can remain not on  
32 administration but on the journey.  
33

34 Education is a core value of The United Methodist Church and one that helped define the Methodist movement in  
35 John Wesley’s 18th century England. Wesley believed education was the key to a fuller, richer life, and it helped to  
36 form leaders within the church. One of the first pronouncements of the first Methodist Education Committee in 1837  
37 was that Methodists should encourage education, which may begin in an infant school and end in Heaven. We  
38 continue to discover ways the denomination can advocate and support our United Methodist schools, colleges, and  
39 universities across the globe.  
40

41 Alleviating student debt through financial support remains a priority for GBHEM. The GBHEM Office of  
42 Scholarships awarded over \$3.9 million in scholarships to 2,100 students in 2023. Scholarships were awarded to  
43 students from all over the world, including fifty-four annual conferences and two central conferences. In addition,  
44 GBHEM also stewarded the distribution of \$20,000,000 in grants and scholarships to United Methodist ministries.  
45

46 Because of your generous support, each year approximately \$10 million is apportioned for the eleven Historically  
47 Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUS) related to the church through The Black College Fund. The funds are  
48 utilized for enhancing capital improvements, providing scholarships to students in need, and providing resources for  
49 faculty, staff, and students.  
50

51 Among its various activities, GBHEM is also responsible for two initiatives approved by General Conference: The  
52 Methodist Global Education Fund for Leadership Development (MGEFLD) – which includes the Grants and  
53 Scholarships Program (GRASP) – and the Central Conference Theological Education Fund (CCTEF). The CCTEF

1 helps advance theological education in all central conferences by strengthening theological institutions, creating  
2 networks among these schools, and increasing access to theological education.

3  
4 GBHEM has also deepened its commitment to partner in mission and ministry through our inter-agency partnership  
5 work, worldwide associations, and advocacy for equitable funding strategies. As a worldwide agency, we  
6 collaborate with key partners, churches, and institutions in Africa, Asia Pacific, Europe, and Eurasia, Latin  
7 American and the Caribbean, and North America.

8  
9 We celebrate our partnership with you and express gratitude for your support of Methodist leaders as we continue to  
10 collaborate as fruitful partners in developing faithful leaders for the Church and the Academy.

11  
12 Sincerely,  
13 General Secretary Rev. Greg Bergquist

## 14 15 **REPORT 14B – Schools of Theology**

### 16 17 **REPORT 14B.1 – Boston University School of Theology**

18  
19 Your partnership, prayers, and support are a cherished gift as BUSTH seeks to serve the church and the world! In a  
20 year like 2023, BUSTH’s commitments to equip transformational leaders for peace and justice are all the more  
21 necessary and significant. We are hopeful and vigilant in our continued partnership with you.

#### 22 23 **NEWS:**

- 24 ● **Students:** Our academic year 2023-24 entering class was among our most diverse, with 86 new students  
25 enrolling, 34% of whom are international students.
- 26 ● **Faculty:** In September we welcomed visiting faculty member David Anderson Hooker, Visiting Associate  
27 Professor of Religion and Conflict Transformation. Two new faculty searches are underway—an  
28 Assistant Professor of Religion and Society and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Professor of Religion and  
29 Black Studies.
- 30 ● **Expanding Online Programming:** BUSTH’s first fully online master’s degree—the Master of Religion  
31 and Public Leadership (MARPL)—continues to expand after welcoming its first students in fall 2022.  
32 MARPL seeks students who wish to be prepared for leadership roles that creatively engage the challenges  
33 of public life. Learn more at [bu.edu/sth/marpl](http://bu.edu/sth/marpl).
- 34 ● **Faculty Research:** Associate Dean Cristian De La Rosa received a Lilly Parenting Grant for \$1.25  
35 million. Our faculty members published more than 75 books, scholarly articles, op-eds, and book reviews  
36 during 2023. Many were interviewed by media publications for their work on academics and activism, fat  
37 liberation, caring for creation, responding to congregational trauma, and the spread of Christianity in  
38 Africa. Selected stories can be found at [bu.edu/sth/research/faculty-research/](http://bu.edu/sth/research/faculty-research/).
- 39 ● **Scholarships:** We continue to offer free tuition to UMC-registered candidates for ordained ministry and  
40 leadership fellowships that support students in ethnic, gender, and sexuality studies. New funds include  
41 the Research & Teaching Fund and Affirmation & Empowerment Fund. We have newly endowed funds  
42 for DEI, Theology & the Arts, and Doctor of Ministry.
- 43 ● **Accreditation and Curriculum:** BUSTH received a renewed full and unqualified listing by the  
44 University Senate of the United Methodist Church. BUSTH is concluding a curriculum review for the  
45 MDiv and MTS programs which will launch in fall 2024.
- 46 ● **Online Lifelong Learning:** BUSTH offers online courses for professional and spiritual enrichment of  
47 religious leaders. Recent offerings include “Sustaining Spirits while Empires Crumble” and “Preaching  
48 Mark with Different Voices.” To learn more, visit [bu.edu/sth/oll](http://bu.edu/sth/oll).
- 49 ● **Development:** Recent accomplishments include endowing the Faith and Ecological Justice Fund, and new  
50 funding for student scholarships and academic programs.

#### 51 52 **COMMITMENT TO JUSTICE and COMPASSION:**

- 53 ● BUSTH’s Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion offers webinars on timely inclusion efforts, such as  
54 “[Increasing Participation of Students of Underrepresented Backgrounds.](#)”



- This year’s Lowell Lecture topics explore the role and responses of theological education for the challenges of today with lectures from Rev. Dr. Ted Smith (fall) and Dr. Keri Day (spring).
- Work continues to improve accessibility, sustainability, and responsible investing as written in our 2030 Strategic Plan. BUSTH is the first certified Green School at BU and is active in the Green Seminary Initiative.

With faith and gratitude,  
G. Sujin Pak, Dean

## **REPORT 14B.2 – Candler School of Theology** **2024 Report to the UMC Annual Conferences**

Since 1914, **Candler School of Theology at Emory University** has educated faithful and creative leaders for the church’s ministries throughout the world. An official seminary of The United Methodist Church, Candler holds true to the Wesleyan value of ecumenical openness, enthusiastically welcoming students from more than 40 denominations, with nearly half of Master of Divinity students coming from the Methodist family, including United Methodist, African Methodist Episcopal, African Methodist Episcopal Zion, Christian Methodist Episcopal, Wesleyan, Free Methodist, Church of the Nazarene, and others. Our student body reflects the diversity and breadth of the Christian faithful, with an enrollment of 419 from 12 countries and 38 states, and 44% persons of color. This diversity is a blessing, enriching our life together and providing a “learning laboratory” for 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.

Candler offers six degrees (Master of Divinity, Master of Theological Studies, Master of Religion and Public Life, Master of Religious Leadership, Master of Theology, Doctor of Ministry) and ten dual degrees, most of which are available in hybrid or online formats. Response to our new hybrid-format Master of Divinity, which launched in Fall 2023, has been strong: 65% of 2023’s MDiv entering class chose the hybrid model, blending online classes and in-person intensives. Plus, around 20% of MDiv students participate in Candler’s Teaching Parish program to earn contextual education credit as they serve as student pastors in local churches. Our proven DMin program—with a near 90% completion rate—is 90% online as well. These flexible options plus Candler’s recognized academic excellence and hands-on learning opportunities are opening possibilities for even more people to follow God’s call to ministry.

Reducing student debt through generous financial aid is a top priority for Candler. In 2023-2024, we are on track to award \$6.3 million in scholarship support, with 100% of MDiv students receiving aid. All MDiv students who are certified candidates for ordained ministry in the UMC receive full-tuition scholarships, and all MDiv, MTS, MRL, and ThM students receive a scholarship covering at least 50% of tuition. MDiv students also receive financial coaching and complete a financial literacy program to strengthen their budgeting skills and reduce debt. That knowledge will serve them—and the ministries they serve—well into the future.

Candler is growing in exciting directions as it creates avenues to bring high-quality theological education to a wider audience. It is a hub of Christian learning with multiple entry points. Those who aren’t seeking an advanced degree can engage in learning through The Candler Foundry, our innovative program to make theological education accessible to the public through short courses, events, and related activities; the United Methodist Course of Study to educate licensed local pastors; the new Candler Center for Christian Leadership to refine business-related skills of United Methodist leaders; and La Mesa Academy, offering diplomas in pastoral leadership via a two-year hybrid program with courses in Spanish, English, and Korean.

One of the biggest news items of the year for Candler is the announcement that after nearly 18 years, Dean Jan Love will step down from Candler’s deanship in the summer of 2024. Through Dean Love’s transformational leadership, Candler has expanded to offer three new degrees, five new dual degrees, and more online and hybrid options, including the highly successful hybrid MDiv and DMin degrees. She has increased the diversity of Candler’s faculty and student body, continued the school’s tradition of world-class scholarship in hiring 75% of the current full-time faculty, and grown the number of endowed professorships. Her efforts have enhanced Candler’s ability to fulfill its mission in a rapidly changing environment, and she leaves the school in a strong position. The next dean of Candler is expected to be named by early summer.

1  
2 Candler depends upon your prayers, partnership, and support. Thank you for the countless ways you advance this  
3 essential ministry in the life of our denomination. We invite you to visit us online at [candler.emory.edu](http://candler.emory.edu).

4  
5 —Office of Communications  
6 Candler School of Theology, Emory University  
7

8 **REPORT 14B.3 – Drew University**  
9 **2023 Report to the United Methodist Annual Conferences**

10  
11 Drew University Theological School  
12 Rev. Edwin David Aponte, PhD, ThD (honorary)  
13 Dean and Professor of Religion & Culture  
14 December 10, 2023  
15

16 Drew University Theological School educates and mentors pastors, preachers, deacons, activists, teachers, thought  
17 leaders, and change agents for ministry and service in the church and society. Drew Theological School is diverse in  
18 theology, vocations, age, as well as racial, ethnic, national, and international identities. Many Drew students are just  
19 beginning their ministry, while others come to graduate theological education with prior ministry experience. The  
20 latter reflects a growing trend among all theological schools in the United States and Canada. Drew holds in-person  
21 classes in Madison, New Jersey, several classes meet exclusively online, while other meet in hybrid fashion, i.e.,  
22 partially online, partially in-person. This is also the case with chapel worship which originates in Seminary Hall, but  
23 also is live-streamed so that students around the world participate. Drew Theological School is a global seminary  
24 with a global student population serving the worldwide church.  
25

26 In Fall 2023 Drew Theological School welcomed 104 new students in all degree programs, with total student  
27 enrollment (by head count) growing from 364 students in Fall 2021 to 407 in Fall 2023 semester. Enrollment of  
28 international students at Drew increased from 120 students in Fall 2021 to 169 students in Fall 2023. This number  
29 includes students who are studying full-time in the U.S.A. on a student Visa, students who are studying online from  
30 their home country, and students in the South Korean Cohort of the Doctor of Ministry program.  
31

32 Drew’s interdisciplinary degree programs provide real-world apprenticeships, promotes adaptive leadership skills,  
33 and encourages innovation through team-taught core courses as well as a variety of electives that integrate  
34 theological disciplines and faith practices. The Drew faculty’s shared values are infused across all aspects of the  
35 teaching and learning: 1) a commitment to anti-racism; 2) gender and sexual-identity equality; 3) eco-sustainability  
36 and environmental justice; and 4) interfaith understanding and cooperation. Drew Theological School has an  
37 increase in United Methodist students, additionally, Drew has many United Methodist Global Fellows pursuing  
38 further education for ministry. UMC graduates are serving in conferences across the United States, and especially  
39 within our nearby regional United Methodist conferences of Greater New Jersey, Eastern Pennsylvania, and New  
40 York Annual Conference.  
41

42 **REPORT 14B.4 – Duke University Divinity School**  
43

44 Duke Divinity School can attest to the work of God’s Spirit to usher us into a season of hope and continued  
45 faithfulness to the mission and calling to serve the church, academy, and the world. In 2023, the Duke University  
46 president and provost appointed Dean Edgardo Colón-Emeric for a full five-year term. In his Opening Convocation  
47 sermon, he stated: “This year marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of my ordination in the United Methodist Church. This is  
48 the school that prepared me. Today, I give God thanks for still allowing me to serve as a minister of the gospel and I  
49 renew the vow I made when I was installed as dean. By the grace of God and en conjunto with you, I will uphold  
50 this school’s ‘commitment to God and the people of God, to the highest standards of academic excellence, and to  
51 this university.’”  
52

53 In the next three years, we will celebrate a number of centennial milestones: Duke University and The Duke  
54 Endowment (2024), the 17<sup>th</sup> centennial of the Council of Nicaea (2025), and Duke Divinity School (2026). As a  
55 foretaste of those occasions to reflect and celebrate, we have had two important milestone celebrations in 2023. The  
56 Office of Black Church Studies (OBCS) commemorated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, an occasion to rejoice in all that God

1 has done through OBCS to bless our Duke Divinity community and to extend the gifts from the Black Church to the  
2 whole church. As just one example of the impact and influence from OBCS, the Rev. Dr. Cynthia Hale (D'79)  
3 received Duke University's Distinguished Alumni Award in recognition of her outstanding contributions in ministry  
4 and service.

5  
6 The Hispanic House of Studies (HHS) celebrated its quinceañera (15<sup>th</sup> anniversary), another opportunity to have our  
7 hope buoyed by God's work in our midst. HHS was created by the Divinity School, with support from The Duke  
8 Endowment, to support the formation of ministers to Hispanic/Latinx congregations and communities in the North  
9 Carolina and Western North Carolina Annual Conferences and beyond. These efforts are not confined to a limited  
10 silo but extend throughout our academic and ministerial programs. For instance, we now offer the "Rediscovering  
11 the Heart of Methodism" course in Spanish on Divinity+, an online resource that is widely available for ministers  
12 and congregations.

13  
14 This fall, we welcomed 215 entering students from 35 different states as well as new community members who hold  
15 either primary or secondary citizenship in 16 other countries including Canada, Chile, China, Finland, Germany,  
16 India, Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, Peru, Russia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Syria, and Zimbabwe.  
17 The Master of Divinity program gained 104 new students, with 54 residential students and 50 in the hybrid program.  
18 The Master of Arts in Christian Practice enrolled 13 new students; the Doctor of Ministry, 22; Master of Theology,  
19 11; Master of Theological Studies, 29; the Doctor of Theology welcomed five new students to campus, and five  
20 special students enrolled. The Certificate in Theology and Health Care welcomed 11 residential students to campus  
21 and 15 in the hybrid program. Across all degree programs at the Divinity School, 31 percent of the incoming class  
22 identified as a race or ethnicity other than white. Black students made up 21 percent of all students; Latinx students,  
23 seven percent. Fifty-four percent of students in the incoming class identify as female. There were 25 denominations  
24 represented in the M.Div. entering class, with 26 percent affiliated with the United Methodist Church. Baptists made  
25 up 10 percent of the incoming students; Anglican or Episcopal students, 10 percent; and nondenominational  
26 students, 12 percent.

27  
28 Duke Divinity School continues to invest in pathways to support Methodist leadership and pastoral formation.  
29 Divinity+ launched the Church Administration series focused on developing practical skills for church leaders. More  
30 than 1,000 learners have enrolled in the first two courses, "Theology and Time Management" and "Strategic  
31 Management." We inaugurated the Certificate in Chaplaincy, designed to prepare students to provide spiritual care  
32 in a variety of settings such as hospitals, hospice, prisons, higher education, and the military. The certificate can be  
33 earned as part of the residential M.Div., Th.M., and M.T.S. degree programs.

34  
35 The school has also welcomed new leaders who bring their gifts to the work of advancing the mission to serve  
36 Christ and the church. Two houses have appointed new directors: the Office of Black Church Studies is led by the  
37 Rev. Dr. Eric Lewis Williams (D'05), assistant professor of theology and Black Church Studies; and the Anglican  
38 Episcopal House of Studies has named the Very Rev. Timothy Kimbrough (D'83), Jack and Barbara Bovender  
39 Professor of the Practice of Anglican Studies. Key members who have joined our staff team include Anita Lumpkin,  
40 executive director of enrollment management; and the Rev. Sarah Belles, a Duke Divinity alumna and ordained  
41 elder in full connection with the Western North Carolina Annual Conference, as the director of student life.

42  
43 Several new programs demonstrate Duke's sustained commitment to connecting with churches and ministers. With  
44 gratitude to funding from the Lilly Endowment, the Divinity School has launched the Transformative Preaching Lab  
45 to prepare creative, culturally competent preachers who can reach audiences in effective and engaging ways. It will  
46 expand preaching training for students in the hybrid modality of the M.Div. program with new courses and  
47 preaching laboratories along with new capacities to explore and engage digital tools for community worship and  
48 preaching. The Transformative Preaching Lab also provides new opportunities for formation in trauma-informed  
49 preaching and preaching in immigrant communities, issues that are especially salient in communities across the  
50 country and around the world.

51  
52 The Theology, Medicine, and Culture initiative has launched the Mental Health Track for Christian mental health  
53 practitioners as part of its Certificate in Theology and Health Care. This hybrid certificate program offers spiritual  
54 and theological formation for mental health clinicians in a range of disciplines. The research and programming from  
55 other Duke Divinity initiatives, including Theology, Medicine, and Culture; Duke Initiatives in Theology and the  
56 Arts; Leadership Education at Duke Divinity; and Thriving Rural Communities, continue to provide numerous  
57 opportunities to bear witness to God's creativity, compassion, and care for communities and congregations.

1  
2 Duke Divinity School continues to be grateful for our ongoing participation in The United Methodist Church and  
3 partnership with this annual conference. We look forward to our ongoing work with you as we join the leading of  
4 God’s Spirit in the task of preparing people for Christian ministry. To learn more about Duke Divinity School,  
5 please visit our website at [www.divinity.duke.edu](http://www.divinity.duke.edu).

6  
7 Respectfully submitted by Edgardo Colón-Emeric  
8 Dean of Duke Divinity School  
9

10 **REPORT 14B.5 Gammon Theological Seminary**  
11 **2024 Report**  
12

13 Gammon Theological Seminary is the Interdenominational Theological Center's United Methodist constituent  
14 member in Atlanta, Georgia. The Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC) is a Christian Africentric  
15 ecumenical consortium of seminaries and fellowships that educate students to commit to practicing justice and peace  
16 through a liberating and transforming spirituality to become leaders in the church and local/global  
17 communities. Gammon was founded in 1883, bearing the name of the Rev. Elijah H. Gammon, a generous  
18 clergyman, businessman, and philanthropist. Rev. Elijah H. Gammon invested and endowed the founding of  
19 Gammon Seminary in partnership with Bishop Henry Warren and the Freedman's Aid Society. Gammon has  
20 educated Black Clergy for almost 140 years, with graduates serving every level of the church, including Bishops,  
21 Superintendents, General church leaders, Conference staff, and Clergy in every jurisdiction. Gammon/ITC offers the  
22 following degree programs: the Master of Divinity, the Master of Arts in Religion and Education, and the Doctor of  
23 Ministry. The support given to The United Methodist Ministerial Education Fund by United Methodist Conferences  
24 continues to enable Gammon students to be grounded in the Wesleyan tradition of theological education.  
25

26 Our 17th President/Dean, Rev. Dr. Candace M Lewis, and the Gammon staff team continue to lead innovatively in  
27 chartering a "Brand New Day" for Gammon's recruitment, retention, research and resources, fund development, and  
28 scholarship endowments in her first two years of service.  
29

30 **Our new initiatives and celebrations this year, 2023 – 2024, at Gammon, include:**

- 31 • In May 2023, Gammon held our 1st Annual Student Scholarship Fundraiser Golf Tournament, receiving  
32 \$70,000 in donations to assist students with their tuition, which also helped Gammon build more  
33 relationships and partnerships.
- 34 • In June 2023, The Rev. Walter H. McKelvey Endowed Scholarship Fund was launched by Dr. Loretta F.  
35 McKelvey (wife of the late Rev. McKelvey) and Dr. Walter Kimbrough with a \$50,000.00 matching gift in  
36 partnership with the South Carolina United Methodist Foundation.
- 37 • In June 2023, The Florida Conference raised and donated over \$ 60,000.00 to the Rev. Geraldine  
38 McClellan Endowed Scholarship Fund, which is now fully endowed by the Florida United Methodist  
39 Foundation.
- 40 • In July 2023 and December 2023, Gammon hosted the Ebony Exploration Event for 75 young adults under  
41 35, increasing participation and forming strategic partnerships with external organizations to enhance the  
42 program's reach and impact.
- 43 • In December 2023, we celebrated our 140th Founders Day Event/Pastors and Leaders Conference, with  
44 over two hundred persons attending workshops (in person and virtual) and our Scholarship Gala Dinner,  
45 hosted at IMPACT Church in Atlanta, GA.  
46

47 The greatest challenge facing Gammon Seminary is the rising cost of theological education and the significant debt  
48 our students incur as they answer their call to full-time ministry. Therefore, Gammon is committed to raising a  
49 million dollars in the next two years to offer full-tuition scholarships to students called and committed to full-time  
50 ministry in the United Methodist Church. We are grateful to this Annual Conference for your support of theological  
51 education and your commitment to ensuring pastoral leadership is theologically trained to lead us forward in the  
52 Wesleyan tradition.  
53

54 Respectfully submitted,

55  
56 Rev. Dr. Candace M. Lewis, President-Dean

## REPORT 14B.6 Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary

Report to the Annual Conference  
2023-2024

For 170 years Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary has been in service to the Church and the Wesleyan/Methodist connection through the formation of Christian leaders in ordained and lay ministries. As the result of a new strategic planning process that seeks to position the seminary more fully and purposefully in service to the global church, Garrett adopted a new mission and vision that will focus our work to this end: *Forming courageous leaders in the way of Jesus to cultivate communities of justice, compassion, and hope...for the thriving of the Church and the healing of the world.*

During this past academic year, Garrett also welcomed its largest entering class in over a decade, with 124 new students, and a current enrollment of 314 students representing 37 states and 21 nations from across the globe. We have experienced particular growth in students from the African continent and the Indian subcontinent, adding to an already richly diverse student body. While our denominational diversity also continues to grow, we also proudly welcomed growth in our United Methodist students who constitute more than 50% of our student body.

Of particular importance in the past year has been the partnership we have entered into with Phillips School of Theology of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church (CME). Phillips students are now also fully Garrett students and together we are preparing the next generation of CME leaders in a robust pan-Methodist/Wesleyan context alongside UMC, AME, and AMEZ students. Phillips President, Dr. Paul Brown, is now also affiliated with our faculty, teaching CME History, Doctrine, and Polity, as well as spiritual formation and organizational leadership courses. It is our hope and intention to continue to grow this partnership and foster a truly pan-Methodist/Wesleyan ethos which includes our growing global Methodist partners in Asia, Latin America, and Africa. Additionally, last year, all Garrett degree programs were made truly hybrid so that students can study with us and earn their degrees either on our Evanston campus or in virtual learning spaces around the globe. This has added an amazing breadth of experience and contexts to our classrooms, where we seek to address real-world challenges with gospel inspired solutions or responses.

Garrett's world-class faculty continue developing curricular innovations that are responsive to the church's growing needs, while also contributing a significant body of scholarly work to their respective fields. Our faculty are also at work developing The Garrett Collective, an online platform of theological learning and resources for churches and partner organizations inspired by our faculty's research and/or strategic partnerships. Finally, at this critical juncture in the history of United Methodism, faculty leaders are providing essential guidance to UMC students, while also continuing to envision with hope the next expression of Methodism that is responsive to the Spirit's call for such a time as this.

## REPORT 14B.7 –Saint Paul School of Theology

Educating tomorrow's leaders by offering on-campus, online, and hybrid learning courses at a FLEXible schedule, Saint Paul School of Theology is a seminary serving a diverse community committed to the formation of people for innovative, creative ministry through rigorous academic life. Grounded in the academic study of faith and ministry, theology is practiced in a traditional classroom and remote spaces. Our contextual curriculum features Ministry Collaboration Groups, Practicums, Spiritual Formation Retreats, and Seminars. Students learn from dedicated faculty, experienced pastors, and community leaders about best ministry practices, leaving our graduates with the tools and first-hand experience necessary to meet the needs of a changing world.

At the core of our mission at Saint Paul is the formation of people for innovative, creative ministry through rigorous academic life. In 2024, we are launching two exciting new programs to revitalize current pastors and preachers and prepare seminary students for music ministry. First, with the help of Lilly Endowment's Compelling Preaching grant and the leadership of Dr. Casey Sigmon, Assistant Professor of Preaching and Worship and Director of Contextual Education and Pause/Play Center for Preachers, Saint Paul School of Theology is creating a Center that addresses the risk of losing heart and prophetic imagination as a preacher in this divided world. The Pause/Play Center for Preachers' mission is in its name: to hold space for busy preachers to pause and play their way into a renewal of their vocation as preachers of the Good News. Second, for Fall 2024, as part of our Master of Arts in Christian Ministry (MACM) degree program, we will launch a first-of-its-kind specialization in Modern Worship Music. Saint Paul

1 will partner with The United Methodist Church of the Resurrection and their COR Worship Collective to prepare  
2 students to write, produce, and perform modern worship music. Students will integrate a worship leaders' skills with  
3 their study of theology, the bible, history, and worship in a diverse, inclusive, and spiritually enriching  
4 environment. Lastly, we recently completed the (Theo)Logic Studio on our Oklahoma Campus. The Studio serves as  
5 a dedicated space for creating, recording, and editing digital media resources tailored to the ministries of students,  
6 staff, faculty, and alums, encompassing content development ranging from podcasts and video resources to digital  
7 graphics.  
8

9 We continue to invite Saint Paul students, alums, and friends to join us in a hybrid format, where participants may  
10 join in-person or online, allowing everyone to come together as one institution from wherever they are. Saint Paul  
11 offers weekly chapel services throughout the academic year featuring students, alums, faculty, and local leaders. In  
12 addition, weekly Spiritual Formation allows attendees to engage in spiritual practices led by new Oklahoma Chapel  
13 Coordinator Rev. Alanna Ireland '23. Some practices take us outdoors or to other sacred spaces, and others have us  
14 connect with community leaders.  
15

16 For the 2023-2024 academic year, we brought 41 new, faithful theologians from across the world to our learning  
17 community. International students from South Korea, Belgium, and Mexico added to the global learning  
18 environment on both campuses and online. Twenty-seven percent of incoming students identified as a race or  
19 ethnicity other than white, and 53 percent identified as female.  
20

21 Saint Paul staff and faculty continue contributing to the academy, church, and society. The faculty of Saint Paul  
22 School of Theology maintains high standards of scholarship, research, publication, and engagement. Over the past  
23 year, their many activities and publications have been so numerous that space permits only sharing selected  
24 highlights:

- 25 • Dr. Israel Kamudzandu, Lindsey P. Pherigo Associate Professor of New Testament Studies and Biblical  
26 Interpretation, published *Translation as Incarnation: The Bible in the Twenty-First Century Global South*  
27 and was the featured guest speaker of our January forum.
- 28 • Dr. Joshua Bartholomew, Assistant Professor of Ethics, Church, and Society, published *Black Theology*  
29 *and The Black Panthers*
- 30 • Dr. Elaine Robinson, Professor of Methodist Studies and Christian Theology, published *Leading with Love:*  
31 *Spiritual Disciplines For Practical Leadership*
- 32 • Rabbi Michael Zedek, Rabbi-in-Residence, published *Taking Miracles Seriously: A Journey to Everyday*  
33 *Spirituality* and hosted a forum with Dr. Jeanne Hoeft, Associate Professor of Pastoral Theology and  
34 Pastoral Care, and Franklin and Louise Cole Associate Professor in Town and Country Ministries, on *The*  
35 *War in Israel and Traumatized Communities*
- 36 • Dr. Mike Graves, Professor Emeritus of William K. McElvaney of Preaching and Worship, published  
37 *Jesus' Vision for Your One Wild and Precious Life (on Things Like Poverty, Hunger, Polarization,*  
38 *Inclusion, and More)*  
39

40 The 2023-2024 Fiscal Year brought a change in leadership to the Seminary. Rev. Neil Blair '80 retired as President  
41 on December 31, 2023, and President Jay Simmons, formerly Vice President of Institutional Advancement, took the  
42 helm at the start of 2024. In addition, Saint Paul Board of Trustees' Chair Dr. Amy Hogan stepped down as Board  
43 Chair, with Ms. Sharon Cleaver assuming the position until the end of June 2024. Our current strategic plan is set to  
44 conclude within the coming year. Consequently, the Board of Trustees formed a task force several months ago to  
45 prepare the next iteration of our strategic plan. Members of the Seminary's Executive Leadership Team are now  
46 working with faculty and staff to refine the draft scripted by the task force. These efforts will continue over the next  
47 few months until we have a document ready for review by the Board of Trustees. While we are still too early in this  
48 effort to comment on any specific initiatives, the plan ultimately endorsed by the Board will guide all our efforts for  
49 the next several years. Therefore, this effort is critical in defining how we ensure that Saint Paul remains a vital and  
50 vigorous Seminary committed to preparing our students for creative and innovative ministry.  
51

52 For the 2023-2024 fiscal year, Saint Paul Course of Study (COS) School educated 250 individual students, including  
53 79 new students, with approximately 600 registrations and offering 46 classes. Serving 31 Conferences, 89 Districts,  
54 116 Full Time and 126 Part-Time Licensed Local Pastors comprised these registrations. Seventy percent of these  
55 students are taking more than one course. To help offset student costs, twenty percent of all students received aid  
56 from their conference or church. COS School continues to attract a diverse student body. One hundred eighty-eight

1 students ranged in age from 30 to 65, and 62 students ranged in age from 66 to 82. Students self-identified across  
2 four racial/ethnic groups. Fifty-two percent were male, and forty-eight percent were female. Many COS School  
3 students serve more than one church, many rural, with a few dozen students serving three or more churches. We  
4 helped 23 students finish the 20-course program this year, issuing them certificates of completion. With approval  
5 from GBHEM, the school has continued its course offerings in both asynchronous and synchronous online formats.  
6 Utilizing this online format, we reached students in 28 states. We continue to offer online registration completed by  
7 the student with the ability to access their student account through Populi as used by our Seminary students. COS  
8 also uses the same learning platform, Moodle, as our Seminary students. By implementing the Course of Study  
9 School into Populi, these students share the same benefits as the Seminary, allowing them to participate in the Saint  
10 Paul experience. They have full access to the Seminary library on campus and online, with several required readings  
11 accessible as an eBook. We have invited COS School students to join our Saint Paul School of Theology Weekly  
12 Chapel Services and Spiritual Formation gatherings and other Saint Paul events.  
13 Saint Paul is a financially healthy Seminary. We operate with a balanced budget, no debt, and an endowment that is  
14 9-10 times the size of our annual expenses. Sustainability has been our focus over the past six years, and we have  
15 achieved our goal. Investments in our future bring exciting new opportunities for our students, staff, and faculty. As  
16 always, we continue to be grateful for donations from the community that provide technology, scholarships, and  
17 evolving academic programs to students. Our significant technological investments have allowed us to maintain a  
18 hybrid educational delivery model, providing a flexible working arrangement for our students.

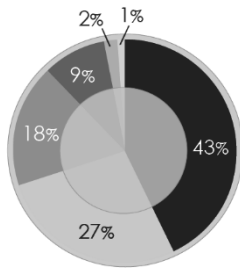
19  
20 We are continuing to enhance our partnership with Zoom and Neat. We now have Neat Bars & Neat Boards in all  
21 our classrooms. In addition, during this last year, we implemented a Neat Board in Harris Chapel on our Oklahoma  
22 Campus. We also have Neat Boards in multiple common areas to encourage ad-hoc use of the technology for  
23 breakout groups and other miscellaneous meetings between our two campuses and our remote students. One of the  
24 best features of this technology is its ability to receive automatic real-time over-the-air feature upgrades. Zoom &  
25 Neat continue enhancing our learning environment by rolling out new enhancements, including enhanced  
26 whiteboarding, noise cancellation, and AI features. Our Neat equipment continuously monitors several  
27 environmental factors within our classrooms: air quality, temperature, humidity, VOC, and CO2, as well as being  
28 able to tell if the classrooms are occupied and how many individuals are in the room. We can also monitor the  
29 audio/video quality and network connectivity in each of our classrooms, as well as the connection quality for all  
30 remote students attending the class. We are excited about the additional enhancements that will come to our  
31 classrooms from Neat and Zoom over this next year.

32  
33 Saint Paul School of Theology is blessed to be your partner in ministry and help those seeking to discover more and  
34 answer the call. Your advocacy for the Seminary and generous financial support have been vital in realizing our  
35 accomplishments. Many thanks for the innumerable ways you have helped Saint Paul. Your prayers and actions on  
36 behalf of the Seminary are a blessing to all of us.

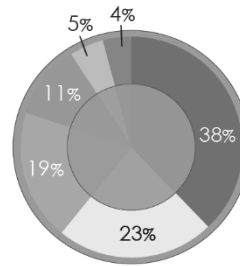
37  
38 Jay K. Simmons, President  
39 spst.edu | *Where Theology Meets Life*  
40

41 **REPORT 14B.8 – United Theological Seminary**  
42 Dayton, OH  
43

44 For more than 150 years, United Theological Seminary has prepared men and women to serve as faithful and fruitful  
45 Christian leaders who make disciples of Jesus Christ. In the 2022-2023 academic year, the seminary served 547  
46 students, representing 36 states, 20 countries, and 43 denominations, with 38% of students identifying as United  
47 Methodist. United in Christ, the student body is a multi-ethnic, multi-racial community that is 43% African  
48 American, 27% White, 18% international, 9% Hispanic, and 2% Asian or Pacific Islander.\* During the 2022-2023  
49 academic year, 120 graduates completed their programs.



- 43% African American
- 27% Caucasian
- 18% International
- 9% Hispanic
- 2% Asian or Pacific Islander
- 1% Two or more races



- 38% United Methodist
- 23% Baptist
- 19% Other
- 11% Non-denominational
- 5% AME
- 4% AME Zion

1

2 **Houses of Study**

3 United’s academic programs include seven Houses of Study for denominational, church renewal, and/or language-  
 4 and culture-based ministry, including online Spanish and Korean houses of study. These houses of study have  
 5 enrolled over 120 new master’s students in the United States and around the world.

6

7 **Bishop Bruce Ough Innovation Center**

8 In 2023, the Bishop Bruce Ough Innovation Center, directed by Rev. Sue Nilson Kibbey, engaged more than 5,000  
 9 participants through 64 resourcing events and activities. The Center partnered with the Black Methodists for Church  
 10 Renewal Laity Advocacy Committee to conduct the 2023 Laity Leadership Institution. The Center also launched a  
 11 *Dynamite Prayer* movement, based on the guidebook *Dynamite Prayer: A 28 Day Experiment* (Invite Resources,  
 12 2022) by Rev. Kibbey and Rev. Dr. Rosario Picardo. Multiple United Methodist conferences and more than 90  
 13 congregations across denominations committed to be part of a Dynamite Prayer Wave and received resourcing on  
 14 the practice of “breakthrough prayer.”

15

16 **New Faces at United**

17 Over the past year, the seminary welcomed several new members to the United community. Bishop James Swanson,  
 18 most recently bishop of the Mississippi Conference of The United Methodist Church, was installed as United  
 19 Methodist Bishop-in-Residence. Dr. Pauline Paris Buisch and Rev. Dr. Xavier L. Johnson joined the faculty as  
 20 Assistant Professor of Old Testament and Assistant Professor of Preaching and Black Church Studies, respectively,  
 21 and Dr. Eliseo Mejia came on board as the Academic Oversight Officer for the Hispanic House of Study.

22

23 **Reducing Student Debt**

24 Finances shouldn’t stand in the way of a seminary education. That’s why United has launched the Fresh Wind:  
 25 Where the Spirit Takes Flight campaign to add \$10 million to the scholarship endowment, which will dramatically  
 26 increase the seminary’s capacity to provide scholarships to students for many years to come. As of January 2024, the  
 27 seminary was more than 70% toward the \$10 million goal.

28

29 Dr. Kent Millard, President

30

31 *\* Student data represent unduplicated headcount enrollment for the 2022-2023 academic year. Demographic*  
 32 *figures represent those who responded.*

33 *\* Student data represent 2022-2023 headcount enrollment, as of March 1, 2023. Denominational figures represent*  
 34 *those who responded.*

35 *\*\* Course of Study figures represent the most recent four terms.*

36

37 **REPORT 14B.9 Wesley Theological Seminary**

38 Rev. Dr. David McAllister-Wilson, President

39

40 The mission of Wesley Theological Seminary (WTS) is to equip persons for Christian ministry and leadership in  
 41 the church and the world, to advance theological scholarship, and to model a prophetic voice in the public square.

42



1 Despite the challenges posed by the global landscape, WTS continues to flourish, driven by our commitment to  
2 excellence in theological education and community engagement:  
3

4 **Master of Divinity, Master of Arts, Master of Theological Studies Degrees:** We offer pathways to meet the  
5 needs of a variety of students. Whether traditional, brick and mortar, inperson study or a flexible, online, hybrid  
6 model (Wesley FlexMA), WTS is committed to curating space for theological reflection, academic inquiry, and  
7 practical application. <https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/study/>  
8

9 **Doctor of Ministry Degree:** WTS is a leader in DMin education offering specialized tracks of study for scholars  
10 going into parish ministry, global missions, or military chaplaincy.  
11 <https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/doctorofministry/program/>  
12

13 **Wesley Innovation Hub:** WTS received a \$1.2M grant from the Lilly Endowment and will embark on  
14 groundbreaking initiatives that harness the power of technology, entrepreneurship, and interdisciplinary  
15 collaboration. <https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/wesley-innovation-hub/>  
16

17 **Center for Public Theology:** WTS received a generous grant from the Trinity Wall Street Foundation to launch  
18 “The Public Theology Fellows Program,” an innovative initiative to bridge gaps between faith communities and  
19 political action. <https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/ice/programs/public-theology/>  
20

21 **Community Engagement Institute:** WTS received a generous grant from City Seminary in NYC for the  
22 innovative, immersive study and praxis of urban ministry.  
23 <https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/ice/about-us/overview-2/>  
24

25 **The Henry Luce III Center for the Arts and Religion:** WTS is thrilled to share two new exhibits, *Sacred Ground*,  
26 which focused on the intersection of community-engaged art and spirituality; and *Paradise Lost*, a captivating  
27 exhibition highlighting transcultural, multicultural, and interreligious narratives.  
28 <https://www.luceartsandreligion.org/>  
29

30 **Lewis Center for Church Leadership:** The Lewis Center conducts leading edge research for the local church.  
31 WTS is pleased to report a growing demand for transformative leadership training within religious communities.  
32 <https://www.churchleadership.com/>  
33

34 **Call us:** (202) 885-8659 **Email us:** [admissions@wesleyseminary.edu](mailto:admissions@wesleyseminary.edu). **Follow us:** Facebook/IG: @WesleySeminary  
35 and LinkedIn: @WesleyTheologicalSeminary  
36

37 Submitted by Lyvonne Briggs, Director of Strategic Communications and Marketing  
38

### 39 **REPORT 14C UM Commission Higher Education Report** 40

41 Students matter.  
42

43 These two simple words encapsulate the work of the United Methodist Commission on Higher Education and the  
44 ministries we support. College is a time when many students explore and develop their faith. Our United Methodist  
45 colleges and universities, along with our Wesley Foundation ministries, give students the opportunity to ask tough  
46 questions, build community, develop a sense of purpose, and find Jesus. Because students matter, our work matters.  
47

48 This particular work continues to be among the most important that we do in our church. And, we must continue to  
49 do this work together. Our students need what we provide through the UM Commission and our ministries. In the  
50 midst of many challenges in our world and in our church, maintaining focus on students and the impact that God has  
51 on their lives during college should be the catalyst we need to maintain or enhance our support for their spiritual  
52 development. Because students matter, your support matters.  
53

54 The UM Commission exists to undergird the amazing work being done through our chaplains and Wesley ministry  
55 staff on our campuses. These special individuals use their gifts to counsel students, lead worship, disciple small

1 group leaders, take mission trips, raise funds, maintain facilities, and, most importantly, develop disciples of Jesus  
2 Christ. Their work is remarkable and transformational, both individually for students and collectively for the  
3 Kingdom of God. Because students matter, our chaplains and Wesley ministry staff matter.  
4

5 I am thankful to be part of the UM Commission on Higher Education - an organization committed to supporting  
6 students and enhancing their college experiences. Our earnest focus on their spiritual development and growth  
7 during such a critical time in their lives clearly demonstrates our mission – Students matter.  
8

9 *Beau Seagraves, President*

10  
11 One night back in 2005, when I was a Wesley director at Mercer University, I was approached by someone from the  
12 neighborhood whom I had never met. Just minutes before worship, he walked right up to me, got in my face, and  
13 said, “You are standing too close to the mirror to see what God sees.” Those words have haunted me since they were  
14 spoken.  
15

16 At the time, I was a Wesley director, local church pastor, and seminary student (not an uncommon experience for  
17 Wesley Directors these days). I remember feeling exhausted from an Old Testament test and planning a funeral. I  
18 did not want to be there; I just wanted to go home. Have you been there? Has the busyness of life ever overwhelmed  
19 you in a way that you could see little beyond the present challenges? As the man walked away, he turned back,  
20 handed me a \$20 bill, and said, “What you do matters here...look at all these young people...they matter.” And then  
21 he just walked away.  
22

23 It could be the challenging economics, the seemingly endless social unrest, or the divisions facing our denomination,  
24 but I fear I have been standing too close to the mirror again. I have been consumed with anxiety about our shared  
25 future and how we will emerge from our present crises. I wonder if others might be feeling that way. I fear I have  
26 been standing too close to the mirror to see the beauty of what is around us, what God is doing in our midst, or the  
27 people in our communities.  
28

29 For over 70 years, the people of North and South Georgia have joined their resources to ensure college students  
30 know they matter while at school. That their story and our shared future matter. This multigenerational commitment  
31 to students has enabled some of the country’s most fruitful and vibrant Wesley ministries with more than 6,000  
32 students reached annually. This commitment helped give birth to nine highly respected, transformational UM-related  
33 campuses dedicated to educating the whole student. Graduates of these institutions and Wesley ministries are  
34 becoming transformational leaders helping envision a better future.

35 Please take the next several minutes to step back from the mirror of busyness and experience the incredible gift of  
36 the higher education ministry you have helped build. You will discover stories of transformation, calling, and  
37 growth. You will find the beauty of Christ-centered communities on campuses across the state. You will see how  
38 your gifts have changed students’ lives. Most of all, I want you to know how you have helped to make all this  
39 happen... because you matter, too.  
40

41 *Michael McCord, Executive Director*  
42

### 43 **Andrew College**

44 Andrew College has an enrolment of 290 students this Fall semester. Of those students, 93-96% are student-athletes.  
45 Their training is very rigorous and they must travel to different schools to play. The offered "Tea for Tuesday" helps  
46 relieve some of the stress along with study through our "Bible recap" every Wednesday and weekly words of  
47 encouragement sent to their email.  
48

49 *Ivelisse Quiñones, Chaplain*  
50

### 51 **Clark Atlanta University**

52 Pre-pandemic, our campus ministry mattered because it provided a space where young people could answer the  
53 existential questions that are prevalent within this age and life stage. However, since the pandemic, our ministry is  
54 more fundamental—basic. Campus ministry matters because it represents a safe space where young adults can feel  
55 like they belong; our ministry is affirming young adults and assuring them that they matter.  
56

1 Earlier this semester, I was working on sermon topics with our CAUSE Leaders when we noticed that “p” words  
2 were coming up more frequently than any others. So, we became intentional and listed only topics that began with  
3 the letter “p.” In fact, we came up so many words that we needed to narrow it down by asking other students to rank  
4 the words. While there were some words that we selected by multiple people, the word “peace” was chosen by  
5 everyone.

6  
7 Our ministry is focused on offering peace to as many as possible through worship, discussions, the Soul space (our  
8 prayer room) and it has been received well. Students are encouraged to lead in each of these areas and they are  
9 drawing others in as they lead. Through the end of this semester, we will feature student leaders who will preach a  
10 message based on one of the words in weekly worship. Thus far, their messages have been relatable, and powerful!  
11

12 One of our committed leaders is Mr. Daniel Sears from the New York Annual Conference where his mother is an  
13 Ordained Elder. At the beginning of his recent message, he shared that he has been to countless worship services and  
14 would always recoil if someone asked when he was going to preach. Well, he preached his first sermon this semester  
15 and proclaimed, “look at how God works.”

16  
17 Indeed, look at how God works!

18  
19 *Tonya Miles, Chaplain*

### 20 21 **Coastal College of Georgia**

22 This year has been one of great depth! We made some pretty major shifts in the way we do ministry, choosing to  
23 focus on the small, authentic, and organic ways in which we believe God wants to move at CCGA. While choosing  
24 to get small in our mindset, we have actually expanded in our reach. Where a year ago our leadership team was one  
25 faithful student, we now have seven students committed to praying for their campus and seeking God on behalf of  
26 the people in their classes. Every week, a new student is on stage learning how to grow their skills in leading  
27 worship, and students are given permission to share what the Lord has put on their hearts. Wesley at CCGA matters  
28 because God is moving in these individuals, and it is spilling over to the campus on a daily basis.

29  
30 *Brooks Hanson, Director*

### 31 32 **Columbus State**

33 My ministry matters, because the campus in which I serve is a very diverse campus with students of all backgrounds  
34 yearning to make connections, and CSU Wesley has become a place for students with differences to find a place to  
35 belong together in Christ. My ministry matters on our campus as we hosted a prayer night before school started to  
36 prayer walk the campus not knowing that five days later, we would then be hosting a prayer vigil as students were  
37 killed on campus and CSU Wesley became a space of healing, grace, and love in the midst of violence and hatred.  
38 CSU Wesley matters because for many of our students’ depression and loneliness form their minds, and CSU  
39 Wesley became a place where they could belong and be loved in the name of Jesus, and they have found freedom in  
40 our ministry. My ministry matters because students who are thought of as a lost generation are coming to believe in  
41 Jesus and serve Jesus both on the campus and in the local church. My ministry matters because without CSU  
42 Wesley, Columbus State University would miss a welcoming presence that shared the love of Jesus with all who are  
43 present.

44  
45 *Andy Ginn, Director*

### 46 47 **Emory University**

48 Fall 2023 has been a time of deepening community at Emory University. Chaplains and Religious Life Affiliates  
49 held our annual Spiritual Life Resource Fair in August, and students are participating in ministries across campus.  
50 Beloved Community, Emory’s ecumenical Protestant worship service, has doubled in size since last year.

51  
52 We held a day-long retreat at Emory’s new Interfaith Center for the Beloved Community on Saturday, September  
53 23. Beginning in March 2023, student leaders Celi Byer, Joshua Bai, and Jessanya Holness worked with Christian  
54 Chaplain Maddie Henderson Herlong to plan the day with the goal of “connecting to God, each other, and  
55 ourselves.” Abby Balson, a sophomore Human Health & Vocal Performance major, participated. She said, “The  
56 Beloved Community retreat was a refreshing, intentional day! Each activity fostered connections and conversation  
57 over our faith, from crafts to a Lullwater picnic to small group discussion and ending with a beautiful bonfire. For

1 many students (myself included!) whose busy lives are stacked to the brim with classes, homework, clubs, the  
2 expectations of others, and simply trying to take care of ourselves, the retreat provided a slow-paced space to  
3 remember an integral, but easily forgotten truth we build our lives on: who our God is and how he loves us."  
4

5 We look forward to our special worship Sunday on November 5 and to having Lyn Pace, Oxford College Chaplain,  
6 preach on November 19. Our hope is that Beloved Community continues to be a place where students feel at home,  
7 can grow in their faith, and can build relationships that sustain them during their time at Emory.  
8

9 *Maddie Henderson, Christian Chaplain*

### 10 **Georgia College & State University**

11 Kyle started his freshmen year at GCSU as a young man with a lot of questions and concerns about God. He did not  
12 have a relationship with Jesus, but one could tell that the Lord was working in Kyle's heart. Kyle regularly attended  
13 our weekly service for freshmen (Freshley) and was also in a Freshley small group, with other Freshmen guys. Kyle  
14 was the only guy in his group that was not a follower of Christ. He kept showing up and the guys in his Freshley  
15 group kept loving on him and encouraging him. His Freshley small group leaders continued to pour into his life.  
16 About two weeks ago, Kyle went to lunch with our Freshley Director, Tony. Over lunch Kyle began to ask several  
17 questions about faith and about God and Tony answered them the best that he could. After finishing their meal,  
18 Tony finally asked Kyle if he wanted to know Jesus personally. Kyle said yes! Right in the middle of Velvet Elvis,  
19 before a plate with French fry crumbs and ketchup stains, Kyle received Jesus' invitation to be Lord of his life. Kyle  
20 still attends Freshley, and is still a part of his Freshley small group, but now as a brother in Christ.  
21  
22

23 This is our "why" of Wesley. Twice a week, our team sets up and tears down for worship services. Every Monday  
24 night, and every Wednesday night. Twice a week, our team runs a coffee shop out of the Wesley house, serving free  
25 cups of coffee with tons of flavored creamers and syrups to over 100 college students. On top of that, 50 students are  
26 disciplined on a weekly basis by our staff and LEAD team. It can be exhausting. But it is all worth it, because of why  
27 we do it. "This is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent" (John  
28 17:3).  
29

30 *Tate Welling, Director*

### 31 **Georgia Gwinnett Wesley**

32 For me, Georgia Gwinnett Wesley has had a huge impact on my life. It all started in 2018 when I started coming to  
33 GGC Wesley on Thursdays for bible study. I was having a hard time dealing with some other group on campus and  
34 Wesley really helped me stay rooted in my faith. In 2019 GGC Wesley became my home on campus, the place I  
35 could belong, and I made a bunch of different friends. I volunteered and was active in Wesley with mission trips and  
36 outings, so eventually the director noticed. In 2021 I applied and became the GGC Wesley intern. As the intern  
37 during 2021 through 2022 I learned so much about what it means to lead and love others with all my ability. I was  
38 blessed with so many great moments of loving people and being loved. When my position as intern ended, I became  
39 the treasurer, and I remained as a steady attendee until I graduated. I know that without GGC Wesley I wouldn't  
40 have made it out as healthy and happy as I did.  
41  
42

43 *Daphne Nateras, Director – Matt Crouse - testimony*

### 44 **Georgia Southern**

45 "The Wesley is my home." This is the phrase I hear from students when I ask them about their Wesley experience.  
46 What I love about that phrase the most is that I hear it from Seniors all the way down to Freshmen. GS Wesley is a  
47 place where students can feel at home and peace during the business of the school semester.  
48

49 *Wesley really taught me the importance of community as a part of my Christian walk. From the first  
50 worship I attended I have been surrounded by people who not only love God, but they love me too. College  
51 is a time of trials and challenges, but I've learned that I don't have to go through them alone. At Wesley,  
52 there are people who are not only willing to help, but they want to be there for anyone who needs it. I will  
53 forever be grateful for the people I've met and the relationships I've built, including my relationship with  
54 God. I wish everyone could feel the love and acceptance I've felt at Wesley. - Rachel Lasseter, Junior -  
55 Ministry Team Member  
56*

1 This year, I have seen students go from participants to ministry leaders! This spring, we had no one who wanted to  
2 serve as interns. However, this fall was a different story. We have students serving in the capacity of Discipleship,  
3 Outreach, and Operations. What I am most impressed with is that they wanted to serve in specific areas of the  
4 ministry for their peers to grow deeper in their relationship with God! When I look at GS Wesley, I see the  
5 commitment to the Great Commission to “ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations” - Matthew 28: 19. We  
6 exist to empower students to impact their peers and community. By being present on campus, students have made  
7 themselves at home at Wesley, but most importantly, in God’s Kingdom.  
8

9 *Albert Williams, III, Director*

10  
11 **Georgia Southwestern**

12 I was teaching my leadership team at Georgia Southwestern University’s Wesley Foundation about the necessity of  
13 prayer and mission in the particular. We were trying to discern together specific individuals to whom was calling  
14 each of us to minister in this season. Every follower of Jesus is an instrument of God’s grace to those in their sphere  
15 of influence. To have the best impact we have to have our eyes and hearts open to the real people around us that God  
16 is trying to reach through us.  
17

18 Elijah, my Discipleship Captain, spoke up:

19 “I have this friend at the Frat. He’s going through a really hard time. He didn’t want to go anywhere or do  
20 anything. Just wanted to stay to himself. I told him I would pray for him, and he should come to Wes. Is  
21 that like what you’re talking about?”

22  
23 “Did you pray for him?”

24  
25 “Yes. I did...right then. AND he came to Wes that night. He was here tonight, too. He said he was really  
26 glad he came.”  
27

28 A touch of holy pride crept into the corner of Elijah’s smile. God had used him, and his place at the WesHouse, to  
29 minister to a friend dealing with heartbreak and isolation. Instead of succumbing to the cares of life or seeking  
30 solace in some unhealthy way, that friend received prayer from a peer and found a place of love and support within a  
31 Christian community right on campus.  
32

33 “That is EXACTLY what I’m talking about. Well done and praise God.”  
34

35 This scene plays itself out hundreds of times a semester, as the WesHouse does the important work that God has  
36 ordained for us to do. Through our ministry God gives comfort, calls the lost home, provides a place of safety and  
37 rest in a dangerous and threatening world, and gives a spiritual family to those who are away from home for the first  
38 time. None of us will know how many lives have been saved, vocations found, college experiences transformed and  
39 redeemed until we see the realization of our hope at Christ’s victorious return. Until then we will be faithful to  
40 provide a place and a people prepared to bring God’s grace into the lives of all those he gives us.  
41

42 *Robert “RT” T. Beverly, Director*

43  
44 **Georgia Tech**

45 In early September a new transfer student named Owen reached out to me and wanted to talk after our Sunday  
46 Morning Worship service. I had preached that morning on the importance of friendship and how Tech Wesley could  
47 be a place where lasting friendships are made. We walked downstairs into the office, and I asked him if I should  
48 close the door. As soon as I sat down Owen immediately started crying and asked me, "how did you know?" I  
49 replied, "how did I know what?" He went on, "How did you know to pray for me?" I asked, "how did I pray for  
50 you?" The student explained to me that throughout his life he had struggled making friends. He had moved around  
51 to many different states and never stayed long enough to create close friendships. Over the past month Owen has  
52 made dozens of close friends at Tech Wesley. He is now involved in our Freshly small group, intramural flag  
53 football team, and helps lead a Dungeon and Dragons game night at Tech Wesley. Owen has truly found a home  
54 away from home at Tech Wesley and has made lasting friendships.  
55

56 *Sam Hopson, Asst Director*  
57

1 **Kennesaw State**

2 A student (they have asked to remain nameless) we have connected with at Kennesaw State for the past 3 years now  
3 has never come to any of our worship services or community groups, but somehow through the connective nature of  
4 college, me and some of our leadership maintained a good relationship with them. It turns out that through the  
5 influence of friends and Greek life, this student had been struggling in their relationship with drugs and alcohol.  
6 They had sadly reached their breaking point, lost friends, and had an incident of assault that led them to reach out in  
7 a deeper way.  
8

9 It broke our hearts to watch this person struggle the way they had. Though I am thankful that when God pushed their  
10 heart to ask for help, they had people to come to. We were both able to get them connected with the help they  
11 needed, and provide them with a spiritual outlet to invest in. This student started to join us for worship, and for  
12 community groups scattered through the week. Eventually they came to celebrate the name of Jesus.  
13

14 This student then felt the call to lead our Tabling outreach on campus. This is the same ministry where they met  
15 our previous leadership students, and found a community of Christians that was willing to show the love of Christ to  
16 this seemingly random 18-year-old walking by.  
17

18 *Sam Kellum, Director*  
19

20 **LaGrange College**

21 Exciting things are happening at LaGrange College! I am new on campus this year and loving my new position. Its  
22 been a joy getting to know the students and hear how God is working in their lives. We have a weekly Sunday night  
23 worship service. This service is student led including having students share their testimonies and praying. Our  
24 sports teams, Greek life, and campus clubs have been attending worship. On Tuesdays we offer Soul Food where  
25 area churches bring homecooked meals and I lead a devotional and we have a time for prayer. On Tuesday nights  
26 we offer Wesley Fellowship which is a Bible Study. We have studied the Parables this semester.  
27

28 Here are what some students are saying –  
29

30 *“Spiritual Life on campus is very impactful to say the least. Chapel, soul food, Wesley, and everything in  
31 between bring people from all walks of life together and helps them learn and grow in their eternal faith!”*  
32

33 *“The spiritual life on campus has really made an impact on my own personal spiritual life. I have a very  
34 busy Sunday morning schedule, so most weeks I wouldn't be able to be in a congregation if it wasn't for  
35 chapel on Sunday nights. Wesley Fellowship on Tuesday nights has helped me build relationships with  
36 likeminded students.”*  
37

38 *Ashley Jenkins, Chaplain*  
39

40 **Wesley Foundation of Macon**

41 Allison Troup chose to be a part of Wesley not once, but twice. As a pre-med freshman, Allison jumped headfirst  
42 into religious life at Mercer University. Growing up, she said that her faith community was incredibly structured. “I  
43 knew the rules I had to follow along with and the steps I had to take,” Allison said. “But it never felt like my  
44 journey.” She got connected with Wesley but was also plugged into other campus ministries. She joined the  
45 leadership of BCM as a freshman. Then, everything changed.  
46

47 After her sophomore year, Allison experienced a major health crisis that resulted in her taking two years off of  
48 school. During that break, the world shut down because of Covid-19. In that two year span, Allison said that she  
49 completely changed as a person. But when she came back to Mercer to finish her degree, she was surprised to find  
50 that she still had a place at Wesley.  
51

52 “The person I was the second time...was not the person I was the first time,” Allison said. “And somehow, Wesley  
53 had room for both versions of me in a way that made both versions feel loved.”  
54

55 Looking back now as a senior, Allison is grateful for the faithfulness of the Christian community she found at  
56 Wesley. “Wesley has been kind of a grounding rock during anything and everything,” she said. “Just knowing that  
57 there was a *place*, there were *people* that were consistent and were steady was truly life changing.” She said that the

1 eclectic community, authentic love, and warm hospitality of Wesley meets such a huge need on campus as people  
2 search for God and for a sense of belonging.

3  
4 “[Wesley] kind of feels like the Island of Misfit Toys,” she said. “But it’s like the happiest of all the islands.”

5  
6 *Brandon Tolle, Director*

7  
8 **Oxford College**

9 In May, seven Oxford students experienced these outer edges of the low country firsthand, as they traveled with  
10 Chaplain Lyn Pace and Assistant Professor of Anthropology Jessica Ham to Sapelo, Cumberland, St. Simon’s,  
11 Jekyll Island, and—back to the mainland—Savannah. On the coast, they learned about modern life in the region, as  
12 well as the people and environmental and cultural forces that define it. Sponsored by the Office of Religious and  
13 Spiritual Life and the Pierce Program in Religion, the trip was an extension of the Emory Purpose project, part of the  
14 university’s commitment to support student flourishing.

15  
16 “The goal was really to help students identify where they make meaning—in this case making meaning out of  
17 travel—and how that can tie into social justice issues,” Pace said. “We wanted to expose students to the history of  
18 the Georgia coastline, especially as it relates to Native populations, but also to enslaved persons—and how that  
19 plays a role in the development of these islands. At least on Sapelo, there is still a descendant community there from  
20 West Africa.”

21 Knowing this history, especially as it relates to Oxford’s home state, “helps us know the context of our community,  
22 our state, our region, and that shapes who we are and how we’re living our lives.”

23  
24 Doreen Okeh, who graduated from Oxford just before the trip, enjoyed the scope of life, history, and culture she  
25 encountered on the islands: “I was able to immerse myself in the diverse cultures woven by both the indigenous and  
26 newly-integrated residents of Georgia,” she said. “The chance to explore Coastal Georgia was a remarkable  
27 journey.”

28  
29 “This is one of the best parts of what I get to do,” Pace said. “Getting to step back and watch someone experience  
30 something for the first time, especially outside their typical classroom environment. Travel is one of the biggest  
31 ways we grow. We are literally broadening our horizons.”

32  
33 *Lyn Pace, Chaplain*

34  
35 **Reinhardt University**

36 Reinhardt Campus Ministries is a vital and thriving part at Reinhardt University. Reinhardt Campus Ministries  
37 provides opportunities for students to worship together, grow in their faith, and serve others. Reinhardt both  
38 organizes ministry and partners with other organizations like FCA and BCM to provide opportunities on Campus.  
39 For many students, the events and programs have provided opportunities for them to grow in truth, belonging, and  
40 purpose.

41  
42 Jillian Martinet is one of those students. Jillians says, “*Campus Ministries is amazing. It is the main reason I am*  
43 *here at Reinhardt. It makes me feel included and like I have a purpose. It has taught me how to grow in my faith and*  
44 *how to share the Gospel. My favorite part is Common Ground, our worship service. There is nothing better than*  
45 *worshipping with my classmates and inviting my classmates to learn more about Jesus.*”

46  
47 *Josh Garner, Chaplain*

48  
49 University of Georgia

50 Testimony of time at Wesley from Janet Lopez, UGA Wesley Foundation former student leader and current student  
51 intern

52  
53 “The Lord is so kind in calling me to Wesley and has show me what the Family of God truly looks like. He  
54 has healed me through the community I’ve experienced here and continue to do so. I also get to grow and  
55 lead in a space place where the Lord is moving in a mighty way.”

56  
57 Testimony of time at Wesley from Mary Blake Whittington, UGA Wesley Foundation Student Leader, Senior

1  
2 "Before coming to college, I went through all of the motions of Christianity without actually having a faith  
3 of my own. I went to church because my parents did and youth because my friends did, and I did not  
4 actually have a personal relationship with God. When I joined a Freshley small group, I was poured into  
5 more than ever before by leaders who encouraged me to draw close to God at all times and take charge of  
6 my faith. I developed an intimate relationship with God and now build my entire life around my faith. I will  
7 forever be thankful that God brought me to Wesley because my faith is now my own and it is one of the  
8 few things that this world cannot take away from me."  
9

10 *Bob Beckwith, Director*  
11

### 12 **University of North Georgia**

13 Lauren Purdy shares her testimony: Wesley is a home away from home for college students for believers and  
14 nonbelievers. Going into college, I had an immense amount of anxiety about making friends and finding "my place",  
15 but Wesley and Freshley welcomed me with open arms. The people quickly became my favorite people to be  
16 around, and Wesley genuinely felt like a home away from home. That's what Wesley is all about: welcoming  
17 anyone and everyone, no matter their background. I am now a college graduate and an intern at Wesley. Watching  
18 college students grow in their faith and relationships with others has been nothing but rewarding. The Freshmen I  
19 had as a Freshley leader are now Seniors, and it has been a privilege to see how much they've grown in their  
20 relationship with God and each other. Everyone I have spoken to that has attended Wesley told me that Wesley is  
21 different from the other college ministries. We value really getting to know students right off the bat and making  
22 sure they feel welcome. Wesley has changed, not only me, but so many other people for the better. I have found life-  
23 long friendships through Wesley and will be forever thankful for the times I've had and will continue to have with  
24 Wesley.  
25

26 *Nathan Dickens, Director*  
27

### 28 **University West Georgia**

29 University of West Georgia freshman Sara Lokey found a home away from her Cairo, Georgia, home on her very  
30 first Sunday in Carrollton. A lifelong Methodist, Sara was drawn to the familiar emblem of the United Methodist  
31 Cross and Flame that she noticed on the front of the church building as she drove up Maple Street. The next day,  
32 Sara sought out the Wesley Foundation table at the University's organization fair, marking the start of her active  
33 involvement in UWG Wesley.

34 Sara's engagement with both Wesley and West Georgia Church has been a huge part of her first semester  
35 experience. Sara has shared her outstanding singing voice in worship at Wesley and has joined the church's choir.  
36 A clarinetist in the UWG marching band, Sara helped her Wesley friends treat the Marching Wolves to popsicles  
37 after a hot August practice session. Her outgoing nature has brought fresh energy and new faces to Wesley, and she  
38 continues to connect others to her new college home.  
39

40 Sara recently said, "I thank God for UWG Wesley and West Georgia Church. I've found my college family here, and  
41 my first semester away from home has been made so much better." Sara represents the 'why' behind our conviction  
42 that "students matter." Nurturing spiritual community has helped her feel a connection on her campus and in her  
43 new community. She is now spreading that love to others!  
44

45 *Adam Roberts, Director*  
46

### 47 **Valdosta State**

48 Greetings from the Wesley Foundation at Valdosta State University! It brings us great joy to be able to share with  
49 you some of the exciting things happening in the Wesley ministry.  
50

51 Goodness upon Goodness. That's the best way to describe this past year at Wesley. A strong discipleship culture has  
52 a heightened awareness of the goodness of God. Our LEAD Team for 2023 have been instruments of God's  
53 goodness on the VSU campus. As these student leaders grow in their fellowship with God, they are helping others  
54 do the same.  
55



1 The leadership that our team brings reinforces our culture of discipleship, helping people come to know Jesus and  
2 walk more like Jesus in the world. Everything we plan serves that end. Weekly worship services, freshmen ministry,  
3 prayer nights, outreach events, fellowship events, leadership development, retreats, home groups...these are all an  
4 intentional part of our discipleship culture.

5  
6 Discipleship Bands are a new part of our culture. A "band" is a group of 3-5 persons that meet, read together, and  
7 pray together to become the love of God for one another and the world. Weekly questions include: How is it with  
8 your soul? What are your struggles and successes? How might the Spirit and Scriptures be speaking in your life?  
9 Having a brotherhood or sisterhood to truly listen and care for one another is a beautiful sight. We currently have 13  
10 Discipleship Bands on campus. If you'd like to learn more about how these groups function, check out  
11 [discipleshipbands.com](http://discipleshipbands.com).

12 Bless the Blazers is a LEAD team area that plans opportunities for the Wesley community to bless other  
13 organizations on campus. During homecoming week, we were able to encourage and show appreciation for the  
14 Blazin' Brigade. They ended the parade by playing the fight song for us in our parking lot. We thanked them for the  
15 gift of music and enthusiasm they bring to the campus and fed them lunch.

16  
17 Please be in prayer for our leadership as we minister to the campus during the 2023-2024 school year. May we be a  
18 faithful community on the campus of Valdosta State that points people rightly to Jesus.

19  
20 *C J Harp, Director*

### 21 22 **Wesleyan College**

23 Sam Dillard shares her testimony: *"In my faith journey, I have experienced many ups and downs. I have never felt*  
24 *closer to God and knowing what, who, and where I am supposed to be. I remember coming into college and feeling*  
25 *like I lived two separate lives and didn't know who I was. Chaplain Rachel was right there to help me and pray with*  
26 *me. She makes sure I am healthy and nourishing myself spiritually, physically, and emotionally. It's the simple*  
27 *things like "Have you eaten?" or the days where she says "Well, how are YOU?" and she genuinely wants to know*  
28 *about things and cares for you."*

29  
30 *Rachel Paul Hartman, Chaplain*

### 31 32 **Young Harris**

33 One of the best things that has happened this semester is that we were able to connect our YHC men's soccer team  
34 with a local ministry to seniors called Hearts in Ministry. Our area has an enormous number of widows and  
35 widowers and this ministry has been building a contact list for a couple of years, but needed help in ministering to  
36 their clients. When I reached out to athletics, the ENTIRE men's soccer team responded. Even in the midst of their  
37 busy season, they are making time to visit, to encourage, and do projects. It reminds me of James 1:27 which says,  
38 "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress  
39 and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world." These seniors are also planning to attend the senior day  
40 soccer game to close out the season, making it a real senior day!

41  
42 *Adam Daniels, Chaplain*

43  
44 Lesley Baskette, Director of Administration, [lesley@umcommission.org](mailto:lesley@umcommission.org)

## 45 46 **REPORT 15 – Hinton Rural Life Center**

47 Hayesville, NC  
48 [www.hintoncenter.org](http://www.hintoncenter.org)

49  
50 As a mission and retreat agency of the Southeastern Jurisdiction of The United Methodist Church, Hinton serves the  
51 SEJ annual conferences and beyond through equipping clergy and congregations (particularly small, rural churches)  
52 and offering opportunities for individuals and church groups to serve and/or come for retreats and renewal. As part  
53 of The United Methodist Connection, we are honored to be "ONE" in mission and ministry with the South Georgia  
54 Annual Conference and desire to support your clergy and congregations. Our Mission: *Inspired by Jesus Christ,*

1 *Hinton Center serves individuals, congregations, and rural communities through retreat ministries, educational*  
2 *opportunities, and missional outreach.*  
3

#### 4 **2023 Highlights**

- 5 • **Retreats:** In addition to hosting groups from 47 churches for missional outreach, Hinton hosted 63 additional  
6 retreats, including a Rural Clergy Renewal Retreat in September 2023, which offered worship, meals, free time  
7 options, and conversational times with rural ministry and clergy health experts.
- 8 • **Confirmation:** Over 280 youth and adults from 23 churches, a majority from South Carolina, participated in  
9 Hinton’s four Theotokos Confirmation Retreat weekends in the spring of 2023. [www.hintontheotokos.org](http://www.hintontheotokos.org)
- 10 • **Safe and Healthy Home Assessment and Repair Missions:** In 2023, Hinton hosted 47 churches and  
11 facilitated missional engagement in addressing housing in rural Appalachia. These mission teams helped us  
12 work on and improve the health and safety of 61 homes and completed 282 projects.
- 13 • **Firewood Ministries:** In 2023, Hinton leveraged volunteer labor to gather, process, and distribute 706 loads of  
14 firewood to neighbors in our community who cannot afford to heat their homes. This is a value of \$139,455 and  
15 a tremendous savings for our neighbors!
- 16 • **Volunteers:** Much of Hinton’s work is completed by volunteers. In 2023, we had 1,164 unique volunteers who  
17 recorded 20,180 hours in service to our community. This is a value of \$602,575.
- 18

#### 19 **2024 Objectives:**

- 20 • **Rural Poverty Simulation:** In order to understand more about the individuals we serve and to promote a “walk  
21 alongside model” of ministry, Hinton developed and offers a rural poverty simulation. This year, 460  
22 individuals participated in the poverty simulation. Beginning in 2024 this simulation is being packaged for use  
23 in other locations and will be available online.
- 24 • **Educational Tool Barn:** On April 15, 2024, Hinton’s new educational tool barn will be dedicated and launched  
25 as a new component of Hinton’s Safe & Healthy Home Repair ministry. Funded by The Duke Endowment, it  
26 will equip our neighbors and mission volunteers with the knowledge and skills to identify and improve the  
27 safety and health of homes in Appalachia and in their own communities.
- 28 • **Beautiful Feet Go BOOM, Cycle of Christian Faith Formation:** Over the years, Hinton has developed  
29 programming for youth through our Summer Mission Outreach ministry, which includes missional leadership  
30 components for high school students and college-age young people. In 2021 we added our *Theotokos*  
31 *Connections* confirmation curriculum and Theotokos Confirmation Retreats (noted above), primarily serving  
32 middle school youth. We are developing this pathway, so young disciples can connect with Hinton from the  
33 middle school years through high school and into college. This will be a network of engagement that  
34 strengthens faith formation for our youth and supports their participation in their local churches and within The  
35 UMC. Because an important component of faith formation in young people is the building of relationships and  
36 mentorships with adults, particularly those in their local churches, this fall we will launch BOOM, Boomers on  
37 Outreach Mission, as another engagement opportunity in our “Beautiful Feet” faith formation cycle. BOOM  
38 will be held September 8-12 for adults 60 and older and will replicate our summer mission program offered for  
39 youth mission teams. The focus of BOOM is to increase adults’ understanding of their call to nurture and  
40 support our younger generations as co-disciples through this shared, connectional experience.
- 41

42 Just as Jesus modeled a life of loving God and neighbor through serving and teaching, Hinton continues to serve in  
43 impactful ways in our 3-county area through Safe & Healthy Home Repair, firewood, Christmas Care, and other  
44 ministries, as well as focusing on generational equipping through educational ministries, such as our rural poverty  
45 simulation and educational tool barn. Following the life of discipleship modeled by Jesus, Hinton offers ministries  
46 for retreat and renewal for all ages, knowing that as we grow in our love for God and ourselves, we are also more  
47 able to love our neighbor in transformational ways.

48  
49 Dr. Jacqueline Gottlieb, Hinton CEO & President  
50 [jackie@hintoncenter.org](mailto:jackie@hintoncenter.org); 828-389-8336  
51

52

53

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50  
51  
52  
53  
54  
55

# REPORT 16 – Lake Junaluska Assembly, Inc.

## Lake Junaluska Assembly, Inc.

Lake Junaluska Assembly continues to live into its mission to be a place of Christian hospitality where lives are transformed through renewal of soul, mind and body. As projected during the pandemic in 2020, 2023 marked the beginning of the “new normal” for organizations like Lake Junaluska. That was indeed the case at Lake Junaluska. All six large conferences returned to Lake Junaluska in 2023 for the first time since 2019.

The 2024 summer season kicks off with the Seventh Day Adventist Camp Meeting on May 19. We look forward to hosting our regular large groups this season as well as a number of groups who are new to our beloved grounds.

### Financial Update, Charitable Giving and Capital Improvements

Lake Junaluska ended the 2023 year with a profit and 2024 projections are in line with finishing the year with a balanced budget.

Charitable giving remains strong and, in 2023, we exceeded our fundraising goal to the Annual Fund for the fifth straight year. The Annual Fund is a budget-relieving initiative that is a line-item in Lake Junaluska’s annual operating budget.

Since generous charitable giving provides opportunities for Lake Junaluska to reinvest into its facilities and grounds, great strides have been made toward improving our infrastructure that will enable the conference center to continue to meet the needs of all guests. Some of the significant improvements completed in 2023 include upgrades to Stuart Auditorium with a state-of-the-art Danley sound system, removal of the Crow’s Nest, a new sound/video booth and the replacement of the main projectors and screens.

Work on the Warren Center multi-function event space (the former Methodist Museum building) will be complete by the end of May 2024 and the first events have been booked for July 2024.

### Fresh Expressions of Ministry and a Bright Future

The 2024 Theologian in Residence schedule is set for June 30-August 16. Eight theologians will preach on Sunday mornings during the series and will offer personal and interactive experiences throughout the following week. A variety of musicians will participate each week and the Artists in Residence at Lake Junaluska will coordinate local artists to provide altar art for summer worship.

Summer activity programs will also return with offerings such as yoga, Qigong, bonfires, devotions and special events. The Festival of Wisdom and Grace returns on August 19-22, and the 36th Choir Music Weekend is scheduled for October 18-20.

Looking toward the future, Lake Junaluska continues to focus on the following guiding aspirations, which were adopted by the board of trustees in 2020:

- **Aspiration 1:** To preserve and enhance the lake and grounds so that more people will recognize the natural beauty of God’s creation.
- **Aspiration 2:** To be a conference center that rivals hospitality industry leaders by exceeding guests’ expectations through excellence in staff and facilities.
- **Aspiration 3:** To be the place that connects more youth to Christ through meaningful ministry, recreation, and education programs.
- **Aspiration 4:** To identify, uphold, and strengthen the Lake Junaluska tradition of implementing innovative, shared experiences – for both individuals and families – that celebrate faith, recreation, the arts, and education.
- **Aspiration 5:** To be an involved, inclusive community that provides the highest quality of life for residents and guests.

The leadership and staff invite you to visit Lake Junaluska for a conference, retreat, or vacation. The lake and surrounding mountains will provide the perfect setting for you to experience transformation and renewal. To plan your next visit, please visit [lakejunaluska.com](http://lakejunaluska.com).

1 **REPORT 17 – Magnolia Manor**

2 Health & Welfare Agencies

3  
4 **Magnolia Manor**

5 The South Georgia Conference’s Ministry with Older Adults

6  
7 **Report #1**

8 At Magnolia Manor we are so thankful for God’s faithfulness and love. We are also thankful for the encouragement  
9 and support that we get from the United Methodist churches of the South Georgia Conference. We rest knowing that  
10 God is in complete control. God’s truth and your faithful love and kindness motivate us to continue our work  
11 helping all of our residents live joyfully because we know that each one matters! As a nonprofit, faith-based senior  
12 living organization, every decision we make is inspired by our mission and vision and grounded by our values to  
13 benefit our Magnolia Manor residents whom we serve. God is glorified and lives are transformed when we follow  
14 our mission, vision, and values and get our Lord’s mission of serving and making disciples right!

15  
16 **MISSION**

17 We serve all through love and support for a lifetime.

18  
19 **VISION**

20 Our communities are about life and living.

21  
22 **VALUES**

- 23 1. Commitment to our faith tradition
- 24 2. Dignity, respect, care and compassion for all
- 25 3. Integrity through excellence
- 26 4. Healthy mind, body and spirit
- 27 5. Creative change and constant improvement

28  
29 These simple statements permeate our organizational culture, along with Servant Leadership principles that we  
30 incorporate through our Heart Forward, our service culture playbook. You will find them illustrated as major  
31 headings throughout our quarterly magazine, Manor Living. You will also find them on our website,  
32 [www.magnoliamanor.com](http://www.magnoliamanor.com), our Facebook page, Instagram, and Twitter. Please check out both our website and our  
33 social media accounts to stay up to date with all the Magnolia Manor news.

34  
35 We are proud to offer retirement and nursing care in a Christian environment on nine campuses throughout the  
36 South Georgia Conference. On any given day, our 800 employees provide care for 1,000 plus older adults through  
37 independent living, catered and personal care, assisted living, skilled nursing care, rehab therapy, and memory care  
38 programs. No matter what level of care a person needs, there are numerous opportunities for socialization,  
39 activities, spiritual enrichment, and all of the supportive services needed to help them receive proper nutrition and  
40 care. We are so thankful for our front-line workers and their continuous commitment not only to Magnolia Manor,  
41 but more importantly, to our residents. Our workers truly go by our slogan “Residents First, Because We Care.”  
42 Their compassionate efforts are comforting and inspiring to our residents as they serve together so that every  
43 residents is taken care of in a loving manner.

44  
45 In addition, our chaplains on each of our campuses have been instrumental as they continue to provide much needed  
46 ministry, comfort, and counseling to our residents and staff. Our commitment to our faith tradition is evident in the  
47 participation that we continue to have in our worship services, Bible studies, and other activities led by our  
48 chaplains. Rev. Dr. John Walker, our VP for Spiritual Care, continues to facilitate a Clinical Pastoral  
49 Education/Training class to help train pastors and further their education in pastoral care. This class provides  
50 clinical experience for pastors and is a 20 week course that meets once a week. These students often help in  
51 nurturing and guiding our residents in their walk with the Lord. Also, Rev. Henry Bass, our VP for Church  
52 Relations, has led the effort in speaking in over 60 churches during 2023 as he continues to educate others on our  
53 ministry to serve senior adults and provide them with a safe and secure home. We are thankful for your continued  
54 support as it helps provide us with chaplains who give valuable comfort and support to our residents and staff on all  
55 of our nine campuses.

1 We are thankful for your partnering with us and for your support for The League of the Good Samaritan. Because  
2 of your support, we are able to keep a promise made by the founding members of our ministry:  
3

4 No Magnolia Manor resident would ever have to leave if, through no fault of their own, they were unable to pay.  
5 This has been an instrumental foundation of Magnolia Manor. We want every resident to have a peace of mind  
6 knowing that we will always strive to take care of each resident who outlives their financial means because everyone  
7 matters and deserves a place to live and feel safe.  
8

9 We are so thankful for your continued love, kindness, and support to The League of the Good Samaritan. Because  
10 of your faithful generosity and our commitment to remain affordable for the average Georgian, we were able to help  
11 more than 60 percent of those we serve with financial assistance. This includes more than 80 percent of our skilled  
12 nursing residents and others who receive rent subsidy from HUD. Your donations are more important than ever as  
13 healthcare costs continue to increase and your generosity makes it possible for us to help dozens of individuals and  
14 provide them peace of mind. It's about honoring our elders and being faithful witnesses to the love of God. At  
15 Magnolia Manor, it is about Life and Living!  
16

17 Since 2020, nine of Magnolia Manor facilities have received national quality awards from the American Healthcare  
18 Association and the National Center for Assisted Living (AHCA/NCAL) 11 times. We are especially proud of these  
19 facilities that have achieved their award during a time of great difficulty for healthcare providers. Our Marion  
20 County campus was one of only two recipients in the entire United States to receive the 2021 Gold – Excellence in  
21 quality Award for superior performance in long term care recognized by the AHCA/NCAL. This was an  
22 outstanding achievement by our team on the Marion County campus.  
23

24 Thank you! Thank you for partnering with us. We certainly value and appreciate your kindness and generosity in  
25 helping us keep the vision of our founders. While the last few years have been very difficult in the healthcare  
26 industry, our residents are always our focus and priority. We continue to prioritize the physical, mental, and  
27 spiritual care of our residents. Your continued prayer and your physical and monetary support is definitely making a  
28 difference!  
29

## 30 **Report #2**

### 31 **Leading churches of the South Georgia Annual Conference** 32 **in support of Magnolia Manor during 2023** 33

#### **Top Ten Supporting Churches in the Conference**

- |                              |                               |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Macon-Vineville UMC       | 6. Moultrie-First UMC         |
| 2. Perry UMC                 | 7. St. Simons Island UMC      |
| 3. Warner Robins-Trinity UMC | 8. Fair Haven UMC             |
| 4. Vienna UMC                | 9. Macon-Mulberry Street UMC  |
| 5. Norman Park UMC           | 10. Savannah-Isle of Hope UMC |

#### **We also honor the Top Ten Churches in each District.**

##### **Coastal**

- |                                   |                       |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. St. Simons Island UMC          | 6. Jesup-First UMC    |
| 2. Savannah-Isle of Hope UMC      | 7. Hinesville UMC     |
| 3. Savannah-Wesley Monumental UMC | 8. Darien UMC         |
| 4. Richmond Hill UMC              | 9. Brunswick-Arco UMC |
| 5. Savannah-St. Luke UMC          | 10. Horse Stomp UMC   |

##### **North Central**

- |                              |                                |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Macon-Vineville UMC       | 6. Piney Mount UMC             |
| 2. Perry UMC                 | 7. Macon-Martha Bowman UMC     |
| 3. Warner Robins-Trinity UMC | 8. Rochelle UMC                |
| 4. Macon-Mulberry Street UMC | 9. Warner Robins-Northview UMC |
| 5. Boiling Springs UMC       | 10. Eastman First UMC          |

**Northeast**

- |                                |                 |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Fair Haven UMC              | 6. Brooklet UMC |
| 2. Statesboro-First UMC        | 7. Oak Park UMC |
| 3. Statesboro-Pittman Park UMC | 8. Cobbtown UMC |
| 4. Bellville UMC               | 9. Center UMC   |
| 5. Mt. Vernon UMC              | 10. Portal UMC  |

**Northwest**

- |                     |                        |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Vienna UMC       | 6. Leslie UMC          |
| 2. Byromville UMC   | 7. Graves UMC          |
| 3. Dawson First UMC | 8. Columbus-Asbury UMC |
| 4. Powersville UMC  | 9. Drayton UMC         |
| 5. Byron UMC        | 10. Wesley UMC-Butler  |

**South Central**

- |                          |                              |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Community UMC         | 6. Hopewell UMC              |
| 2. Shiloh – Valdosta UMC | 7. Fitzgerald-Central UMC    |
| 3. Tifton-First UMC      | 8. Douglas-St. Mark UMC      |
| 4. Valdosta-Bemiss UMC   | 9. Live Oak UMC              |
| 5. Salem UMC             | 10. Waycross-Winona Park UMC |

**Southwest**

- |  |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
| 1. Norman Park UMC                         | 6. Dixie UMC            |
| 2. Moultrie-First UMC                      | 7. Boston UMC           |
| 3. Oak Grove UMC (Boston/Oak Grove Charge) | 8. Bainbridge-First UMC |
| 4. Quitman UMC                             | 9. Pavo UMC             |
| 5. Ashburn UMC                             | 10. Albany-Avalon UMC   |

**REPORT 18 – Committee on Memoirs**

The Committee on Memoirs is a team of clergy and spouses of clergy charged with the two-fold responsibility of remembering those who have served our Lord through the South Georgia Conference of the United Methodist Church. Our responsibilities include: 1. Cooperating with the Worship Committee to prepare and lead the Annual Conference Memorial Service and to host the reception for the families held prior to the Service; and 2. Writing and editing the official memorial for each deceased clergyperson and spouse. These memoirs are published in the Conference Journal and are considered an extension of this report. The memoirs are also compiled and published into an annual Book of Memoirs that is available free of charge for the families of the deceased.

The committee’s annual budget is used exclusively for the publication and delivery of the Book of Memoirs. As of the submission of this report, the members of the Committee on Memoirs are Rev. Lowery Brantley, Rev. Ronnie Culpepper, Rev. Creede Hinshaw, Rev. Vicki Scott, and Rev. Christopher Shoemaker. We are joined in our work by our Conference Archivist, Ms. Anne Packard, our connection to the recorded history of our churches and clergy. We are also grateful to Mrs. Eleanor Dickson of Administrative Services for her invaluable assistance and data. The working year of the Committee on Memoirs is April 1 to March 31. In 2023 this included the remembrance of nineteen clergy and seventeen spouses, all duly recorded in our Conference Journal.

The Committee on Memoirs thanks the members of the South Georgia Annual Conference for entrusting us with this sacred honor.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Rev. Christopher Michael Shoemaker, Chair

1  
2  
3 **REPORT 19 – The Methodist Home for Children and Youth**  
4

5 **REPORT #1**  
6

7 Greetings to our friends in the South Georgia Conference of The United Methodist Church,  
8

9 “In response to Christ and the Church, the mission of The Methodist Home for Children and Youth is to be  
10 a **model agency** that **restores childhoods, strengthens families** and cultivates a **people-building organization**.  
11 Powered through prayer, God has provided so many incredibly talented people, including YOU, who are  
12 wholeheartedly committed to our work. We are so grateful for the faithful dedication of those who walk with us in this  
13 ministry to provide a healing hand to those in need.  
14

15 Together, we claim the promise of **Psalm 100:5** *“For the LORD is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and*  
16 *his faithfulness to all generations.”* I can testify that **we see and experience HIS goodness, love and faithfulness**  
17 **through YOU** each and every day. Thank you for helping us care for His children as we strengthen a future generation  
18 of God’s people.  
19

20 Because of YOU, we have been able to increase our care for others. Together, in the last full FY 22-23, we  
21

- 22 • Served nearly 250 children providing care 24/7. This includes 178 girls and boys in our residential Children’s  
23 Homes and 68 children (an increase of 20% over last year) in our community-based HOPE Foster Care Homes.
- 24 • Achieved 98% in performance based contracting standard scores for residential sites and 106% for Hope Foster  
25 Care services.
- 26 • Celebrated seven young people who graduated high school or obtained a GED and one who graduated from  
27 college.
- 28 • Increased the number of certified foster families through HOPE Foster Care and Adoption by 27%.
- 29 • Strengthened 525 people through our Lighthouse for Families Community Counseling Centers, an increase of  
30 5%.
- 31 • Worked with 168 clients in our Intensive Family Visitation program, an increase of 34%.
- 32 • Averaged 83 hours of service per month in our newest initiative, Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health  
33 Consultation Services.  
34

35 Plus, we maintained COA national accreditation, EAGLE faith-based accreditation, COGNIA School accreditation,  
36 Three Star Quality Child Care Rating from Bright from the Start, and remained a Sanctuary Certified trauma informed  
37 organization.  
38

39 **Psalm 100:5** also provides us with the assurance and confidence to **move forward boldly** because He is steadfast,  
40 unwavering and so faithful in His love for us. Truly, God is working through us in new and exciting ways as He shows  
41 us how very much **“One Matters”**.

42 Thinking ahead, we strive to:

- 43 • Explore new ways to expand community-based services in the Columbus region.
- 44 • Reduce risk, increase quality and enhance the wellbeing of those we serve.
- 45 • Live into our Wesleyan heritage to “Offer Them Christ” as believers and celebrate the baptism/spiritual growth  
46 of those in our care.
- 47 • Strengthen our future by connecting with those who want to help our ministry, including those who name The  
48 Methodist Home as a beneficiary of their retirement accounts, estate plans or life insurance policies.  
49

50 Friends, here at YOUR Methodist Home, we claim an ever-present miracle is unfolding before us. You are an integral  
51 part of our legacy and our future! On behalf of the Board of Trustees of The Methodist Home, our staff and especially  
52 those we help, please accept our deepest gratitude for your faithful support and continued investment in our ministry.  
53  
54

1  
2  
3 Warmly,  
4 Alison Evans President/CEO

5  
6 *May God bless our South Georgia United Methodist Family!*  
7

8 **REPORT #3**  
9 **THE METHODIST HOME FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH**  
10 **MACON, GEORGIA**  
11 **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
12 **2024-2025**

13 **I. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

14  
15 Chairman ..... Dr. Stan Littleton (2nd of a two-year term)  
16 Vice Chairman..... Mrs. Staci Vickers (2nd of a two-year term)  
17 Secretary ..... Mr. David Green (2<sup>nd</sup> of a two-year term)  
18 Assistant Secretary .....Mrs. Staci Fonseca, Executive Assistant  
19 Treasurer ..... Mr. Frank Gaudry (2<sup>nd</sup> of a two-year term)  
20 Assistant Treasurer .....Mr. S. Bruce Stanfield, VP Finance  
21 All Committee Chairs

22 **II. TRUSTEES**

23 **2025**

24 Mrs. Jan Tripp (2<sup>nd</sup>)  
25 Mr. Frank Gaudry (1<sup>st</sup>)  
Dr. Stan Littleton (2<sup>nd</sup>)  
Rev. Jim Davis (2<sup>nd</sup>)  
Mrs. Julie Vann (2<sup>nd</sup>)  
Mrs. Staci Vickers (1<sup>st</sup>)  
Mrs. Frankie Evans, (U)  
Rep. Penny Houston (1<sup>st</sup>)

Ms. Hannah Allen (1<sup>st</sup>)  
Mr. David Green (2<sup>nd</sup>)  
Open  
Mr. Max Manack (2<sup>nd</sup>)  
Open  
Rev. Mark Magoni (1st)  
Rev. Reggie Williams (1st)  
*Alumni President CL Neville, Guest Observer*

Dr. John A. Walker (2<sup>nd</sup>)  
Rev. Lee Smith (2<sup>nd</sup>)  
Senator Larry Walker, III (2<sup>nd</sup>)  
Mrs. Elaine Ruckel (1<sup>st</sup>)  
Ms. Cheryl King (1<sup>st</sup>)  
Rev. Kirk Hagan (1<sup>st</sup>)  
Mrs. Eugenia Henderson (U)

**2026**

**2027**

Mrs. Loida Waters (2<sup>nd</sup>)  
Open  
Rev. Jack Varnell (1<sup>st</sup>)  
Mr. Brent Hampton (2nd)  
Mr. Bill Fickling, III (1<sup>st</sup>)  
Rev. Michelle Hayes (1<sup>st</sup>)  
Mrs. Merita Evans (2<sup>nd</sup>)  
*Dr. Joe Holler, Guest Observe, St Marys*  
*Mrs. Ellen Holler, Guest Observer, St Marys*

26  
27 **III. TRUSTEE EMERITUS**

28 Mr. Johnny Walker, III

29  
30 **IV. EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS**

31 (subject to change via appointment)

32  
33 Resident Bishop Bishop David Graves  
34 Regional District Superintendent TBD  
35 Regional District Superintendent TBD  
36 Regional District Superintendent TBD  
37 Sr. VP, GA United Methodist Foundation TBD



Chair, The Foundation of The Methodist Home	Mr. Russel Lipford
CEO, The Foundation of The Methodist Home	Mrs. Caroline Edenfield
CEO, The Methodist Home	Ms. Alison Evans

The Methodist Home of the South GA Conference, Inc.  
 Conference Request for Approval of Trustees 24-25  
 Feb 24, 2024

Slate of Officers for 24-25 to be approved by Trustees on May 9, 2024

Chairman:	Mr. Russell Lipford	
Vice Chairman:	Mrs. Debbie Chapman	
Secretary/Treasurer:	Mr. Gary Bechtel	
CEO:	Mrs. Caroline D. Edenfield	
Class of 2025	Mr. Mark Allen	
	Mr. Milton Heard	
	Mrs. Lisa Lane	
	Dr. Shane Green	
	Mr. Russell Lipford	
	Mrs. Stacey Pease	
	Mr. Byron Pyles	
Class of 2026	Gary Bechtel	
	Jackie Watson	
	Wes Wheeler	
	Honorable Leslie Abrams-Gardner	
	Mrs. Kathy Jones	
Class of 2027	Honorable Leslie Abrams-Gardner	
	Mrs. Kathy Jones	
	Mr. Joe Evans	
	Mrs. Denise Wansley	
Class of 2028	Mr. Jeff Barker	
	Mrs. Debbie Chapman	
	Rev. Teresa Edwards	***
	Ms. Celia Eisentrager	***
	Dr. Bob Moon	***
Standing Board Member	Ms. Alison Evans	

\*\*\* New Trustee for Approval

**REPORT 19A**  
**The Foundation of The Methodist Home**  
**2023 Annual Report**

The Foundation of The Methodist Home was established in 1999. Our sole objective is to support the operations of The Methodist Home of The South Georgia Conference. In carrying out its purpose, the Foundation provides oversight and management for all the long-term gifts made for the benefit of The Methodist Home, including bequests, donations to the endowment, donations via planned gifts, and funds for The Joseph Company. The Foundation is also responsible for managing any gifts of property that are not directly used for operations.

1 The generosity of our donors, who share gifts of cash, appreciated stock, beneficial interests in trusts, annuities, real  
2 property, and, upon death, gifts through their estates, enables us to fulfill our mission. Please know that we are truly  
3 grateful that you have chosen to journey with us - it is because of you that we are able to make a difference in the lives  
4 of God's children now and in the years to come.  
5

6 In the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023 The Foundation distributed \$441,076 for the benefit of The Methodist Home,  
7 assisting with operational support, capital improvements, funding for higher education, and funding for the Chaplain's  
8 position. During the year, The Foundation recorded revenue in the amount of \$480,670 and incurred administrative  
9 expenses of \$276,480 with total expenditures of \$732,042, including the distribution to The Home.

10 At the end of the fiscal year, The Foundation held \$4,494,097 in assets managed by Morgan Stanley and \$1,260,164 in  
11 assets managed by other financial institutions.  
12

13 The annual audit of The Foundation is included within the audit of The Methodist Home. We received an unqualified  
14 audit, and it is the opinion of our Auditor that the financial statements fairly present, in all material respects, the  
15 financial position of The Methodist Home and The Foundation as of June 30, 2023.  
16

17 In what has been a challenging year on many fronts, The Methodist Home, The Foundation of the Methodist Home, and  
18 the members of The South Georgia Conference have worked alongside one another serving God's children. Our  
19 efforts have been steadfast, and God has indeed been faithful as we continue to make a difference in the lives of the  
20 children and families entrusted into our care.

21 Respectfully Submitted,

22 Mr. Russell Lipford, Chairman

Caroline D. Edenfield, President/CEO

## 23 **REPORT 20 –Open Door Community House**

24 **Report to the South Georgia Annual Conference**

25 **from Open Door Community House, Inc.**

26 **Creating Long-Term Solutions to Poverty**

27 **2024**  
28

29 Open Door Community House is humbled to be your ministry partner throughout the South Georgia Conference and  
30 with United Women in Faith! Open Door serves people of low income or those experiencing homelessness in the  
31 Columbus area through ministries to help people realize their full potential as children of God. Eighty-nine years ago,  
32 these ministries were created to help women, children and youth find restoration, hope, and access to resources to thrive  
33 and not merely survive. Because "**One Matters**" – every one - and helping each person find hope and live the abundant  
34 life is Christ's desire for all of us.  
35

36 Every day, we see the lives of women and children transform because of you and ***your faithfulness to pray and give.***  
37 People experience transformation through Christ's love.  
38

39 In 2023, the Open Door Board of Directors and the *Growing the Legacy* Capital Campaign Committee continued its  
40 work to secure \$3 million to ensure that essential repairs and renovations are made to our facility so that we are able to  
41 serve for many more decades to come.  
42

### 43 **Ministry highlights from 2023:**

- 44 • **Circles in Columbus** continues in two locations, Open Door and a Circle Leader Training site at St. Mary's  
45 Road United Methodist Church. In 2023, 96 direct and indirect program participants were served (includes  
46 parents, children, and Allies). Circle Leaders moved from merely surviving to thriving!
- 47 • The **Mathews Promise Academy** after school program began to transport children from local schools,  
48 increasing opportunities for ministry to the children and their families. 100% of children served in K-6th  
49 grades advanced to the next grade level in the last school year. 72% of K-3<sup>rd</sup> graders served were reading at or  
50 above their reading grade level.
- 51 • Graduates of the **Culinary Arts Training Program** gained employment as assistant restaurant managers,  
52 caterers, and some into the **Culinary Incubator** to become business owners. Some Incubator participants are  
53 now selling products in local markets and restaurants. Access to a shared commercial kitchen will be available  
54 in early 2024, giving Incubator participants a greater ability to have a sustainable business and one day  
55 sustainable income and the building of generational wealth.

- **Welcome Home**, a rapid rehousing program, and **HOME**, a long-term rental assistance program, provided permanent housing assistance for nearly 200 homeless women with children.
- The **Virginia D. Jackson Home for Women** assisted homeless residents to secure sustainable income and permanent housing after up to 12 months of transitional living.

Thanks to you and your prayers and gifts, lives are transformed and circumstances changed by God’s grace. One matters – every child, every women, every volunteer, every prayer lifted. Each one makes a difference.

From living in poverty to creating a foundation to move beyond; from starting a business to building generational wealth; from learning to read at grade level and building confidence to succeed academically - our neighbors and friends are living into a life more abundant.

Thank you for all the ways you offer servant leadership at Open Door and across South Georgia. If we may ever be of service to you as a ministry partner, we are ready to serve.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kim E. Jenkins, Executive Director

**The Mrs. Butch Deaton “Living The Vision” Award**  
**2024**

The Mrs. Butch Deaton “Living the Vision” Award is presented to a person who truly exemplifies the faith and vision of our founders, Mrs. Weeta Watts-Mathews and Mrs. Martha King, in their persistent dream to create the ministry now known as Open Door Community House. The award is presented annually to the person who most generously is invested in keeping alive their vision for Open Door through volunteer time, financial support, and the mobilization of the church and community also to be invested in the Open Door ministries. The award is named for Mrs. Butch Deaton, the recipient of the 2005 inaugural “Living the Vision” award, who has faithfully lived out this vision through over 70 years of service at Open Door.

**The 2024 Mrs. Butch Deaton “Living the Vision” Award recipient is**

***Mrs. Lisa White***  
***Past Chair of the Board of Directors***

Lisa White has served with Open Door as a board member from 2018-2024. During her tenure as a board member, Lisa has served as Development Committee Chair, Nominations Committee Chair, and Governance Chair. She currently serves as an incredibly valued member of the *Growing the Legacy* Capital Campaign Committee where she has secured large gifts for essential repairs and renovations of the Open Door facility.

Very few people have served with the expertise, experience, and love for the Open Door ministries that Lisa has. She indeed “lives the vision” every day, helping others in the community catch the vision of Open Door and develop the passion for serving our community through its ministries. It is our pleasure and privilege to present this award to our long-time friend, Mrs. Lisa White.

**Outstanding Financial Stewardship in Charitable Contributions**

We are grateful to all churches in the Conference for their financial and prayer support and to the following for their stewardship of financial gifts to the ministries of Open Door:

**Highest Giving Church in the Conference to the ministries of Open Door Community House, Inc.**

***St. Paul United Methodist Church***  
**Columbus, GA**

**Highest Giving Church per capita to the ministries of Open Door Community House, Inc.**

***Mauk United Methodist Church***  
**Mauk, GA**



1  
2 The following are just some of the highlights of St. Joseph's/Candler's past fiscal year (2023):  
3

4 **COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE AND BENEFITS DRAFT:**

- 5 • St. Joseph's/Candler (SJ/C) provided more than \$149m in total community assistance in 2023. Assistance  
6 provided included services to care for the most at risk populations, as well as programs and services for the  
7 broader community. Traditional charity care, including indigent care and Medicaid shortfall, totaled \$14.8m.  
8 Outreach programs including community health improvement programs, health professional's education,  
9 subsidized health services, financial /in-kind contributions and programs designed to address the social  
10 determinants of health totaled \$9m. Additionally, SJ/C spent nearly \$85.6m in subsidizing uncollected service  
11 cost and uncompensated Medicare cost in Fiscal Year 2023. All of these figures represent the actual cost of  
12 providing care and not hospital charges.  
13

14 **MISSION SERVICES:**

- 15 • SJ/C's Pastoral Care employed ten (10) chaplains in 2023. Chaplains provided a variety of services to patients,  
16 families and visitors including daily rounding, patient visits, one-on-one counseling sessions, grief counseling  
17 and more. More than 28,728 contacts were made during the year.  
18 • SJ/C's Pastoral Care department also provides two additional chaplains who supported the System's Palliative  
19 Care and Workforce Spirituality programs. We have also added an additional Regional Chaplain at the  
20 Bluffton Campus. These programs support patient care services and human resources respectively. In 2023,  
21 these programs made more than 4,907 contacts assisting patients, families and caregivers.  
22 • SJ/C celebrated the ninth annual "*John Wesley Day*" on May 24<sup>th</sup> with educational information, prayers and  
23 other opportunities for SJ/C co-workers and patients to learn more about John Wesley, Methodism, and the  
24 health system's legacy and heritage. This celebration is spearheaded by clergy with the Methodist church and  
25 supported by chaplains of other faith traditions.  
26 • For the 21<sup>st</sup> consecutive year, St. Joseph's/Candler served as a host site for Mercy Corps Volunteers. These  
27 volunteers are young adults who spend one year embracing compassionate service to others. These volunteers  
28 worked on-site at several SJ/C outreach programs. SJ/C spends up to \$60,000 each year to provide these young  
29 adults with an opportunity to assist vulnerable populations, grow in their faith and to live in a faith community.  
30 • SJ/C continues to operate the Emergency Department Medical Home Program which connects uninsured and  
31 underinsured patients to Primary Medical Homes. Patients are followed for six months to ensure they have the  
32 appropriate health and social services they need to improve their health, economic stability and overall well-  
33 being. There were 5,089 contacts in 2023.  
34

35 **ST. JOSEPH'S/CANDLER CO-WORKERS**

- 36 • Co-workers Judy Boykin, from Risk Management was awarded the 2023 Lientz Award, and Alison White,  
37 from Pooler Campus Surgical Services was awarded the McAuley Award for 2023. Both awards celebrate one  
38 co-worker from each hospital campus who best exemplifies the mission and values of the health system.  
39 • In 2023, SJ/C recognition programs honored 6,006 co-workers for living the mission and values of the Health  
40 System. Co-workers were recognized through a variety of ways including the We Care, Smart Start and other  
41 recognition programs. SJ/C also celebrated its co-workers with the second annual Appreciation Fest and a  
42 week- long series of "thank you" events.  
43 • SJ/C, in partnership with the City of Savannah, continued its innovative Home ownership program in 2023.  
44 The Home Ownership program provides education and financial assistance that ultimately leads to home  
45 ownership. Qualified applicants receive assistance in the form of zero percent interest on a five-year forgivable  
46 loan. In 2023, we had a total of 5 coworkers who applied to the program. They were all approved for the  
47 \$3,000.00 assistance. This totals \$15,000.00. That brings the over-all total to \$155,000.00 that SJCHS has  
48 donated for financial support in conjunction with the City of Savannah partnership for The Home Ownership  
49 program.  
50

51 **AWARDS, RECOGNITIONS & ACHIEVEMENTS:**

- 52 • St. Joseph's/Candler and Raydient Places + Properties formed a strategic alliance to create a healthier  
53 community in Bryan County, GA.  
54 • St. Joseph's/Candler continued its major Investment in the City of Savannah's Home Ownership Program.

- St. Joseph's/Candler announces expansion of its clinical training partnership with Augusta University's Medical College of Georgia as plans are announced for a new four-year campus at Savannah's Georgia Southern University's Armstrong Campus.
- St. Joseph's/Candler Announces On-Site Medical Center at Hyundai Motor Group new Metaplant America.
- St. Joseph's/Candler and Bryan County Schools create innovative health education partnership

**COMMUNITY:**

- IRS, Partnership with St. Mary's Community Center. We are a Volunteer Tax Preparation site. In the 2023 tax season, the Center assisted 425 taxpayers with a total refund of \$799,435.
- In September, Danny Brown Box collections were delivered to PACK Savannah, a local nonprofit that helps with backpack meals for the schoolchildren and clothing and personal items for homeless children or children taken into emergency Foster Care.

**CONTINUING ST. JOSEPH'S/CANDLER OUTREACH INITIATIVES:**

- The African-American Health Information & Resource Center celebrated 24 years of service in November 2023. The Center aims to improve the health of African-Americans in Chatham County through health screenings and sponsored events that target healthcare concerns. The center had 25,869 encounters through engagement at community events and services offered at the center.
- The Good Samaritan Clinic – The clinic opened in 2007 to serve growing numbers of people who lack health insurance. The clinic exists to ensure wellness exists in the community and specifically west Chatham County. The clinic had 5,466 encounters with their patients in 2023.
- St. Mary's Community Center – Another community outreach initiative of St. Joseph/Candler will celebrate 22 years of service. It is located in a struggling African-American community and serves individuals from Savannah's poorest census tracts. This is accomplished through education/job training, children's services, and through working with collaborative partners. The community center had 16,009 encounters with community members in 2023.
- St. Mary's Health Center – A medical home for the uninsured provides high quality care and treats those who do not have insurance, but do not qualify for Medicaid. The Health Center had 5,488 encounters with their patients in 2023.
- SJ/C provides mammograms to un/underinsured individuals. In 2023, 616 women received mammograms at no cost.
- The Georgia Infirmary – Recognized as the first hospital for African-Americans in the nation, the Georgia Infirmary became a day center for stroke patients in 1974. It helps in the development of public policy around case management for the chronically ill, management of housing for low-and moderate-income persons, and aids the independence of the elderly and disabled.
- SJ/C S.O.U.R.C.E. (Service Options Utilizing Resources Community Environment) – Monitors the health care of Medicaid and Medicare patients and assists those with chronic conditions in order to help them remain healthy and independent. Its three vital health components are primary medical care, community services, and case management.
- Williams Court Apartments – Managed by the Georgia Infirmary, the apartments are a Section Eight complex for elderly and disabled adults. The apartments have been recognized nationally for providing an exceptional example of linking residents with local providers of supportive services for the elderly.

By carefully stewarding resources, and with artful financial acumen, St. Joseph's/Candler has been able to efficiently and effectively improve patient access across all quadrants of our regional beltway. This has allowed SJ/C to expand its charitable mission, *Rooted in God's Love, we treat illness and promote wellness for all people.*

**REPORT 23 – Vashti Center, Inc.**

1. We have served children and families in Georgia since 1903
2. 71 Staff
3. Nationally Accredited by CARF
4. Since 2020 we have trained 3,200 area professionals on childhood abuse, trauma, and protective measures with 11 different proprietary training and education programs
5. We have developed 80 robust public-private community partnerships which are diverse and have a regional behavioral health focus

6. We served 659 children and adolescents in the counties of Brooks, Colquitt, Decatur, Grady, Mitchell, and Thomas
7. We served 55 children and adolescents in our on-campus resiliency clubhouse
8. We served 48 adolescents in foster care living in our residential program from all over Georgia

## REPORT 24 – Wesley Community Centers

Wesley Community Centers of Savannah, Inc., since 1949  
One Matters means Love Covers All @ Wesley Community Centers of Savannah, Inc.

Jeremiah 29:11 says “For I know the plans I have for you declares the Lord, plans to prosper you not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future.” Holy Bible NLT

God’s plan for us had to have the key human ingredients to make the plans take shape. The ingredients included Ms. Gertrude Greene, Rev. George Cleary, Rev. Arthur Curtwright, and Dr. William K. Payne, along with women from Christian Missionary Society. Wesley Community Centers of Savannah, Inc. has been displaying *One Matters* by showing love for women, children, and families for 75 years! From providing good quality early care and learning for children ages 1 – 4 years of age, to providing summer camp sessions for school age children 5 – 12 years old, to taking care of the family through our Crisis Intervention Program in Wesley’s J.R. Paddison Family Life Center.

### One Matters and Love Covers All:

Travis is a new camper who came to us at age 12 (career camper) and unfortunately has maxed out of the program for the new summer camp year (camp ages 5-12). Mom shared that over the years Travis has struggled with reading below his grade level and because of this, he had no interest in completing any reading assignments during the summer months. Camp Counselors noticed how Travis’s attitude would change when the campers had to complete reading assignments. He would put his head down, state he had a stomachache, or disrupt the other campers. After speaking with mom, the camp coordinator and literacy teacher (camp counselor) met with Travis to discuss his interest(likes/dislikes). The literacy teacher implemented a plan to provide one on one support that would make Travis acceptable to the help he needed and for him not to feel ashamed for needing the help. Mom was so grateful for this because Travis had someone, he felt comfortable with when receiving individualized help to shape his individual need.

One Matters through showing love for those we serve, have helped us to sustain our national accreditations and other certifications for our programs.

### Early Childcare Center

- Subsidized child care for 87 low income children and free services for 4 homeless children;
- We are a Three Star Quality Rated Center through Georgia Quality Rated Program
- Compliance with all rules and regulations mandated by licensing entities.
- Provided employment opportunities for parents of children enrolled in child care.

### Multi-Cultural Youth Arts Program:

- On-site camp for 42 school-aged children at a reduced cost;

### J.R. Paddison Family Life Center (Crisis Intervention Program):

- Services, advocacy, and referrals for 1,500 single adults and families;
- Gave 450 bags of groceries to hungry people; Provided over 50 people with SNAP assistance;
- Provided 150 families with personal hygiene items;
- Helped 261 families keep their homes and utilities during crisis;
- Provided Thanksgiving dinners for over 125 families;
- Maintained Georgia Coalition to End Homelessness (QESST) accreditation.

We are grateful to have your support as we thrive and display the One Matters mindset, by showing the love for the women, children, and families we serve. We look forward to serving God’s people for 75 more years! Our accomplishments are made possible by the support of people like you. Thank You.

(912) 236-4226 phone, (912) 236-6128 fax, [www.wesleyctr-savh.org](http://www.wesleyctr-savh.org), Find us on Facebook!

1  
2 **REPORT 25 – Wesley Glen Ministries, Inc.**

3 **REPORT #1**

4  
5 Friends of Wesley Glen Ministries,

6  
7 Guided by the wisdom of Jeremiah 29:11 - 'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the LORD, 'plans to prosper  
8 you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future' - we are heartened to see your support as a key part of this  
9 hopeful narrative. It illuminates our path forward at Wesley Glen, casting a vision of a thriving and prosperous future,  
10 and fills us with an enduring sense of optimism and thankfulness.

11  
12 Thanks to your support, the people who live in our community benefit from a caring environment with many  
13 opportunities for personal and spiritual development. Wesley Glen supports each person in expressing their unique  
14 abilities, having new experiences, and achieving their lifelong goals. Your support makes a big difference. It's not only  
15 about the services Wesley Glen provides, but also about the personal stories, development, and relationships that our  
16 work helps to create.

17  
18 Friends of Wesley Glen, **YOU are certainly a significant part of what God is doing in the lives of people with**  
19 **intellectual and developmental disabilities.** Thanks to your prayers and support, our community is benefitting from a  
20 solid financial position that enables us to continue providing incredible care and support to those who call Wesley Glen  
21 "home." We would not be able to fulfill our mission without your continued support! **We invite you to visit us and**  
22 **experience the incredible ABILITIES of our community members firsthand. Thank you for being our partner in**  
23 **ministry as we collectively serve our almighty God.**

24  
25 Best,  
26 Cameron Bishop  
27 President/CEO

28 **REPORT #2**

29 **Wesley Glen Ministries, Inc. Board of Trustees**

30  
31 **Executive Committee**

32 Patricia Beeber - Chairman  
33 Rick Lanford – Vice Chairman  
34 Jane Claxton – Secretary  
35 Brian Utley – Treasurer

36  
37 **Board Members in Alphabetical Order by First Names**

38 April Mouton-Beal  
39 Art Barry  
40 Beth Smith  
41 Brian Utley  
42 Brown Edwards  
43 Craig Hutto (Ex Officio for Bishop)  
44 Donald Reid  
45 Helen Burgin  
46 Jane Claxton  
47 Jeanna Fennell  
48 Jimmy Cason  
49 Jonathan Martin  
50 Lisa Smitha  
51 Patricia Beeber  
52 Rick Lanford  
53 Robin Hughes  
54 Sandra Richardson  
55 Thad Childs  
56 Thomas Reichert  
57 Tom Adrien



# SPECIAL OFFERING

TO BENEFIT UM COLLEGES & WESLEY FOUNDATIONS IN SOUTH GEORGIA



## OUR MINISTRIES

Your gifts will help support the following South Georgia Ministries:

- Andrew College
- Coastal College of Georgia Wesley
- Columbus State Wesley
- Georgia Southern Wesley
- Georgia Southwestern Wesley
- Valdosta State Wesley
- Macon Wesley (serving Mercer & Middle Georgia State University)
- Wesleyan College

## WHY GIVE?

Incredible things are happening on campuses across the state of Georgia! Last year the weekly student reach (discipleship + worship) averaged over 4,000 students per week. Over 90% of those are experiencing United Methodism for the very first time!

The 2024 Annual Conference special offering will benefit the UM colleges and Wesley Foundations of the South Georgia Conference through the Commission on Higher Education and Campus Ministry. The UM Commission provides support, funding, administration, and long-term vision casting for these campus ministries and United Methodist schools.

**3 WAYS  
TO GIVE**



As an offering during AC's opening worship on June 2nd



[www.sgaumc.org/specialoffering](http://www.sgaumc.org/specialoffering)

**SCAN  
TO GIVE**

