

2023 CONFERENCE WORKBOOK  
JUNE 11-13



BE STRONG.  
TAKE HEART.

**HOPE**  
IN THE LORD!

North Texas Annual Conference 2023



 **NORTH TEXAS**  
CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

[www.ntcumc.org](http://www.ntcumc.org)

# Welcome to Annual Conference 2023!

*This Conference Workbook contains an agenda, program announcements, schedules, reports, and legislative proposals for the 2023 North Texas ANNUAL CONFERENCE in Plano, Texas.*

## VOTING MEMBERS:

Lay and Clergy Members who are eligible to vote at District and Annual Conferences should contact their district offices if they have not received an email explaining registration. At Annual Conference, please wear your badge at all times.

## VISITORS:

The middle/center section of the balcony of Christ UMC will be reserved for visitors. In addition, the business sessions on Monday and Tuesday, as well as worship services Sunday and Monday evenings, will be livestreamed. Check the [www.ntcumc.org](http://www.ntcumc.org) web page for the link for each session and service.

## GENERAL INFORMATION:

- **The agenda** provides the schedule of events planned during Annual Conference.
- **General Meals** will be served in the Gym, which is located on the south side of the campus. This will include Monday lunch and dinner, as well as lunch on Tuesday. Meals must be pre-purchased online at <https://ntcumc.org/ac2023>. Deadline is Friday, May 26. Please note there are some meals that are provided at no cost to participants. Those meals are listed on page 4. To ensure we have enough for those special meals, pre-registration is required. These meals will be held on the campus of Christ UMC Plano.
- **Area Maps** are included at the back of this workbook.
- **Registration** will be in the Narthex, located inside the North Entrance.
- **Information** is at the Welcome Desk located inside the North Entrance. Please check here for general information, messages, etc. Lost and Found will also be here.
- **Hearing devices** are available at the Welcome Desk.
- **First Aid supplies** are available at the Welcome Desk.
- **Snack Station** is in the Narthex. Bottled water, water stations, and sodas will be available all day, along with snack foods. Coffee and tea will be available Monday and Tuesday morning until 11 a.m. Snacks are available for all attendees for a donation of your choosing at the stations.

## SUNDAY, June 11

**3:30 p.m.** *Laity Session*, First UMC, Plano

**5:00 p.m.** *Laity Dinner*, First UMC Plano

**7:00 p.m.** *Opening Worship Service*, **Rev. Estee Valendy** preaching, Christ UMC Plano sanctuary. Worship to include commissioning of young adults serving with Project Transformation, Bridgeport Camp, Conference Camp Youth Leadership Program, and in local churches. (Childcare available.) Reception to follow in the Gym and Gym Lobby hosted by Bishop & Mrs. Saenz honoring Rev. Estee Valendy.

## MONDAY, June 12 and TUESDAY, June 13

**7:00-9:30 a.m.** *Quest Diagnostics screenings* for HealthFlex participants to be held Monday and Tuesday in Room S126. Pre-registration is required.

**7:30 a.m.** *Holy Communion* will be served by the Order of St. Luke, Monday and Tuesday mornings in the Chapel.

**8:00 a.m.** *Exhibitors* in the connector hallway and narthex

**8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.** *General session* in the sanctuary. The main floor of the sanctuary and the sides of the balcony are for all voting members of Annual Conference. A section to stage right will be reserved for

persons requiring sign language. The middle/center section of the balcony is reserved for visitors. Please wear your name badge at all times.

**7:00 p.m.** *The Monday Evening Service of Ordination and Commissioning*, Bishop Saenz preaching, Christ UMC Plano sanctuary. Reception will be in the Gym and Gym Lobby.

*Child care for children* 12 weeks to 5 years old is available at no cost, but reservations must be made in advance for worship services and onsite sessions. On Sunday, child care will be available beginning at 3:30 p.m. and will end at 9:00 p.m. Monday's child care will be available from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and from 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Tuesday's child care will be available at 7:30 a.m. and end at 5:00 p.m. If your child will be in child care during a mealtime, please provide food for them. Please register online at <https://ntcumc.org/ac2023> to register your child/children. Deadline to register is Friday, May 26.

**PLEASE NOTE: If you want a bound, printed, 8 ½ x 11, black and white copy of the 2023 North Texas Conference Journal, you must complete the order form located in the back of this workbook or purchase one online.**



## NAME BADGE COLORS

<b>BLUE</b>	<b>Clergy members</b> who are entitled to vote except for the election of lay delegates to the General and Jurisdictional Conferences.
<b>PEACH</b>	<b>Provisional clergy members, associate clergy members, clergy appointed under 346.2, and local pastors under part-time and full-time appointment, retired local pastors under appointment</b> who are entitled to vote unless the subject is constitutional amendments or election of lay delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conferences and matters of ordination, character and conference relations of clergy.
<b>GREEN</b>	<b>Lay members</b> who are entitled to vote unless the matter pertains to the clergy, such as ordination, reception into full membership, or election of clergy delegates.
<b>YELLOW</b>	<b>Diaconal ministers</b> who are entitled to vote unless the matter pertains to the clergy, such as ordination, reception into full membership, or election of clergy delegates.
<b>PINK</b>	<b>Student local pastors, retired local pastors, clergy from other annual conferences (§1346.1), missionaries</b> assigned by the GBGM, <b>and certified lay missionaries</b> from nations other than the United States, both who are serving within the bounds of the Annual Conference, who have voice but are not allowed to vote.
<b>WHITE</b>	<b>Visitors</b> who are not permitted to speak on the floor or allowed to vote.

## ANNUAL CONFERENCE MEALS

All meals must be pre-purchased online at <https://ntcumc.org/ac2023>.

No meals can be purchased on site.

Room assignments for pre-purchased meals will be in your registration app, on signage, and on the screens at Annual Conference prior to dismissals.

The Welcome Desk as well as volunteers will be available at Christ UMC Plano to help you find your meal.

### GENERAL MEALS:

This year, general meals will be offered at Christ UMC, Plano, in the Gym Monday lunch, dinner, and Tuesday lunch by reservation. General meals are open to anyone; please see the schedule below for special group meals and be sure to register for your choice of meals. No meals may be purchased on site.

**MEAL SCHEDULE** (please register online to attend these meals):

### SUNDAY, JUNE 11

- 5:00 pm Laity Dinner at FUMC Plano
- 5:00 pm Clergywomen at Christ Plano
- 5:00 pm Project Transformation Intern Dinner at Christ Plano

### MONDAY, JUNE 12 (all meals at Christ UMC Plano)

- Noon General Lunch
  - Retirees
  - Lay Servants
  - Hispanic Ministry
- 5:00 pm General Dinner
- 5:00 pm Children and Youth Workers
- 5:00 pm Ordinands/Commissionees (invitation only)

### TUESDAY, JUNE 13 (all meals at Christ UMC Plano)

- 7:00 am Perkins Alumni Breakfast
- Noon General Lunch
  - District/Conference Administrative Assistants
  - Black Methodists for Church Renewal
  - Clergy Spouse
  - Deacons
  - Duke Alumni
  - Highland Park UMC (invitation only)
  - Local Pastors



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## AGENDA FOR ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2023

**“BE STRONG. TAKE HEART. HOPE IN THE LORD!”**

### Sunday, June 11

3:30 pm - 9:00 pm	Child Care Open.....	<i>Christ UMC Nursery</i>
3:30 pm	Laity Session.....	<i>First UMC, Plano</i>
3:30 pm	Ordination Rehearsal.....	<i>Christ UMC Sanctuary</i>
4:30 pm	Intern Rehearsal.....	<i>Christ UMC Sanctuary</i>
4:30 pm - 6:30 pm	Clergy Check-In and Receive Name Badges.....	<i>Christ UMC Narthex</i>
5:00 pm	Opening Worship Rehearsal.....	<i>Christ UMC Sanctuary</i>
5:00 pm	Laity Dinner.....	<i>First UMC, Plano</i>
	Clergywomen.....	<i>Christ UMC</i>
	Project Transformation Interns Dinner.....	<i>Christ UMC</i>
5:30 pm	Choir Rehearsal.....	<i>Christ UMC Sanctuary</i>
7:00 pm	Opening Worship with Rev. Estee Valendy, guest preacher.....	<i>Christ UMC Sanctuary</i>
8:30 pm	Reception hosted by Bishop Ruben Saenz Jr. and Mayé Saenz honoring Rev. Estee Valendy.....	<i>Gym and Gym Lobby</i>

### Monday, June 12

6:30 am	Exhibitor Area open for setup.....	<i>Connector Hallway/Donut Room/Narthex</i>
7:00 am	Registration/Welcome Desk open.....	<i>Christ UMC</i>
7:00 am - 9:30 am	Quest Diagnostic Screening (by appointment only).....	<i>S126</i>
7:30 am	Tellers Meeting.....	<i>Library</i>
7:30 am	Holy Communion and Prayer Service.....	<i>Chapel</i>
7:30 am - 4:30 pm	Child Care.....	<i>Nursery</i>
8:00 am - 6:45 pm	Exhibitors open.....	<i>Connector Hallway/Donut Room/Narthex</i>
8:00 am	Opening Music.....	<i>Sanctuary</i>
	Welcome and Prayer – Bishop Saenz	
	Welcome to Christ UMC – Rev. Chris Dowd	
	Organization of the Conference/Setting the Bar – Rev. Kenny Dickson	
	Consent Calendar – Rev. Andy Lewis	
8:20 am	Baptismal Renewal Service and Episcopal Address – Bishop Saenz	
9:10 am	Episcopacy Committee Report – Rev. Dr. Clayton Oliphint	
	Retiree Video	
9:30 am	Board of Ordained Ministry Report	
10:00 am	Standing Break and Gathering Song	
10:10 am	Keynote 1 – Rev. Trey Wince and Rev. Dr. Aqueelah Ligonde, Ministry Incubators “Know Thy Neighbor: Gen Z and the Faith of Emerging Generations”	
11:00 am	Agency Video 1 – Wesley-Rankin Center	
	Center for Leadership Development – Rev. Cammy Gaston	
	United Women in Faith video	
	Center for Church Development – Rev. Dr. Owen Ross	
11:40 am	Delegation Report – Rev. Dr. Clayton Oliphint and Kelly Carpenter	
11:50 am	Announcements and Prayer – Rev. Kenny Dickson	
Noon	Lunch Break	
	General.....	<i>Gym</i>
	Retirees.....	<i>N255</i>
	Lay Servants.....	<i>N253</i>
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1:20 pm	Resolution Committees.....	<i>N258-263</i>

1:20 pm	Toolbox Session – Lowering the Barriers for New People – Rev. Dr. Owen Ross .....	<i>Sanctuary</i>
2:20 pm	Break and Gathering Music	
2:45 pm	Prayer .....	<i>Sanctuary</i>
	Perkins School of Theology – Bishop Michael McKee	
	Journey Toward Racial Justice / Racial DEI Report – Rev. Dr. Ron Henderson and Rev. Silvia Wang	
3:00 pm	Keynote 2 – Generation Z Panel	
3:45 pm	Announcements and Prayer – Rev. Kenny Dickson	
3:50 pm	Dismiss to Toolbox Sessions – Bishop Saenz	
4:00 pm	Toolbox Sessions .....	<i>Locations in the Whova App</i>
	Children’s Ministry Resources and Ideas	
	Church Leadership in the New Reality – Kenneth Wolverton	
	Understanding, Navigating, and Dealing with Conflict – Lisa Hancock	
	Building an Antiracism and Racial Justice Model for Your Church	
	Online Discipleship	
	Ministry with New Generations in the Church – Ministry Incubators	
	Youth Ministry Resources and Ideas	
5:00 pm	General Dinner .....	<i>Gym</i>
	Children and Youth Workers Dinner .....	<i>Youth Loft Sports and Rec Building</i>
	Ordination Participants Dinner .....	<i>N255 C &amp; D</i>
5:30 pm	Choir Rehearsal .....	<i>Sanctuary</i>
6:30 pm - 9:00 pm	Child Care .....	<i>Nursery</i>
7:00 pm	Ordination Service – Bishop Ruben Saenz Jr., preacher .....	<i>Sanctuary</i>
8:30 pm	Reception for Ordinands and Commissionees .....	<i>Gym and Gym Lobby</i>

## Tuesday, June 13

7:00 am	Perkins Alumni Breakfast .....	<i>Christ UMC N165 A&amp;B</i>
7:00 am	Registration/Welcome Desk open .....	<i>Christ UMC</i>
7:00 am - 9:30 am	Quest Diagnostic Screening (by appointment only) .....	<i>SI26</i>
7:30 am	Holy Communion and Prayer Service .....	<i>Chapel</i>
7:30 am - 5:00 pm	Child Care .....	<i>Nursery</i>
8:00 am	Exhibitors open .....	<i>Connector Hallway/Donut Room/Narthex</i>
8:00 am	Opening Music .....	<i>Sanctuary</i>
	Welcome and Prayer – Bishop Saenz	
	“Into the Spotlight” Trailer	
8:20 am	Laity Address – Kim Brannon	
	Future Foundation Formation Report – Kim Brannon and team members	
	Conference Unification Report – Tim Griffy and Lisa Gafford	
	Ordinand Video 1	
9:00 am	Center for Connectional Resources – Christy Drenner	
	Equitable Compensation, Board of Pension and Health Benefits, Board of Trustees, CF&A	
9:20 am	Award Presentations	
	Ordinand Video 2	
9:50 am	COSROW Report	
	Black Church Initiative	
	Agency Video 2 – Golden Cross/Methodist Health System	
10:10 am	Standing Break	
	Gathering Song	
	Ordinand Video 3	
10:30 am	Legislation and Resolutions	
	Consent Calendar – Rev. Andy Lewis	
	Nominations report – Rev. Andy Lewis and Kim Brannon	
11:50 am	Announcements and Prayer – Rev. Kenny Dickson	

Noon	Lunch Break	
	General .....	<i>Gym</i>
	Local Pastors .....	<i>N255 D</i>
	Clergy Spouses .....	<i>N158</i>
	Black Methodists for Church Renewal .....	<i>N255 A&amp;B</i>
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	Africa University Video	
	Clergy Spouses Report	
	Young People’s Address	
	Agency Video 3 – Dallas Bethlehem Center	
2:00 pm	Remaining Business	
3:00 pm	Keynote 3 - Rev. Trey Wince and Rev. Dr. Aqueelah Ligonde, Ministry Incubators	
3:45 pm	GCORR video	
	Center for Missional Outreach – Rev. Andy Lewis	
	GBGM video and speaker – Todd Willis, Chief Operations Officer/General Counsel	
4:10 pm	Closing Worship with Holy Communion and Setting of Appointments – Bishop Saenz	
5:00 pm	Dismissal	



***HOPE IN THE LORD! BE STRONG! LET YOUR HEART TAKE COURAGE! HOPE IN THE LORD!***  
***–Psalm 27:14***

Right now, people of faith around the globe are holding onto word “hope.” We know that the day calls for more strength than we possess and that the challenges we face are bigger than we could possibly solve alone. But we are not daunted this reality. Instead, we maintain hope that God, in faithful love, is not yet finished with us – even in the face of uncertainty. In times like these, we actively choose to hope.

We find strength and encouragement by placing our hope not in ourselves, but in the Lord, just as our ancestors of faith have done throughout the ages and generations to come will

do. In turn, hope pulls our gaze to the future and challenges us to think about how we can be the church for the next generation.

At Annual Conference 2023, we will be joined by Rev. Trey Wince and Rev. Dr. Aqueelah Ligonde from Ministry Incubators, an organization committed to helping individuals, organizations and faith communities turn “hare-brained ministry ideas” into sustainable impact enterprises. Their expertise will give us valuable, data-based insights as we consider how to establish ourselves as a church that can minister effectively with Gen Z and the generations to follow.

For three days in June, we will gather to worship, learn, pray, and proclaim what it means to truly be the church. Together as a community of faith, we will look beyond today’s fleeting circumstances, find our strength, be encouraged, and place our hope for a good future in the Lord.



## 2023 NORTH TEXAS ANNUAL CONFERENCE FEATURED SPEAKERS



### **BISHOP RUBEN SAENZ JR. ORDINATION PREACHER**

Bishop Ruben Saenz Jr. is a native of South Texas and a lifelong United Methodist. He was elected bishop at the 2016 South Central Jurisdictional Conference and was assigned to the Great Plains Conference, effective September 1, 2016. While serving as resident bishop of the Great Plains Conference, Bishop Saenz was also assigned to provide episcopal coverage for the Central Texas Conference, beginning January 1, 2022. Effective January 1, 2023, Bishop Saenz was assigned as resident bishop of both the Central Texas Conference and the North Texas Conference.

In his role as an episcopal leader in Kansas and Nebraska, Bishop Saenz led three former conferences through a unification process that began in 2014. Under his leadership, the Great Plains Conference focused on the four pillars of a robust ministry and witness for Jesus Christ in the Wesleyan tradition: Love God; proclaim Christ; serve others, especially the poor; and seek justice.

Bishop Saenz is a graduate of Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas, and a former high school teacher, high school football coach, and businessperson. He earned his Master of Divinity and Doctor of Ministry degrees from Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University. As a pastor, he focused his ministry on intentional spiritual practice and formation, developing a lay apostolate, and giving people the tools and encouragement to move out of generational poverty. He served congregations in East Dallas, Oak Cliff, El Paso, and Edinburg, Texas. El Buen Pastor—The Good Shepherd—in Edinburg, Texas, was the largest Hispanic-American United Methodist Church in the country during his pastoral tenure.

In 2010, he was appointed to serve as the Southwest Texas Conference director of congregational and new church development, and he helped start 11 new churches before being named director of the conference connexional ministries and executive director of the Rio Texas Conference's Mission Vitality Center in January 2015. In that role, he oversaw the conference's missional strategies and objectives for congregational vitality, starting new churches, clergy and lay leadership vitality, uniting people, and transforming communities.

Bishop Saenz has been married to Mayé since 1981. They have four children and nine grandchildren, with one on the way.



**REV. ESTEE VALENDY**  
**GUEST PREACHER**  
*Co-Senior Pastor, Keller UMC*

Estee Valendy is an Elder in the Central Texas Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church. She grew up in Keller, Texas, and is married to her high school sweetheart, Jason. Together, they have two children: Jude (15) and Evan (10). She is a graduate of Southwestern University and Brite Divinity School.

Valendy has served in associate and senior pastor positions. She currently serves as co-senior pastor at Keller United Methodist Church. Her previous appointments were FUMC Arlington (2006-2012) and Saginaw UMC (2012-2019). Valendy currently serves on the Central Texas Board of Ordained Ministry as the chair of the Order of Elders. She was the first female in the Central Texas Annual Conference to receive the Bishop's Preaching Excellence Award

in 2015. She led the CTC Preaching Summit in 2018 and was a preaching peer group convener for the Perkins Center for Preaching Excellence.

Valendy's passion is encouraging others to trust in God's presence and grace. She loves the local church and counts it the highest honor to accompany God's people in times of joy and pain. When she is not at church, she's at home with her nose in a book or her fingers on piano keys.



**REV. TREY WINCE**  
**KEYNOTE SPEAKER**  
*Executive Vice President, Ministry Incubators*

Trey Wince serves as the Executive Vice President of Ministry Incubators, an innovation consultancy start-up dedicated to helping missional innovators get their ideas clarified, launched and sustainable.

Wince also serves as the president and CEO of Ministry Architects, a consultancy and resourcer for churches, theological institutions, and nonprofits. Ministry Architects offer a systems-based approach to tackling the challenges facing mission-driven organizations. Wince is the former executive director of the Bridges Project, an initiative of The United Methodist Conference of Greater

New Jersey, funded by the Lilly Endowment. Previously, as the director of new disciples for the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference, Trey helped coach, resource and church plants with more than 550 churches across the area.

During his years of church leading, planting, consulting, coaching and pastoring, Wince has remained convinced that high-impact organizations simply know how to build steady habits that make healthy growth predictable.

In his past lives, Wince has served as preaching pastor of Princeton UMC, lead pastor of Kingston UMC, college and young adult ministries director at First Presbyterian Church in Nashville and international missions coordinator with Joshua Expeditions.

Wince spends his most important hours coaching his sons Jack and Liam in soccer and watching early 2000s sitcoms with his wife Debbie.

**REV. DR. AQUEELAH LIGONDE****KEYNOTE SPEAKER**

*Vice President for Coaching and Training,  
Ministry Incubators*

Aqueelah Ligonde is an enthusiastic speaker and leader with a passion for today's generation of leaders, youth and women.

Ligonde holds a master of divinity from McCormick Theological Seminary and a doctorate in ministry and a certificate in Black church studies from Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary. In 2011, she was ordained in the Presbyterian Church (USA) and became a member of the Presbytery of New York City. Ligonde has worked with various organizations, institutions and programs, such as the Institute for Youth Ministry at Princeton Theological Seminary, Leadership Education at Duke Divinity, Fuller Youth Institute, Urban Youth

Workers Institute, Youth Specialties, Holmes Presbyterian Camp, PC(USA) Young Adult Volunteer Program and GenOn/Logos Ministries, plus others.

Ligonde is an International Coaching Federation (ICF)-trained coach through the Coach Approach Skills Training program. She is currently the Director of Coaching and Staff Consultant for Ministry Architects and the Vice President for Coaching and Training for Ministry Incubators, organizations that are designed to champion congregations and leaders to help them live into their full ministry potential.

Ligonde lives with her husband in Long Island, New York, where they enjoy cheering on the Mets and watching episodes of "Dr. Who."

## PRELIMINARY CONSENT CALENDAR GUIDELINES

The Consent Calendar will be presented as a resolution in which the reports listed can be approved in one motion rather than separate motions for each item. A consent calendar, as the name implies, refers to the general agreement that certain item(s) are voted on, without questions or discussion, as a package. It differentiates between routine matters not needing explanation and more complex issues needing examination. It is not that the routine matters are not important, nor that they don't need to be approved by the body, it is just that they are not controversial and so there is no need for discussion before taking a vote. Many of the items are placed on the consent agenda because there is no change what-so-ever or a minor word(s) change for clarification year after year. The main purpose of a consent calendar is to liberate our business sessions from administrative details, repetitious discussions, and help keep our focus on celebrating, worshipping, teaching, learning and strategic issues.

**To be placed on our consent calendar, the report item must:**

- 1) **Not have financial implications that have not already been included in the new budget, and**
- 2) **Not deal with conference rules.**

**To be removed from the consent calendar, the report item must have the following actions:**

- 1) **A note proposing the item to be removed, signed by five (5) voting members of the annual conference, submitted to the Conference Secretary, and**
- 2) **Must be done within twenty-four (24) hours of presenting the consent calendar.**

## PRELIMINARY CONSENT CALENDAR

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## STANDING RULES: PROCEEDINGS FOR THE MEETINGS OF THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

### Motions by Function Chart

<i>Motion</i>	<i>What to say</i>	<i>Second?</i>	<i>Debate?</i>	<i>Amend?</i>	<i>Vote?</i>
Adjourn	"I move that we adjourn."	Yes	No	No	Majority
Adopt a report	"I move that the report be adopted."	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
Amend a motion on the floor	"I move to amend by [describe]."	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Complain about air conditioning, noise, etc.	"I rise to a question of privilege."	No	No	No	No vote. Chair rules
Divide motion into parts to be voted on separately	"I move that we divide the question to consider separately [specify]."	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
End debate	"I move the previous question."	Yes	No	No	2/3
Introduce a main motion	"I move that . . ."	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Give closer study	"I move to refer the matter to committee."	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Protest a breach of rules or conduct	"I rise to a point of order."	No	No	No	No vote. Chair rules
Reconsider an action	"I move to reconsider the vote on [specify]."	Yes	same as original motion	No	Majority
Request information	"Point of information."	No	No	No	No vote. Chair responds
Suspend an issue	"I move to table the motion."	Yes	No	No	Majority
Suspend the rules	"I move to suspend the rules so that [specify]."	Yes	No	No	2/3
Take up a tabled matter	"I move to take from the table [specify]."	Yes	No	No	Majority
Vote on a chair's ruling	"I appeal from the decision that [specify]."	Yes	No	No	Majority

## Motions by Rank Chart

<b>Ranking Motions</b> The ranking motions are listed in order of rank. When any one of these motions is immediately pending, those above it are in order and those below it are not in order.		<b>Principal Requirements</b>		
<i>Privileged Motions</i>	Second Required?	Debatable?	Amendable?	Vote Required
Adjourn	Yes	No	No	Majority
Raise a question of privilege	No	No	No	No vote. Chair rules
Call for order of the day	No	No	No	No vote. Chair rules
<i>Subsidiary Motions</i>				
Table	Yes	No	No	Majority
Move the previous question	Yes	No	No	2/3
Refer to committee	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Amend	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
<i>Main Motions</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
<b>Non-Ranking Motions</b> Whether these non-ranking motions are in order depends upon the business already under consideration and what purpose they may serve when introduced.		<b>Principal Requirements</b>		
<i>Incidental Motions</i>				
Appeal	Yes	No	No	Majority
Divide the question	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
Parliamentary inquiry	No	No	No	No vote
Point of order/point of information	No	No	No	No vote. Chair rules/responds
Suspend the rules	Yes	No	No	2/3
Withdraw a motion	No	No	No	Majority
<i>Motions that Bring a Question Back</i>				
Reconsider	Yes	per original	No	Majority
Take from the table	Yes	No	No	Majority

## ACRONYMS

<b>BOD</b> .....	Book of Discipline
<b>BOM</b> .....	Board of Ordained Ministry
<b>BOR</b> .....	Book of Resolutions
<b>CCYM</b> .....	Conference Council on Youth Ministries
<b>CFA</b> .....	Council on Finance and Administration
<b>CPP</b> .....	Comprehensive Protection Plan
<b>DCOM</b> .....	District Committee on Ordained Ministry
<b>DS</b> .....	District Superintendent
<b>EA</b> .....	East District
<b>ELCC</b> .....	Ethnic Local Church Concerns
<b>GBCS</b> .....	General Board of Church and Society
<b>GBGM</b> .....	General Board of Global Ministries
<b>GBHEM</b> .....	General Board of Higher Education and Ministry
<b>GBOD</b> .....	General Board of Discipleship
<b>GCAH</b> .....	General Commission on Archives and History
<b>GCCUIC</b> .....	General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns
<b>GCFA</b> .....	General Council on Finance and Administration
<b>GCOSROW</b> .....	General Commission on Status and Role of Women
<b>GCCR</b> .....	General Commission on Religion and Race
<b>JFON</b> .....	Justice For Our Neighbors
<b>LPI</b> .....	Lydia Patterson Institute, El Paso
<b>ME</b> .....	Metro District
<b>MEF</b> .....	Ministerial Education Fund
<b>MHBT</b> .....	McQueary/Henry/Bowles/Troy
<b>MPP</b> .....	Ministerial Pension Plan
<b>NC</b> .....	North Central District
<b>NTC</b> .....	North Texas Conference
<b>NW</b> .....	Northwest District
<b>NYMO</b> .....	National Youth Ministry Organization
<b>P-PR</b> .....	Pastor-Parish Relations Committee
<b>P&amp;Q</b> .....	Division of Preparations and Qualifications of the Board of Ordained Ministry
<b>SCJ</b> .....	South Central Jurisdiction
<b>S-PR</b> .....	Staff-Parish Relations Committee
<b>TMF</b> .....	Texas Methodist Foundation
<b>TUMCA</b> .....	Texas United Methodist College Association
<b>UMC</b> .....	The United Methodist Church
<b>UMCom</b> .....	United Methodist Communications
<b>UMCOR</b> .....	United Methodist Committee on Relief
<b>UMM</b> .....	United Methodist Men
<b>UWF</b> .....	United Women in Faith
<b>UMYF</b> .....	United Methodist Youth Fellowship
<b>VBS</b> .....	Vacation Bible School
<b>VIM</b> .....	Volunteers in Mission
<b>YSF</b> .....	Youth Service Fund



## 2023 AWARDS

### *HARRY DENMAN EVANGELISM AWARDS*

For over 44 years, The Foundation for Evangelism has partnered with annual conferences to present the Harry Denman Evangelism Awards to youth, clergy, and laity whose ministries help to nurture and empower disciples so changed by their relationship with Jesus Christ that they cannot stop themselves from serving as Christ served, or sharing “Why Jesus” in all aspects of their lives.

Harry Denman, a noted lay evangelist and leader in the Methodist Church in the 1950s, believed that each person must live their call to make disciples of Jesus Christ through relationship, mission, and preaching. Denman’s words still inspire more than 40 years after his death: “Today...the only way we can see Christ is to see him wrapped in a person...” What relevant words for the times we live in now!



#### *CLERGY*

#### **Pastor Wayne Walters**

Trenton United Methodist Church

The North Texas Conference Bishop and Cabinet nominates Wayne Walters for the Harry Denman Clergy award Recipient for 2023. Pastor Walters is the fulltime local pastor at Trenton United Methodist Church in the East District. He has served the church for five years. During his tenure the church has steadily grown.

This past year Trenton reported an 850% increase in professions of faith. Their robust confirmation class included nine high school youth and two adults. This is quite remarkable given the fact that Trenton has an average worship attendance of 56 people. In addition to the eleven Confirmands, eight others professed their faith and joined the church in 2022 for a total of nineteen new Christian professions.

When asked to tell the story, Pastor Walters talks about the people, “This is the most incredible church. Whenever there is a need in the community they step into action.” When the local elementary school caught on fire the evening of Easter Sunday, Pastor Walters and the church leadership stepped into to help the school leaders and reached out to support the teachers. “This is just who they are,” said Pastor Walters who loves to provide support for his church and engagement in the community. He says that being accessible to his flock is important to him, so he keeps regular hours at the church in the mornings. On Thursdays he goes to the Community Center and connects with the Senior Citizens, hosts a game day at the church on Fridays, and offers spiritual food at the Sunday Evening Bible Study. Pastor Walters very intentionally connects to the community and celebrates his leaders and Trenton’s Mission and Ministry team for their passion and great leadership. This past Easter they had 110 in worship and their membership is the highest it has been in ten years.

We congratulate Pastor Wayne Walters and Trenton UMC for their faithful leadership and ministry!

*LAITY***Mary Torres**

First United Methodist Church, Bogata

The North Texas Conference 2023 Harry Denman Evangelism Award for Laity is awarded to Mary Torres. Mary is devoted to her family and her church, First UMC Bogata in the East District, and she is known for her servant's heart. Mary has always been eager to try new ideas for ministry. Since joining First UMC Bogata, she has helped plan new worship experiences for young families and community members and served breakfast on Sundays. After visiting a homebound senior member of the Bogata community, Mary told her pastor, "God is telling me to do something for our older folks in town. I am not sure what, but I know I must do something."

Mary, who is also a professional cook and former restaurant owner, began serving lunch once a week at the church for older adults with just a few dollars in her pocket, a pot, a spoon, and a mission. Her vision was to give older adults a place to visit, play games, share a meal, and feel important. Within a few short years, Mary recruited benefactors to cover expenses, upgraded the church kitchen to prepare more food, and increased the number of days for senior center recreation and food to twice a week. Mary and several church volunteers cook and plan the programming. This is a food ministry and much more.

Mary Torres had a vision to provide a place where people could come to be fed emotionally, physically, and spiritually: a place for the community's elderly, homebound, and anyone else who wanted to come. For ten years the doors have been open twice a week for the community to come for a hot meal and a game of bingo. Health fairs and health experts often come. Exercise programs for the seniors have taken place along with time for community announcements, joys and concerns, cards ministry, devotions, and prayers. Attendees include Methodists, Baptists, and several who do not attend church. One stated that this gathering was her weekly church. Another expressed that this gathering saved her life. Before coming to the senior center, she felt she had been slowly dying from isolation inside her house. One woman's willingness to listen to God's call has made Christ real for so many older adults who have been reminded of how important they are.

*YOUTH***Raileigh Flaniken**

First United Methodist Church, Jacksboro

We are excited to celebrate Raileigh Flaniken of First UMC Jacksboro as this year's Harry Denman Evangelism Award Youth recipient. Raileigh approached her pastor, Rev. Dr. Chad Johnson, last summer about a ministry idea she wanted to launch in Jacksboro. The ministry would provide youth of the Jacksboro community a safe space to meet and talk about faith and life challenges in a non-judgmental environment. C3'D (Coffee-Cocoa-Christ) strives to create a space for young people to seek healing and wholeness. Raileigh is passionate about emotional, mental, and spiritual health and allowing safe spaces for young people to find community and faith. After initial gatherings at the parsonage, C3'D has grown into a full ministry meeting on campus and averaging 20 young people who are finding their own faith voices. It has been successful beyond measure and is bearing great fruit in this community.

The entire premise of the ministry is to provide a space for young people who may or may not have connections to a church or who have often felt marginalized and rejected by church on some basis. Every week centers on a struggle or social justice topic and allows the students the space to share and find healing. The conversation also revolves

around faith and finding grace and God's presence in their challenges. There is a meal provided and a time of games and fellowship.

This ministry is offering an important outlet for evangelism as many of the youth do not regularly attend any form of church and are now talking about their faith. The program acts as a transitional ministry and has been the catalyst for over ten youth to start attending church and youth programs at First UMC Jacksboro. One student who identified as an atheist began attending for the free meal and is now attending youth and worship regularly. Additionally, the healing youth have found through regular discussion and support has been a large part of helping these students grow as individuals and as a community. New bonds and friendships are being made that would not have otherwise been fostered. C3'D is planting seeds of faith and drawing young people into community where they can experience the love of God and the support of others.

Raileigh lives in every way of her life Open Hearts-Open Minds-Open Doors! She sees people for the sacred value they have. She wants everyone to feel involved, uplifted, and supported, and most of all wants the outcasts, marginalized, and oppressed to find voice, hope, and purpose. Raileigh is a model of our evangelistic spirit and John Wesley and Harry Denman would be so proud of her!

## ***BISHOP WILLIAM B. ODEN ECUMENICAL AWARDS***

The Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns would like to present two Bishop William B. Oden Ecumenical Awards. The first is to Rev. Dr. Andy Stoker, Vice President, Chief Engagement Officer at Thanks-Giving Foundation serving at Thanksgiving Square and the second to FUMC Allen for their innovative first Interfaith Dinner.



### **Rev. Dr. Andy Stoker**

Vice President and Chief Engagement Officer of Thanksgiving Square

Andy Stoker has been in full time ministry for over 20 years and was ordained as Elder in the North Texas Conference in 2005. Throughout his ministry and particularly as the senior minister at First United Methodist Church Dallas and in his current extension appointment as Vice President and Chief Engagement Officer of Thanksgiving Square, he has contributed faithfully to the interfaith connections and bridge building of faith communities in the city of Dallas.

His efforts have included being a member and leader with Faith Forward Dallas, a diverse coalition of Dallas' faith leaders dedicated to a shared vision of peace and justice for the North Texas community. In the aftermath of shootings in downtown Dallas in 2016, Dr. Stoker was a part of an intentional effort to convene faith and city leadership for meaningful work in racial healing.

Dr. Stoker is the ecumenical officer for Fellowship Southwest and has been recognized as a Champion for Compassion by the National Council on American-Islamic Relations. He has a mindfulness certification in the Buddhist tradition and has been awarded the "Pastor of the Year" honor by Pastors for Texas Children, a ministry that serves and advocates with Texas' neighborhood public. In his current position, Dr. Stoker is in partnership with Stanford University's ACTNOW in creating People's Commissions for the ultimate vision of the Beloved Community reflecting the ongoing work of Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr. Stoker is also hard at work across the state of Texas with the Interfaith Alliance which celebrates religious freedom and advocates with the LGBTQ community by engaging Texas faith leaders in advocacy efforts with elected leaders.



### **First United Methodist Church, Allen Interfaith Dinner**

Every 30 years, Ramadan, Passover, and Holy Week occur at the same time of the year. In response, First UMC Allen gathered a small group of faith leaders in Allen, representing those different faith communities to plan the Allen Interfaith Dinner in hopes of creating space for dialogue and building of relationships.

On April 12, 2023, 80 persons gathered in the Atrium of First UMC Allen representing Christianity, Judaism, Islam and Hinduism. At tables of 8-10, participants responded to these questions:

- Why are you here and what do you hope to contribute?
- What is one thing about your faith tradition that brings you joy?
- What is one question you have about a faith tradition that is different from yours?
- How does your faith help you navigate challenging times in your life?

At sunset, the adhan (call to prayer) was offered and Muslim participants retired to the fellowship hall for the Maghrib prayer before breaking their Ramadan fast. Participants broke bread for the Iftar dinner, enjoying a delicious Turkish meal.

Plans are already underway for another Interfaith Dinner in late summer, hosted by the Krishna Temple in Allen.

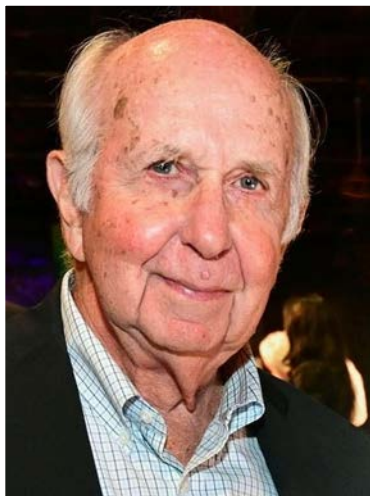


### ***ONE MATTERS AWARD***

**Rev. Dr. Edgar Bazan**  
New World United Methodist Church

The One Matters award is given to the pastor and the church who increased their professions of faith from zero to at least one person. This year the 2023 One Matters award goes to Rev. Dr. Edgar Bazan and New World United Methodist Church for their great work in evangelism. The church reported 18 professions of faith in 2022. These professions of faith were due in part to the connecting work the congregation did with the Day School at their same location. The congregation also increased 14% in membership in 2022 with many of the new members being young couples and families. The church has hosted a parenting course and provides regular family focused events to reach the families and support them. Dr. Bazan put together a “Community Life” team which has worked with the elementary school next door to provide volunteers for the “Book Buddies” program, sweatshirts, and school supplies. The church is living out a vision for outreach and connecting families to the church... AND IT’S WORKING!

Congratulations, Rev. Dr. Bazan and New World United Methodist Church!



## FRANCIS ASBURY AWARD

### **James E. Mitchell, Ph.D.**

ArapahoUnited Methodist Church

Dr. James “Jim” Mitchell is the 2023 North Texas Conference Francis Asbury Award recipient. Dr. Mitchell is the founding Board President of the Synergy Wesley Foundation at the University of Texas Dallas. He is a member of Arapaho United Methodist Church, the University of Texas at Dallas (UTD) Development Board, and the Academy of Chemical Engineers at West Virginia University. Jim is a retired Licensing Manager with ARCO Exploration and Production Research. He holds a Ph.D. in Chemical Engineering from the University of Illinois (1965), is married to Pat Mitchell, who he met at the Baptist Student Ministry at WVU during college and they have two married children.

In 2013, Bishop Mike McKee invited campus ministers to explore the possibility of creating a campus ministry at the University of Texas at Dallas. Brittany Melrose was at the time serving at Denton Wesley Foundation and felt God calling her to be a part of starting a new campus ministry at UTD. The ministry started its first year in 2014 with a small budget, in partnership with Arapaho UMC. It was in that first year that Brittany met Jim and learned about his passion for campus ministry and reaching students at University of Texas at Dallas, where he served on the Development Board. Jim helped Synergy grow from what was essentially a Conference-supported local church college ministry into a Wesley Foundation. They worked together to assemble the team that became the first Board of Directors, and then pursued the process of becoming a 501c3. Jim’s wisdom, higher education knowledge, and previous nonprofit Board experience are invaluable for forming an extremely effective Board that has been able to grow to the point they are today, with a ministry budget five times what it was when they started, and with multiple partner churches and funding partners. With Jim’s expertise and the strong foundation he built, Synergy Wesley Foundation has grown to serve about 200 students last year at UTD, plus an expanding community college ministry.

Jim has embodied our hope in a Wesley Foundation Board Member - he is strategic and forward- thinking, connected with the university campus, is highly engaged, cares deeply about the success of the ministry, supports the leadership and growth of the campus minister, and has built and facilitated a very healthy and generous Board of Directors. Dr. Jim Mitchell has demonstrated that he one of the strongest advocates for higher education, college students, and campus ministry.

Jim has additionally engaged the Center for Leadership Development staff liaison to Campus Ministry in wonderful conversation, resources and learning to better support all of Campus Ministry. Every North Texas Campus Ministry and their boards are better because Jim holds us all to great expectations and contributes to resourcing and achieving our goals.

Brittany Melrose states, “I’d like to think that campus ministry is not at-risk or on the decline, but instead that campus ministry, and college students themselves, will pave the way for a vibrant and exciting future of the United Methodist Church. Jim’s profoundly successful leadership tells that story.”



## **2022 KATE WARNICK AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN LOCAL CHURCH HISTORY – SMALL CHURCH CATEGORY**

### **Oak Lawn United Methodist Church, Dallas**

The Texas United Methodist Historical Society is pleased to announce that the 2022 Kate Warnick Award for Excellence in Local Church History –

Small Church Category – has been awarded to *Oak Lawn UMC: Love, Struggle and Renewal as a Sheltering Church 1981 - 2022*, by Kent H. Roberts.

Established nearly 150 years ago, Oak Lawn UMC was once at the center of a prestigious residential enclave north of downtown Dallas. As the church approached its centennial, the neighborhood changed. The church's older members moved away, driving in for Sunday services. Vibrant, gifted neighbors moved into the Oak Lawn neighborhood and joined the church. These new members were gay, lesbian, and transgendered Christians who treasured the services at Oak Lawn UMC.

Rev. Jacob Smith, acting chair of the Kate Warnick Award committee, noted, "The primary narrative of the writing is focused on the issue of membership and leadership roles for LGBTQ Christians who had found a home at Oak Lawn UMC. We appreciated how the larger struggle within the United Methodist Church was highlighted in this local congregation. After a divisive vote of 1989, Oak Lawn UMC had to heal and revive its own identity and understanding of how to be the church in its ministry context." Heal and renew itself is what the church did over the four decades chronicled in the book.

"Overall, we appreciated how relatable Oak Lawn UMC's struggles are as all churches are facing these same issues. It is a brave stand for Oak Lawn UMC to embrace these challenges and to adapt to changes in culture and demographics as well as the theological landscape of the UMC. The book gives perspective to anyone who reads it, whether you lived the last forty years in the UMC or not," Rev. Smith added.

The new history is lively, making extensive use of both church records and oral histories of key leaders. "After collecting church records," author Kent Roberts explained, "I began interviewing present and former clergy, staff, and lay members of the church. Listening to the recordings, I felt like I was enjoying a particularly good podcast. As I wrote this history, I sought to capture the energy and flow of the conversation. They tell the story." Rev. Barbara Huggins, also on the committee, agreed, "The stories of leadership, lay and clergy, within the congregation, are especially interesting."

As winner of the Kate Warnick Award, *Oak Lawn United Methodist Church: Love, Struggle and Renewal as a Sheltering Church 1981 – 2022* will be kept in the Archives of the North Texas Conference, at Bridwell Library at Southern Methodist University, and in the denomination's Methodist Library at Drew University. The book is published on Amazon.com.

The Texas United Methodist Historical Society established the Kate Warnick Awards in 1978 to encourage the publication of exemplary local church histories within the eight Annual Conferences of the United Methodist Church that constitute the Texas United Methodist Historical Society: Central Texas, New Mexico, North Texas, Northwest Texas, Oklahoma Indian Mission, Rio Grande, Rio Texas, and Texas. The Award is given in the Large Church, Medium Church, and Small Church categories. This year, no awards were made in the Large Church or Medium Church categories.

# LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS

## LEGISLATIVE ITEM #1

### LAY/CLERGY EQUALIZATION TABLE 2023 EQUALIZATION OF LAY AND CLERGY MEMBERSHIP

DISTRICT	CLERGY	LAY	RULE IIIA(1)	TOTAL RULE IIIA(1)	LAY EQUAL FACTOR
EAST	62	60	4	64	-2
METRO	277	106	19	125	152
NORTH CENTRAL	187	94	10	104	83
NORTHWEST	72	43	5	48	24
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>598</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>257</b>

#### STANDING RULE IIIA(1)

	EA	ME	NC	NW	TOTAL
Conference Lay Leaders/Assoc. Lay Leaders		2	1		3
Core Leadership Team	1	2		1	4
UMM President					0
UMW President		1			1
Youth Organization President			1		1
Wesley Foundation Directors	1	2		1	4
District Lay Leaders		1	1	1	3
Young Adults under 25 yrs.	1	1	1	1	4
Council on Youth Ministry	1	1	1	1	4
Diaconal Ministers		8	1		9
Agency Chairs/GBOGM Secretary		1	4		5
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>38</b>

	Membership 2022	% of Total	To Be Elected
East	6,275	6%	15
Metro	48,941	48%	123
North Central	39,486	38%	98
Northwest	8,177	8%	21
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>102,879</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>257</b>

1 **LEGISLATIVE**

2 **ITEM #2                   EQUITABLE COMPENSATION ANNUAL DETERMINATION**

3  
4 **FROM:**                   Center for Leadership Development (CLD)

5  
6 **BACKGROUND:**       The primary purpose of the Equitable Compensation Pastors Funds is to assist local  
7 churches in moving from part-time pastoral positions to full-time pastoral positions. These funds are meant to  
8 be transitional funds rather than long-term subsidies. Some congregations have the potential to reach a sustained  
9 average worship attendance of adults to move from a part-time to a full-time pastoral position with this short-term  
10 conference assistance. The time frame and benchmarks for moving from part-time to full-time should be reflected  
11 in yearly increases in worship attendance, Sunday School and small group attendance, professions of faith, those  
12 enrolled in annual confirmation classes, and annual increases in the number of individuals and families supporting  
13 the church’s mission and ministry budget (operations) of the church. In essence, growing churches can move from a  
14 part-time to full-time pastoral position in three to five years. To continue receiving Equitable Compensation Funds,  
15 a congregation in such a transitional setting shall pay 100% of the annual apportionments.

16  
17 The North Texas Conference also has a history of supporting missional settings where full-time pastors have been  
18 appointed to congregations not able to pay a full-time salary. Continued conversations with the pastor, congregation,  
19 and the Cabinet of the NTC are essential to ensure these congregations continue to be effective in reaching others,  
20 transforming lives, and sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ in word and deed. Annually, congregations in missional  
21 settings must also manifest the fruitful increases in worship attendance, small groups, professions of faith, confirma-  
22 tion classes, along with annual stewardship training and education. To continue receiving Equitable Compensation  
23 Funds, a congregation in a missional setting shall pay 100% of the annual apportionments.

24  
25 The Center for Leadership Development in consultation with the Bishop and the NTC Cabinet takes into consider-  
26 ation not only the appropriate minimum level compensation for full-time clergy of the conference but also the needs  
27 of the churches in determining whether they can afford a full-time pastor.

28  
29 **LEGISLATION:**       The CLD requests that Pastors Subsidies and Equitable Compensation support and admin-  
30 istrative expenses be apportioned at \$51,594 for 2024.

31  
32 **A. Guidelines for Conference Members and Full-Time Local Pastors**

- 33  
34 1. Equitable Compensation for Conference Members be set at \$51,954 for the minimum equitable com-  
35 pensation. This compensation includes:  
36     a. base salary,  
37     b. utilities, which shall be provided with payments made by the local church or reimbursed when  
38       paid by the pastor,  
39     c. dependent premium payments made by the local church,  
40     d. dependent premium supplemental payments paid by the conference at the discretion of the  
41       District Superintendent,  
42     e. and other conference subsidies received but excluding any reimbursement for Annual Confer-  
43       ence expenses or grants to assist with the expenses to attend expected spiritual formation or  
44       continuing education events for all of the clergy members of the conference (e.g., the Clergy  
45       Retreat) for conference members in full connection, associate members and provisional mem-  
46       bers of the North Texas Conference serving full time for 2024.

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49 Applying the same formula adopted by the 2006 Annual Conference at the recommendation of CF&A for  
50 changes to the District Superintendent level compensation, there will be no change in the Equitable com-  
51 pensation amount for clergy appointed full-time.



## 2. Adjustments for years of service:

Years of Service	Equitable Compensation Amounts
0-5	\$51,954
6	52,054
7	52,154
8	52,254
9	52,354
10	52,454

3. Compensation for additional churches on a charge: Each charge with more than one church shall receive \$200 additional for the second church and \$100 each for the third through the fifth additional churches.

4. Housing shall be provided in a church-owned parsonage or provided for with a monthly allowance. It is expected that the minimum housing allowance that will be paid by those churches or charges that do not provide a parsonage for their pastor will be \$12,000 per year. Requests for equitable compensation salary supplements where housing allowances exceed \$12,000 will not be considered.

## 5. Local Pastors serving full time:

Five years or less	\$45,877
Six years or more	\$45,977
Expense recommendations same as above.	

## 6. Deacons serving under salaried appointments in a local church:

- are not eligible to receive Equitable Compensation support from the Annual Conference;
- shall be granted the same minimum salary as an elder in full connection when their primary appointment is within a local church. \* \*\*

\*(Judicial Council decision #807)

\*\**(2016 Book of Discipline, Paragraphs 331.10b, 625.4)*

B. The following policies are proposed to the North Texas Annual Conference for the distribution of equitable compensation assistance in 2024.

1. A local church exists to serve, not to be served. All churches should be motivated to a larger sense of ministry. Churches whose pastors receive salary subsidy should be open to linkage with other churches in order to utilize efficiently the service of full-time conference members to reduce the need for subsidy.

2. Equitable Compensation levels can best be met when appointments are open to all ministerial members without regard to race or gender. We continue to urge every conference member to make the subject of a fully open Conference and adequately supported ministry at the local church level a matter of daily personal prayer. Only as the love of Christ dwells in us can an annual conference be a communion of caring persons.

3. Growth in stewardship should be achieved by all below-minimum remuneration churches. In making application for salary subsidy, District Superintendents are to provide evidence of stewardship education and growth of the church.

4. Tenure payments are designed to honor the years of service of pastors who continue for more than five years in ministry to below-minimum compensation charges because of the needs of the Conference. The Bishop and the Cabinet are urged to make every effort to move pastors to above-minimum compensation charges within five years after they begin full-time service.

1 5. Applications for salary subsidy from Equitable Compensation are to be made by the District Superinten-  
2 dent on the prescribed forms.  
3

4 6. The Charge Conference of any charge unable to pay the minimum salary set by the Conference shall be  
5 informed by the District Superintendent of the guidelines for receiving equitable compensation assistance.  
6 The Charge shall be informed of the amount required to bring the compensation level up to the minimum  
7 and shall be challenged to move toward the goal of full self-support at the earliest possible time. On the  
8 application for salary assistance, the District Superintendent shall certify that the charge has been duly noti-  
9 fied. The amount of subsidy granted to a pastor shall be acknowledged annually at the Charge Conference.  
10

11 7. Equitable Compensation assistance is not available to pastors serving as associate pastors or in staff  
12 positions other than pastor-in-charge. In order that such persons receive an equitable wage and to be in  
13 compliance with Judicial Council decision #807, however, it is expected that local churches use Conference  
14 minimum standards as minimum guidelines for setting associate and staff salaries.  
15

16 8. Pastors who decline an appointment which would reduce or eliminate compensation support are ineligi-  
17 ble for the Equitable Compensation tenure payment given for years of service.  
18

19 9. Equitable Compensation assistance is not available for a North Texas Conference member appointed to  
20 serve in another annual conference, nor is it available to members of other annual conferences serving under  
21 appointment in the North Texas Conference.  
22

23 10. There shall be no lump sum payments to persons receiving Equitable Compensation assistance, unless  
24 such sums are too small for monthly payments to be made.  
25

26 11. It shall be the responsibility of the pastor receiving Equitable Compensation subsidy to inform the  
27 District Superintendent of any increase in remuneration or any changes in eligibility which occur after an  
28 application for Equitable Compensation has been approved.  
29

#### 30 EXCEPTIONAL REQUESTS BY THE CABINET: 31

32 All requests for exceptional support (assistance requested by the Cabinet in excess of the 25% maximum stan-  
33 dard) shall be submitted in writing to the Center Director for Leadership Development and to the Center Director  
34 for Connectional Resources. The requests shall include the amount of assistance requested, length of time for  
35 assistance, and reason(s) for exceptional request.  
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1 **LEGISLATIVE**2 **ITEM #3**3 **RESOLUTION TO DESIGNATE RENTAL HOUSING ALLOWANCES FOR**  
4 **RETIRED OR DISABLED CLERGYPERSONS OF THE NORTH TEXAS**  
5 **CONFERENCE**6  
7 **FROM:** Board of Pension and Health Benefits  
89 **BACKGROUND:** To be in compliance with Internal Revenue Service Revenue Ruling 75-22, 1975-1,49, as it relates  
10 to clergy housing, the North Texas Conference (the “Conference”) adopts the following resolutions relating to rental/  
11 housing allowances for active, retired, or disabled clergypersons of the Conference:  
1213 **LEGISLATION: WHEREAS,** the religious denomination known as The United Methodist Church (the “Church”),  
14 of which the North Texas Conference is a part, has in the past functioned and continues to function through Ministers of  
15 the Gospel (within the meaning of Internal Revenue Code section 107) who were or are duly ordained, commissioned  
16 or licensed ministers of the Church (“Clergypersons”); and  
1718 **WHEREAS,** the practice of the Church and of this Conference was and is to provide active Clergypersons with a par-  
19 sonage or a rental/housing allowance as part of their gross compensation; and  
2021 **WHEREAS,** pensions or other amounts paid to active, retired and disabled Clergypersons are considered to be deferred  
22 compensation and are paid to active, retired and disabled Clergypersons in consideration of previous active service; and  
2324 **WHEREAS,** the Internal Revenue Service has recognized the Conference (or its predecessors) as the appropriate or-  
25 ganization to designate a rental/housing allowance for Clergypersons who are or were members of this Conference and  
26 are eligible to receive such deferred compensation:  
2728 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:**  
2930 **THAT** an amount equal to 100% of the pension or disability payments received from plans authorized under *The Book*  
31 *of Discipline of The United Methodist Church* (the “*Discipline*”), which includes all such payments from Wespath  
32 during the year 2024 by each active, retired, or disabled Clergyperson who is or was a member of the Conference or its  
33 predecessors, be and hereby is designated as a rental/housing allowance for each such Clergyperson; and  
3435 **THAT** the pension or disability payments to which this rental/housing allowance applies will be any pension or disabili-  
36 ty payments from plans, annuities, or funds authorized under the *Discipline*, including such payments from Wespath  
37 and from a commercial annuity company that provides an annuity arising from benefits accrued under a Wespath plan,  
38 annuity, or fund authorized under the *Discipline*, that result from any service a Clergyperson rendered to this Confer-  
39 ence or that an active, a retired, or a disabled Clergyperson of this Conference rendered to any local church, annual  
40 conference of the Church, general agency of the Church, other institution of the Church, former denomination that is  
41 now a part of the Church, or any other employer that employed the Clergyperson to perform services related to the  
42 ministry of the Church, or its predecessors, and that elected to make contributions to, or accrue a benefit under, such a  
43 plan, annuity, or fund for such active, retired or disabled Clergyperson’s pension or disability as part of his or her gross  
44 compensation.  
4546 **NOTE:** The rental/housing allowance that may be excluded from a Clergyperson’s gross income in any year for  
47 federal income tax purposes is limited under Internal Revenue Code section 107 (2) and regulations there under  
48 to the least of: (1) the amount of the rental/housing allowance designated by the Clergyperson’s employer or other  
49 appropriate body of the Church (such as this Conference in the foregoing resolutions) for such year; (2) the amount  
50 actually expended by the Clergyperson to rent or provide a home in such year; or (3) the fair rental value of the  
51 home, including furnishings and appurtenances (such as a garage), plus the cost of utilities in such year.  
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1 **LEGISLATIVE**

2 **ITEM #4**                    **PRE-1982 SERVICE YEAR RATE FOR 2024**

4 **FROM:**                    Board of Pension and Health Benefits

6 **BACKGROUND:**        Paragraph 1506.7 of the 2016 *Discipline* states that the responsibility for past service annuity rate for ministerial service rendered before 1982 be determined by each annual conference. Legislation passed at the 2012 General Conference removed the wording from Paragraph 1506.7 requiring the Past Service Rate increases be a minimum of .8% based on the Conference Average Compensation (CAC). Furthermore, General Conference 2012 passed legislation requiring full funding of any Past Service Rate increases by December 31 of the year preceding the proposed increase. In order to provide an increase in retirement benefits that keeps pace with inflation, the North Texas Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits is recommending the adoption of the percentage increase known as the “Cost-of-Living Adjustment” (COLA) as published by the Social Security Administration as the established rate for the annual increase in the Past Service Rate with a cap of 4%. The cap can be increased on recommendation of the Board of Pension and Health Benefits and approval by the Annual Conference.

17 At the March 2023 meeting, the board received an economic projection report from Wespath on the conference’s pension liabilities. In light of the need to review these projections more fully, increasing economic uncertainty, and implications of changes for the North Texas Conference in the coming year, the Board recommended the application of the COLA rate be suspended for 2024, leaving the current rate of \$844 in place for the coming year.

22 **LEGISLATION:** The Board of Pension and Health Benefits of the North Texas Conference proposes the pre-1982 Service Year Rate for 2024 remain unchanged at \$844 for approved service of clergy members in full connection, probationary members, associate members, and local pastors of the conference. This temporary suspension of the guidelines to apply the COLA increase each year to the Pre-82 rates is in response to the various challenges facing our local churches in this time of major change as we respond to worldwide economic uncertainties and the implications of changes for the North Texas Conference in the coming year.

30 **LEGISLATIVE**

31 **ITEM #5**                    **AUDITOR FOR THE CONFERENCE TREASURY**

33 **FROM:**                    Council on Finance and Administration

35 The Council on Finance and Administration recommends Ratliff & Associates, P.C. as the auditing firm for the Conference Treasury for the 2023 audit.

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**LEGISLATIVE****ITEM #6                    APPROVING THE DISAFFILIATION  
OF OAK GROVE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH****FROM:**                    **North Texas Conference Board of Trustees**

**BACKGROUND:**        Oak Grove United Methodist Church located in Little Elm, Texas (“Church”) has asked to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church; and in accordance with the provisions of ¶2553 of *The Book of Discipline, 2016* (as amended at the special called session of the General Conference in 2019), at least two-thirds of the professing members present and voting at a duly-called church conference of Church voted to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church; and

Rev. Debra Hobbs Mason, District Superintendent of the North Central District, has certified that Church was in full compliance with the provisions of ¶2553 concerning disaffiliation; and

Church has fully complied with the guidelines and procedures established by the North Texas Annual Conference and its Board of Trustees for disaffiliating churches, and the Conference Board of Trustees has proposed a written Disaffiliation Agreement Pursuant To ¶2553 (“Disaffiliation Agreement”).

**LEGISLATION:**

1. That the proposed Disaffiliation Agreement between the North Texas Annual Conference and Church, regarding Church’s disaffiliation from The United Methodist Church is hereby ratified and approved.
2. That following the full execution of that Disaffiliation Agreement, the corporate officers of the North Texas Annual Conference are hereby authorized to execute a quit-claim deed releasing the trust clause in all property to the Local Church’s new entity effective on the Disaffiliation Date; PROVIDED however that prior to the date of disaffiliation, the Local Church shall fully pay all monies due under the terms of the Disaffiliation Agreement.
3. That from and after the date of disaffiliation, Church, having voluntarily disaffiliated under ¶2553, shall have no connection or affiliation with The United Methodist Church and the North Texas Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, or with any predecessor denomination or conference.
4. That, to the fullest extent possible, copies of the official records and papers of the Church be deposited for permanent safekeeping with the North Texas Conference Archives. See ¶230 and ¶233 for guidance.
5. That we give thanks for this congregation and ask for God’s blessing upon its continued ministry.

1 **LEGISLATIVE**2 **ITEM #7**                    **APPROVING THE DISAFFILIATION**  
3                                    **OF ANTELOPE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**  
45 **FROM:**                    **North Texas Conference Board of Trustees**  
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8 **BACKGROUND:**        Antelope United Methodist Church located in Antelope, Texas (“Church”) has asked to  
9 disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church; and in accordance with the provisions of ¶2553 of *The Book of*  
10 *Discipline, 2016* (as amended at the special called session of the General Conference in 2019), at least two-thirds of  
11 the professing members present and voting at a duly-called church conference of Church voted to disaffiliate from  
12 The United Methodist Church; and13  
14 Rev. Todd Harris, District Superintendent of the Northwest District, has certified that Church was in full compliance  
15 with the provisions of ¶2553 concerning disaffiliation; and16  
17 Church has fully complied with the guidelines and procedures established by the North Texas Annual Conference  
18 and its Board of Trustees for disaffiliating churches, and the Conference Board of Trustees has proposed a written  
19 Disaffiliation Agreement Pursuant To ¶2553 (“Disaffiliation Agreement”).20 **LEGISLATION:**  
2122 1. That the proposed Disaffiliation Agreement between the North Texas Annual Conference and Church, regarding  
23 Church’s disaffiliation from The United Methodist Church is hereby ratified and approved.  
2425 2. That following the full execution of that Disaffiliation Agreement, the corporate officers of the North Texas  
26 Annual Conference are hereby authorized to execute a quit-claim deed releasing the trust clause in all property to  
27 the Local Church’s new entity effective on the Disaffiliation Date; PROVIDED however that prior to the date of  
28 disaffiliation, the Local Church shall fully pay all monies due under the terms of the Disaffiliation Agreement.  
2930 3. That from and after the date of disaffiliation, Church, having voluntarily disaffiliated under ¶2553, shall have no  
31 connection or affiliation with The United Methodist Church and the North Texas Annual Conference of The United  
32 Methodist Church, or with any predecessor denomination or conference.  
3334 4. That, to the fullest extent possible, copies of the official records and papers of the Church be deposited for  
35 permanent safekeeping with the North Texas Conference Archives. See ¶230 and ¶233 for guidance.  
3637 5. That we give thanks for this congregation and ask for God’s blessing upon its continued ministry.  
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**LEGISLATIVE****ITEM #8                    APPROVING THE DISAFFILIATION  
OF BECKER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH****FROM:**                    **North Texas Conference Board of Trustees**

**BACKGROUND:**        Becker United Methodist Church located in Kaufman, Texas (“Church”) has asked to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church; and in accordance with the provisions of ¶2553 of *The Book of Discipline, 2016* (as amended at the special called session of the General Conference in 2019), at least two-thirds of the professing members present and voting at a duly-called church conference of Church voted to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church; and

Rev. Cassie Wade, District Superintendent of the East District, has certified that Church was in full compliance with the provisions of ¶2553 concerning disaffiliation; and

Church has fully complied with the guidelines and procedures established by the North Texas Annual Conference and its Board of Trustees for disaffiliating churches, and the Conference Board of Trustees has proposed a written Disaffiliation Agreement Pursuant To ¶2553 (“Disaffiliation Agreement”).

**LEGISLATION:**

1. That the proposed Disaffiliation Agreement between the North Texas Annual Conference and Church, regarding Church’s disaffiliation from The United Methodist Church is hereby ratified and approved.
2. That following the full execution of that Disaffiliation Agreement, the corporate officers of the North Texas Annual Conference are hereby authorized to execute a quit-claim deed releasing the trust clause in all property to the Local Church’s new entity effective on the Disaffiliation Date; PROVIDED however that prior to the date of disaffiliation, the Local Church shall fully pay all monies due under the terms of the Disaffiliation Agreement.
3. That from and after the date of disaffiliation, Church, having voluntarily disaffiliated under ¶2553, shall have no connection or affiliation with The United Methodist Church and the North Texas Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, or with any predecessor denomination or conference.
4. That, to the fullest extent possible, copies of the official records and papers of the Church be deposited for permanent safekeeping with the North Texas Conference Archives. See ¶230 and ¶233 for guidance.
5. That we give thanks for this congregation and ask for God’s blessing upon its continued ministry.

1 **LEGISLATIVE**2 **ITEM #9**                    **APPROVING THE DISAFFILIATION**  
3                                    **OF COOPER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**  
45 **FROM:**                    **North Texas Conference Board of Trustees**  
67  
8 **BACKGROUND:**        Cooper United Methodist Church located in Cooper, Texas (“Church”) has asked to  
9 disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church; and in accordance with the provisions of ¶2553 of *The Book of*  
10 *Discipline, 2016* (as amended at the special called session of the General Conference in 2019), at least two-thirds of  
11 the professing members present and voting at a duly-called church conference of Church voted to disaffiliate from  
12 The United Methodist Church; and13  
14 Rev. Cassie Wade, District Superintendent of the East District, has certified that Church was in full compliance with  
15 the provisions of ¶2553 concerning disaffiliation; and16  
17 Church has fully complied with the guidelines and procedures established by the North Texas Annual Conference  
18 and its Board of Trustees for disaffiliating churches, and the Conference Board of Trustees has proposed a written  
19 Disaffiliation Agreement Pursuant To ¶2553 (“Disaffiliation Agreement”).20 **LEGISLATION:**  
2122 1. That the proposed Disaffiliation Agreement between the North Texas Annual Conference and Church, regarding  
23 Church’s disaffiliation from The United Methodist Church is hereby ratified and approved.  
2425 2. That following the full execution of that Disaffiliation Agreement, the corporate officers of the North Texas  
26 Annual Conference are hereby authorized to execute a quit-claim deed releasing the trust clause in all property to  
27 the Local Church’s new entity effective on the Disaffiliation Date; PROVIDED however that prior to the date of  
28 disaffiliation, the Local Church shall fully pay all monies due under the terms of the Disaffiliation Agreement.  
2930 3. That from and after the date of disaffiliation, Church, having voluntarily disaffiliated under ¶2553, shall have no  
31 connection or affiliation with The United Methodist Church and the North Texas Annual Conference of The United  
32 Methodist Church, or with any predecessor denomination or conference.  
3334 4. That, to the fullest extent possible, copies of the official records and papers of the Church be deposited for  
35 permanent safekeeping with the North Texas Conference Archives. See ¶230 and ¶233 for guidance.  
3637 5. That we give thanks for this congregation and ask for God’s blessing upon its continued ministry.  
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**LEGISLATIVE****ITEM #10            APPROVING THE DISAFFILIATION  
OF ENLOE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH****FROM:**                **North Texas Conference Board of Trustees**

**BACKGROUND:**      Enloe United Methodist Church located in Enloe, Texas (“Church”) has asked to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church; and in accordance with the provisions of ¶2553 of *The Book of Discipline, 2016* (as amended at the special called session of the General Conference in 2019), at least two-thirds of the professing members present and voting at a duly-called church conference of Church voted to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church; and

Rev. Cassie Wade, District Superintendent of the East District, has certified that Church was in full compliance with the provisions of ¶2553 concerning disaffiliation; and

Church has fully complied with the guidelines and procedures established by the North Texas Annual Conference and its Board of Trustees for disaffiliating churches, and the Conference Board of Trustees has proposed a written Disaffiliation Agreement Pursuant To ¶2553 (“Disaffiliation Agreement”).

**LEGISLATION:**

1. That the proposed Disaffiliation Agreement between the North Texas Annual Conference and Church, regarding Church’s disaffiliation from The United Methodist Church is hereby ratified and approved.
2. That following the full execution of that Disaffiliation Agreement, the corporate officers of the North Texas Annual Conference are hereby authorized to execute a quit-claim deed releasing the trust clause in all property to the Local Church’s new entity effective on the Disaffiliation Date; PROVIDED however that prior to the date of disaffiliation, the Local Church shall fully pay all monies due under the terms of the Disaffiliation Agreement.
3. That from and after the date of disaffiliation, Church, having voluntarily disaffiliated under ¶2553, shall have no connection or affiliation with The United Methodist Church and the North Texas Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, or with any predecessor denomination or conference.
4. That, to the fullest extent possible, copies of the official records and papers of the Church be deposited for permanent safekeeping with the North Texas Conference Archives. See ¶230 and ¶233 for guidance.
5. That we give thanks for this congregation and ask for God’s blessing upon its continued ministry

1 **LEGISLATIVE**2 **ITEM #11**                   **APPROVING THE DISAFFILIATION**  
3                                   **OF KAVANAUGH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**  
45 **FROM:**                   **North Texas Conference Board of Trustees**  
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8 **BACKGROUND:**       Kavanaugh United Methodist Church located in Greenville, Texas (“Church”) has asked  
9 to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church; and in accordance with the provisions of ¶2553 of *The Book of*  
10 *Discipline, 2016* (as amended at the special called session of the General Conference in 2019), at least two-thirds of  
11 the professing members present and voting at a duly-called church conference of Church voted to disaffiliate from  
12 The United Methodist Church; and13  
14 Rev. Cassie Wade, District Superintendent of the East District, has certified that Church was in full compliance with  
15 the provisions of ¶2553 concerning disaffiliation; and16  
17 Church has fully complied with the guidelines and procedures established by the North Texas Annual Conference  
18 and its Board of Trustees for disaffiliating churches, and the Conference Board of Trustees has proposed a written  
19 Disaffiliation Agreement Pursuant To ¶2553 (“Disaffiliation Agreement”).20 **LEGISLATION:**  
2122 1. That the proposed Disaffiliation Agreement between the North Texas Annual Conference and Church, regarding  
23 Church’s disaffiliation from The United Methodist Church is hereby ratified and approved.  
2425 2. That following the full execution of that Disaffiliation Agreement, the corporate officers of the North Texas  
26 Annual Conference are hereby authorized to execute a quit-claim deed releasing the trust clause in all property to  
27 the Local Church’s new entity effective on the Disaffiliation Date; PROVIDED however that prior to the date of  
28 disaffiliation, the Local Church shall fully pay all monies due under the terms of the Disaffiliation Agreement.  
2930 3. That from and after the date of disaffiliation, Church, having voluntarily disaffiliated under ¶2553, shall have no  
31 connection or affiliation with The United Methodist Church and the North Texas Annual Conference of The United  
32 Methodist Church, or with any predecessor denomination or conference.  
3334 4. That, to the fullest extent possible, copies of the official records and papers of the Church be deposited for  
35 permanent safekeeping with the North Texas Conference Archives. See ¶230 and ¶233 for guidance.  
3637 5. That we give thanks for this congregation and ask for God’s blessing upon its continued ministry.  
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**LEGISLATIVE****ITEM #12****APPROVING THE DISAFFILIATION  
OF PINE FOREST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH****FROM:** North Texas Conference Board of Trustees

**BACKGROUND:** Pine Forest United Methodist Church located in Pickton, Texas (“Church”) has asked to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church; and in accordance with the provisions of ¶2553 of *The Book of Discipline, 2016* (as amended at the special called session of the General Conference in 2019), at least two-thirds of the professing members present and voting at a duly-called church conference of Church voted to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church; and

Rev. Cassie Wade, District Superintendent of the East District, has certified that Church was in full compliance with the provisions of ¶2553 concerning disaffiliation; and

Church has fully complied with the guidelines and procedures established by the North Texas Annual Conference and its Board of Trustees for disaffiliating churches, and the Conference Board of Trustees has proposed a written Disaffiliation Agreement Pursuant To ¶2553 (“Disaffiliation Agreement”).

**LEGISLATION:**

1. That the proposed Disaffiliation Agreement between the North Texas Annual Conference and Church, regarding Church’s disaffiliation from The United Methodist Church is hereby ratified and approved.
2. That following the full execution of that Disaffiliation Agreement, the corporate officers of the North Texas Annual Conference are hereby authorized to execute a quit-claim deed releasing the trust clause in all property to the Local Church’s new entity effective on the Disaffiliation Date; PROVIDED however that prior to the date of disaffiliation, the Local Church shall fully pay all monies due under the terms of the Disaffiliation Agreement.
3. That from and after the date of disaffiliation, Church, having voluntarily disaffiliated under ¶2553, shall have no connection or affiliation with The United Methodist Church and the North Texas Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, or with any predecessor denomination or conference.
4. That, to the fullest extent possible, copies of the official records and papers of the Church be deposited for permanent safekeeping with the North Texas Conference Archives. See ¶230 and ¶233 for guidance.
5. That we give thanks for this congregation and ask for God’s blessing upon its continued ministry.

1 **LEGISLATIVE**2 **ITEM #13**                    **CLOSING OF BEN FRANKLIN UMC – EAST DISTRICT**3  
4 **FROM:**                    North Texas Conference Trustees5  
6 **BACKGROUND:**        Because only a small number of members remain at the Ben Franklin UMC, Delta County,  
7 the remaining members agreed that they cannot continue. Members of the church concluded that now is the time to  
8 close the church.  
910 **LEGISLATION:**        The North Texas Conference Board of Trustees recommends the closure of the Ben Frank-  
11 lin church per the *2016 Book of Discipline*, ¶2549.3a. The property will be deeded to the cemetery association.  
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1516 **LEGISLATIVE**17 **ITEM #14**                    **CLOSING OF CHICOTA UMC – EAST DISTRICT**18  
19 **FROM:**                    North Texas Conference Trustees20  
21 **BACKGROUND:**        Because only a small number of members remain at the Chicota UMC, Lamar County, the  
22 remaining members agreed that they cannot continue. Members of the church concluded that now is the time to  
23 close the church.  
2425 **LEGISLATION:**        The North Texas Conference Board of Trustees recommends the closure of the Chicota  
26 church per the *2016 Book of Discipline*, ¶2549.3a. The property will be deeded to the cemetery association with  
27 remaining funds transferred to the North Lamar Parish.  
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3132 **LEGISLATIVE**33 **ITEM #15**                    **CLOSING OF LONE STAR UMC – EAST DISTRICT**34  
35 **FROM:**                    North Texas Conference Trustees36  
37 **BACKGROUND:**        Because only a small number of members remain at the Lone Star UMC, Red River Coun-  
38 ty, the remaining members agreed that they cannot continue. Members of the church concluded that now is the time  
39 to close the church.  
4041 **LEGISLATION:**        The North Texas Conference Board of Trustees recommends the closure of the Lone Star  
42 church per the *2016 Book of Discipline*, ¶2549.3a. The property will be conveyed to the Congregational Methodist  
43 Church according to their deed of trust.  
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**LEGISLATIVE****ITEM #16 CLOSING OF SEAGOVILLE UMC – EAST DISTRICT**

**FROM:** North Texas Conference Trustees

**BACKGROUND:** Because only a small number of members remain at the Seagoville UMC, Dallas County, it was determined that the local church was no longer viable.

**LEGISLATION:** The North Texas Conference Board of Trustees recommends the closure of the Seagoville church under exigent circumstances per the *2016 Book of Discipline*, ¶2549.3b. The property will return to the North Texas Conference in accordance with the Trust clause.

**LEGISLATIVE****ITEM #17 CLOSING OF FERRIS GOD’S KINGDOM UMC – METRO DISTRICT**

**FROM:** North Texas Conference Trustees

**BACKGROUND:** Because only a small number of members remain at the Ferris God’s Kingdom UMC, Ellis County, it was determined that the local church was no longer viable.

**LEGISLATION:** The North Texas Conference Board of Trustees recommends the closure of the God’s Kingdom church under exigent circumstances per the *2016 Book of Discipline*, ¶2549.3b. The property will return to the North Texas Conference in accordance with the Trust clause.

**LEGISLATIVE****ITEM #18 CLOSING OF JUBILEE UMC – METRO DISTRICT**

**FROM:** North Texas Conference Trustees

**BACKGROUND:** Because only a small number of members remain at the Jubilee UMC, Dallas County, it was determined that the local church was no longer viable.

**LEGISLATION:** The North Texas Conference Board of Trustees recommends the closure of the Jubilee church under exigent circumstances per the *2016 Book of Discipline*, ¶2549.3b. The property will return to the North Texas Conference in accordance with the Trust clause.

1 **LEGISLATIVE**

2 **ITEM #19**                    **CLOSING OF PLEASANT MOUND UMC – METRO DISTRICT**

4 **FROM:**                    North Texas Conference Trustees

6 **BACKGROUND:**        Because only a small number of members remain at the Pleasant Mound UMC, Dallas  
7 County, it was determined that the local church was no longer viable.

9 **LEGISLATION:**        The North Texas Conference Board of Trustees recommends the closure of the Pleasant  
10 Mound church under exigent circumstances per the *2016 Book of Discipline*, ¶2549.3b. The property will return to  
11 the North Texas Conference in accordance with the Trust clause.

13  
14  
15 **LEGISLATIVE**

16 **ITEM #20**                    **MERGER OF ANNONA UMC – EAST DISTRICT**

18 **FROM:**                    North Texas Conference Trustees

20 **BACKGROUND:**        Because only a small number of members remain at the Annona UMC, Red River Coun-  
21 ty, the remaining members agreed that they cannot continue. Members of the church concluded that now is the  
22 time to merge the church with the Boxelder UMC.

24 **LEGISLATION:**        The North Texas Conference Board of Trustees recommends the merger of Annona UMC  
25 with Boxelder UMC. The property of the Annona UMC will be merged to the Boxelder UMC in accordance with  
26 the *2016 Book of Discipline*, ¶2546.

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# RESOLUTIONS

## RESOLUTION

### #1

### RESOLUTION ON FURTHERING THE CONNECTION

**FROM:** Rev. Dr. Edgar Bazan and Kim Brannon, North Texas Conference Lay Leader.

**WHEREAS,** The United Methodist Church has a long history of seeking to balance its diverse beliefs and perspectives within the bounds of its covenant faith through a worldwide connectional system to foster unity and carry out its mission in the world (§§104, 120, 132; BOR 8002); and

**WHEREAS,** The United Methodist Church recognizes the need to further its connection across the globe to remain a reconciling presence in the midst of difficult and divisive issues (§§4, 162, 165); and

**WHEREAS,** The United Methodist Church seeks to uphold its orthodox doctrine (Doctrinal Standards) and practices (General Rules and Our Theological Task) while acknowledging the needs and realities of society and remaining a relevant agent of God's inclusive love (§§4, 104, 105, 140, 162, 165); now

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that

1. The United Methodist Church affirms its commitment to connectionalism to promote understanding, acceptance, and respect among its diverse members (§132).
2. The United Methodist Church rejects any form of discrimination and affirms its dedication to creating inclusive communities where everyone is valued and treated with respect and dignity, recognizing the sacred worth of all people (§4).
3. The United Methodist Church celebrates that this does not mean a lack of convictions or an abandonment of principles but rather a commitment to finding common ground to build bridges of empathy, compassion, and peace (BOR 6139).
4. The United Methodist Church commits to seeking the mind of Christ on all matters, focusing on our shared humanity rather than our differences to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, and being guided by the teachings of Jesus and the principles of the Wesleyan tradition in all its endeavors (§165).

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that The United Methodist Church will continue to engage in respectful dialogue to understand differing perspectives of ministry in an effort to maintain unity and work towards resolving differences in a manner that is consistent with its mission and core values while upholding its orthodox doctrine and practices (§§105, 132; BOR 8002).

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that this body affirms the commitment of The United Methodist Church to remain diverse and contextual across the globe, embracing all individuals, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or any other form of differentiation, as full and equal participants in the life and work of the Church (§4).

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that this body affirms its commitment to seeking unity and compassion in the midst of diversity and disagreement and to working together to share the love of Christ with the world, calling upon all United Methodist congregations and organizations to work together to create a Church that truly reflects the persevering, saving, and sanctifying love of God, knowing that the Holy Spirit will guide and lead us in the way that is faithful to our calling and best for the future of the Church (§§6, 130, 131; BOR 8002).

**RESOLUTION****#2 RESOLUTION ON HISTORICAL SITE AND HERITAGE LANDMARK  
RECOGNITION COX MEMORIAL CHAPEL,  
HIGHLAND PARK UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, DALLAS, TEXAS****FROM:** Commission on Archives and History**WHEREAS**, it is beneficial to consider and honor our common history and communal effort to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ to present and future generations in effective and engaging forms; and**WHEREAS**, the General Commission on Archives and History of the UMC is charged by the General Conference of the UMC with the tasks of recognizing historic Methodist historic sites and structures; and**WHEREAS**, the General Commission on Archives and History of the UMC has implemented a program to recognize United Methodist Historic Sites and United Methodist Heritage Landmarks; and**WHEREAS**, paragraph 1712.a of *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, 2016* provides:*Historic Sites are buildings, locations, or structures which are specifically related to a significant event, development, or personality in the history of an Annual, Central, or Jurisdictional Conference (or its antecedents). Historic Sites are designated by formal action of the Annual, Central, or Jurisdictional Conference within whose regions the site is located. Such designation shall first be considered and reviewed by the respective Commission on Archives and History (or equivalent); and***WHEREAS**, paragraph 1712.a of *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, 2016* further provides:*After action by the Annual, Central, or Jurisdictional Conference to designate a building, structure, or location as an Historic Site, the president or chairperson of the Commission on Archives and History (or equivalent) shall advise the General Commission on Archives and History of the action taken and provide such documentation as may be required; and***WHEREAS**, paragraph 1712.c of *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, 2016* provides:*All nominations for the designation of buildings, locations, and structures as United Methodist heritage landmarks shall be made by the annual, central, or jurisdictional conference commission on archives and history (or equivalent) within whose regions they are located; and***WHEREAS**, the Commission on Archives and History of the North Texas Conference has determined that in 1970 and 1971, the Cox Memorial Chapel of Highland Park UMC, Dallas, Texas, was the site of the development of liturgical practices which were published and used throughout the United Methodist Church. These practices, then labeled “contemporary worship” reflecting their intention of engaging a new generation of disaffected Christians, have since become the backbone of liturgical worship within the UMC; and**WHEREAS**, the experimentation at Cox Memorial Chapel was led by James F. White and Rev. Grady Hardin, professors at the Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University (SMU), situated adjacent to Highland Park UMC. In the spirit of the times, the experimentation by Professors White and Hardin was open to and relied upon the laity of Highland Park UMC and in the SMU community to develop a liturgy which reflected a “work of the people;” and**WHEREAS**, Professor White embodied the results of the liturgical experimentation in Cox Memorial Chapel in his book *New Forms of Worship* (1971). From that source, the liturgy entitled “A Service of Word and Table I” in *The United Methodist Hymnal* (1989) was developed; and



1 **WHEREAS**, scholars have since recognized the importance of the liturgical experimentation at Cox Memorial  
 2 Chapel, most recently in Dr. R. Matthew Siglar’s “James F. White, Grady Hardin and Methodist ‘Contemporary’  
 3 Worship: The 11:00 a.m. Cox Chapel Service at Highland Park,” in *Essays on the History of Contemporary Praise  
 4 and Worship* (Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2020), edited by Lester Ruth; and  
 5

6 **WHEREAS**, the designation of Cox Memorial Chapel as a United Methodist History Site and as a United Method-  
 7 ist Heritage Landmark does not impose restrictions upon the use, modification or removal of the Chapel; and  
 8

9 **WHEREAS**, the Church Council of Highland Park UMC, a church in the Metro District of the North Texas Confer-  
 10 ence of the UMC, has approved this resolution on December 12, 2022, and will, with the Commission on Archives  
 11 and History of the North Texas Conference, complete the application process prescribed by the General Commis-  
 12 sion on Archives and History for registration of Cox Memorial Chapel as a United Methodist Historic Site and as  
 13 a United Methodist Heritage Landmark upon the adoption of this resolution by the North Texas Conference; and  
 14

15 **WHEREAS**, the Commission on Archives and History of the North Texas Conference of the United Methodist  
 16 Church has approved this resolution on January 26, 2023, and supports the application of Highland Park UMC for  
 17 registration of Cox Memorial Chapel as a United Methodist Historic Site and will nominate Cox Memorial Chapel  
 18 as a United Methodist Heritage Landmark, subject to approval of this resolution by the North Texas Conference;  
 19 now

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 21 **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the North Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church designates  
 22 Cox Memorial Chapel at Highland Park UMC, Dallas, Texas, as a Methodist Historic Site; and it is  
 23

24 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the North Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church agrees with the nomi-  
 25 nation of Cox Memorial Chapel at Highland Park UMC, Dallas, Texas, as a Methodist Heritage Landmark; and it is  
 26

27 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Commission on Archives and History of the North Texas Conference is hereby  
 28 directed to advise the General Commission on Archives and History of the action here taken and provide such doc-  
 29 umentation as may be required in order to seek designation of Cox Memorial Chapel of Highland Park UMC as a  
 30 United Methodist Heritage Landmark.  
 31

## 32 33 **RESOLUTION**

### 34 **#3**

### **RESOLUTION FOR THE NORTH TEXAS ANNUAL CONFER- 35 ENCE’S SUPPORT OF THE UMC SOCIAL PRINCIPLE ON ABOR- 36 TION IN THE STATE OF TEXAS**

#### 37 38 **FROM:**

39 Rev. Becky David Hensley  
 40 Rev. Katie Newsome  
 41 Rev. Jessica Wright  
 42 North Texas Conference United Women in Faith  
 43 North Texas Conference Commission on the Status and Role of Women

44 **WHEREAS**, God calls us as people of faith to transform conditions of injustice and advocate for the rights of all  
 45 people to have access to affordable, equitable, and comprehensive healthcare that includes reproductive and mater-  
 46 nal care; and  
 47

48 **WHEREAS**, the judicial precedents of *Roe v. Wade* and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, which established a consti-  
 49 tutional right to abortion that countless people have relied on for safe, proper, and medically sound abortion proce-  
 50 dures by certified medical providers was overturned by the Supreme Court through the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s*  
 51 *Health Organization* decision in 2022; and  
 52

1 **WHEREAS**, the Social Principles of the United Methodist Church (2016 *Book of Discipline* ¶161.K – see ad-  
2 dendum for full text) provide guidance on our denomination’s ethical standards regarding abortion, stating: “We  
3 recognize tragic conflicts of life with life that may justify abortion, and in such cases we support the legal option of  
4 abortion under proper medical procedures by certified medical providers;” and

5  
6 **WHEREAS**, our faith compels us to approach abortion with nuance and care, recognizing that our Social Principles  
7 compel us to reject an absolute prohibition against abortion – even if we mourn the realities that lead to abortions,  
8 especially in late-term pregnancies where clear “conflicts of life with life” emerge; and

9  
10 **WHEREAS**, our Social Principles affirm that “a decision concerning abortion should be made only after thoughtful  
11 and prayerful consideration by the parties involved, with medical, family, pastoral, and other appropriate counsel,”  
12 and that state law alone is not a sufficient guide for an incredibly personal, theological, and medical decision such  
13 as this; and

14  
15 **WHEREAS**, abortion is a vital form of healthcare for all persons who have a uterus, whether they intend to give  
16 birth or not, and while these laws restricting access to reproductive healthcare harm every community, they dispro-  
17 portionately impact Black, Brown, Indigenous and low-income communities; and

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19 **WHEREAS**, current Texas law severely impedes the professional autonomy of doctors in decisions to provide re-  
20 productive healthcare and calls into question their ability to abide by the Hippocratic oath of “First do no harm;” and

21  
22 **WHEREAS**, there is no exception according to Texas law for access to abortion for those experiencing a pregnancy  
23 following rape or incest; nor in cases of lethal fetal anomalies, forcing pregnant persons to endanger their own lives  
24 with no hope of bringing home a baby (Texas Health and Safety Code, Section 170A.002); and

25  
26 **WHEREAS**, the only exception under current Texas law which allows abortion is when there is a “risk of death...  
27 or serious risk of substantial impairment of a major bodily function;” fear of criminal prosecution has led medical  
28 professionals to delay or deny care they otherwise would have provided, with several cases documented where doc-  
29 tors waited to treat pregnancy complications until a patient’s health had deteriorated to the point that their life was  
30 in danger (Texas Policy Evaluation Project at the University of Texas at Austin); and

31  
32 **WHEREAS**, according to Texas Health and Safety Code, Section 171.208, anyone who performs or induces an  
33 abortion or does anything to aid or abet, knowingly or unknowingly, a person obtaining an abortion, barring the few  
34 exceptions currently present in the law, or can be proven to have intended to do any of these things, may be subject  
35 to civil litigation pending legal interpretation of the religious freedom exemption; now

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37 **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the North Texas Annual Conference will advance the Social Principles  
38 of The United Methodist Church through the creation of a task force under the purview and with the support of the  
39 Center for Missional Outreach that shall include United Methodist legal professionals, healthcare workers, clergy-  
40 women, and professionals from nonprofits working in reproductive health. The work of this task force shall be to  
41 provide consultation and educational resources for clergy, church staff, and United Methodist healthcare workers so  
42 that we may “continue to provide nurturing ministries to those who terminate a pregnancy, to those in the midst of  
43 a crisis pregnancy, and to those who give birth” (¶161.K); and

44  
45 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that we call upon the elected leaders who represent us to oppose the universal ban  
46 on abortion in the state of Texas and to strike down laws currently in place that restrict our observance of the United  
47 Methodist Social Principle ¶161.K.

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49 **Supporters:**

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1	Rev. Ashley Anne Sipe	Rev. Marti Soper	Keri S. Keck, LMSW-AP
2	Rev. Boston White	Rev. Deborah Riggsby	Beth Montigue
3	Rev. Heather Gottas Moore	Rev. Sarah Roberts	Kim Eiffert
4	Rev. Debbie Chapman	Rev. Beth Ensor	Dr. Sherry R. Boyd
5	Rev. Deana Lowe	Rev Cynthia Kennedy	Karyl Patredis
6	Rev. Stefani Reed-Meyer	Rev. Dr. Clara M. Reed	Martha Lammers
7	Rev. Macie Liptoi	Rev. Dr. Christy Thomas	Jessica Short
8	Rev. Chelsea Peddecord	Rev. Dr. Lucretia Facen	Tiffany Krieg
9	Rev. Melissa Hatch	Rev. Laura Echols-Richter	Samantha J. Braddock
10	Rev. Carole Somers-Clark	Rev. Anna Bundy Hagler	Kathy Hess
11	Rev. Ann Barton	Rev. Jennifer Chickering	Katie Clark
12	Rev. Katherine Glaze Lyle	Rev. Holly G. Bandel	Karen Kendall
13	Rev. Marianne Brown-Trigg	Rev. Joan H Humphries	Dianne Schayot
14	Dr. Sheron C. Patterson	Rev. Dana G Norton	Sharyn Yetman
15	Rev. Elizabeth Moseley	Staci Orr	Paula Maroney
16	Rev. Jennifer Kilpatrick	Reid Fade	Jenny Bates
17	Rev. Kay Ash	Judith Reedy	Dr. Andy Wright
18	Rev. Professor Sarah Heaner Lancaster	Kathy McLean-Davis	Rev. J. I. Minor
19	Rev. Patricia Thresher	Wendy Campbell	Rev. Marcus Womack
20	Rev Georgia Harrison	Shandon Klein	Rev. Mitchell Boone
21	Rev. Dr. Abril Goforth	Laura Hudec	Andy Stoker
22	Rev. Carol Montgomery	Sara Hardaway	Rev. Scott Gilliland
23	Rev. Jennifer Stevens	Nicki Lyford	Rev. Eric Folkerth
24	Rev. Dr. Georjean Blanton	Patti R Martin	Rev. Chuck Church
25	Rev. Audrua Welch Malvaez	Shawna Lewis	Rev. J.D. Allen
26	Rev. Stacey Piyakhun	Elizabeth Moen	Rev. Phillip Dieke
27	Rev. Jane Graner	Dawn Anderson	David Owsley
28	Rev. Eliana Sillas-Rios	Laura Byrd	Rev. Dr. Gregory S. Neal
29	Rev. Nancy DeStefano	Jessie Liles	Rev. Jack Soper
30	Rev. Meredith Scruggs	Sally Vonner	Rev. Josh Esparza
31	Rev. Kerry Smith	Angie Christoffersen	Kenneth Wolverton
32	Rev. Alice Coder	Hillarye Hightower	Rev. Geoffrey C Moore, PhD
33	Rev. Nancy Sherman Carter	Holly J Holloway	Rev. Patrick Hoffman
34	Rev. Pat Beghtel Mahle	Paula Maroney	Rev. Bill (John William) Matthews
35	Rev. Danielle Buwon Kim	Carrie Lammers	Noah Bunn
36	Rev. Kellie Sanford	Judith G. Sherwood	Alexander Clark
37	Rev. Leslie Smith, MDiv. BCC	Dr. Karen Anderson-Lain	Rev. Jonathan Grace
38	Rev. Jenna Johnson	Mae Alexander	Rev. Dr. Mike Greene
39	Rev. Valarie Englert	Suzanne Wolverton	Rev. Dr. Larry George
40	Rev. Dr. Anna Hosemann-Butler	Kristen Perkins Glover	Rev. Dr. Charles L. Aaron, Jr.
41	Rev. Susan Butler Leddy	Deniece Roane-Mason	Rev. Brian Dierolf
42	Rev. Beate Hall	Jennifer Baumgardner	
43			
44			
45	<b>2016 Book of Discipline, Social Principles ¶161.K</b>		
46			
47	K) Abortion		
48	The beginning of life and the ending of life are the God-given boundaries of human existence. While individuals		
49	have always had some degree of control over when they would die, they now have the awesome power to determine		
50	when and even whether new individuals will be born. Our belief in the sanctity of unborn human life makes us		
51	reluctant to approve abortion.		
52			

1 But we are equally bound to respect the sacredness of the life and well-being of the mother and the unborn child.

2

3 We recognize tragic conflicts of life with life that may justify abortion, and in such cases we support the legal option  
4 of abortion under proper medical procedures by certified medical providers. We support parental, guardian, or other  
5 responsible adult notification and consent before abortions can be performed on girls who have not yet reached the  
6 age of legal adulthood. We cannot affirm abortion as an acceptable means of birth control, and we unconditionally  
7 reject it as a means of gender selection or eugenics (see Resolution 3184).

8

9 We oppose the use of late-term abortion known as dilation and extraction (partial-birth abortion) and call for the end  
10 of this practice except when the physical life of the mother is in danger and no other medical procedure is available,  
11 or in the case of severe fetal anomalies incompatible with life. This procedure shall be performed only by certified  
12 medical providers. Before providing their services, abortion providers should be required to offer women the option  
13 of anesthesia.

14

15 We call all Christians to a searching and prayerful inquiry into the sorts of conditions that may cause them to consid-  
16 er abortion. We entrust God to provide guidance, wisdom, and discernment to those facing an unintended pregnancy.

17

18 The Church shall offer ministries to reduce unintended pregnancies. We commit our Church to continue to provide  
19 nurturing ministries to those who terminate a pregnancy, to those in the midst of a crisis pregnancy, and to those  
20 who give birth.

21

22 We mourn and are committed to promoting the diminishment of high abortion rates. The Church shall encourage  
23 ministries to reduce unintended pregnancies such as comprehensive, age-appropriate sexuality education, advocacy  
24 in regard to contraception, and support of initiatives that enhance the quality of life for all women and girls around  
25 the globe.

26

27 Young adult women disproportionately face situations in which they feel that they have no choice due to financial,  
28 educational, relational, or other circumstances beyond their control. The Church and its local congregations and  
29 campus ministries should be in the forefront of supporting existing ministries and developing new ministries that  
30 help such women in their communities. They should also support those crisis pregnancy centers and pregnancy  
31 resource centers that compassionately help women explore all options related to unplanned pregnancy. We partic-  
32 ularly encourage the Church, the government, and social service agencies to support and facilitate the option of  
33 adoption. (See ¶ 161M.) We affirm and encourage the Church to assist the ministry of crisis pregnancy centers and  
34 pregnancy resource centers that compassionately help women find feasible alternatives to abortion.

35

36 Governmental laws and regulations do not provide all the guidance required by the informed Christian conscience.  
37 Therefore, a decision concerning abortion should be made only after thoughtful and prayerful consideration by the  
38 parties involved, with medical, family, pastoral, and other appropriate counsel.

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**RESOLUTION**

#4

**RESOLUTION SUPPORTING MEMBERS OF THE NORTH TEXAS  
CONFERENCE EXPERIENCING DISAFFILIATION****FROM:** North Texas Annual Conference General and Jurisdictional Delegation**WHEREAS**, at the Special Called Annual Conference of the North Texas Conference we voted to approve the disaffiliation of a number of congregations throughout the Conference; and**WHEREAS**, there are a number of congregations throughout the Conference which did not complete the disaffiliation process, but remain deeply impacted by the consideration of disaffiliation; and**WHEREAS**, those electing to remain with The United Methodist Church from the congregations which voted to disaffiliate are faced with the task of finding a new church home, or beginning new congregations; and**WHEREAS**, we, the North Texas Conference of The United Methodist Church, recognize the importance of acknowledging this ongoing pain and publicly committing our support to those navigating this grief; and**WHEREAS**, we, the North Texas Conference of The United Methodist Church believe in the power and impact of our connectionalism to help these individuals and congregations heal, grow, and thrive moving forward; now**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, we, the North Texas Conference of The United Methodist Church, acknowledge the pain in disaffiliations, and as we recognize those among us who are navigating the grief and deep wounds caused by the disaffiliation process we also recommit to the importance of prioritizing our conference wide connectionalism to support those experiencing that pain; and**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, we, the North Texas Conference of The United Methodist Church, honor those remaining steadfast amidst divisions, and will seek to support those groups and individuals navigating finding new church homes, and creating new congregations, with our prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness; and**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, we, the North Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church, pledge to foster an inclusive environment that welcomes diverse perspectives and promotes dialogue and action to support The United Methodist Church as a big tent denomination in all our efforts moving forward.

**RESOLUTION****#5 RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE REMOVAL OF DISCRIMINATORY POLICIES**

**FROM:** North Texas Annual Conference General and Jurisdictional Delegation

**WHEREAS**, a more diverse and fully welcoming UMC is a testament to a more complete image of God, which includes persons of all sexual orientations and gender identities; and

**WHEREAS**, a more diverse and fully welcoming UMC allows all United Methodists to offer their prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness, as followers of Jesus, to further Christ's mission; and

**WHEREAS**, by the power of the Holy Spirit, God calls and includes all persons into the life and leadership of the Church, transcending the limitations of human categorization; and

**WHEREAS**, the current language in the *Book of Discipline* places limits on Christ's teaching and example of God's universal love; and

**WHEREAS**, the current language in the *Book of Discipline* falls short of embodying the spirit of John Wesley's simple rules to do no harm, do all the good we can, and love God; and

**WHEREAS**, legislative changes to the *Book of Discipline* would reduce barriers and allow movement toward wider diversity and inclusion in our United Methodist Church; now

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the North Texas Annual Conference supports the removal of all discriminatory policies and harmful language related to sexual orientation, and urges delegates to adopt the following petitions; petitions already submitted and that will be before the voting body of the next General Conference:

**Petition No: 20730-CB-¶161-G;**

Entitled: Revised Social Principles-161 and 162

[ADCA Vol 2, Sec 1, Page 208](#)

Summary: Removes the statement that affirms marriage as only between "one man and one woman." Removes the statement that only affirms "heterosexual" marriage. Removes, "The UMC does not condone the practice of homosexuality and considers this practice incompatible with Christian teaching."

**Petition No: 20177-FO-¶304.3**

Entitled: A Simple Plan #3

[ADCA Vol 2, Sec 2, Page 624](#)

Summary: Removes ¶304.3 which states, "self-avowed practicing homosexuals are not to be certified as candidates, ordained as ministers, or appointed to serve in The United Methodist Church." Also removes the corresponding footnote stating that "self-avowed practicing homosexual is understood to mean that a person openly acknowledges to a bishop, district superintendent, district committee of ordained ministry, Board of Ordained Ministry, or clergy session that the person is a practicing homosexual; or is living in a same-sex marriage, domestic partnership or civil union, or is a person who publicly states she or he is a practicing homosexual."

**Petition No: 20469-OM-¶341.6**

Entitled: A Simple Plan #5

[ADCA Vol 2, Sec 2, Page 1041](#)

Summary: Removes ¶341.6, which states (under unauthorized conduct), "ceremonies that celebrate homosexual unions shall not be conducted by our ministers and shall not be conducted in our churches."

1 **Petition No: 20181-FA-¶613-G**

2 Entitled: A Fully Inclusive Way Forward-Part 6 of 8

3 [ADCA Vol 2, Sec 1, Page 504](#)

4 Summary: Removes ¶613.19, which prohibits annual conferences from giving “United Methodist funds to any  
5 gay caucus or group, or otherwise use such funds to promote the acceptance of homosexuality . . . “

6  
7 **Petition No: 20190-FA-¶806-G**

8 Entitled: A Fully Inclusive Way Forward-Part 7 of 8

9 [ADCA Vol 2, Sec 1, Page 508](#)

10 Summary: Removes ¶806.9, which tasks GCFA with “ensuring that no board, agency, committee, commission, or  
11 council gives United Methodist funds to any gay caucus or group . . . “

12  
13 **Petition No: 20304-HS-¶415.6-G**

14 Entitled: Next Generation UMC #11—Amend Episcopal Responsibilities

15 [ADCA Vol 2, Sec 2, Page 977](#)

16 Summary: Removes statements prohibiting bishops from commissioning, ordaining, or consecrating persons de-  
17 termined to be “self-avowed practicing homosexuals.”

18  
19 **Petition No: 20387-JA-¶2711.3-G**

20 Entitled: Next Generation UMC #22—Penalties

21 [ADCA Vol 2, Sec 2, Page 933](#)

22 Summary: Removes predetermined, mandatory minimum penalties for clergy who officiate same sex weddings.

23  
24 **Petition Number: 20365-JA-¶2702.1-G**

25 Entitled: Next Generation UMC #21 - Chargeable Offenses

26 [ADCA Vol 2, Sec 2, Page 924](#)

27 Summary: Removes chargeable offenses that target “self-avowed practicing homosexuals” and clergy who con-  
28 duct same-sex weddings.

29  
30 **Petition No: 20420-OM-¶310.2d-G**

31 Entitled: A Simple Plan #4

32 [ADCA Vol 2, Sec 2, Page 1022](#)

33 Summary: Removes statements from Footnote 3 that repeat phrases being removed from other paragraphs in the  
34 BOD.

35  
36 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the North Texas Annual Conference secretary shall send copies of this reso-  
37 lution to: all General and Jurisdictional Conference delegates and alternates, the Commission on General Confer-  
38 ence; and the Council of Bishops.

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**RESOLUTION****#6 AFFIRMATION AND CALL TO CENTER JUSTICE  
AND EMPOWERMENT**

**FROM:** North Texas Annual Conference General and Jurisdictional Delegation

**WHEREAS**, in a groundswell response to the passage of harmful legislation at the 2019 Special Session of General Conference, Annual Conferences elected queer<sup>1</sup> clergy and lay persons to be General and Jurisdictional Delegates in record numbers, for the first time empowering queer<sup>1</sup> delegates to speak and act from our diverse experiences; and

**WHEREAS**, the 2019 Special Session of the United Methodist General Conference passed the Traditional Plan, which increased penalties for United Methodist clergy who are LGBTQIA+ and for clergy who support the LGBTQIA+ community through officiating their weddings; and

**WHEREAS**, in an attempt to address the divide within The United Methodist Church, an abeyance or moratorium was proposed to the General Conference, referenced below,<sup>2</sup> by the authors of the Protocol of Reconciliation and Grace through Separation; and

**WHEREAS**, we understand our call and responsibility as United Methodists to do good, do no harm, and stay in love with God; and

**WHEREAS**, we call straight and cisgender allies to do good by using their voice and vote to support, empower, and amplify the voices of the LGBTQIA+ community in The United Methodist Church; and

**WHEREAS**, 46 queer General and Jurisdictional Conference delegates from across all five jurisdictions wrote the original resolution which was historically adopted at all five jurisdictional conferences in November 2022; now

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the North Texas Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church:

1. Supports and amplifies the queer delegates' call to justice and empowerment for the LGBTQIA+ community throughout the North Texas Annual Conference, within and beyond our local churches, districts, departments, centers, and committees; and
2. Implores our Bishop to resolve in a timely fashion through a process of just resolution any complaints against clergy regarding their sexual orientation or the officiating of weddings of LGBTQIA+ persons; and
3. Aspires to become a United Methodist Church in which LGBTQIA+ people will be protected, affirmed, and empowered throughout our life, mission, and ministry together.

<sup>1</sup> The queer delegates chose to describe themselves using the umbrella term "queer," but refer to the broader community of persons with the LGBTQIA+ acronym.

<sup>2</sup> "Effective immediately upon adjournment of the 2020 General Conference, no complaint proceedings (including, without limitation, a bishop's supervisory response, suspension proceedings, attempts to achieve a just resolution, or referral of a complaint) shall be initiated, and all current or pending complaint proceedings shall be suspended, insofar as the alleged Book of Discipline violation asserted in the complaint is that the respondent is a 'self-avowed practicing homosexual' (however that term may be defined, including, without limitation, living in a same-gender marriage, domestic partnership or civil union); that the respondent has conducted, officiated, performed, celebrated, or blessed a same-gender wedding or other same-gender union; that the respondent has certified, licensed, com-



1 missioned, ordained, consecrated, or appointed a ‘self-avowed practicing homosexual’; that the respondent has  
2 provided ‘funds to any gay caucus or group’ or used funds ‘to promote the acceptance of homosexuality’; or that  
3 the respondent has otherwise engaged in conduct that The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church  
4 currently states is ‘incompatible with Christian teaching’ as it pertains to LGBTQ relationships. This moratorium  
5 on all new and pending complaint proceedings concerning human sexuality provisions applies not only to charges  
6 that are explicitly based on ¶ 2702.1b, but also to any charge that the same alleged underlying conduct constitutes  
7 a chargeable offense under any other provision of the Discipline, including (without limitation) ‘immorality’ under  
8 ¶ 2702.1a; ‘disobedience to the order and discipline of The United Methodist Church’ under ¶ 2702.1d; and ‘dis-  
9 semination of doctrines contrary to the established standards of doctrine of The United Methodist Church’ under  
10 ¶ 2702.1e. This moratorium is inclusive of charges related to the following paragraphs: ¶ 161, ¶ 304.3, ¶ 310.2, ¶  
11 341.6, ¶ 613.19, ¶ 806.9, and ¶ 2702.1b. This moratorium does not apply to charges under any of these provisions in  
12 which the underlying alleged actions address a different subject matter, including but not limited to sexual miscon-  
13 duct, sexual abuse, and sexual harassment. This moratorium shall remain in effect until the close of the first General  
14 Conference of The United Methodist Church after other denominations separate. Any complaints pertaining to this  
15 paragraph filed during this period shall be held in abeyance, and no time limits shall commence until the above-ref-  
16 erenced General Conference has concluded.” -From the Protocol of Reconciliation and Grace through Separation

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**1 RESOLUTION****2 #7****RESOLUTION ENCOURAGING LEADERSHIP WITH INTEGRITY**

3

**4 FROM:**

North Texas Annual Conference General and Jurisdictional Delegation

5

**6 WHEREAS**, the vibrant future of The United Methodist Church requires deep commitment and loyal leadership  
7 at every level; and

8

**9 WHEREAS**, grounded in a sense of duty and loyalty to the mission of the church, leaders are counted on and ex-  
10 pected to make decisions about the future of The United Methodist Church with the absolute best interest of Christ's  
11 church at heart; and

12

**13 WHEREAS**, the selection, election, and appointment of clergy and lay leaders throughout The United Methodist  
14 Church includes the implicit understanding that leaders will ethically serve in each of their leadership roles with the  
15 utmost integrity; and

16

**17 WHEREAS**, leaders who do not intend to remain in The United Methodist Church entangle themselves in a signif-  
18 icant conflict of interest; and

19

**20 WHEREAS**, the service of a leader whose call to discipleship is aligned with The United Methodist Church is  
21 prevented by the continued leadership of an individual who has made a private decision and/or public declaration  
22 to leave The United Methodist Church; and

23

**24 WHEREAS**, in November of 2022, and in historic fashion, a resolution in support of leading with integrity  
25 was adopted at all five Jurisdictional Conferences; now

26

**27 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the North Texas Annual Conference expresses both respect and gratitude  
28 to those who have voluntarily stepped away from positions of leadership as they journey away from membership in  
29 The United Methodist Church; and

30

**31 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that, as we continue this period of transition the North Texas Annual Conference  
32 calls upon every United Methodist, as a disciple of Jesus the Christ, to move forward in fairness and with integrity;  
33 and

34

**35 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the North Texas Annual Conference asks all lay and clergy members who in-  
36 tend to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church to recuse themselves from leadership roles in all areas of the  
37 church, including the local church, district, conference, jurisdictional, and general church level committees, boards,  
38 agencies, delegations, and episcopal leaders, and

39

**40 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that we encourage the North Texas Conference Board of Trustees to develop  
41 codes of conduct to manage conflicts of interest that may arise around discussions of disaffiliation agreements.

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**RESOLUTION****#8 RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF CREATING A  
U.S. REGIONAL CONFERENCE**

**FROM:** North Texas Annual Conference General and Jurisdictional Delegation

**WHEREAS**, the seven Central Conferences and five U.S. Jurisdictions of The United Methodist Church engage in mission together in 136 countries; and

**WHEREAS**, the connectional ties between the church in the United States and the Central Conferences are significant and vital to the continued mission and ministry of the worldwide United Methodist Church; and

**WHEREAS**, the existing structure of The United Methodist Church at the general church level has historically impeded each region from effectively tailoring its ministry to its specific contexts; and

**WHEREAS**, the existing structure of The United Methodist Church at the general church level diminishes our ability to be a vital and effective church and needs to be re-envisioned to achieve more fair and equitable church governance; and

**WHEREAS**, the Apostle Paul offered a beautiful example making clear the value of a church established in diverse places with shared beliefs, alongside local and regional differences in structure, worship, and style best suited to particular contexts; and

**WHEREAS**, the creation of a U.S. Regional Conference and the conversion of the Central Conferences to Regional Conferences, as outlined in the [Christmas Covenant](#), developed by Central Conference leaders in Africa and the Philippines, would establish structural parity throughout the worldwide church; and

**WHEREAS**, the creation of a U.S. Regional Conference, as outlined in legislation put forward by [the Connectional Table](#) will establish the governance necessary to allow each region to design ministry for its particular contexts, and thus more effectively make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world; and

**WHEREAS**, the North Texas Annual Conference aspires to vital, thriving, multicultural, and diverse ministries that are open to all people and can be a beacon of hope for the worldwide United Methodist Church, and

**WHEREAS**, in November of 2022, and in historic fashion, a resolution in support of a U.S. Regional Conference was adopted at all five Jurisdictional Conferences; now

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the North Texas Annual Conference supports the expressed intents of the Christmas Covenant and Connectional Table legislation, including the creation of Regional Conferences in Africa, Europe, the Philippines, and the U.S., respectively; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the North Texas Annual Conference recognizes and supports the leadership of our Central Conferences in the creation and furtherance of the Christmas Covenant as well the Connectional Table's future visioning on behalf of our worldwide fellowship; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the North Texas Annual Conference urges the Council of Bishops to expedite the process of voting on the constitutional amendments necessary to enact the regional conferences legislation, calling special sessions of annual conferences where necessary; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that in line with the intent of the non-disciplinary petition submitted by the Connectional Table, the North Texas Annual Conference requests the Council of Bishops to immediately appoint

1 a 20-25 member Interim Committee on Organization for a US Regional Conference to develop and propose to the  
 2 2024 general conference the structure and organization of a US Regional Conference. In line with the CT's legis-  
 3 lation, this body would organize and plan for the establishment and functioning of a new United States Regional  
 4 Conference comprising the five jurisdictions of the United States. Committee membership should have a minimum  
 5 of 3 members of each US jurisdiction, 3 central conference members and shall meet standards of racial and gender  
 6 diversity. The Committee should recommend a structure for the US Regional Conference including considerations  
 7 such as its membership, committee structure, meeting time, agency, and function; and  
 8

9 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the North Texas Annual Conference secretary shall send copies of this  
 10 resolution to all delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conferences, including alternates, to the Commission  
 11 on the General Conference, and to the Council of Bishops.  
 12  
 13  
 14

## 15 **RESOLUTION**

### 16 **#9 RESOLUTION ON BEARING WITH ONE ANOTHER IN LOVE** 17 **IN A SEASON OF DIVISION** 18

19 **FROM:** Rev. Dr. Nick McRae  
 20

21 **WHEREAS** our Conference has been severely wounded by divisions in the Body of Christ—divisions culminating  
 22 in the disaffiliation of more than forty congregations thus far—which has led to painful spiritual displacements,  
 23 broken relationships, and other tragic consequences wherever disaffiliations have occurred; and  
 24

25 **WHEREAS** the divisions within the Body of Christ that led to these disaffiliations have been related to controver-  
 26 sial matters including but not limited to human sexuality, gender identity, and reproductive ethics, matters that are  
 27 of vital and urgent importance to the Body of Christ, our wider culture, and the world at large; and  
 28

29 **WHEREAS** we acknowledge that there are faithful clergy and laity within the North Texas Conference who hold  
 30 opposing views on how to approach matters related to human sexuality, gender identity, and reproductive ethics in  
 31 the Church, and, acknowledging this, we seek to preserve both the unity of the Body of Christ and the consciences  
 32 of those siblings in Christ within our Conference who disagree on these matters; and  
 33

34 **WHEREAS** we recognize that an Annual Conference-level resolution, when passed, makes a statement in the name  
 35 of the North Texas Conference as a whole, thereby implicating all of its members, and that the passing of resolutions  
 36 that take particular positions on matters of human sexuality, gender identity, and reproductive ethics must necessar-  
 37 ily violate the consciences of our faithful siblings in Christ who hold opposing views; and  
 38  
 39

40 **WHEREAS** we recognize that Annual Conference-level legislation is not the only way open to the people of the  
 41 North Texas Conference for speaking to the Church, the culture, and the world, and that the clergy and laity of the  
 42 North Texas Conference are free to author and publish statements on these important matters as individuals, coali-  
 43 tions of individuals, congregations, or coalitions of congregations; and  
 44

45 **WHEREAS** we believe that continuing to put forward and pass Annual Conference-level legislation on these im-  
 46 portant but controversial matters may lead to further division within the Body of Christ, additional disaffiliations,  
 47 and more of the broken relationships that come in their wake; and  
 48

49 **WHEREAS** we believe that the maintenance of structural unity and Christian love within our Conference does not  
 50 require unity of opinion on matters related to human sexuality, gender identity, and reproductive ethics, but does re-  
 51 quire mutual respect, regard for one another's consciences, and a spirit of gentleness and self-sacrifice as we pursue  
 52 what makes for peace and mutual upbuilding; now

1 **BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED** that we, the members of the North Texas Annual Conference, covenant to  
 2 bear with one another in love when we disagree on how to approach the vitally important but controversial matters  
 3 related to human sexuality, gender identity, and reproductive ethics; and  
 4

5 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that, in recognition of the diversity of strongly held convictions within our Con-  
 6 ference, we aspire to express and publish our views on these matters as individuals, coalitions of individuals, con-  
 7 gregations, or coalitions of congregations rather than through Annual Conference-level resolutions, that we may  
 8 preserve the consciences of our siblings who are of a different mind and, in doing so, preserve the unity of the Body  
 9 of Christ as we seek to persuade one another in a spirit of tender collegiality; and  
 10

11 **BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that, despite our disagreements over matters of human sexuality, gender identity,  
 12 and reproductive ethics, we covenant to love one another, pray for one another, serve one another, respect one ano-  
 13 ther, treat one another with kindness and gentleness, and be willing to lay down our lives for one another according to  
 14 the command and example of Jesus Christ, who saved us and is saving us, who called us to be one as the persons of  
 15 the Triune God are one, and who sent us out to make disciples and transform the world in his name and for his glory.  
 16  
 17  
 18

## 19 **RESOLUTION**

### 20 **#10 RESOLUTION ON TRANS YOUTH AND FAMILIES**

21  
 22 **FROM:** Rev. Dr. Geoffrey Moore  
 23

24 **WHEREAS** we believe all persons, regardless of gender or sexual orientation, are entitled to have their human  
 25 and civil rights ensured and we affirm that all persons are individuals of sacred worth, created in the image of  
 26 God (*BOD*, ¶161.G); and  
 27

28 **WHEREAS** we seek for every individual opportunities and freedom to practice ethical self- determination and  
 29 we understand our gender diversity to be a gift from God, intended to add to the rich variety of human experience  
 30 and perspective (*BOD*, ¶161.F); and  
 31

32 **WHEREAS** health is a condition of physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being and healthcare is a basic  
 33 human right to which all persons should have equal access and that the church has an obligation to see that all  
 34 persons have access to needed medical care and therapy (*BOD*, ¶¶161.O, 161.V); and  
 35  
 36

37 **WHEREAS** we believe the physician-patient relationship is a sacred trust and should not be compromised or  
 38 interfered with and that the consensus of the medical community, guided by established bioethical parameters,  
 39 should be entrusted and empowered to determine what constitutes individualized best-practice, evidence-based  
 40 care for patients who are guaranteed patient autonomy and informed consent (*BOR* 3201 and *BOD* ¶162.N); and  
 41

42 **WHEREAS** we believe the rights and privileges a society grants to or withholds from its people definitively com-  
 43 municate to persons and groups of persons their value in that society and discriminatory and oppressive policies  
 44 have been used historically to seek the marginalization and eventual erasure of entire groups of persons (*BOD*  
 45 ¶162); and  
 46

47 **WHEREAS** we support social climates in which communities are maintained and strengthened for the sake of all  
 48 persons and their growth and are committed to work toward societies in which each person's value is recognized,  
 49 maintained, and strengthened, providing the potential for nurturing human beings into the fullness of their human-  
 50 ity (*BOD* ¶¶161, 162);  
 51  
 52

1 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that we oppose the criminalization of individualized best-practice,  
2 evidence-based, life-giving care for trans youth; and  
3

4 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that our churches in the North Texas Conference will be safe sanctuaries for trans  
5 children, youth, and their families and that, while we acknowledge the obligation our clergy have as mandatory  
6 reporters, we do not, because of our convictions of faith, consider gender-affirming care child abuse and thus will  
7 not report it as such.  
8

9 **CO-SPONSORS:**

10	Rev Scott Gilliland	Sharon E Bradley
11	Rev Boston White	Rev Marc Corazao
12	Rev Jennifer Kilpatrick	Tom Council
13	Rev Jonathan Perry	Rev Dr Georjean Blanton
14	Rev Josh Esparza	Kim Eiffert
15	Rev Randall G Lucas	Rev Pavielle Jenkins
16	Rev Dr Diana Brown Holbert	Becki Ozmun
17	Rev Macie Liptoi	Rev Patrick Littlefield
18	Rev Laura Byrd	Hillarye Hightower
19	Rev Rebecca David Hensley	Rev Julia Puac-Romero
20	Rev Ashley Anne Sipe	Rev John Thornburg
21	Jorja Sipe	Rev Beate Hall
22	Rev Mitchell Boone	Rev Katie Newsome
23	Wini Council	Kathy Jones
24	Kent H Roberts	Rev Dana G Norton
25	Jacquelyn Elbel	Dan Perkins
26	Rev Kerry Smith	Rev Roy Atwood
27	Rev Dr Tom Waitschies	Rev Marti Soper
28	Rev Laura Echols-Richter	Rev Dr Anna Hosemann-Butler
29	Rev Kay Eck	Rev Michael James Baughman
30	John Astle	Cheryl Bishop
31	Trent Juarez, MTS	Karyl Patredis
32	Rev Ann Willet	Rev R Ben Marshall
33	Rev Jonathan Grace	Eric Tuzin
34	Rev Kay Ash	Rev Stefani Reed-Meyer
35	Marcie Salamone	Rev Holly G Bandel
36	Holly J Holloway	Samantha J Braddock
37	Rev Jane Graner	Rev Dr Gregory S Neal
38	Jenny Bates	Rev Dr Tommy Brumett
39	Jeff Bouis	Rev Allison Jean
40	Sara Cowley	
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## 2023 NTC CONFERENCE REPORTS



### 2023 ANNUAL CONFERENCE REPORT JOURNEY TOWARD RACIAL JUSTICE (JTRJ) REPORT

The Journey Toward Racial Justice Team continues its work to engage, equip, and implement opportunities for transformation through following its vision statement to end active and passive racism and create an equitable future for all people in the North Texas Conference and the communities we serve. The JTRJ Team is committed to the work of justice in the areas of Vital Conversations, Intercultural Competency, and Institutional Equity. JTRJ is housed under the NTC Center for Missional Outreach.

In 2022, the Clergy of the North Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church approved a Resolution on Hate Crimes. The Laity of the North Texas Conference approved a Resolution on Gun Violence. To honor and fulfill the vision of these important resolutions, the Journey Toward Racial Justice Study Materials Committee wrote and compiled study materials consisting of theological insights, liturgy, teachings, sermon notes, and practical applications. The purpose of these study materials is to (1) equip clergy and laity with biblical and theological foundations around the issues of hate crimes and gun violence, and (2) to offer opportunities for Wesleyan formation and Christian responses with respect to these issues.

The JTRJ study materials on hate crimes are available at [https://ntcumc.org/Hate\\_Crimes\\_Curriculum.pdf](https://ntcumc.org/Hate_Crimes_Curriculum.pdf). The study materials on gun violence are available at [https://ntcumc.org/Gun\\_Violence\\_Curriculum\(1\).pdf](https://ntcumc.org/Gun_Violence_Curriculum(1).pdf). For additional resources, please see the JTRJ website - <https://ntcumc.org/about/combating-racism>.

Looking ahead to this next year, I envision JTRJ focusing more on Intercultural Competency. This would include thinking and speaking theologically with understanding of implicit biases, “cancel culture,” “critical race theory,” “color blindness,” and how to express our faith about race and identity at a deeper level with one another with respect. JTRJ will discern its role in curriculum preparation for our laity and clergy on cross-cultural / cross-racial understandings for seasons of ministry for churches and clergy. It has been a vision of JTRJ to create opportunities for building more bridges among groups of persons of color. We join in collaboration and support for one another. Through strengthening the connections among persons of color and with all people, we hope that bridges of understanding, belonging, and welcoming would grow through faith and grace in Christ. Thank you for your prayers and work in justice.

Blessings in Christ,

—Rev. Silvia Wang, Chair, NTC Journey Toward Racial Justice ([rev.silvia.wang@gmail.com](mailto:rev.silvia.wang@gmail.com))

## NORTH TEXAS CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH FUTURE FOUNDATION FORMATION TEAM ANNUAL CONFERENCE REPORT

### Introduction

The North Texas Conference Future Foundation Formation (FFF) team has been charged by the lay and clergy members of the Extended Cabinet with creating a description of the future identity of the North Texas Conference (NTC) in order to guide the Conference and ensure that the institution will remain relevant to people in a changing culture.

The team's work has been informed by the ideas and questions in consultant Gil Rendle's monograph, "Jacob's Bones: On the Church's Institutional Future." The team, along with lay and clergy input from throughout the Conference, has focused on a long-term horizon and on questions of identity and discernment. The aspirational purpose, values, metaphors, and evidence of effectiveness of the North Texas Conference of the future are presented below. The team began its work with the understanding that the Conference is the collective ministry of United Methodist Church communities, pastors, and laypersons in the geographic area defined by the North Texas Conference. As the NTC collaborates with other conferences in the future, this work can be replicated and built upon to reflect combined geographical conference areas. Additional information on the FFF team's process, team members, and input from the NTC is provided in the Appendix at the end of this document.

### Purpose

The communities and people of the North Texas Conference connect, resource, and inspire one another for ministry so that the Church's impact and witness to all people in the mission field will expand and be fruitful in making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

### Values

The following five values based on the life of Christ will undergird and shape the future work of the North Texas Conference:

- *Belonging* - genuinely welcoming, including, and valuing all people as they are to enrich our witness for Christ and celebrate the diversity of God's creation (John 4:1-30)
- *Connecting* - mutually supporting one another in ministry (1 Corinthians 12:12-27)
- *Nurturing* - cultivating, educating, and nourishing the members of the Conference and their mutual desire for faithful discipleship that our connection creates (John 21:15-17)
- *Serving* - emptying ourselves through personal and social holiness in the same way Christ emptied himself (John 13:1-10)
- *Creating* - moving out into the world and towards the renewal of all things, as people called by God, enlivened by God's ongoing creative work which nurtures our full potential in Christ (John 3:1-6)



## Metaphors

Three metaphors visually illustrate the aspirational identity for the North Texas Conference of the future:

- *Communion Table*  
The communion table metaphor emphasizes belonging, connection, and service, as a shared meal fosters deep relationships between complex and flawed people. The preparation and invitation represent the self-sacrifice of personal and social holiness. The nourishment of the meal symbolizes spiritual and emotional support within the church community. The NTC looks like a communion table when we gather together to share life, messiness and all, in the presence of Christ.
- *Aspen Grove*  
The aspen grove metaphor highlights the values of connecting and nurturing, with the single, common root system symbolizing interdependent members. This metaphor emphasizes the living, growing nature of the church community, where individuals can find nurture and support in each other for their spiritual development. The interdependence of the grove exemplifies the church's united purpose and faith, creating a strong foundation for a thriving Christian community. The NTC looks like an aspen grove by nature of being many communities connected within one conference, a source of our shared vitality.
- *Tapestry*  
The tapestry metaphor represents the diverse and interconnected nature of the church community. Each color and thread signify individual members, creating a rich pattern reflecting unity and belonging. This metaphor showcases the value of creating and it celebrates the diversity of each unique thread that is carefully and thoughtfully woven together to form a beautiful, cohesive masterpiece. The NTC looks like a tapestry each time a new expression of faith is woven into our common fabric. When we look closely, we can see the individual threads that make up the tapestry--the way individuals and congregations make up the Conference. As we zoom out, we are made aware that our beauty is found in the way we are knit together.

## Evidence

The best indicators that the North Texas Conference of the future is faithfully and fruitfully living into this identity are:

- New gatherings of disciples and different expressions of church increase.
- People's lives are transformed through deepening discipleship.
- People and churches recognize and employ the power of our connection.
- Diverse and safe spaces are cultivated where the mission field is emulated and all are empowered and thrive.
- The community is engaged and symbiotic with churches in increasing outreach and justice endeavors.
- People know the saving grace of Jesus Christ.
- Individuals, communities, churches, and clergy are resilient and resourceful.

## APPENDIX

The Future Foundation Formation (FFF) team of the North Texas Conference (NTC) was formed in September 2022 to create a clear description of the Conference in the future. This work grew out of a desire by NTC leadership to be proactive and to engage in a forward-looking, high-level discernment process that will guide the Conference in the coming years. As the NTC collaborates with other conferences in the future, this work can be replicated and built upon to reflect combined geographical conference areas.

The FFF team’s work has been informed by consultant Gil Rendle’s monograph, “Jacob’s Bones: On the Church’s Institutional Future.” Rendle explains that the most important work for a denominational entity in a season of change is to clarify “the values and disciplines that it holds most sacred that will make it an important institution to the people in a changed cultural turning.” He identifies five areas to be explored - Identity, Purpose, Values, Practices, and Metaphors:

- *Identity* - who are we now?
- *Purpose* - what difference are we called to make?
- *Values* - what very few principles must be held dear at all costs?
- *Practices* - what few behaviors and practices are to be held as central?
- *Metaphors* - what will be the dominant metaphors that will carry the promise of the institution?

The FFF team’s task has been discernment, not strategic planning, with an emphasis on defining purpose and values, not solving specific problems. Questions about disaffiliations, budgets, organizational structure, and programmatic offerings are not in the scope of the FFF team’s work. Similarly, the FFF team has focused on the Conference, not local churches. In this work, the “Conference” is understood to be more than just the staff and budget of the NTC. The Conference also includes the collective work done by the clergy, laity, and churches of the NTC when they come together. Cooperative mission efforts, committees, and conference-wide initiatives are all examples of this collective work. While the work of individual people and congregations is also vital in the ministry of the Conference, this is outside of the FFF team’s charter.

The members of the FFF team are an ad hoc group of laity and clergy intentionally assembled from throughout the NTC. They gathered in person for a total of 24 meeting hours during this nine-month process. Additional hours were spent in preparation and data gathering. Members of the FFF team are shown below:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Clergy/Lay</b>	<b>Church</b>
Edgar Bazan	C	New World UMC
Kim Brannon	L	Cabinet, University Park UMC
Mary Brooke Casad	L	First UMC Richardson
Cammy Gaston	C	Cabinet
Mary Beth Hardesty-Crouch	C	First UMC Allen
Ted Haynes	L	First UMC Winnsboro
Pam Hughes	L	First UMC Richardson
April Johnson Bristow	C	First UMC Richardson
Danielle Kim	C	Custer Road UMC

Levy LaGuardia	C	Axe Memorial UMC
Zack Landis	C	University UMC, Wichita Falls
Andy Lewis	C	Cabinet
Geoffrey Moore	C	St. Stephen UMC
Laura Muller	L	First UMC Sherman
Mary Nickson	L	Hamilton Park UMC
Tom Palmer	C	First UMC Coppel
Linda Parks	L	Floral Heights UMC
CJ Rice	L	First UMC McKinney
Amy Ruppertsberg	L	Christ UMC, Farmers Branch
Taylor Smith	C	First UMC The Colony
Amy Spaur	C	Christ Foundry UM Mission
Herman Totten	L	Trinity UMC, Denton
Deborah Vela	L	Elmwood-El Buen Samaritano UMC
Larry Womack	L	First UMC Rockwall

The FFF team was facilitated by Mike Bonem, a consultant who works with churches, denominational bodies, and ministries throughout the country.

Even though the FFF team has diverse representation, they intentionally sought input from throughout the Conference. Each district laity training event in February 2023 included a structured opportunity for participants to provide input for the team's consideration. Similarly, several virtual listening sessions were held for NTC clergy. Input was also gathered during several other events in January and early February (e.g., conference-wide event for children's and youth ministry staff). In total, approximately 400 people outside of the FFF team contributed to this process. The final recommendations represent the consensus that the FFF team discerned from this broader constituency.

## **CENTER FOR CHURCH DEVELOPMENT (CCD)**

*"Hope in the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage;  
Hope in the LORD!" - Psalm 27:14*

The vision for the Center for Church Development of the North Texas Conference (CCD) is *Every Church Planting*. The CCD's purpose is to equip congregations to gather new faces in new spaces for Wesleyan spiritual formation. With the wide diversity of churches in the North Texas Conference (NTC), the CCD knows that church planting will look different in every church. For some churches, planting looks like gathering for discipleship in a unique setting a small group of persons who are not currently a part of their congregation. For other churches, planting looks like developing a multi-million-dollar campus. Planting happens in a wide variety of ways when two or more new persons gather for Christian discipleship. The 2022-2023 Annual Conference (AC) year saw a diversity of planting taking place throughout the NTC.

### **New Campuses - Accelerated Church Expansion (ACE)**

While much of the church planting activities occurred inside of churches and in off-site locations, some contexts and ministries will be best served through the planting of a new church campus. The Accelerated Church Expansion (ACE) initiative was developed to take advantage of assets that have been accumulated within the NTC from the

sale of closed churches (Legacy Funds) to create a self-sustainable program that will allow us to rapidly expand United Methodist Churches within High Growth – Low UMC Presence areas while minimize the overall risks associated with buying land and building churches. Legacy Funds continue to be used as grants in all four districts and in all demographics of the NTC to assist with capital expenses while a portion of these funds have been dedicated for ACE.

The initiative has been a joint effort between the Center for Church Development, the North Texas Conference Cabinet and Trustees, Texas Methodist Foundation, and local churches. Together, these entities utilizing the ACE initiative have built Melissa UMC, broken ground on Grace Chapel UMC, placed land under contract for The Gathering - Anna, and developed plans to assist future church starts to acquire land and build a first phase buildings with a financial plan that includes the Legacy Funds reimbursed by these churches. This plan was approved by the NTC Cabinet, the NTC Board of Trustees, and the Council on Finance and Administration in 2019.

Here is a simplified summary of how ACE works:

- TMF provides the Conference with a zero-down note for the land and the building with the expectation that the Conference will pay interest only on the note,
- The ACE Congregation will wade at a rate of 12.5% each year into assisting with the interest payments.
- The ACE Congregation will hold capital campaigns every three years to decrease the principle.
- By year 10, the ACE Congregation will refinance the property, and
- In the refinance, the ACE Congregation will reimburse the Legacy Funds.

This process makes ACE self-sustaining. In short, ACE is designed to leverage and utilize existing and future Legacy Funds (from closed churches) to plant new churches at an accelerated rate and reimburse these funds for the North Texas Conference to plant United Methodist Churches throughout the NTC until the Lord's return.

### ***Primary Goals***

The ACE Initiative has five primary goals as follows:

1. To rapidly expand churches within High Growth-Low UMC Presence areas,
2. To form partnerships between the Conference, TMF, and local churches to purchase land and build a phase one building immediately,
3. To layout a ten-year business plan, along with a review board to make necessary changes, to celebrate wins, or if necessary to quickly stop the effort to minimize financial impact,
4. To empower key process owners to move quickly to take advantage of market opportunities, and
5. To create a financial approach that maximizes the use of Legacy Funds while allowing the New ACE Campuses the time to build their congregation in a way that allows the program to be self-funding for future church starts.

### ***How does it work.***

The ACE initiative is designed to work within a predetermined four phase process as follows:

**Phase 1** – The first phase is an assessment, approval, and then agreement phase. Items included in Phase 1 include approving a project, defining the ACE New Campus mission field, developing the ten-year plan concept, completing a Risk/Reward Agreement (if a Sending Church is involved), capital campaigns, and getting approvals from TMF, the Asset Team, and the local church. The Gathering - Anna is currently in Phase 1.

**Phase 2** – The second phase is the acquisition of land and construction of the first building. Items included in Phase 2 are finding and putting potential land tracts under 120-day preliminary contracts, completing all engineering and utility assessments, adapting the existing ACE building design within a master plan, land acquisition, obtaining approvals, obtaining land using TMF, and beginning construction of the first building. Grace Chapel is currently in Phase 2.

**Phase 3** – The third phase covers the eight years after land is acquired and the building is completed. Items included in Phase 3 are the Conference servicing the TMF Note using the Legacy Funds, ideally an ACE Sending Church, New Campuses growing the Congregation, holding capital campaigns to reduce the principal debt, the ACE Congregation (the New and/or all campuses) gradually taking on Service Payments years 3-8, and the review board holding quarterly reviews to celebrate, change, or halt effort. Melissa UMC is currently in Phase 3.

**Phase 4** – The fourth phase is the completion of the ACE Initiative. This may occur after the successful completion or if the decision is made to halt the effort. Items included in this phase are definitions on how debts will be repaid and how existing assets will be handled going forward primarily based on the Risk/Reward Agreement mentioned in Phase 1.

### ***Payment Proposal***

- Initial debt services are paid 97.5% by the NTC and 2.5% by the local congregation;
- When the certificate of occupancy is received, the local congregation's share increases to 12.5%;
- Each year, the local congregation continues to increase its portion by 12.5%;
- Every three years, the local church shall hold a capital campaign that includes significant debt reduction;
- On the eighth year of occupancy, the local congregation will be covering 100% of debt services;
- On ninth year of occupancy, the local congregation will refinance the loan, repaying the NTC for all expenses incurred in the project (without interest), and will receive the deed from the NTC; and
- By year 10, the local church receives the deed, and the Legacy Fund has been made whole.

### ***Why ACE is a way forward.***

The ACE Initiative can be successful for several reasons. These include utilization of Multi-Site Churches, New Campus Teams, A Business Plan, A Review Board, moving quickly to lock up land opportunities, Fail Fast and Less Expensive approach, New Campuses gaining critical mass before being burdened with debt, Self-Funding process, and a shared Risk/Reward approach creating an environment of “Involvement equals Commitment.”

### ***FAQs***

#### **Has ACE been vetted?**

Yes. Numerous entities and individuals including TMF, CFA, Trustees, 380 Advisory Team, and the NTC Cabinet have reviewed the models and found them to be accurate. All of the named entities have endorsed and desire to participate in this initiative. TMF has shared that they want to take ACE to other conferences.

#### **Why do we want to build right away?**

The models show that the cost difference between servicing a land note only and a land plus building is not significantly higher primarily since the New Campus pays less on rent and is positioned to grow faster in its own building and land.

#### **Are we cutting out the other committees that manage land and assets?**

No. Before any purchase is made, we will still obtain proper approvals. We are asking that appropriate Center Directors be allowed to put land under contract with “out” clauses so we can control the land deals. While engineering and utilities analysis is going on, we would seek the appropriate NTC approvals.

#### **What happens if interest rates rise, and we have maxed out the borrow rate?**

We would not advise maxing out the borrow rate. If the max borrow rate is 3.95X, then we would probably recommend no more than 60%-80% in order to have a cushion.

#### **What if the church does not make?**

This is always a possibility. We will minimize our risk by focusing on high-growth areas and by designing a building that serves multiple industries. Special care will need to be given to assure that the first building can work for businesses other than a church, i.e. day cares, medical plazas, retail, storage, etc. We would then

explore options – sell the property to add back to the asset pool for future church starts, hold the property for potential return on our assets, etc.

### **If we sold the property, who gets what?**

First, the lender would be paid back. Second, the Conference would be paid back funds used to service the note. Once that was complete, any additional profits or remaining debts (if the two debts owed were not covered by the sale) would be the responsibility of the Conference and the ACE Sending Campus based on the agreed upon Risk/Reward agreement. If no sending church exists, all profits would be returned to the Legacy Fund.

### **How does this program relate to other programs like assisting with a church development pastor's pay or reducing apportionments?**

It does not – this program is focused on the capital acquisition and debt payments associated with building church assets. Standing rules of the NTC limits Legacy Funds to capital expenses.

### **Are all funds from closed churches going to ACE?**

No. Grants from these funds have been and will continue to be made in all districts and representative of the diversity within the NTC and according to *The Book of Discipline* ¶ 2549.

North Central District Lay Leader Kenneth Wolverton is the architect of ACE. Whereas the initial churches taking advantage of ACE have been in the North-Central District, Legacy Funds have been invested in all four districts, and ACE has been offered to churches beyond the North-Central District. While Legacy Funds have been and continue to be invested in all demographics of the NTC and in all four districts, the CCD anticipates implementing ACE in all NTC districts and in the diversity of church plants as a new season of church planting is emerging in the NTC. This new season gives me hope in the work of the Lord through The United Methodist Church to reach fast growing areas with low UMC presence.

## **New Congregations**

The CCD currently funds 16 New Congregations with New Church Start funds. These churches are found in all four districts of the NTC, with two having a primary mission field that is Black, seven are Latinx, one is African-American led who is creating an intentionally multiracial congregation, one is Asian, and five are in a predominantly white mission field.

Even in the adverse conditions of the pandemic, new congregations continue to be planted, and these new congregations are growing. Churches that received new church funding include Oasis, CCM Grand Prairie, Cockrell Hill, Kirkwood Huerta de Oración, Vecinos- Sherman, The Seed Pleasant Mound/Christ's Foundry, Gracia Viva in Oak Lawn, Grace Chapel-Grace Avenue, Immanuel Korean, Oak Haven Spanish, and Jahweh Rafah. The CCD also assisted with the adoption merger of Walnut Hill UMC by Lovers Lane UMC and assisted Krum UMC.

Because all funding is matching, contextual, and leveraged with a vision towards long-term vitality, income is measured, among many other metrics. Although the majority of projects are in lower-income communities, these new churches experienced an average of 30% increase in mission field giving over the past two years. New churches are growing, and the strategy of churches planting churches is bearing fruit.

New churches entering into CCD New Church Funding in 2022-2023 included Market Street in Mabank, The Gathering - Anna, The Seed, and a new UMC in Krum.

*First*, On March 26, 2023, the North Texas Conference chartered Market Street United Methodist Church in Mabank. On December 4, 2022, a group of 31 persons, primarily from disaffiliations of FUMC Mabank and FUMC Athens from the Texas Annual Conference, met with NTC CCD Director Dr. Owen K. Ross in a small, crowded music studio on Market Street in downtown Mabank. This group decided to continue to meet on Sunday evenings, and

the group grew with the leadership of the congregation and interim planter, Dr. Vic Casad. On March 26, 2023, 77 persons became charter members of Market Street UMC.

*Second*, FUMC Anna building burned in December of 2020 and later voted to close the congregation. Pastor Dallen Morgan was appointed planter in Anna and has been working to gather and equip leaders as well as identify property where proceeds from the sale of the land of the closed FUMC Anna as well as funds from the insurance claim of the fire can be invested in the new UMC in Anna known as The Gathering. At the writing of this report, the NTC has land under contract for the future site of The Gathering - Anna.

*Third*, The Seed United Methodist Fellowship under the leadership of Pastor Ruben Alvarez has been engaging in planting work over the past year. With less than a dozen actively participating in the congregation, on March 31, 2023, Pleasant Mound UMC closed. On July 1, 2023, Pastor Alvarez begins as a full-time appointment to grow The Seed into a congregation to minister to the predominantly Latinx mission field in Pleasant Grove.

*Finally*, on August 21, 2022, FUMC Krum held a “closing service” to begin a season of “going dark” in preparation for a relaunch. During this season, the church has not held Sunday worship and have communicated to the community that they have closed in preparation for a rebranding and relaunch. Rev. Rick Williamson, pastor of FUMC Argyle, was contracted as their coach during Phase 1 of this dark season. Rev. Buster Noah was appointed on March 1 for Phase 2 of the dark season. On July 1, 2023, Rev. Jarrod Johnston will become the planter of a new church that will meet in the facilities of the congregation formerly known as FUMC Krum. A small but committed remnant of the historical congregation continues to meet on a weekday to prepare itself to serve as the support team for this planting endeavor in this rapidly growing community.

### **New Spaces**

While a few church starts are beginning new campuses or taking over existing campuses, most new church starts in the NTC are small gatherings of persons gathering for discipleship. Methodism began in such groups. While some may not consider these “church plants,” the CCD considers this work planting and defines these smaller groups as “New Spaces.”

One of the primary ways in which these New Spaces were started over the past year has been through *The Spark Tank*. The Spark Tank takes entrepreneurial laity and clergy in the NTC and, similar to TV’s Shark Tank, congregations pitch an idea of a New Space to these “ministry sharks” to receive feedback and funding.

Spark Tank was held for a second year with ideas from all four districts and representative of the diversity of NTC congregations. The CCD received 21 total applications of which 15 received funding. Five of these applications were presented during Clergy Retreat where pastors pitched five new spaces of which four of the five received the promise of a grant with mentoring from their “ministry sharks.” Of the four that received funding, two were focused on the growing and underrepresented Asian-American population in North Texas.

The “Ministry Sharks” for this tank were:

- Rev. Amy Spaur - Senior Pastor at Christ’s Foundry
- Rev. Derek Jacobs - Senior Pastor at The Village
- Rob L. Spencer - Cultiv8

The spaces that presented were:

Fellowship Center	Good Shepherd UMC
First Cypress Waters	First UMC of Coppel
AAPI Dinner Church	Custer Road UMC
UMC @ the Farmers' Market	Iowa Park
Thrive!	St Stephen

On December 3, 2022, at Whitesboro UMC, we held our main Spark Tank, where both clergy and lay members were invited to pitch their ideas.

Our Ministry Sharks for this tank were:

- Gregg Hickman: laity, Whitesboro UMC. Owner/CEO of First Texas Home Health
- Rev. Debbie Lyons: Pastor, Winnsboro UMC
- Rev. Sylvia Wang: Pastor, Archer City UMC
- Philip Neeley, laity, Whaley UMC in Gainesville, Tx. President/CEO of Trident Process Systems (his second start-up)
- Rev. Dr. Andy Stoker: Chief Engagement Officer at the Thanks-Giving Foundation

We had the following eight spaces present their ideas:

The Sacred Table	Whaley UMC
Buttons and Bows Foster Closet & Ministry	Button Memorial UMC
HOPE*LOVE*PEACE*JOY Senior Ministry	Good Shepherd UMC
The Tastes of Anna	The Gathering Anna
Healthcare in Worship	The Village UMC
Reflection Kayaks	PJC Wesley Center
The Loft	Casa Emanu-El UMC
Bridging The Gap	Mount Zion UMC Paris

These ideas are shared with the prayer that these ideas spark ideas in other churches of ways in which new persons can be gathered in new spaces to experience the good news, hope, and love of Jesus Christ. In seeking to reach underrepresented populations, one of these spaces is intentionally multiracial, two are African-American, and one is Latinx.

### **Reaching Under-Reached Populations**

The 2021 AC report shared the demographics of the NTC mission field and the underrepresentation of most ethnic groups in north Texas. CCD funding and strategy is working to reach underreached populations. These strategies include the planting of new faith communities as demonstrated in the above list of plants and investing in cohorts through the Latinx Laity Fellowship, as well as connecting with and investing in African and Asian pastors and congregations.

The 2021 recommendations from Black Church Task Force have been incorporated into the Black Church Initiative, and a Black Church Initiative Advisory team has been formed under the leadership of Metro District Superintendent Rev. Edlen Cowley. Through the Black Church Initiative (BCI), a new rural Black Church cohort was launched this past AC year in addition to continuing the Southern Dallas County cohort. St. Luke “Community,” Hamilton Park,



The Village, St. Paul, Church of the Disciple, and Warren have continued to work their BCI assessments and have grown in their community engagement through the BCI process. Strategic planning continues, and next AC year is promising to see new BCI initiatives.

### **Equipping Innovators and Planters**

Both lay and clergy planters continue to be trained through the Genesis and Launch cohorts of the CCD, led by Rev. Matt Temple. With a growing population in North Texas, with fewer persons in our mission fields seeking out churches, and with the CCD's vision of every church planting, skills at church planting are needed throughout the NTC. The CCD is continuing to recruit NTC clergy and laity interested in connecting with other existing and potential planters to learn more about planting and develop strategies to gather new faces in new spaces.

One of the CCD's flagship programs for developing and supporting church planters is the Genesis Cohort. We designed and launched the cohort in 2018 for the purpose of providing leaders who are starting new things with in-time training on start-up methodologies for a post-Christendom world. At its core we hoped the cohort would help us identify, assess, and train creative multiplying leaders in the North Texas Conference. We have been running the Genesis Cohort for five years. Going into this year we realized that due to the pandemic and the rate at which things change that it is time to develop a new iteration of the program. In the summer of 2022, we developed a design team to help us rethink what the cohort could be and how it could best serve the development of new ministry in the North Texas Conference. The design team came together several times in the summer to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the cohort and build out Genesis 2.0. It was our desire to make the cohort more accessible for a wider range of participants in hopes that it could help us better identify church planters, entrepreneurs, and start-up leaders in the North Texas Conference. We also recognized that a lot had changed in the world since the pandemic, and we needed the cohort to adapt to that reality. Finally, we recognized that there was a growing diversity and variety in the kinds of new faith communities people were hoping to start and we wanted the cohort to be more contextualized rather than a one size fits all.

The first change that came out of our design teamwork was to split the cohort into two separate experiences. The first experience is our 6-week Discernment Academy. The Discernment Academy is less of a time commitment and allows for a broader engagement along with opportunity for discernment, and an introduction to our start-up methodology. The purpose of the 6-week Discernment Academy is to help participants discover their leadership style, strengths and weaknesses, intercultural competency, and learning style and then to incorporate those discoveries into their leadership practice into a post-Christendom context. Everyone who participates in the Discernment Academy completes a full assessment that looks at their personality through the big-5 assessment, skills, grit, intercultural competency through the IDI, and enneagram.

The second experience is the Genesis Cohort. Genesis is a 9-month journey broken up into three rhythms with the purpose of developing the leadership skills necessary for starting new things from launching new initiatives in an established Church that are focused on reaching new people to starting a new worshipping community from scratch. The cohort is a creative learning environment that seeks to give flexibility to engage the learning in ways that are meaningful to the participant and fit within the reality of their schedule as well as give them opportunities to connect and collaborate with others who are seeking to innovate. Within the Genesis experience they are in control of their learning so they will decide the ways in which they want to participate. There will be webinars, learning projects, suggested reading, training days, and retreats. In the first month of the cohort, they will have the opportunity to complete a learning assessment to discover the ways they learn best and from there they will come up with customized goals and a learning plan for how they hope to participate over the course of the cohort, more specific training, and support around starting something new.

We completed our first Discernment Academy in the fall of 2022. We had nearly 20 people complete the academy, and the feedback was overwhelmingly positive. We are currently in the midst of Genesis and are very pleased with the new rhythm. Anyone interested in either the Genesis Cohort or the Discernment Academy, can email Matt Temple at [temple@ntcumc.org](mailto:temple@ntcumc.org).

### Resourcing the Local Church

The CCD continues to resource pastors, local churches, and District Superintendents. Webinars have been held almost monthly and have covered subjects such as digital discipleship, church-based social enterprises, rural ministries, and creating new spaces. Through financial investments, connecting with coaches, experts, and practitioners, and through spending time throughout the NTC, the CCD equips congregations and leaders to gather new faces in new spaces.

One tool that has gathered interest in the NTC is the Simplified Accountable Structure (SAS) as an alternative to traditional governance structures and as an alternative to single board models of governance. Our Mission Coordinator has connected churches in every district to SAS coaches to explore if SAS is right for them. Many churches have made this transition and are seeing the fruits of their work by becoming more missionally focused in their governance.

In conclusion, the staff of the CCD (Dr. Owen K. Ross, Director; Rev. Matt Temple, Associate Director; and Jessica Vargas, Mission Coordinator) are grateful for the support and engagement of the United Methodists of the North Texas Conference in CCD initiatives. After seasons of pandemics and divisions, the NTC is in the narthex of a sanctuary of revival, and the CCD is witnessing congregations engaging the Wesleyan spirit and heritage of reaching new people in new ways. We give thanks to God as congregations throughout the NTC are living into the vision of *Every Church Planting*.

—Rev. Dr. Owen K. Ross, Director

### CENTER FOR LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT (CLD)

Our mission in the Center for Leadership Development is to “Develop principled Christian leaders for the transformation of the world.” We grow leaders, support leaders, and create events for faith formation for clergy and lay leadership. Our team consists of Kelly Carpenter, Associate Director; Joseph Bradley, Associate Director of Children, Youth and Camping; Pastor Liz Greenwell, Crisis Response and Conflict Management Coordinator; Mariel Vela, Ministerial Services Administrator; Mary Skinner, Administrative Assistant, and Rev. Cammy Gaston, Director.

As the Director and spiritual guide of our Center for Leadership Development Team, I engaged the staff in recalling our spiritual story and purpose. Our Christian leadership stories helped us clarify our passions for ministry and the direction we would take in 2022-2023. We placed each staff member in the place of their giftedness and passions. Kelly Carpenter and Mariel Vela moved into Board of Ministry roles and created an effective and efficient candidacy for ministry experience. Joseph Bradley stepped into Children, Youth and Camping leadership and continued to build on his passion for leadership development and quality resources. Liz Greenwell expanded her role in crisis care by updating the resources for our SPRC Tool Kit, working with the Commission on the Status and Role of Women, and consulting with churches to create healthier environments for all people. My passion for developing leaders and supporting leaders led me to invest time in the Residency Program, Interim Ministers, coaching, crisis and conflict response and educational events like Covenant Day and Clergy Retreat. We were also gifted with the faith formation ministry of Emma Williams during the past six years before she transitioned to be the Executive Pastor at University Park UMC on April 1, 2023.

#### Focus and Goals for 2023

Our goal is to *create leaders, grow leaders, and support leaders*. We will develop young and diverse clergy through intentionally identifying leaders through our leadership development programs. We will do the same with our lay leadership development. In partnership with the Conference Lay Leader, Kim Brannon, we will provide training for Lay Leadership Development. We will connect Lay Leadership to certification programs, and convene Children, Youth and Campus ministers/directors to equip and empower their ministry. We will also work with the Board of

Laity to support their vision and empower the voices of the laity. Lastly, we will provide connectional resources for engaging in ministry in the local church and the mission field. Our special focus this year will be to support churches who have been adversely affected by conversations of disaffiliation and discord. These churches will receive crisis team resources, program ministry consultation, coaches and resources deemed necessary for rebuilding their ministry. It is our HOPE to bring new life and connectional strength to all our North Texas Annual Conference Churches. Thank you for the opportunity to partner with you in ministry.

—Rev. Cammy Gaston, Director, Center for Leadership Development

***A Time for Children (ATFC)*** is completing its eighth year of learning cohorts in North Texas. We continue to see the support and education provided by this program nurture our children's ministries by equipping children's ministry professionals to deepen and strengthen their programs. Children's ministry leaders, led by Rev. Dr. Leanne Hadley, gathered at Prothro Retreat Center in the fall and the spring for a time of renewal, continuing education, and connection. In addition to gathering in person, ATFC participants also meet monthly online to share wisdom and learning and are supplied a personal coach trained in the Coach Approach method.

***A Time for Youth (ATFY)*** – Youth leaders from North Texas and Central Texas Conferences gathered twice this year at Prothro Retreat Center for the second full year of A Time for Youth cohort training. The fall training was led by Rev. Emma Williams and Kelly Carpenter and focused on vocational and program discernment. In the spring, Rev. Dr. Chris Schoolcraft led those gathered in Enneagram training, using the tool to think about group and institutional growth.

***Bishop's Rally*** – Bishop's Rally creates a unique opportunity to usher Children into Youth Ministry and introduce them to our connectional church, and especially to the bishop of our conference. In October 2022, FUMC McKinney hosted Bishop's Rally with tons of games, food, and opportunities for worship. Woven Worship led the music of the worship experience, and Bishop McKee preached and answered confirmand questions for the last time as the bishop of the North Texas Conference. The youth celebrated his service by presenting him with a stole decorated with their own handprints.

***Camp Bible*** – One of the best ways for children to be formed in faith is to learn how to explore the Word of God. Children's Ministers from across the conference planned the overnight camping experience where third through fifth grade children and volunteers were able to come together at Bridgeport Camp and Conference Center to learn about God, camping life, and being a community. The theme for Camp Bible 2022 was "Wonderfully Me," where we explored the ways in which God made us with unique gifts and ways of seeing the world, so that we can show God's love in lots of different ways.

***Committee on Religion and Race (CORR)*** - The NTC Committee on Religion and Race has the goal of strategic planning in the areas of diversity, cultural competency, racial justice, reconciliation and equity, and communication/advocacy for change. The committee has representatives serving on the Conference Journey Toward Racial Justice team and collaborates with the North Texas Conference Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. As led by God's vision, the committee focuses its present work on building equity and dismantling racism. The priorities of the committee include sharing resources from the General Commission on Religion and Race (GCORR), storytelling through a video medium, social media outreach, and coordination with Conference and community groups in the work of racial justice for transformative healing and reconciliation.

***Committee on the Status and Role of Women (COSROW)*** – The work of this team is to challenge the UMC for the full and equal participation of women in the total life and mission of the Church. We do that by providing educational opportunities and resources for local church leadership and collecting data in our annual conference to aid us in doing that work. We continue to encourage *all* pastors and church leadership teams to consider how women are in leadership in their church, to include women in decision-making positions, to invite women—both clergy

and laity—to preach at least once each year and to preach and teach on the call of Christian service in all vocations including ordination and consecration in The United Methodist Church. This year, we celebrated 50 years of COSROW in The UMC, diving specifically into the rich history here in North Texas. We worked alongside CART to revise and update the conference sexual misconduct policy to make the document more current and easier to navigate, and to better resource the local church. We surveyed clergywomen throughout the conference to gather data specific to the status and role of clergywomen in the North Texas Conference regarding goals, appointments, pay, and other career-related realities. A final report of that data will be available on the conference website later this year. This data will be used to inform how we equip, encourage, empower clergywomen throughout our conference. We also began work on creating educational and empowerment events for lay and clergy women throughout our conference. As always, we are committed to further conversations with clergy, laity, district superintendents, the extended cabinet, and the bishop to develop tools and resources to empower, encourage, and enable women to serve at all levels of ministry leadership within the North Texas Annual Conference.

***Conference Council on Youth Ministry (CCYM)*** – CCYM is honored to represent the youth of the North Texas conference throughout the year. CCYM is a diverse compilation of youth from 6th to 12th grades. The 2023 Midwinter Retreat was held at Bridgeport Camp and Conference Center, and included gathering together for worship, study, prayer and play. This year’s theme was C.A.M.P. – Created and Made Purposefully. Over the two weekends of camp, CCYM led over 300 youth and adults as they grew in love and service to God and each other. This marked the first year our CCYLP (Conference Camp Youth Leadership Program) also led in Midwinter. As always, the Snack Shack at Midwinter raised funds for an organization decided on by the youth leaders. This year, funds from the Snack Shack went to the Wilkinson Center. The Wilkinson Center mission is to transform the lives of Dallas families by providing pathways to self-sufficiency with dignity and respect, fulfilled by helping families face critical life challenges including food insecurity, lack of education, economic instability, unemployment, and underemployment.

To find more information on all the above committees, events and programs, to host an event at your church or get involved, please visit <https://ntcumc.org/leadership-development> or email Joseph Bradley ([joseph@ntcumc.org](mailto:joseph@ntcumc.org)).

***Advanced Leadership Coaching*** – The Fall of 2022 was our sixth round of launching an eight-month season of one-one and group coaching relationships between over 50 laity and clergy with our trained Advanced Leadership Coaches. We utilized coaching in new ways alongside several events and with teams. Our Center Director and three people, two clergy and one lay person, participated in International Coaching Federation (ICF) approved 60 hours of coach training to continue expanding our coaching connection. If you would like to connect with a coach, coaching group or clergy cohort contact Kelly Carpenter, [kelly@ntcumc.org](mailto:kelly@ntcumc.org).

***CART – Crisis Response and Care Team*** - This year, the Crisis Response and Care Team served 20 churches through in-person direct intervention, consulting, and resourcing. The team also provided consulting and resourcing assistance for District Superintendents, lay leaders, and conference staff. The Response Team Coordinator provided research and coordination of the quadrennial Clergy Sexual Ethics and Misconduct Training held in August of 2022 and the online option through the Lewis Center for Learning. Training about Crisis Response was also provided for the clergy in residence. The Crisis Response Team Coordinator is working closely with COSROW and the Center for Leadership Development to update the Conference website for the SPRC Toolkit and the Sexual Misconduct, Prevention, and Support pages, as well as looking at updates that may be needed for the Conference Policies and Procedures for Personal Conduct and Sexual Ethics.

***Resource Persons*** are laity on the Crisis Response Team who are specially trained to work one on one with someone affected by misconduct or a crisis in the church. Currently ten Resource Persons serve the North Texas Conference by providing safe space for confidential conversations, finding appropriate resources for personal and familial healing, and offering support and guidance to both the aggrieved and others affected during a formal complaint process. Over the past year, two cases required the help of Resource Persons.

***CART - Conflict Resolution Team***, led by Lisa Hancock, Conflict Resolution Specialist, served 60 churches within the conference this year, providing conflict resolution intervention, weekly or biweekly consultations to clergy, staff, and laity in various ministry settings in the conference, and leading several retreats that served multiple churches. Resources, trainings, and workshops included self-awareness, the role of anxiety and change, leadership, and information regarding the Enneagram.

Please contact your District Superintendent or Liz Greenwell directly [greenwell@ntcumc.org](mailto:greenwell@ntcumc.org) or (972)562-5000 for more information on how to access the help of the CART Teams.

***Intentional Interim Ministry (IIM)*** - Interim ministers are experienced clergy persons, committed to Wesleyan theology and the UMC, who have proven effective in their service to Christ and the church. Intentional Interim Ministers adapt well to a congregation's context and particular needs, are highly relational, and provide pastoral leadership and management for a season of ministry. IIMs are vetted by the Bishop and NTC Cabinet, trained and certified through an accreditation process, and may be deployed across conference boundaries. IIM's serve many contexts which include: Sabbatical, Renewal or Study Leave; Pastoral Transitions; Conflict Management; Disability, Terminal Illness or Death of a Pastor, and Clergy Misconduct. In 2022 -2023 the Cabinet and the Center for Leadership Development made 15 Intentional Interim Ministry placements.

For more information on IIM training or deployment, contact Rev. Cammy Gaston, Director of The Center for Leadership Development of the NTC at [cgaston@ntcumc.org](mailto:cgaston@ntcumc.org) and the Transitional Intentional Interim Ministry Specialists Association at <https://tiimsa.org>.

***Vocational Discernment and Candidacy*** – God is calling! Seventeen inquiring candidates attended Candidacy Summits held in August of 2022 and January 2023. Candidacy Summit is an orientation to the candidacy process event focused particularly on preparing people for the certification interview and building connections with representatives of the Annual Conference and other inquiring candidates. Summit also launches the first of six group mentoring sessions of the inquiring candidacy process. Vocational Discernment resources such as the 5 Cups of Coffee brochures, Christian as Minister, resources for the SPRC interview and more can be found on the North Texas Board of Ordained Ministry website <https://ntcumc.org/bom/call-to-ministry/discerning> and by contacting Kelly Carpenter, [Kelly@ntcumc.org](mailto:Kelly@ntcumc.org).

### **Camp and Retreat Ministry**

***Conference Camp Youth Leadership Program*** – This program seeks to provide leadership training and opportunities to youth attending the Bridgeport Summer Camp, who are selected to be Junior Counselors and Youth Counselors. Junior Counselors are tasked with assisting in small groups and participating in a daily reflection time to discuss what they are learning about leadership, where they are experiencing God at camp, and to prepare for the following day's lessons. Youth Counselors are older youth who are tasked with leading the Junior Counselor reflection time, along with being given the opportunity to shadow our camp directors throughout the week. This experience provides high school juniors and seniors an opportunity to experience firsthand what it takes to direct a camp. They are also given the opportunity during this time to get to know these directors on a personal level, many of whom are ministry staff at churches in our conference.

There was a lot of excitement from our returning Youth Counselors and Junior Counselors last summer. We had over 50 youth participate in the program last summer and are anticipating the same numbers this year. Along with adding a training weekend for our youth leaders last year, we are excited to also add a new Annual Conference component this year. During this component, youth will get to explore all that the Annual Conference has to offer while also starting to prepare for their work over the summer.

***Mixed Age Summer Camp at Bridgeport*** – We are excited to offer our campers and churches a new camping opportunity this summer at Bridgeport Camp and Conference Center. We have been hard at work over the past year preparing for our first Mixed-Age Summer Camp in a very long time. Mixed-Age camp will be a single camp offered to both Junior High and Senior High Campers. During Mixed-Age camp, Junior High and Senior High campers will interact with each other during worship, large group activities, and other times. However, there will also be small group sessions where campers are surrounded by peers in their own grade range. This camp gives our churches, which already find it incredibly hard to fit everything into the limited summer schedule that young people have available to them these days.

To find out more about any of our Camping and Retreat Ministries, please visit <https://ntcumc.org/leadership-development/camps-retreats> or email Joseph Bradley at [joseph@ntcumc.org](mailto:joseph@ntcumc.org).

***Bridgeport Camp and Conference Center*** - 2022 was a year of recovery and striving to get back to “normal” business for us. Though we did not quite make that mark, it was definitely an improvement over the past few years. Late Winter and Spring started slower than we hoped, but Fall rebounded well and helped us end the year strong.

Conference Summer Camps were back to normal schedule. We did not have the attendance we hoped for, but a marked improvement and move in the right direction. We had almost 800 students in attendance with us over the seven weeks of Summer Camp and were able to stay open throughout the summer with minimal Covid cases and no major impacts to our holding of camp sessions.

In those non summer months, we were able to host 45 groups and a total just shy of 2800 attendees. This was a great increase from the previous year, and well on our way to getting back to pre-pandemic numbers. We were so happy to have so many of our friends be able to join us this year, and we hope and pray that we will continue to grow in both summer and non-summer events. For additional information on bringing your group to Bridgeport for camp or a retreat, please visit our website, <https://www.bridgeportcamp.org/>, and follow us on social media @bridgeport.camp.

***Prothro Center at Lake Texoma*** -- Throughout the years, The Prothro Center has experienced a steady increase in usage. Weddings, Church Retreats, Family Reunions, Beach Parties, Pool Outings, Staff Retreats, Birthday Celebrations, Anniversaries, and school outings were a few of the many events that we had the pleasure of hosting. 2022 was a year of rebounding from the shortages of covid. Our biggest project was the re-siding of our twin cabins to bring them up to a more modern coastal farmhouse feel. Also, new canopies were installed at our main beach to give shelter from the summer sun.

We continued to serve many repeat events such as NTC Licensing School, The Bishop’s Cabinet, NTCUWF, Board of Ordination, Clergy Spouse Retreat, Summer Internship, three SEEK Camps, and numerous individual church/youth retreats.

As a reminder, we do offer a “Clergy Wellness” option to our NTC clergy. It provides a change of atmosphere of their normal routine, to our beautiful 100 acres of shorelines, lake views, and nature. It’s a great opportunity to work on one’s mental health, write sermons for the upcoming weeks, or just simply relax. We want to welcome leaders to our Center, where they can work on themselves, and then go back where they can share their joys with their congregation. Word of mouth is our biggest form of advertisement.

We also paired up with Cultiv8Community! In working closely with Rev. Rob Spencer, we wanted to thank our teachers with a similar wellness program. Through this program, teachers are welcome to stay two nights with us at an extremely discounted rate. It provides us a way to give back to our community and simply thank our teachers for their commitment to our children.

The Prothro Center is proud to be a great reflection of the North Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church. For more information, contact: [prothro@ntcum.org](mailto:prothro@ntcum.org), [prothrocenter.org](http://prothrocenter.org), or call 903-786-2141.

—Cliff Dyer, Executive Director of The Prothro Center at Lake Texoma

### Collegiate Ministry

**Denton Wesley (UNT/TWU/NCTC)** – The Denton Wesley serves the students of the University of North Texas, Texas Woman’s University, and North Central Texas College. DWF is an intersectional and inclusive community that invites, disciples, and empowers college students so that they might discern and fulfill their needed place in bringing about the world God wants.

We provide discipleship and relationship-building opportunities for students through worship, Bible study, community groups, and leadership development. We have given students transformative opportunities to connect with God and each other through special events such as our kayaking day-retreat and visits to local churches to experience and lead different types of worship. Our worship program has reached new and existing students and provided a space for students discerning a call to ministry to explore their gifts. One of the highlights of our year was leading worship at the conference Midwinter youth retreat! This year we’ve started a group for queer and trans students to connect with each other, led by one of our student interns. We continue to host a devoted crafting group, as well as many new expressions of community, such as: group meditation sessions, mindfulness classes, lunch and dinner groups.

This year, we have expanded services in the Shiloh Food Pantry and Resource Room to include not just food, but also needed personal care and household items. As prices rise on many of these items, students often must go without things they need to flourish. Our Shiloh hours run concurrently with our weekly free lunch and coffee hour, so students enjoy a community environment together whether they are in need of free groceries or not. Our ‘Open Doors’ hours, as we have named this time, host a wide diversity of students from all over the world. The Wesley received a New Spaces grant this year to help us craft deeper connections during this time by partnering with local immigrant owned business to provide more culturally diverse meals. Our students have said they are trying types of food they never would have before some weeks and enjoying the comforting taste of home other weeks. We are also working through a project funded by the General Commission on Religion and Race to develop a stronger intercultural competency in our students and staff and helping students have meaningful connections across cultures.

We’ve made some changes to our internship program—this year, we wrote job descriptions to specifically align at the intersection of the Wesley’s ministry priorities and the individual students’ career and learning goals. We are learning so many new and diverse ways students can contribute to our ministry that we had not considered before.

Wesley building is a place for students to rest, connect, and seek support. We have been a space for students to zoom with their therapists in private, to use a restroom that is safe for them regardless of gender identity, and in some cases to even take a nap. Recently, one of our freshmen showed me that her maps app on her phone had auto named the spot on the Wesley: “home.”

We are so grateful to our supporters who have invested their time, gifts, and prayers into the Wesley. You have made this space of radical welcome and transforming love possible for our students. We seek to build more connections with local churches in the coming year, if you would like to work with the Wesley or have us visit your church, please visit <https://thedentonwesley.org/> or contact Rev. Marianne Brown-Trigg at [marianne@thedentonwesley.org](mailto:marianne@thedentonwesley.org)

**The Wesley Center at Paris Junior College** is a campus faith community in Paris, Texas, committed to journeying together, boldly questioning and deepening our beliefs, and living in a way that makes the world more like God’s dream.

We aim to exude prevenient grace as we share the love of God and experience the love of God alongside the greater PJC community. The majority of college students who come through our doors could be described as belonging in the “none” or “done” categories. These students have either not been exposed to faith communities or have decided that the beliefs of their families are not for them. They are not actively searching for a faith community, but they desire to feel a sense of belonging and community. The Wesley Center can create a space where diverse people come together and are transformed by one another and God in their midst.

Throughout the week, students are gathering between classes, playing together, encouraging one another, and inviting their friends to join them. We have four DnD campaigns being facilitated by our interns, which has been an eye-opening adventure. Since opening the Loads of Love Laundry in 2020, many clothes have been washed here and relationships formed. At our weekly Free Lunches, students who don't typically speak throughout the week have a chance to check in with a more diverse crowd and expand their social circles. This is transformational to the culture of the PJC student body. We have expanded our offerings to include a food pantry. Anytime we are open, students can find shelf stable food and homemade freezer meals.

Last summer, the PJC Wesley Center sent two students to work with Project Transformation North Texas. This year, three students lead and participate in weekly worship at FUMC Paris and Connections. Four student interns this semester are also learning about what working in ministry looks like. The interns have gone through a Strengths-Finder training to learn more about themselves and more about how they can lead well from their God-given gifts. They have been trained in asset-based mapping, as we continue to identify the abundant gifts that PJC has to offer and look for ways to partner together.

Every week the interns brainstorm together about upcoming events and how to execute them well. Every activity or small group is a wonderful opportunity for them to hone their leadership and hospitality skills. The Wesley Center is an inclusive community of students who gather together to support one another through life, and it is growing quickly.

We know that God is present and working in the lives of our students and we will continue creating spaces where that is cultivated and celebrated!

For more information, visit <https://www.pjcwesleycenter.org/> or contact Michelle Wood at [director@pjcwesleycenter.org](mailto:director@pjcwesleycenter.org).

**Wesley at SMU** is a ministry for all college-aged students to become deeply devoted followers of Christ. This past year we have witnessed God move in the hearts of college students in truly remarkable ways. We kicked off the year with our annual house party – an event geared towards inviting new students to our community. Through this event alone, we met more than 50 unique students who became plugged in and invested within Wesley for their first semester. We shifted our curriculum this year to a more intensive Bible study approach that focused on books of scripture that are often difficult to understand or ignored altogether. These books included Job, Haggai, Hosea, 1 & 2 Samuel, Kings, etc. It was incredible to see students become hungry for the word of God and to begin to feel confident in their ability to approach scripture, understand the bible, and even teach it to their peers!

This year we celebrated a lot of “firsts”! During the fall, we launched our first-ever Freshman and Transfer Student Leadership Team, giving five first-year students and one transfer student opportunities to lead their peers and create spaces where those specific demographics felt welcomed and included. We also hosted our first annual alumni worship event during SMU Homecoming Weekend which showcased how the bond built within this community far outlasts the years of undergrad. Seeing these graduates living fruitful and faithful lives beyond their college ministry experience was amazing. This spring, we shifted our leadership team model to an internship experience, providing an opportunity for students to have a paid internship, gaining them ministry experience and a way to provide for themselves financially. We currently have three interns: one discipleship intern, one logistics intern, and one social intern. All are current college students who hope to one day pursue vocational ministry. We aim to expand from



three interns to five in the upcoming 2023 school year! We also shifted our model of Spring Retreat and launched a new initiative; one focused on spiritual formation and deep discipleship. We took 30 students to an offsite location for two nights. We spent the weekend learning The Shema, growing through breakout sessions on understanding the Bible, conquering thought Spirals, and praising the Lord through powerful worship sessions. The takeaway from Spring Retreat weekend was students long for deep, meaningful friendships and time to be in solitude to reflect and pray to God. The challenge of the weekend for students was to lean into “shema” to listen and respond - what was amazing was seeing them return to campus and start their own bible study through Philippians!

Overall, this year has included a lot of change and transition, but what remained constant was the character of God and his faithfulness to this ministry. There are countless stories of students’ lives becoming transformed and renewed through the Spirit of the Lord at work in their hearts. It has been an honor to be a beacon of light amongst the campus community of Southern Methodist University. We could not have done it without our student leaders, steadfast volunteers, and support from the local church of HPUMC. We are fervently and expectantly praying for how God will continue to move on this campus in the years to come! To connect or learn more about Wesley House, you can visit <https://www.hpumc.org/connect/college>, contact the Pastor to College Students Haley Sloan at [sloanh@hpumc.org](mailto:sloanh@hpumc.org), and follow us on Instagram [@thewesleyhouse](https://www.instagram.com/thewesleyhouse).

***Synergy Wesley Foundation (UTD/Dallas College/Collin College)*** – The Synergy Wesley Foundation provides supportive space for college students to build authentic relationships and community, grow in faith through worship and discussion, discover their gifts, discern their vocational call, develop as Christian leaders, and serve alongside their neighbors to transform the world. Our programming includes weekly worship, Bible study, retreats, praise band, volunteering, fellowship events at the center of campus, free weekly meal, and leadership development programs. Over the past year we served 190 UT-Dallas students and 70 community college students, with 55 students involved at a deep and consistent level across multiple campuses. This year we received a grant from Texas Methodist Foundation to provide free therapy and spiritual direction. We formed a team of 23 therapists and six spiritual directors who have provided more than 120 individual therapy and spiritual direction sessions for students. We hosted a retreat for 15 students at the Prothro Center in partnership with the Center for Courage and Renewal founded by Parker J. Palmer, to pilot their new college curriculum facilitating Circles of Trust that help students discern their vocational calling.

We served as a seminary internship site for SMU Perkins student Rachel Mumaw and TCU Brite student Adam Richards. Adam was one of our earliest Synergy Wesley students who joined as a UTD undergrad shortly after our founding in 2014. Adam grew up in the UMC but like many college students, had drifted from Christianity. Adam’s involvement in Synergy Wesley was transformative: Adam is now a certified candidate for ministry in the NTC and leads our community college ministry. Adam says, “This year our Dallas College ministry has seen a flurry of activity and all-time high lunch attendance. We continued our fruitful partnership with the Dallas College Criminal Justice/Pre-Law club, bringing in speakers from TCADP, Faith in Texas, and Resource Center. We are currently focused on developing our microgrant program for student-led ministry projects and creating targeted programming for our Early College youth attending community college. God is at work here and I am excited to see where we are heading next!” Adam is one of several Synergy Wesley alumni who are now attending seminary or serving in ministry, either in lay leadership or on the path to ordination in the UMC.

We are so thankful for our partner/sponsor churches and organizations over the past year: Arapaho UMC, Chapel Hill UMC, FUMC Richardson, Christ UMC Plano, General Board of Discipleship, Black Tie Dinner, and Texas Methodist Foundation. We would love to include you in this list next year! To partner with Synergy Wesley, you can contact our campus minister, Brittany Melrose, at [Brittany@SynergyWesley.org](mailto:Brittany@SynergyWesley.org) or visit <https://www.synergywesley.org/> or [@SynergyWesley](https://www.instagram.com/SynergyWesley) on social media. We would love to work with you to reach and grow a rising generation of young Christian leaders for the transformation of the world!

*The Wesley @TAMUC (Texas A&M Commerce)* has undergone many significant changes in the last year including being led by a team of student interns during the Fall semester and continuing in collaboration with the arrival of the new Campus Minister and Director, Rev. Christina Hardy.

Over the Spring break our new director cleaned the entire building and made minor repairs to electrical, added personal hygiene products and signage to the restrooms and did strategic realignment of the building's layout. These changes directly affected the safety of the building and created a personal space for ministry and a safe place spiritual formation and counseling. In addition, an Interns Office and workspace for staff were added, which created a warmer ambiance to name a few.

Last year we raised over \$20,000 for our 30 for \$30k fundraising campaign (including a matching fundraising grant from the CLD). With your support and generous contributions we hope to raise \$30k this year and invest it in much needed projects within our center and worship space. This would include, new flooring, better seating, lighting, and AV and media advancements to reach more students for the Kingdom.

This academic year of 2022-2023 we already have 32 active students! Last year the Wesley @TAMUC has functioned much like a new church plant! Now that we have a brand new director, Pastor Christina, who has picked up the torch from Pastor Payton, along with three amazing senior interns, Kayla, Kentoria, and Charity, who are fired up with the expanded vision for the Wesley at TAMUC. We are continuing our ministry and with great zeal. Currently, we are an active student organization hitting the ground running after two years of COVID and many leadership changes. We are pleased to announce that the Wesley Campus Ministry has been nominated for an award on the Texas A&M Commerce campus.

Our focus and vision have been building relationships among our new director and leadership, as well as honoring all those who have served so faithfully. We participated in a women's retreat with Wichita Falls Wesley at Bridgeport Camp on March 10-12. We attended and networked at the special session of Annual Conference in Plano, and we were able to attend a meet and greet at UTA Wesley. Also, our director has spent precious time raising staff morale by having individual mentoring meetings and by implementing staff lunch meetings and birthday gatherings among our team. We are also getting the campus community reacclimated with our ministry and new leadership. We did a painting with a purpose event and had a huge turnout, which allowed all who attended to help decorate the building with the Word of God. You should see the happy and joyous faces of those who now see their ministering artwork on display throughout the center!

We have started a new Facebook page and are currently working with two companies to get a new website, as well as projects including door codes, alarm system, computers, printers, piano, hopefully 40 new chairs and 10 new tables. We are all motivated and working hard on making our building a space that all would feel welcome to be in fellowship within this community. We are so grateful to be a known, growing, active presence on campus and in the surrounding communities and expanded discipleship via our 7:00 pm, Wednesday Night Bible Study. These actions have truly helped the Wesley @TAMUC grow from one student (who was/is an intern) to now 32 students, three student interns and Campus Minister/Director!

We also have placed special attention in raising funds and utilizing our board and students to complement all our efforts. We raised over \$10,000 in 2022 with half of that coming specifically from our 30 to \$30k campaign. We've received generous donations from local churches in the East District, North Texas Conference congregants, and non-UMC supporters based on our personal relationships. We are so excited to support and share the Gospel to even more students and partners. We are now dreaming bigger and created a goal to have 100 students in worship on Wednesday Night and 125 active members by Spring of 2024.

If we want to accomplish this great but faithful call, we need bold partners to join in on our vision and dream big in 2023 along with us. For the "dream" to become a reality we are asking for you all to invest as you are led by the

Spirit. Your investment will be immediately put to work by using these funds to improve our ministry space, provide opportunities for leadership development and training, expanding evangelism on campus and beyond, mission work (local and abroad), and most importantly allowing all those who are drawn here to be able to taste and see that the Lord is good. As in the words of Bishop Saenz, “Campus Ministry is a mission critical point of our church’s mission and ministry,” and your contribution will change lives, heal hearts, feed stomachs, and make disciples, by sharing the greatest commission of all time, “The Good News.”

Here are a few ways to stay updated and support us:

- New Website “Coming Soon.”
- Please Join our NEW Facebook group page: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100090663969862>
- Follow our Instagram page: <https://www.instagram.com/wesleytamuc/>
- Donate to our 30 for \$30k campaign <https://wcm.churchcenter.com/giving/to/30-for-30-campaign>
- Sign up for 2022-23 Wednesday Night Dinner @6:30: <https://wcm.churchcenter.com/people/forms/269714>
- Sign up to provide a college care package: <https://wcm.churchcenter.com/people/forms/356521>

The Wesley @TAMUC is grateful for the support of the North Texas Conference, East District, and every local church that has supported us and will invite our new director, Pastor. Christina Hardy, to preach. I hope invitations will continue to be extended as we grow our ministry and our effectiveness on campus and in the surrounding communities. This truly is only the beginning for what God has in store for us!

Dream Big in Faith with us... 100 in Worship by Spring of 2024 and 125 Active Wesley Members!!! For more information or to offer support please feel free to contact Rev. Christina Hardy at [revcwhardy@outlook.com](mailto:revcwhardy@outlook.com).

***The Wichita Falls Wesley (MSU/Mount Vernon College)*** continued to serve the students of Midwestern State University (MSU TX) and Vernon College in the Northwest District this year. The Wesley experienced a ministerial leadership change as our students bid farewell to Rev. Marcus Jones and welcomed in Julia Puac-Romero as the new director. We have continued to serve 40-50 unique students since the beginning of the school year. While many of the Wesley students graduated in the Spring of 2022, there were several who continued to be faithful to the Wesley Foundation in the midst of such a major transition and continued to be present in Weekly Bible study, Free Lunch, and our monthly Soul Nights.

In the Fall we began serving morning breakfast breaks for students on Monday mornings and it has become one of the more popular events for students to touch base with our interns, meet and check in with the director for a small pastoral care moment, and receive a small breakfast snack that many would acknowledge as their only chance to eat all day. As we continued on in to the school year our students asked for a Bible Study on the Book of Job and it has generated interesting and deep discussions that many of the students have acknowledged feeling theologically filled by this bible study series.

This Spring we were given a grant from the General Commission on Religion and Race to begin the training for a new Wesley Gospel Choir that we are aiming to launch in the Fall 2023 semester. The hope is that this choir will build bridges with the local Northwest District congregations as well as the student population in providing them a new worship experience that they can attend. We also launched a Women’s Retreat with the Wesley of Texas A&M Commerce and held it at Bridgeport Camp. The retreat held space for 12 college-aged Black Indigenous Women of Color (BIWOC) to learn how to take care of their spiritual well beings, as well as their mental health. It was an opportunity for many of the students to let their hair down, feel relief, and break from the business of what has been a long school year.

One of the most significant changes that we have experienced has been the construction and remodeling of a dedicated space located on the second floor of the University United Methodist Church, Wichita Falls. While we have been hosting our weekly Free Lunch out of the church’s fellowship hall, this completion of the dedicated space re-

modeling will give the students of MSU TX & Vernon College a space to call their own for the first time in over 15 years since the demolition of the original Wesley Foundation building. We have had many generous donations and received grants that have helped make all these programs and changes at the Wesley possible. We graduate another round of students in May 2023 who have been the bulk of the Wesley foundation and are looking forward to what this means as we prepare for the incoming class of Fall 2023.

For more information about our ministry communities, discipleship model, and ways to support our ministry, email [campusministry@wfwesley.org](mailto:campusministry@wfwesley.org) and follow us on.

### 2023-2024 Center for Leadership Development Dates

- » Summer Camp @ Bridgeport and SEEK Camp @ Prothro June – July
- » Advanced Leadership Coaching Individual and Group Launch – August 2023
- » Lay Servant Ministries Laity Day – August 12, 2023 – Aldersgate UMC, Carrollton
- » Candidacy Summits – August 5, 2023 and January 6, 2024
- » A Time for Children/Youth Fall Cohort Retreat – October 17-18, 2023
- » Camp Bible (3rd – 5th grade students) - Bridgeport Camp – September 23-24, 2023
- » Bishop's Rally – October 15, 2023 (5th - 7th grade & Confirmation students) - FUMC McKinney
- » Clergy Retreat – October 23-24, 2023 at Tanglewood & Camp and Conference Center
- » Confirmation Camp – September 29-October 1, 2023 – Contact Joseph Bradley
- » Clergy Covenant Day – January 2024
- » Laity Training Day – February 2024
- » MidWinter Retreats 2024 – Jan 26-28, Feb 9-11 (Middle & High School) – Bridgeport Camp
- » ONE Worship Event (Middle and High School Youth) – April 2024



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## Board of Ordained Ministry Report

The Board of Ordained Ministry is charged with the recruitment, credentialing, and ongoing support of ministerial leadership in our annual conference. While ¶635 of the *Book of Discipline, 2016*, enumerates a long list of specific responsibilities of the Board, the most visible aspect of the Board's work is evaluating candidates seeking ordained ministry in The United Methodist Church. This year, we will celebrate 14 candidates at our Service of Commissioning, Ordination, and Recognition of Orders.

Four will be commissioned: Caleb Brimmage, Sean McDonald, Courtney Mitchell, and Uwezo Mwanjala.

Ten will be ordained: Anna Bundy Hagler, Jennifer Kilpatrick, David Magallanes, Kurt Maerschel, Nick McRae, Heather Gottas Moore, David Rangel, Meredith Scruggs, Kyle Walden, and Angela Williams.

We celebrate all those who have responded to God's call on their lives, and we continue to hold in prayer all those in the process. Thanks be to God for those called to leadership in The United Methodist Church!

—Rev. Chris Dowd, Chair

### 2023-2024 Board of Ordained Ministry Calendar North Texas Conference of The United Methodist Church

<b>August, 2023</b> .....	DCOM interviews for candidates seeking commissioning
<b>August 5</b> .....	Candidacy Summit
<b>September 18-20</b> .....	Residency Orientation and retreat
<b>September 21</b> .....	BOM Fall Meeting, 10:00 am -Noon at Christ UMC Plano
<b>October 2</b> .....	Deadline for districts to submit candidates for commissioning
<b>October 2</b> .....	Deadline for provisional Deacons and Elders to apply for 2024 ordination
<b>October 12</b> .....	Residency Covenant Group Meeting
<b>October 26</b> .....	BOM Meeting with Comm. and Ord. Candidates, 9:00 am-Noon at the Ministry Center
<b>November 9</b> .....	Residency Covenant Group Meeting
<b>December 1</b> .....	Commissioning Paperwork deadline, 5:00 pm
<b>December 14</b> .....	Residency Covenant Group Meeting
<b>December 15</b> .....	Ordination Paperwork deadline, 5:00 pm
<b>January 6, 2024</b> .....	Candidacy Summit
<b>January 11</b> .....	Residency Covenant Group Meeting
<b>January 21-24</b> .....	Commissioning Interviews at Prothro Center
<b>February 8</b> .....	Residency Covenant Group Meeting
<b>February 25-28</b> .....	Ordination Interviews at Prothro Center
<b>March 14</b> .....	Residency Covenant Group Meeting
<b>April 4</b> .....	BOM Continuation Interviews 9:00-Noon at Christ UMC Plano
<b>April 11</b> .....	Dismantling Racism Seminar
<b>May 1</b> .....	Deadline for districts to submit Licensing School attendees
<b>June</b> .....	Licensing School: in person kick off (official dates to come early 2024)
<b>June-July</b> .....	Licensing School: weekly online lessons (official dates to come early 2024)
<b>July</b> .....	Licensing School: preaching weekend (official dates to come early 2024)

## United Women in Faith (UWF)

As the Conference organization of United Women in Faith (UWF), our goal is to support ministry with and advocate for the oppressed and dispossessed with special attention to the needs of women, children and youth; build a supportive community among women; and engage in activities that foster spiritual growth, mission education and Christian social involvement. Our new name welcomes all women of faith to join with us, regardless of whether their church is Methodist.



United  
Women  
in Faith

**The 2022 budget** for North Texas Conference UWF totaled nearly \$145,000. Almost \$124,000 went directly to un-designated mission giving, supplemental giving and our 2022 mission projects that impact lives locally, regionally, nationally, and globally. The balance of the budget funded educational programming, leadership development, and costs for administration and membership.

**Our 2022 Mission Project** was the Jerri Savuto Rescue Center for girls escaping FGM (feminine genital mutilation) in rural Kenya. Women in our conference became aware of the Kenya Methodist Women's Fellowship's goal to provide a safe place for girls who must leave their families to escape the procedure. We partnered with the Kenyan women to raise funds to build the shelter. The story of women in North Texas working with the women in Kenya was published in the NTC UMC Connection newsletter and UMNews on International Women's Day. We rejoice that the goal was met in early 2023 and the 44-bed shelter has been built.

### The year's engaging events with positive impact

- **UWF Assembly “Turn It Up!” in Orlando, Florida (May 2022)** Twenty-five NTC women traveled to Florida to learn, be inspired, attend workshops, discuss issues, celebrate our new name, and to connect with women from around the world. More NTC women participated virtually at home or at watch parties.
- **Mission u: “Who Can We Be Together?” (July 2022)** Participants gathered in-person at FUMC Plano and virtually on Zoom for the study based on Luke 13.
- **Annual Meetings for Metro, North Central and East Districts (September 2022)** Each District had a special guest speaker and collected funds and items for a local domestic abuse shelter chosen as their mission project.
- **Annual Meeting for NTC UWF (October 2022)** Rev. Dr. Susan Henry–Crowe, General Secretary of the Board of Church and Society was our keynote speaker. She encouraged us to boldly live our faith as we Love. Pray. Work. Vote. Repeat. New officers were installed.
- **Texas UWF Legislative Event in Austin (January 2023)** UWF from across Texas partnered with Texas Impact to learn about current public policy issues and advocate for justice for all Texas women, children, and youth. With our new name we invited all women of faith, not just Methodists, and the in-person event was sold out for the first time in 36 years. Over 50 women from North Texas participated, some virtually. They have shared what they learned and encouraged more UWF to advocate for all women, children, and youth, especially during this legislative session.
- **Officer Training (February 2023)** was done in a new format with great success.
- **“Environmental Justice Requires Racial Justice” event (April 2023)** On Earth Day our keynote speaker, Ilka Vega, UWF national executive for Economic and Environmental Justice, was shared with other conferences by livestream. Table Talk discussion focused on issues in our local communities.
- **Soul Care Retreat (May 2023)** This intergenerational event focused on nurturing minds, bodies and spirit with spiritual practices that strengthened bonds.

Like the church, UWF is a connectional ministry. Individual members who nurture each other, volunteer, and donate are the core of our organization. Each local UWF group has inspiring and educational programming, mission activities, and a budget that financially supports missions, including, but not limited to, their Pledge to

Mission sent to District, Conference and National UWF. Their local impact is beyond measure! We're encouraging women and groups to inspire each other with their ideas. We've reinvigorated our website with a calendar full of information about special local events, as well as District and Conference programming, advocacy links, our Annual Mission Project details, programming suggestions, resources, training and more. Our weekly newsletter promotes UWF and mission events, inspires advocacy, provides programming ideas, and shares stories of love in action transforming the world. Learn more about all we have going on and join our newsletter list at <https://www.uwfnorthtexas.org/> or contact Wendy Campbell, NTC UWF President at [wjpc.uwf@gmail.com](mailto:wjpc.uwf@gmail.com).

—Wendy Campbell, President, NTC United Women in Faith (UWF)

## CENTER FOR MISSIONAL OUTREACH (CMO)

Like a steady drumbeat in his first few months in the North Texas Conference, Bishop Saenz consistently has called the Church to focus on four things:

- help people love God;
- proclaim new and abundant life in Christ;
- serve others, especially the poor; and
- do works of mercy and justice.

The ministry of the Center for Missional Outreach (CMO) aligns with the third and fourth of these bullets.

For years, we have been saying that the mission or fundamental purpose of the CMO is to help local churches make disciples through **ministry with their neighbors, particularly the poor and marginalized**. We have found, again and again, that when we walk *with* our neighbors and come to see the world through their eyes, God moves us to stand *with* them and work *alongside* them to create a more just and equitable world. **Serving others** in a spirit of friendship and mutuality and **doing justice** go hand-in-hand. The CMO does not pursue this mission on its own but rather aims to be a resource to local churches by investing in and supporting their faithful and creative work and by facilitating connections and collaborations for greater missional impact.

In the past year, the North Texas Conference (NTC) has faced numerous challenges, but through it all we have **drawn strength from our faith in Christ** and remained focused on making a difference in the following areas:

- Launching and overseeing a fully staffed, fully funded, long-term recovery effort in Jacksboro in partnership with UMCOR, local leadership, and NTC churches;
- Continuing to encourage a shift in the culture of local churches toward “ministry with” through our Ministry With Grants program;
- Providing resources for individual disciples and local churches to do the work of anti-racism so that they are transformed and all people experience belonging in NTC congregations and communities;
- Facing the mental health crisis in our communities and equipping local church leaders to participate in the healing work of Christ by meeting people at this tender place of need;
- Planting seeds in rural churches for long-term poverty alleviation work through a partnership with Cultiv8 Community;
- Forming and leading a cohort of local churches to participate in the Good Neighbor Experiment; and
- Reviving ecumenical relationships to strengthen the Body of Christ and build community resilience and responsiveness.

Seeing what God is doing in and through local churches and our community partners in the above areas **encourages us and gives us hope!** We hope that by reading on you too will **be strengthened, take heart, and be filled with hope.**

For more information, go to the CMO website (<https://ntcumc.org/missional-outreach>), explore, and sign up to receive the monthly CMO e-newsletter by clicking Subscribe on the landing page. In addition, the CMO staff is eager and available to connect with you:

*Rev. Andy Lewis*, Director – [lewis@ntcumc.org](mailto:lewis@ntcumc.org)

*Rev. Jessica Wright*, Associate Director – [wright@ntcumc.org](mailto:wright@ntcumc.org)

*Rev. Jeremy Basset*, Conference Disaster Response Coordinator – [disasterresponse@ntcumc.org](mailto:disasterresponse@ntcumc.org)

*Audrey Thompson*, Administrative Assistant – [ntcadmin@ntcumc.org](mailto:ntcadmin@ntcumc.org)

### **Jacksboro Long-Term Recovery and Disaster Response**

The tornado that touched down in Jacksboro in March 2022 has focused our disaster response ministry on two specific efforts: “Close to Home” and “R.E.A.C.H.” Let’s unpack what these two phrases mean and how we got there.

*Firstly*, Jacksboro’s pain compelled us to engage in a long-term response, putting our systems and our commitment to the test. The scope of the event was too small for a FEMA declaration for individual assistance, but it was too large for the community to recover with its own resources alone. How could the over 300 affected homeowners recover, especially given that some 60% were uninsured or under-insured?

The NTC rose to the challenge! Together with our amazing partner, UMCOR, we have walked alongside the community-led Long Term Recovery Committee in shaping a two-year response effort that has allowed us to **bring hope** to their pain. Volunteer teams have already traveled to Jacksboro to contribute to the recovery – and many more have signed up to do so.

A Recovery plan, funded by an UMCOR grant and a significant financial commitment from the NTC, is now well underway. The grant pays the salaries of the seven staff hired to the conference staff to support the work: two case managers working directly with clients to shape their personal recovery plans; two construction managers overseeing the work of volunteers and contractors engaged in the rebuilding work; a monitoring and evaluation manager who works with UMCOR to ensure we stay focused on our stated recovery goals; a financial support person in the conference office; and the overall recovery director.

Still, the Recovery plan needs additional resources to help the unmet needs of our clients, the difference between what they have and what they need fully to recover. This is where the NTC committed to raising \$500,000 to complement UMCOR’s \$1.4m grant, allowing us to allocate a total of over \$1m in direct aid to clients. This fund-raising effort endorsed by our bishops, past and present, and the NTC Council on Finance and Administration is called “Close to Home.”

Other partners are already assisting with the total estimated client-focused needs of some \$3m. The community-led Jacksboro Long Term Recovery Committee is working hard to find additional financial partners to support this effort. We have already received a commitment from NOMADS to spend some three months with us. Mennonite Disaster Services are looking at a similar commitment, focusing on the dozen or so homes that need to be re-built from scratch. Catholic Charities of Fort Worth has also come onboard.

*Secondly*, this Jacksboro event has invited us to re-examine and rethink what an effective Disaster Response ministry looks like. We have a rich history of training and deploying Early Response Teams over the years. But it almost goes without saying that those teams only deploy when there is a disaster, and some trained team members have never been deployed during the years of their certification.

We are obviously not wanting to see any more disasters than we have, but the question arises: can the commitment of people to be trained and the commitment of a church to disaster response ministry not be better shaped into an ongoing and useful ministry that has a purpose before, during, and after disasters?



This led us to our second effort: R.E.A.C.H. It offers an outline of a fivefold-ministry plan for local churches to serve and strengthen their communities - and beyond. In this still-developing paradigm, we offer churches opportunities to deepen their commitment to and visibility in their own neighborhoods and to be better equipped when called upon to deploy in response to a particular disaster event.

- **RESILIENCY DEVELOPMENT** is the “big picture” overview of what allows a community to prepare for and recover from a disaster. In other words, how can we walk alongside our own communities, learning with them what makes a community stronger and more buoyant in the face of challenges?
- **EARLY RESPONSE TEAMS** have been the most well-known aspect of disaster response work. Members are trained through the well-respected UMCOR course that equips them with the basic understanding and skills needed to work helpfully in a post-disaster scene.
- **ACADEMY OF MISSION SERVICE** provides ongoing education and skills-development through online and in-person courses.
- **CONNECTING NEIGHBORS** is an existing UMCOR curriculum that trains members of a local church to deliver support to the church, its members, and the surrounding community in specific ways to prepare for a disaster.
- **HELPING HANDS** will take on non-disaster related projects to allow church DR teams to deploy close to home in meaningful work to develop teamwork, sharpen skills, and make a difference for homeowners unable to handle maintenance or improvement work themselves.

For more information about the Close to Home Campaign, how to send volunteer teams to Jacksboro, or any element of R.E.A.C.H., go to <https://ntcumc.org/disaster-response>.

### Ministry With Grants

Since 2019, the CMO has awarded \$170,000 to local churches and related ministries through our Ministry With Grants program. *We find hope* in United Methodists who are connecting with their local communities and are serving as powerful forces for creativity, compassion, and justice. This year, we are honored to support:

- **CitySquare Paris with First UMC Paris** in replacing lights in their clothing and household goods closet following the recent roof repair to create a warmer and more welcoming space for neighbors to shop.
- **Esperanza Strings and ONE+ONE Dallas at First UMC Dallas** in expanding their high quality, faith-based music program with a new afterschool violin program at G. Burnet Elementary School, in partnership with La Fundicion de Cristo/Christ’s Foundry United Methodist Mission.
- **Neighborhood Fall Festival at Holy Covenant UMC** in rediscovering and revisioning the work of being a neighborhood church by building relationships with neighbors and City government.
- **Open Doors at the Denton Wesley Foundation** in expanding the hospitality of their free lunch and Resource Room & Food Pantry by partnering with local immigrant-owned businesses to offer students from outside the U.S. the comfort of a familiar home-cooked meal while creating connections with off-campus immigrant communities as well as other students.
- **Open Mesa at Arapaho UMC** in forming relationships with immigrant families in Richardson ISD by gathering to cook meals native to the immigrants’ ethnicities as a means to learn from each other, share a meal together, and improve communication by hosting English-language lessons for immigrant families and Spanish-language lessons for those who primarily speak English.
- **Senior Center/Holy Habit Café at First UMC Bogata** in offering a safe, accessible space for neighbors to gather to be fed physically, emotionally, and spiritually, with a meal, educational classes, and accountability.
- **Tastes of Anna at The Gathering Anna** in creating a food truck park as a space where people can gather in an approachable setting, meet their neighbors, explore cultures and diversity through cuisine, and worship together.
- **The Vining Garden at Rhome UMC** in building a garden shed to create a space to host classes and other events for the community as well as continuing to provide sustainable garden produce to those in need.

Ministry With Grants are currently available in two ways:

- Ongoing microgrants are available throughout the year. These grants of no more than \$1,000 are available to enable individuals and groups to start smaller projects because we know opportunities arise year-round; and
- The Fall Cycle will be open for applications September 1-October 15. These grant awards may be up to \$10,000 per grant, with smaller grants also available.

The purpose of these CMO grants is to be a catalyst for making the “ministry with” dreams of local churches in the North Texas Conference a reality. Grants are for new efforts or efforts that catalyze existing ministries with creativity and innovation. Applications will be evaluated according to how they intend to live into the “ministry with” values:

- Come alongside neighbors in a spirit of friendship and mutuality. Listen to and learn from them.
- Build long-term relationships with neighbors.
- Uncover the often-undervalued gifts, talents, dreams, desires, and connections of neighbors.
- Adopt the iron rule: never do for others what they can do for themselves.
- Embody and demonstrate racial equity and anti-racism.
- Address the systems that perpetuate suffering and inequity rather than only deal with the symptoms of our broken world.
- Use a strengths-based approach that leverages the gifts and relationships of local partners.

For more information about Ministry With Grants, please contact Rev. Jessica Wright or go to: <https://ntcumc.org/ministry-with-grant>.

### **Anti-Racism**

The CMO believes that all people are created with sacred worth and are bearers of the image of God. This core conviction compels us to provide resources for individual disciples and local churches to do the work of anti-racism so that they are transformed and all people experience belonging in NTC congregations and communities.

In the past year, the CMO has continued to support the Journey Toward Racial Justice teams and partner with Rev. Ron Henderson, Director of Racial Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. We also have deepened our collaboration with Project Unity. Project Unity has created a model for facilitating candid and respectful conversations about race around dinner tables called Together We Dine. Many of you experienced the power of Together We Dine at Annual Conference last June! The vision for this collaboration is to bring Together We Dine to churches across the NTC.

So far in 2022 and 2023, the following churches have participated in Dines together:

- Highland Park UMC with St. Luke’s “Community” UMC
- St. Paul UMC with First UMC Dallas
- Hamilton Park UMC with Arapaho UMC and Spring Valley UMC
- Hamilton Park UMC with Holy Covenant UMC
- First UMC Denton with community partners
- Grace Avenue UMC with Empowerment Church
- St. Paul UMC youth with youth from across the NTC
- First UMC Rockwall with community partners
- Northaven UMC and The Village UMC

If you are interested in exploring hosting Together We Dine at your church, contact Rev. Andy Lewis.

## Mental Health

Mental health continues to be a challenge – especially for young people – in our churches and communities. The CMO believes that we are called to participate in the healing work of Christ and meet people at this tender place of need, but we acknowledge that wading into these waters can seem overwhelming. ***Be strong, take heart, and hope in the Lord!***

The CMO is exploring exciting partnerships and fresh ways to provide local church leaders with mental health resources. To do that most effectively, we need to hear from you. Please get out your smart phone or tablet and scan the QR code on the right to access a three-question survey, so we can know what you are already doing and how we can best come alongside you to support you in ministry.



You may recall that during the season of the pandemic the CMO convened a mental health design team to gather resources and explore ministry opportunities around mental health. One exciting outcome was a partnership between the CMO, the Faith Community Nursing Program at Methodist Health System (MHS), and the Mental Health Alliance. A working model was established for deploying a full-time Faith Community Nurse from MHS to three church-connected sites in Dallas County. The Golden Cross Foundation awarded this collaboration a significant grant to fund a three-year experiment with this model. It has proven to be a challenge to identify and hire a full-time registered nurse for this work, but very soon we expect this nurse to begin providing education to people in the three communities that will expand their awareness of and capacity to address health and wellness needs for community members.

## Rural Poverty Alleviation

The CMO believes that many rural congregations are positioned to build relationships in their communities that can fight rural poverty in creative ways. To plant seeds and equip clergy and laity for long-term and deep poverty alleviation work, the CMO is partnering with a non-profit started by Rev. Rob Spencer called Cultiv8 Community. Rev. Spencer is currently engaging with and providing support for eight NTC clergy (four in the East District, two in the Northwest District, and two in the North Central District in far north Denton and Collin Counties). For more information, contact Rev. Andy Lewis.

## Neighboring

Learning the art of neighboring is helping local churches become more effective in their ministry with their neighbors! In 2022, five local churches completed the Good Neighbor Experiment: First UMC Allen, Grace Avenue UMC, Grace Chapel, Pilot Point UMC, and First UMC Denton.

Together, neighboring teams learned practical skills and reflected theologically on the “why” and the “how” of engaging with the community right outside our door, whether in our own neighborhoods or in the neighborhood where our churches are. Participants focused on living authentically, building relationships, and developing asset-based skills that welcome the gifts of each person. ***This brings hope to communities*** who may often have been defined by what is wrong, without recognizing what is already strong, offering an opportunity to craft a better, more connected future together.

This took shape in various ways across our cohort. One church used the idea of a post-it note “gifts garden” to create a colorful visual representation of the giftedness of their church so that conversations about what God was calling them to do next could start from a place of abundance. Another used the resources available to create foundational transformation as all their adult learning groups engaged in the work together. It was powerful to see how a variety of churches in various contexts came together to support each other and offer their experiences and ideas.

If you are curious about how your church might live into the call to love God and love neighbor, a four-week “Key Ingredients of Neighboring” all-church series, which includes sermon notes, worship resources, digital content, and adult small group materials is available. This is a great way to introduce the work of neighboring and see if your church is ready to be a part of our next cohorts. Contact Rev. Jessica Wright if you have questions or would like more details.

### **Ecumenical Partnerships**

United Methodists continue to be a people who know we can do more together to the glory of God than we can alone. Through the immigration crisis in 2021, our ecumenical connections were strengthened and continue to provide support across denominational boundaries.

In August, the Ecumenical Collaboration Team moved forward with discerned priorities from our March 2022 Lenten Prayer Dinner by hosting a targeted conversation on affordable housing/homelessness in Dallas and Collin counties. Community leaders Christine Crossley, Director of the Office of Homeless Solutions with the City of Dallas, and Joli Angel Robinson, President and Chief Executive Officer of Metro Dallas Homeless Alliance Dallas (now renamed Housing Forward) presented information and helped faith leaders begin a collaboration to serve our neighbors well.

In January, we came together in worship during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, which was graciously hosted by Custer Road UMC. Participants included 200 lay and clergy from The Roman Catholic Diocese of Dallas, The Episcopal Diocese of Dallas, Grace Presbytery of the PC(USA), and the Northern Texas – Northern Louisiana Synod of the ELCA as we focused on doing good and seeking justice. Maintaining these strong relationships enables us to work and stand together into the future.

### **Conclusion**

In this past season, Rev. Andy Lewis and Rev. Jessica Wright, in particular, have been called upon to preach and present in dozens of NTC churches. Jessica has preached 25 of the last 50 Sundays, providing invaluable respite for colleagues and transitional leadership for congregations. Andy’s work related to disaffiliation has led him to facilitate discernment gatherings and to walk closely with leaders in over 30 different local churches. This ministry, on top of leading the CMO, has created opportunities to get to know you better and share about resources like Ministry With Grants and the long-term recovery work in Jacksboro. ***Seeing how God is on the move in the churches of The United Methodist Church gives us hope for the future!***

—Rev. Andy Lewis, Rev. Jessica Wright, and Rev. Jeremy Basset

### **Board of Church and Society**

Beginning with last year’s Annual Conference, we held an auction during the Annual Conference to raise funds for Peace with Justice grants. Based on the funds raised we were able to grant funds to Haven Chapel UMC in Denison for the launch of a new prison ministry. We will also have enough to do a second round of granting this Spring (submit your grant requests on the NTC website).

We also presented legislation, “A Resolution for Free and Fair Election,” that passed with overwhelming support. Based on this resolution we supported congregations and residents of North Texas by partnering with Texas Impact to host Faith in Democracy at St. Paul UMC in Dallas. Also, in association with Texas Impact, we provided access to Ballot Ready – a resource congregations and individuals can use to check their voter registration status, stay informed about what/who they will be voting for at upcoming elections, voting locations, etc.

During this year's Texas Legislature, the NTC Church and Society Committee has been sharing information regarding various bills we (with recommendations from Texas Impact and other trusted advocacy organizations) believe to be harmful and thus are called to resist as United Methodists in Texas. Some of the most harmful legislation is targeting our Transgender siblings, thus we hosted "Trans in Texas: A Discussion with Texas Trans Rights Advocates," to support the Trans Community, inform people who are unaware of the lived experiences of Trans persons in Texas, and provide a space for dialogue.

As this year comes to a close, we are planning to host an event to inform, support, and train congregations who desire to engage in justice ministry, or dive deeper into justice ministry. As a result of this event, we also plan to resource and connect local Church and Society committees with one another to further the impact of our work across the conference, state, and our country. If you are looking to start a Church and Society committee, or interested in greater engagement with justice ministry, email Rev. Phil Dieke ([phildieke@gmail.com](mailto:phildieke@gmail.com)), Chair of the NTC Church and Society.

## CORE LEADERSHIP TEAM (CLT)

The Core Leadership Team (CLT) serves as a sounding board and strategic partner for the bishop and the center directors in their leadership within the North Texas Conference (NTC). For the 2022-2023 conference year, the CLT became an integral part of the Future Foundation Formation (FFF) Task Force, a discernment team commissioned by Bishop McKee and the extended cabinet to create a vision of the Annual Conference of the future. In The United Methodist Church's current season of change, clarity about identity and core values will be essential for continued health and effectiveness. This discernment team engaged laity and clergy from all four districts along with representatives from the extended cabinet. It was formed to be proactive and forward-looking. Gil Rendle's monograph, "Jacob's Bones" was the basis for this work as the team explored identity, purpose, values, practices, and metaphors.

The CLT, along with the rest of the FFF task force, met five times and engaged in faithful and fruitful discussion.

In September, the CLT/FFF met in a four-hour evening session and discussed:

- Metaphors to describe the annual conference of the future
- What would be missed if the North Texas Conference did not exist in the future
- Ways to gather input more broadly from across the North Texas Conference

In November, the CLT/FFF met in a six-hour Saturday session to:

- Refine metaphors developed previously
- Name values and practices of the conference of the future
- Plan for conference-wide input on metaphors and values. The team planned the process for obtaining input, the groups from which to obtain input, and the content of the input-gathering meetings

CLT/FFF team members assembled and facilitated discussion groups during December, January, and February in order to gather data conference-wide. Metaphor and values data from these meetings was assembled for use in the February CLT/FFF meeting.

In February, the CLT/FFF met in a four-hour evening session and discussed:

- *Values* – the team spent considerable time discussing the possible values for the conference of the future. The broader input from conference-wide gatherings was synthesized.
- *Metaphors* – the broader input from conference-wide gatherings was synthesized.
- *Purpose* – the team also began the work of defining the future purpose for the conference.

In March, the CLT/FFF met in a six-hour Saturday session and began to synthesize previous work and plan a final report. The group began refining the following report areas:

- Objective and scope
- Future purpose of the North Texas Conference
- Values that will guide the conference
- Metaphors that inform our understanding
- Essential practices that will be displayed

In May, the CLT/FFF met in a four-hour evening session to finalize outcomes and prepare the report to Annual Conference.

The CLT was convened by Bishop McKee for 2022-2023 and included:

<b>Vice Chair/Conference Lay Leader</b> .....	<i>Kim Brannon</i>
<b>Lay members elected by each district</b> .....	<i>Phiebie Hutchins, Metro; Herman Totten, North Central; East (vacant); and Laura Muller, Northwest</i>
<b>Five at-large members appointed by the bishop</b> .....	<i>Mary Beth Hardesty-Crouch, Taylor Smith, Levy Laguardia, Deborah Vela, and Ted Haynes</i>
<b>One District Superintendent</b> .....	<i>Debra Hobbs Mason</i>
<b>Center Directors</b> .....	<i>Christy Drenner, Cammy Gaston, Andy Lewis, and Owen Ross</i>
<b>Director of Racial Diversity, Equity and Inclusion</b> .....	<i>Ron Henderson</i>

## CENTER FOR CONNECTIONAL RESOURCES (CCR)

The mission of the Center for Connectional Resources is to provide administrative services including treasury, pension, health insurance, and workers' compensation insurance. The Center also provides ongoing training and guidance on annual reporting, statistics, and compliance needs of the local church. *The ministry of administration* is the best way to describe our work.

The theme for this annual conference seems to reflect the good work that our churches have done for the past several years during a challenging season. I continue to be blessed by how you show up each day to "Be Strong. Take Heart. Hope in the Lord." It is a joy to be in ministry with you.

Considering the continued conversations related to merging the North Texas and Central Texas Conferences, the leadership of both Conferences has opted to postpone bringing an apportionment budget to their June meetings. Instead, we will hold a special called conference late Fall to pass the 2024 budget.

Below you will find reports from the work of the committees that are under the CCR umbrella.

If I can be of service, please do not hesitate to reach out to me or one of our exceptional team members. I would encourage you to visit [ntcumc.org/connectional-resources](http://ntcumc.org/connectional-resources) to learn more about our work.

—Christy Drenner, CPA, Director of the Center for Connectional Resources/Treasurer/Chief Benefits Officer

## **Board of Pension and Health Benefits**

The Board of Pension and Health Benefits (BOPHB) oversees all conference pension and health benefit plans which are administered by Wespath.

In November of 2022, the BOPHB requested Wespath perform an Economic Projection to do an in-depth study of all the long-term funding obligations of the North Texas Annual Conference. The results of the reports were shared in March 2023. The overall projections were very favorable across the multiple potential return scenarios. The BOPHB will review and discuss the reports in more detail this summer as we prepare for the 2024 budget process.

Legislation passed at the Special Called Conference of 2019 includes a provision for churches that choose to leave the denomination to pay the unfunded portion of their pension liabilities as determined on a market basis. Our pensions remain fully funded on a funding basis. When a church leaves, they are in essence “selling” their responsibility for the long-term liability to the conference. The market basis is what it would cost to sell this liability to a third party who would then assume the risks of market declines. The funding plan applied by the denomination in compliance with federal laws governing church plans recognizes the value in keeping the expense of the pension plan to the projected funding basis, with only a small buffer to the conference in the event of a market downturn. This plan assumes the churches will continue to fund the liability as needed, with the opportunity to spread the additional liability resulting from a sharp downturn in the market over several years.

The market basis funding liability for the North Texas Conference last year was reduced by \$16.9 million dollars. Wespath has provided an updated market funding liability as of September 1, 2022, for the North Texas Conference of \$19,465,715. From the report: “These unfunded liability estimates are lower than the estimates provided with the actual valuation reports last year mainly due to significant increases in the market discount rate used to value the liability (from 2.41% to 4.35%), which decreases the liability when taken alone. Cumulative asset returns since 9/1/2021 have been less than expected, but they have not been poor enough to offset the impact of the higher discount rates.” Note the calculation of the liability is at 105% of the value. This liability would only become due in full if all churches left the denomination at the same time.

## **Board of Trustees**

### **A. Fidelity Bond for Annual Conference Office**

With the changes to the Comprehensive Insurance program, the North Texas Conference will continue to provide a \$100,000 Employee Dishonesty (Crime) Bond for the employees and volunteers responsible for all aspects of finances at the district and annual conference levels.

### **B. Electric Aggregation Program**

Electric utilities in the state of Texas were deregulated effective January 1, 2002. Deregulation offered the opportunity for the churches of the North Texas Conference to join together to purchase electricity. With the encouragement of the Council on Finance and Administration (CF&A), a group of large churches in the conference initiated an effort to secure a group contract for the purchase of electricity. All of the churches of the conference have been invited to participate in this effort. Effective July 1, 2021, we moved to a contract with Reliant for 72 months at the rate of .0391 per KWH.

To compare our program with other providers, be aware that there are four primary charges regardless of the provider you select. The first is, of course, the KWH rate that we have negotiated. The second is the basic charge for delivery of your electricity by ONCOR. Third, ONCOR does charge extra for high demand periods. The rate varies and may exceed all other charges on a KWH basis. The fourth component is related to your local utilities tax. The last three charges will apply regardless of which provider you select.

### C. Conference Wide Property & Liability Insurance Program

At the called Annual Conference meeting on March 4, 2023, legislation was passed to transition from Conference-wide group insurance to insurance coverage procured by each local church. Effective April 1, 2023, churches were responsible for finding their own property, liability, and auto insurance. The Conference continues to require each church to remain in a shared workers' compensation policy that provides coverage for all churches. In addition, as stated in *The Book of Discipline, 2016*, each church, as a minimum requirement, must ensure the [GCFA Standards](#) are maintained. The Center for Connectional Resources has been working with each church to make sure that coverage is in place.

### Council on Finance and Administration

The North Texas Conference recorded a payout of 86.3% of our total apportionments for 2022. The apportionments received were approximately 7% lower than the average normally received by the conference over the last ten years. A few of the churches that voted to disaffiliate opted to hold onto their apportionments until their effective disaffiliation date. Had these churches paid before the deadline our payout would have been over 89%. This revenue was recovered in March 2023. Another significant impact on our payout amount is the reality that our churches are still trying to rally after the long-lasting effects of the pandemic.

The total paid for apportionments was \$9,986,372 and the total paid for all benevolent causes beyond the apportionment was an additional \$705,037.

While the Council recommends that local churches strive to designate at least 25% of their total annual budgets for causes beyond their churches, it is expected that apportionments be given first claim by churches in their beyond-the-local church payments, with advance specials and other benevolences viewed as second-mile giving.

The Council continues to expect 100% payout of our apportionments and urges every church to take seriously the recommended ten-month payment plan in which 10% of the annual apportionment amount is remitted monthly. Without doubt, making monthly payments beginning in January or February is an important step in paying apportionments in full.

Paragraph 622 of the *Book of Discipline, 2016* states that the Board of Pension and Health Benefits apportionment, the Episcopal Fund, the District Superintendents Fund, and Equitable Compensation are apportioned funds which are to be paid on the same schedule as the pastor's salary is paid. The Cabinet joins the Council in urging each church to adhere to this mandate monthly.

All churches are also encouraged to make contributions to their District Second-Mile Fund. This is an important way to assist districts and the conference as a whole to achieve 100% payment of our total apportionments.

The Council and the Conference Treasurer continue to update reports in order to provide the information conference leaders and members expect in an open and transparent way. The Council takes seriously its fiduciary responsibility and is working with conference leaders to ensure faithful and effective stewardship of conference funds.

### END-OF-YEAR 2022 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

1. The 2022 apportionment payout was 86.3%.
2. The total operating reserves held by the conference treasurer at the beginning and end of 2022 were \$6,493,862 and \$6,411,681 respectively. Although the apportionments received were down from the prior years, the conference was able to curtail spending to preserve the operating reserves. A portion of these reserves is still being held to meet the financial obligation related to the Boy Scouts of America Bankruptcy in the amount of \$468,216.



3. The conference treasury held \$8,080,493 in the operating account and \$6,637,608 in reserves at the Texas Methodist Foundation. In addition, \$1,009,971 is held at Wespath for the Metro District parsonage, \$459,257 for the North Central parsonage, \$451,835 for the Episcopal Parsonage, and an additional \$35,646,832 in deposits at Wespath for the Board of Pension and Health Benefits. The reserves held by the Board of Pension and Health Benefits are designated to provide the funding for accrued retiree medical and pension benefits as well as an operating reserve for the direct billing function for the current year health insurance, pensions, and CPP (Comprehensive Protection Plan).
4. Statement of Financial Activities –
  - a. The Winter Storm of February 2021 had a significant financial impact on the 2021 financials. The significant reduction in both the revenue services line item and the expense property insurance line are due to the those claims not being a part of 2022.
  - b. The 2022 reduction in revenue receipts of legacy church facilities line item was due to properties received during 2021 that were then sold or conveyed. It was an unusually high amount in 2021.
5. Statement of Financial Position –
  - a. As with most entities our investments dropped considerably due to a downturn in the market. The Council on Finance and administration will be reviewing the best vehicles for investing our reserves into the summer and fall of this year.
  - b. Accounts payable were unusually high in 2021 due to the timing of payments on insurance claims. The amount listed for 2022 is a more reasonable balance to carry in that line item.
6. The 2022 financial reports may be found in the Conference Reports of this Journal.

### **Looking Forward**

Overall, the conference remains in a very strong financial position. The conference carries a relatively low level of debt in relationship to its assets. The conference currently maintains a little over six months of reserves. A best practice for not-for-profit organizations is to carry three-six months of operating reserves. The pensions remain fully funded on a funding basis. Our board chairs, conference directors and staff members have worked very hard the past few years to streamline tasks, share personnel and resources. But we realize this is not enough.

In January of this year, Christy Drenner and Andy Lewis led seven focus groups with a variety of clergy and laity to better understand how the local church understands the work of the annual conference in relationship to its use of resources. A sample of the questions asked were: What are the critical Conference programs and services that benefit your church? What should the Conference be investing resources in to meet the needs of the future? The conversations provided good insight and will be helpful as we begin the work of building the 2024 budget.

Two common questions asked by church leaders:

1. What is the financial impact on apportionment revenue for the churches that voted to disaffiliate? 12%
2. Will the remaining churches have to carry the load for those that have left? No

We are committed to significantly reducing the apportionment budget for 2024 to help our churches recover from the struggles experienced the past few years and thrive in new ways for the future. Because of the delayed budget process, we will need to suspend the standing rules and will notify the churches of their 2024 apportionment number by December 1.

## Commission on Archives and History

In August 2022, we were pleased to welcome Lillie Jenkins Walker as our Conference Archivist. Lillie has years of archival experience and was familiar with the conference holdings from day one. The Conference Archives at Bridwell Library at Perkins School of Theology are open and fully functioning and Lillie answers questions and assists researchers. The archives continue to receive deposits from closed churches and from the families of deceased ministers. Lillie may be reached at [walker@ntcumc.org](mailto:walker@ntcumc.org)

The Commission has updated the Archives page on the [ntcumc.org](https://ntcumc.org) website. Researchers on the Internet now have a place to go to understand the holdings of the Conference archives and to communicate research questions with our Conference Archivist. The Archives page is at <https://ntcumc.org/connectional-resources/archives-history>.

The General Commission on Archives and History of the United Methodist Church issued guidance on the records of disaffiliating churches. The GCAH guidance was that, from the UMC's perspective, these are closed churches and their records should come to the Conference Archives. This guidance was implemented in the disaffiliation agreements ratified in the Special Called Annual Conference on March 4, 2023. At that meeting, the Conference Archive received physical and electronic records from some of the disaffiliating churches. The records of the disaffiliating churches that have been received are being processed for availability for research at the Conference Archives.

The Commission is especially proud of longtime member Rev. Ben Shinn. After First UMC, Sulphur Springs, voted to remain in the United Methodist Church, its senior pastor resigned. Ben stepped in as interim pastor to bring healing and reconciliation to that fractured congregation. FUMC Sulphur Springs and Commission member Judy Gilreath said, "His loving and enlightening spirit has been the balm that continues to heal a church that has been through discernment, the vote and the departure of some longtime friends." Ben is a lover of Methodist history who truly is making Methodist history.

Since June 2021, a group of local church historians of the North Texas Conference have been meeting monthly in a writers support group to share best practices and work through how to tell the story of their church to its members and its community. In almost two years of meetings (so far), the Conference developed a pipeline of local church histories. In 2022, three histories of local churches in the North Texas Conference were published – for Webb Chapel UMC (now closed) in Farmers Branch, Oak Lawn UMC in Dallas, and Warren Chapel UMC in Terrell. In March 2023, the Texas United Methodist Historical Society announced that *Oak Lawn United Methodist Church: Love, Struggle and Renewal as a Sheltering Church, 1981 – 2022* had won the Kate Warnick Award for Excellence in Local Church History. The writers support group continues, dedicated to telling the story of the local churches of the North Texas Conference.

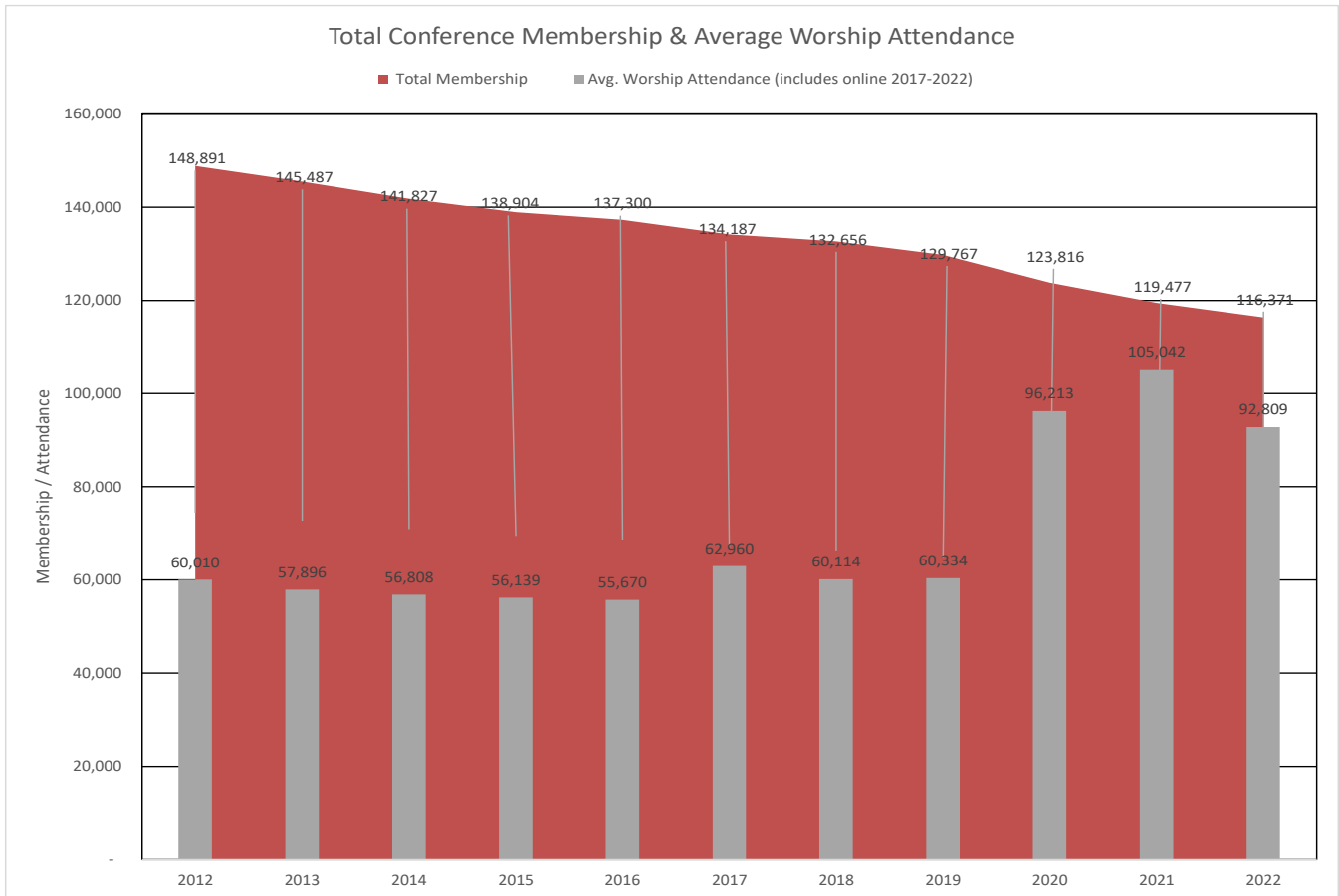
Finally, on March 24 – 25, 2023, the North Texas Conference hosted the annual meeting of the Texas United Methodist Society at Lovers Lane United Methodist Church in Dallas.

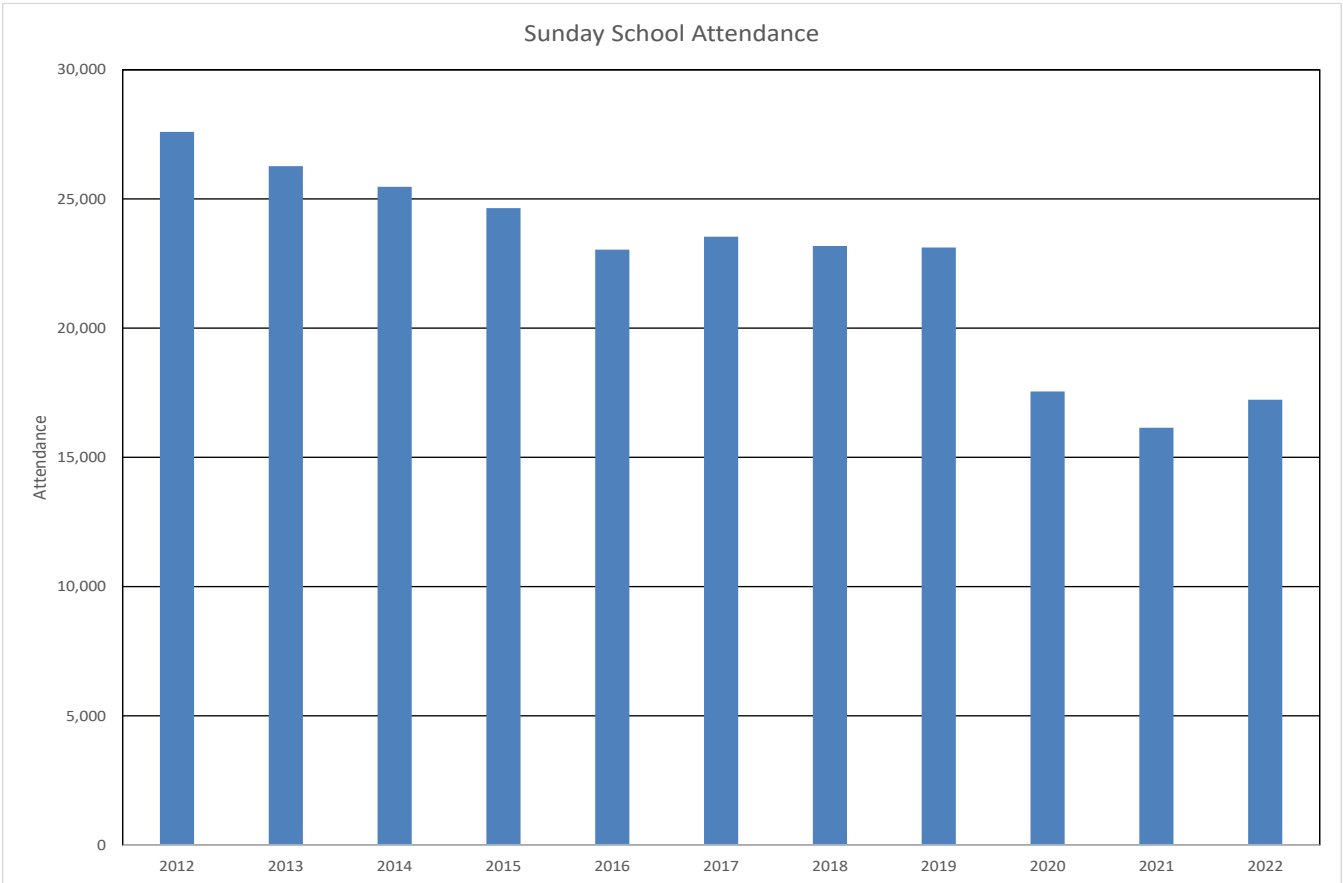
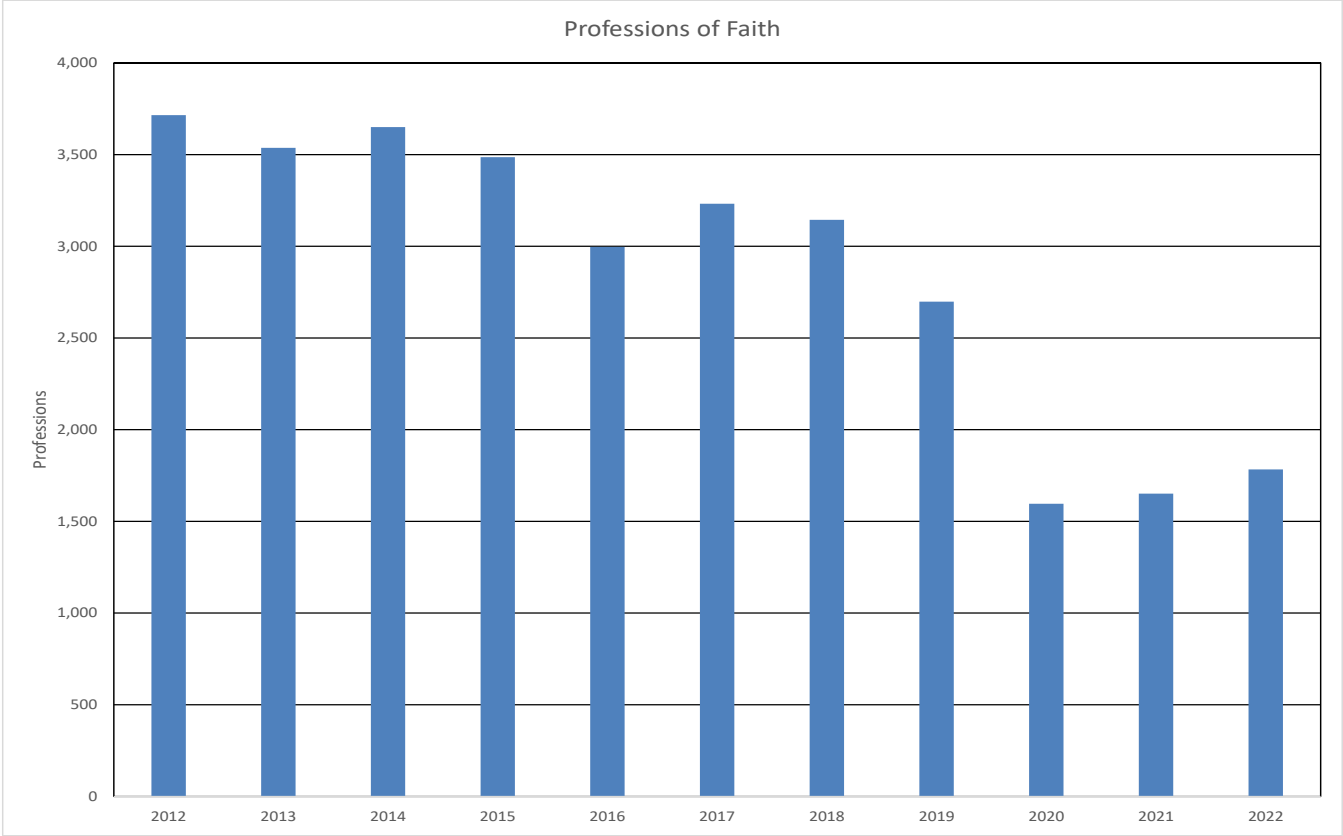
–Kent Roberts, Commission on Archives and History, Chair  
–Lillie Jenkins Walker, Conference Archivist

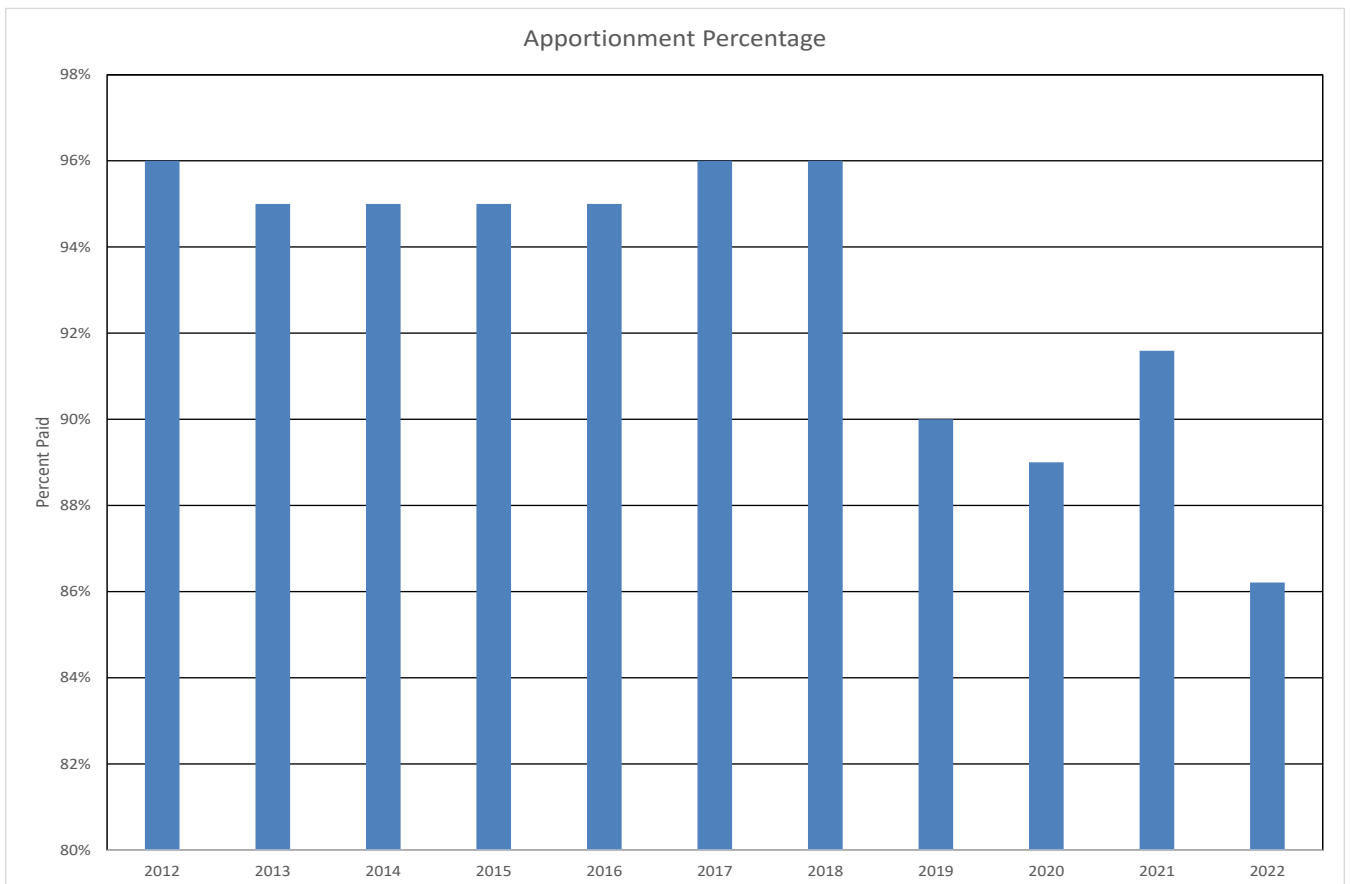
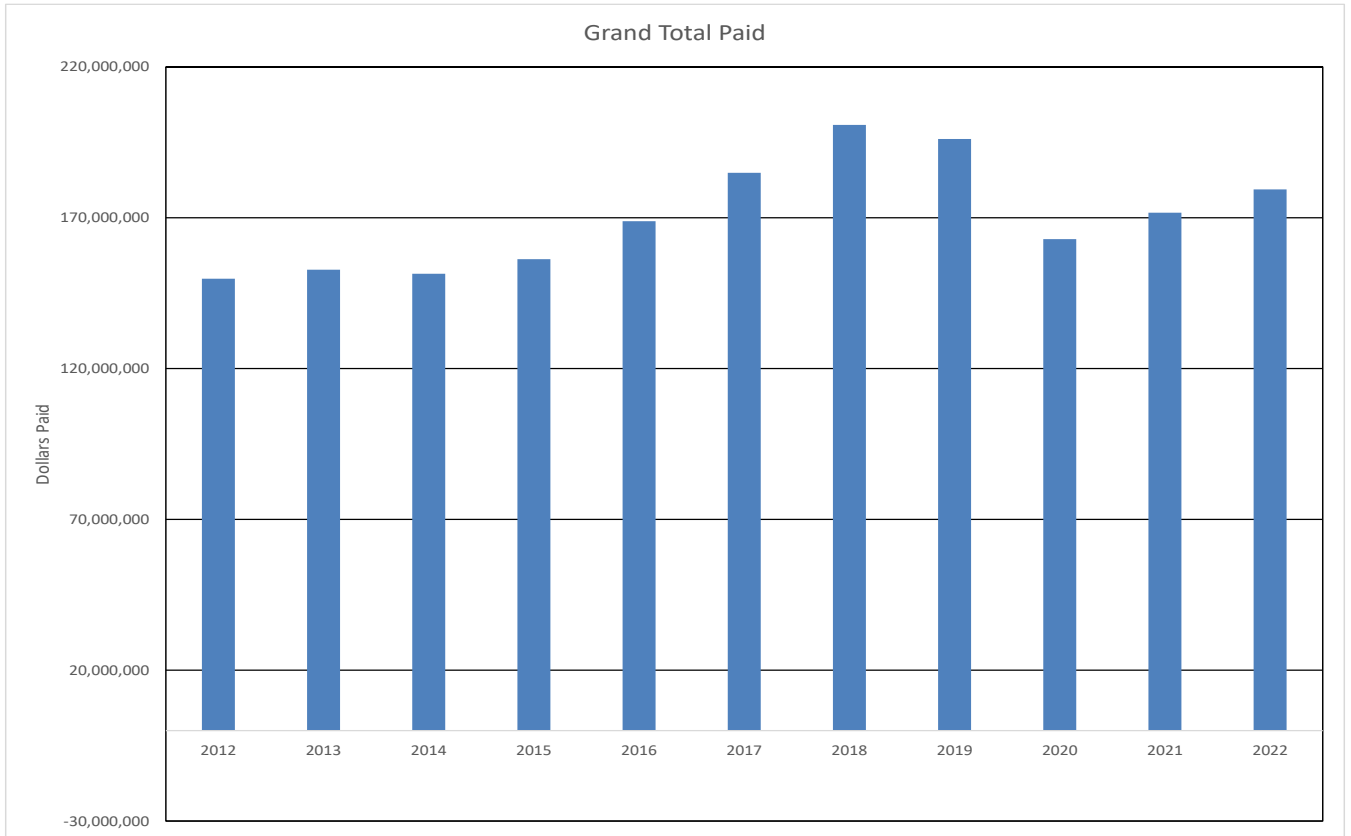
**Report of Conference Statistician**

**2022 STATISTICS AT-A-GLANCE**

<b>Total Membership</b>	116,371
<b>Average Attendance</b>	31,789
<b>Average Attendance Online</b>	61,020
<b>Sunday School Attendance</b>	17,230
<b>Assets (Property and Liquid)</b>	\$1,485,002,518
<b>Debt</b>	\$128,183,444
<b>Programs/Operations</b>	\$36,446,083
<b>Clergy Costs</b>	\$29,703,175
<b>Staff Costs</b>	\$44,909,968
<b>Churches (reporting stats)</b>	277
<b>1000+ Churches (Membership)</b>	24
<b>999-500 Churches (Membership)</b>	15
<b>499-250 Churches (Membership)</b>	39
<b>249-0 Churches (Membership)</b>	199







**COUNCIL ON FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION  
CONFERENCE TREASURER'S REPORT (UNAUDITED)**

**REMITTANCES**

	2020 RECEIPTS	2021 RECEIPTS	2022 RECEIPTS
<b>APPORTIONMENTS</b>			
World Service	1,693,991	1,168,885	1,075,688
Ministerial Education	572,151	394,795	363,317
Black College Fund	228,226	157,480	144,924
Africa University Fund	51,076	35,244	32,434
Interdenominational Cooperation Fund	44,746	30,876	28,414
General Administration Fund	201,148	138,795	127,729
Episcopal Fund	585,565	582,067	582,067
Lydia Patterson Institute	62,452	64,639	59,485
Jurisdictional Administration Fund	33,037	39,830	36,654
Leadership Development	1,660,016	1,647,738	1,520,415
Center for Church Development	1,191,715	1,062,876	979,223
Center for Missional Outreach	655,273	651,625	599,670
Center for Connectional Resources	1,224,667	1,271,288	1,182,249
Area and Conference Administration	533,006	533,942	491,370
Conference Benefits	1,540,200	1,533,200	1,561,242
District Superintendents Fund	616,478	606,480	606,480
District Administration Fund	<u>629,539</u>	<u>618,803</u>	<u>600,917</u>
<b>TOTAL APPORTIONMENTS</b>	11,523,286	10,538,562	9,992,279

**COUNCIL ON FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION  
CONFERENCE TREASURER'S REPORT (UNAUDITED)**

**REMITTANCES**

	2020 RECEIPTS	2021 RECEIPTS	2022 RECEIPTS
<b>TARGETED CAUSES</b>			
Second Mile Apportionment Fund	8,118	23,068	3,798
<b>GENERAL ADVANCE SPECIALS</b>			
<b>UMCOR</b>			
UMCOR Undesignated Gifts	31,120	50,350	46,205
UMCOR Relief Supplies	0	0	0
UMCOR Domestic Disaster Response	27,995	45,840	59,982
UMCOR International Disaster Response	4,465	29,824	338,409
UMCOR Global Health	2,825	11,694	0
UMCOR Missionaries Around the World	120	0	0
UMCOR Sustainable Development	<u>1,300</u>	<u>1,100</u>	<u>0</u>
Total UMCOR	67,825	138,809	444,597
<b>WORLD MISSIONS</b>			
Regional Africa	5,400	8,300	5,000
Cambodia	1,000	0	5,000
Cameroon	0	0	0
Congo	956	100	850
Europe	0		0
Heifer International Fill the Ark	850	145	0
Russia	0	0	0
Poland	320	0	0
Latin America and the Caribbean	19,695	8,236	105,712
Vietnam	0		
Global Migration	0		
Haiti Advance Project	<u>1,935</u>	<u>1,830</u>	<u>5,329</u>
Total World Missions	30,156	18,611	121,891
<b>TOTAL GENERAL ADVANCE SPECIALS</b>	<b>97,981</b>	<b>157,420</b>	<b>566,487</b>
<b>OTHER ADVANCE SPECIALS</b>			
Africa University Special Gifts	0	500	300
Black College Fund	<u>0</u>	<u>500</u>	<u>300</u>
Total Other Advance Specials	0	1,000	600
<b>YOUTH SERVICE FUND</b>	<b>673</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**COUNCIL ON FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION  
CONFERENCE TREASURER'S REPORT (UNAUDITED)**

**REMITTANCES**

	2020 RECEIPTS	2021 RECEIPTS	2022 RECEIPTS
<b>GENERAL CONFERENCE OFFERINGS</b>			
UMCOR Sunday (One Great Hour)	4,253	11,401	13,822
World Communion	846	6,357	6,275
UM Student Day	480	420	605
Human Relations Day	1,169	250	463
Peace With Justice	264	1,126	848
Native American Ministries	<u>1,027</u>	<u>140</u>	<u>802</u>
<b>TOTAL GENERAL CONFERENCE OFFERINGS</b>	<b>8,039</b>	<b>19,694</b>	<b>22,815</b>
<b>OTHER CONFERENCE BENEVOLENCES</b>	<b>93,566</b>	<b>330,440</b>	<b>115,135</b>
<b>TOTAL NON-APPORTIONED FUNDS</b>	<b>208,377</b>	<b>531,622</b>	<b>705,037</b>
<b>TOTAL APPORTIONED FUNDS</b>	<b>11,523,286</b>	<b>10,538,562</b>	<b>9,992,279</b>
<b>TOTAL ALL CAUSES</b>	<b>11,731,663</b>	<b>11,070,184</b>	<b>10,697,316</b>



**North Texas Conference of The United Methodist Church**  
**Statement of Financial Position (Unaudited)**  
**December 31, 2022**

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
<b>Assets</b>		
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Cash - Conference	\$ 8,080,493	\$ 10,872,368
Accounts Receivable	2,126,891	3,094,455
Prepaid Expenses	362,335	122,608
Investments	43,876,195	51,105,608
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	54,445,914	65,195,038
<b>Other Assets</b>		
Fixed assets, net of depreciation	4,537,813	4,452,034
Land and Bldgs held for resale	10,156,363	11,190,292
Investments	2,044,860	2,540,589
<b>Total Other Assets</b>	16,739,037	18,182,915
<b>Total Assets</b>	71,184,951	83,377,953
<b>Liabilities and Net Assets</b>		
<b>Liabilities</b>		
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	1,208,927	4,078,198
Current year postretirement benefits obligation	347,917	383,316
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	1,556,844	4,461,514
<b>Non-current Liabilities</b>		
Notes payable, non-current portion	7,374,419	8,025,242
Long term postretirement benefits obligation	6,398,923	8,977,750
<b>Total Non-current Liabilities</b>	13,773,342	17,002,992
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	15,330,186	21,464,506
<b>Net Assets</b>		
<b>Net Assets Without Donor Restriction</b>		
Operating Reserves	6,411,681	6,493,862
Board Designated Reserves	42,685,432	47,780,003
BOD Designated Reserves	641,470	685,359
Real and Personal Property Reserves	3,029,058	3,733,634
Conference Managed Reserves	(13,723)	(11,045)
<b>Total Net Assets Without Donor Restriction</b>	52,753,919	58,681,812
<b>Net Assets With Donor Restrictions</b>		
Temporarily Restricted	2,275,001	2,417,567
Permanently Restricted	825,845	814,068
<b>Total Net Assets With Donor Restrictions</b>	3,100,846	3,231,635
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	55,854,765	61,913,448
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	\$ 71,184,951	\$ 83,377,953

**North Texas Conference of The United Methodist Church  
Statement of Financial Activities (Unaudited)  
For the Year Ended December 31, 2022**

	2022	2021
<b>Changes in net assets without donor restrictions</b>		
<b>Revenues</b>		
<b>Revenues without donor restrictions</b>		
Apportionment receipts	\$ 9,992,879	\$ 10,541,925
Unrestricted donations and grants	646,832	85,290
Program & Event Fees	161,546	908,468
Receipts of legacy church facilities	394,581	3,702,390
Services (health, pension, property)	22,581,205	34,148,166
Investment income (loss)	(6,984,875)	3,467,884
PPP grant revenue	-	688,700
Other	603,520	981,638
<b>Total Revenues without donor restrictions</b>	<u>27,395,689</u>	<u>54,524,461</u>
<b>Total Revenues</b>	27,395,689	54,524,461
<b>Expenses</b>		
Staff	3,163,026	2,971,733
Employee Benefits	9,671,943	9,959,351
Travel & Meetings	236,476	168,978
Facility Occupancy	876,968	408,361
Property Insurance	15,397,987	24,627,909
Professional Fees & Contract	484,164	450,601
Supplies	957,748	2,104,520
Training & Continuing Education	537,568	204,094
Grants/benevolence	5,285,845	4,816,079
Depreciation	322,429	322,688
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<u>36,934,154</u>	<u>46,034,314</u>
<b>Other changes</b>		
Actual gain (loss) on postretirement benefits obligation	3,168,866	1,098,981
<b>Total Changes in net assets without donor restrictions</b>	<u>(6,369,599)</u>	<u>9,589,128</u>
<b>Changes in net assets with donor restrictions</b>		
Contributions for programs	738,007	52,693
Investment return, net	(427,091)	205,570
<b>Total Changes in net assets with donor restrictions</b>	<u>310,916</u>	<u>258,263</u>
<b>Change in total net assets</b>	<u>(6,058,683)</u>	<u>9,847,391</u>
<b>Net assets at beginning of year</b>	61,913,448	52,065,858
<b>Net assets at end of year</b>	<u>\$ 55,854,765</u>	<u>\$ 61,913,448</u>

**North Texas Conference of The United Methodist Church  
Statement of Functional Expenses (Unaudited)  
For the Year Ended December 31, 2022**

Natural Classification	Programs						Support	
	Program	Missions	Supervisory	Services	Subsidiaries	Programs subtotal	General & Admin	Total
Staff	\$ 581,456	\$ 312,975	\$ 465,468	\$ 257,187	\$ 541,064	\$ 2,158,151	\$ 1,004,875	\$ 3,163,026
Employee Benefits	192,696	41,409	60,436	9,085,346	120,204	9,500,091	171,852	9,671,943
Travel & Meetings	107,325	16,785	49,328	9,497	15,375	198,310	38,166	236,476
Facility Occupancy	96,226	32,931	132,300	40,368	106,001	407,825	469,143	876,968
Property Insurance	10,608	-	-	15,361,351	18,072	15,390,031	7,956	15,397,987
Professional Fees & Contract	288,947	36,915	-	52,027	4,558	382,448	101,716	484,164
Supplies	137,123	36,358	2,293	624,591	70,967	871,332	86,416	957,748
Training & Continuing Education	522,129	5,840	-	-	9,600	537,568	-	537,568
Grants/Benevolence	1,413,428	2,961,863	20,800	413,834	164,069	4,973,994	311,850	5,285,845
Depreciation	68,853	-	-	-	150,295	219,148	103,280	322,429
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 3,418,791</b>	<b>\$ 3,445,076</b>	<b>\$ 730,624</b>	<b>\$ 25,844,202</b>	<b>\$ 1,200,205</b>	<b>\$ 34,638,898</b>	<b>\$ 2,295,256</b>	<b>\$ 36,934,154</b>

**North Texas Conference of The United Methodist Church**  
**Designated Fund Summary - Condensed (Unaudited)**  
**December 31, 2022**

	<u>Opening Balance</u>	<u>YTD Receipts</u>	<u>YTD Disbursements</u>	<u>YTD Transfers &amp; Adjustments</u>	<u>Ending Balance</u>
<b>Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions</b>					
<b>Operating Reserves</b>					
Center for Church Development	\$1,780,359	\$979,223	\$732,590	\$37,500	\$1,989,492
Center for Leadership Development	\$552,114	\$1,560,156	\$1,492,426	\$158,751	\$461,094
Center for Missional Outreach	\$624,834	\$599,670	\$550,169	\$10,000	\$664,335
Center for Connectional Resources	\$1,996,596	\$1,140,829	\$1,314,739	\$12	\$1,822,674
Episcopal NTC Area Funds	\$229,110	\$75,992	\$43,251	\$12	\$261,839
Communications Office Operations	\$319,342	\$404,056	\$448,037	\$0	\$275,362
Dist. Superintendent Fund Operations	\$352,216	\$600,480	\$593,941	\$0	\$358,755
East District	\$151,525	\$161,252	\$176,904	\$300	\$135,572
Metro District	\$138,273	\$174,101	\$241,443	(\$23,700)	\$94,631
North Central District	\$57,978	\$166,473	\$167,185	\$300	\$56,966
Northwest District	\$291,515	\$139,041	\$139,595	\$0	\$290,961
<b>Total Operating Reserves</b>	<b>\$6,493,862</b>	<b>\$6,001,274</b>	<b>\$5,900,280</b>	<b>\$183,175</b>	<b>\$6,411,681</b>
<b>Board Designated Reserves</b>					
Center for Leadership Development	\$270,983	\$98,959	\$101,905	\$0	\$268,037
Center for Missional Outreach	\$155,940	\$1,017	\$78,449	\$0	\$78,509
Center for Connectional Resources	\$326,161	\$93,708	\$59,490	\$0	\$360,379
Episcopal Reserves	\$363	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$363
DS Reserves	\$19,561	\$6,000	\$0	\$0	\$25,561
Conference Benefits - Health Insurance	\$1,741,054	\$10,053,886	\$8,102,337	\$0	\$3,692,603
Conference Benefits - Scholarships	\$227,420	\$0	\$251	\$0	\$227,169
Retiree Benefits Reserves	\$33,107,461	(\$3,503,485)	\$2,058,025	\$0	\$27,545,952
New Church Start Reserves	\$3,918,005	\$98,317	\$141,773	(\$229,479)	\$4,104,027
New Church Starts - East District	\$58,810	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$58,810
New Church Starts - North Central Dist.	\$146,984	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$146,984
Legacy Property Held for Sale	\$4,016,138	\$430,891	\$494,181	\$221,979	\$3,730,869
District Reserves	\$735,304	(\$289,281)	\$4,008	\$0	\$442,016
Property Insurance Reserves	\$3,050,111	\$14,309,272	\$15,360,935	\$0	\$1,998,448
Camping Reserves	\$5,707	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$5,707
<b>Total Board Designated Reserves</b>	<b>\$47,780,003</b>	<b>\$21,299,283</b>	<b>\$26,401,354</b>	<b>(\$7,500)</b>	<b>\$42,685,432</b>
<b>BOD Designated Reserves</b>					
MEF Reserves	\$277,954	\$97,026	\$116,054	\$0	\$258,927
GCFA Episcopal Office Reserves	\$14,885	\$75,470	\$86,331	\$0	\$4,024
Urban Ministries Reserves	\$392,519	\$0	\$0	\$14,000	\$378,519
<b>Total BOD Designated Reserves</b>	<b>\$685,359</b>	<b>\$172,496</b>	<b>\$202,385</b>	<b>\$14,000</b>	<b>\$641,470</b>
<b>Fixed Assets Reserves</b>					
Conference Office	\$389,916	\$3,054,836	\$3,174,205	\$10,000	\$260,547
Parsonages	\$1,975,590	\$272,790	\$710,287	\$0	\$1,538,093
Camps	\$1,368,128	\$0	\$137,710	\$0	\$1,230,418
<b>Total Fixed Assets Reserves</b>	<b>\$3,733,634</b>	<b>\$3,327,626</b>	<b>\$4,022,202</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>	<b>\$3,029,058</b>

	<u>Opening Balance</u>	<u>YTD Receipts</u>	<u>YTD Disbursements</u>	<u>YTD Transfers &amp; Adjustments</u>	<u>Ending Balance</u>
<b>NTC Associated Entities - Held in Trust</b>					
NTC Clergy & Lay Organizations	\$49,476	\$3,016	\$6,205	\$0	\$46,287
Wesley Foundations	\$167,037	\$3,458	\$176,733	(\$173,175)	\$166,937
Camping Reserves	(\$227,559)	\$612	\$0	\$0	(\$226,947)
<b>Total NTC Associated Entities - Held in Trust</b>	<b>(\$11,045)</b>	<b>\$7,086</b>	<b>\$182,938</b>	<b>(\$173,175)</b>	<b>(\$13,723)</b>
<b>Total Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions</b>	<b>\$58,681,812</b>	<b>\$30,807,765</b>	<b>\$36,709,159</b>	<b>\$26,500</b>	<b>\$52,753,919</b>
<b>Net Assets With Donor Restrictions</b>					
<b>Donor Designated Reserves</b>					
Seek Scholarship Reserves	\$18,595	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$18,595
A Time for Children	\$9,400	\$380	\$730	\$0	\$9,050
North Texas Disaster Relief Reserves	\$62,116	\$500,980	\$154,802	(\$10,000)	\$418,293
CMO Reserves	\$616	\$45,109	\$1,715	(\$15,000)	\$59,010
Seminary Assistance Reserves	\$150,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$150,000
Communications Reserves	\$1,795	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,795
Perkins Funds for Retiree Assistance	\$1,723,511	(\$406,161)	\$101,344	\$0	\$1,216,006
Johnny Irish NW District Reserves	\$83,777	\$27,470	\$77,085	(\$1,500)	\$35,662
Bridgeport Playground Reserves	\$7,149	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$7,149
CUT Trust Reserves	\$271,269	\$0	\$2,828	\$0	\$268,441
Superannuate Required Reserves	\$89,338	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$89,338
Nannie Bean Earnings	\$0	\$3,322	\$1,661	\$0	\$1,661
<b>Total Donor Designated Reserves</b>	<b>\$2,417,567</b>	<b>\$171,099</b>	<b>\$340,165</b>	<b>(\$26,500)</b>	<b>\$2,275,001</b>
<b>Permanently Restricted Endowment Corpus</b>					
CMO Nannie Findlay Bean Trust	\$64,068	\$11,777	\$0	\$0	\$75,845
Reserves-Perkins Fund	\$750,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$750,000
<b>Total Permanently Restricted Endowment Corpus</b>	<b>\$814,068</b>	<b>\$11,777</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$825,845</b>
<b>Total Net Assets With Donor Restrictions</b>	<b>\$3,231,635</b>	<b>\$182,876</b>	<b>\$340,165</b>	<b>(\$26,500)</b>	<b>\$3,100,846</b>
<b>Total Net Asset</b>	<b>\$61,913,448</b>	<b>\$30,990,641</b>	<b>\$37,049,324</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$55,854,765</b>

## 2023 NTC CONNECTIONAL REPORTS

### AFRICA UNIVERSITY (AU)

United Methodists worldwide celebrated an “Ebenezer” moment in the ministry of Africa University (<http://Africa University>) in 2022, marking 30 years of faithfulness, generosity, growth, and impact within and beyond The United Methodist Church.

God’s presence in the life of Africa University is evident, thanks to the prayers and generous support of the North Texas Conference. The North Texas Conference graciously invested 52.76 percent of its share of general church giving to support the day-to-day operations of Africa University. At 83.7 percent overall in 2022, giving to the Africa University Fund (AUF) remained resilient in all five jurisdictions in the United States.

Supported by the strong missional engagement of North Texas United Methodists and church members across the denomination, Africa University embraced new opportunities as it emerged from pandemic-related restrictions in 2022.

- **Enrollment:** Africa University achieved a total enrollment of 2,791 students in August 2022. Female students comprised 58 percent of the student population and 23 African nations were represented.
- **Academic Growth:** Africa University launched its first new academic unit in almost twenty years—The School of Law—with a pioneer cohort of 20 students pursuing the Bachelor of Laws (Honors) (LL.B.) degree program. The institution is launching five new undergraduate and graduate programs approved by the Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education (ZIMCHE), the national accreditation and quality assurance agency.
- **Infrastructure expansion:** A new residence hall for female students at Africa University is under construction, funded by the East Ohio Conference’s \$1.5 million *Teach \* Reach \* Bless* campaign. Once completed, the building will boost the available on-campus housing for students to around 1200 beds.
- **Outcomes:** 712 graduates from 18 African countries became Africa University alumni in June 2022. The university’s almost 11,000 graduates to date are making vital contributions as clergy, educators, agriculturalists, health professionals, entrepreneurs, and innovators. Faculty and students are addressing endemic challenges such as malaria and tuberculosis, food insecurity, and climate change, and gaining continental attention as well as international funding for their research efforts.

Africa University’s year-long 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary program culminated in October 2022 with a gathering of more than 3,000 people at its main campus in Mutare, Zimbabwe. Amidst the commemoration and joyful thanksgiving live-streamed to the world, the Rev. Dr. Peter Mageto was formally installed as the fifth vice chancellor (president) of the institution.

Mageto, a Kenyan and academician specializing in theological ethics, echoed the gratitude of the students, faculty, staff, trustees, and alumni of Africa University for the incalculable sum of answered prayers that is the Africa University story. His inaugural address highlighted the optimism and commitment to purpose that drive the university’s unfolding vision.

Thank you, North Texas Conference, for nurturing change leaders and building an enduring legacy through the ministry of Africa University. Let us continue to journey together—learning, leading, and serving God, all the time, everywhere.

—James H. Salley, President and Chief Executive Officer, Africa University (Tennessee) Inc.  
& Associate Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement

## BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY (BUSTH)



Boston University School of Theology

I am profoundly grateful for your partnership, prayers, and support in these challenging times. A year like 2022 makes even more relevant BUSTH's (<https://www.bu.edu/sth/>) historic and ongoing commitments to peace and justice in equipping transformational leaders. We remain hopeful and vigilant in our continued partnership with you.

### BREAKING NEWS:

- **Students:** Our academic year 2022-23 entering class was among our most diverse, with 88 new students enrolling, 34% of whom are international students.
- **Faculty:** In September we welcomed three new [faculty members](#): James McCarty, Assistant Clinical Professor of Religion and Conflict Transformation; Eunil David Cho, Assistant Professor of Spiritual Care; and Peng Yin, Assistant Professor of Ethics.
- **New Online Degree First Cohort:** BUSTH's first fully online master's degree—the Master of Religion and Public Leadership (MARPL)—welcomed its first students in fall 2022. MARPL seeks students who wish to be prepared for leadership roles that creatively engage the challenges of public life. Learn more at [bu.edu/sth/marpl](https://bu.edu/sth/marpl).
- **Faculty Research:** Prof. Filipe Maia was awarded a Louisville Institute book grant in April, and Prof. Luis Menéndez-Antuña was awarded a grant from the Catholic Biblical Association in August. Other large grants continue to move forward, including the Trauma Responsive Congregations Project led by Prof. Shelly Rambo and supported by the Lilly Endowment, and the Positive Psychology and Formation-Based Flourishing grant led by Prof. Steven Sandage and supported by the Peale Foundation.
- **Scholarships:** This year, we announced free tuition for all residential master's candidates. We continue to offer free tuition to UMC-registered candidates for ordained ministry and leadership fellowships that support students in ethnic, gender, and sexuality studies. New funds include the Research & Teaching Fund and Affirmation & Empowerment Fund as well as the following endowed funds: DEI, Theology & the Arts, and Doctor of Ministry.
- **Accreditation Visit:** BUSTH just welcomed the United Methodist University Senate Review team on February 1-3 for our re-accreditation visit.
- **Online Lifelong Learning:** BUSTH offers online courses for professional and spiritual enrichment of religious leaders. Recent offerings include “Ethics and Video Games,” and “Spiritual Mending for Helping Professionals.” To learn more, visit [bu.edu/sth/oll](https://bu.edu/sth/oll).
- **Development:** Recent accomplishments include endowing the Faith and Ecological Justice Fund, and new funding for student scholarships and academic programs.

### COMMITMENT TO JUSTICE and COMPASSION:

- BUSTH's Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion offers webinars on timely inclusion efforts, such as “[Increasing Participation of Students of Underrepresented Backgrounds](#).”
- This year's [Lowell Lecture](#) topics explore the spiritual dimension of artistic expression. This fall, Dr. Emmett G. Price III highlighted the brilliant resilience and demonstrative hope of Black folk through the lens of two exceptional spiritual beings: Nina Simone and John Coltrane. A diverse panel response fostered rich conversation.
- Work continues to improve accessibility, sustainability, and responsible investing. 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

## CC YOUNG Senior Living Serving Seniors since 1922.

Reflecting on the Centennial celebration of CC Young (CCY) in 2022, we can proudly say that the last year was a great success – full of reverence and gratitude for our legacy and forefathers. That said, 2023 has seamlessly launched us into the next 100 years. We are certainly not resting on our laurels! With all disciplines working together, our census is rebounding to unprecedented levels. We attribute this success to both the pent-up desire and the increasing recognition of CC Young’s name, longevity, and our service reputation.

As of writing this article, we have only nine apartments in all of Independent Living that are not yet committed for new residents. Skilled Nursing is continuously full, with an average of 100+ census per month. Memory Support has a waiting list, and Long Term Care is virtually full. Our Vista Assisted Living has only nine units available currently. Once those apartments are committed, we expect focus to shift to the Hillside Assisted Living apartments. We are thrilled to be in this position especially since many of our peers are not as fortunate.

**One of our newest offerings** which launched last year has been a huge hit: Osher Lifelong Learning Institute with the University of North Texas (OLLI/UNT). The program has been met with great enthusiasm from residents and the community at large as well. All participants experience college-level classes with no homework, books, or tests. The program has brought new guests to The Point which has proven to be fertile ground with many guests (25+) converting to Point Membership. It is notable that six Point Members in recent past have converted to full-time residency and more are expected to be residents before too long. All in all, The Point and Life Enrichment on campus is a differentiator among other competitors and has become one of our main selling tools. As a result, our marketing team is now focusing on promoting Point events directly to the local community.

With 2023, we are also evolving into Parkinson’s specialists, with offerings of exercise and voice classes for those with PD. Our therapy team is leading the charge, and we recently hosted a “Rock Steady Boxing” demonstration in combination with a panel discussion about Parkinson’s research. In conjunction with the Rock Steady Boxing event, we announced a partnership with the Michael J. Fox Foundation (MJFF). CC Young has challenged area senior living organizations to partner with CCY and participate in MJFF’s “Smell Test Challenge.” Nine local organizations have joined with CCY to make Dallas the most robust participating city supporting the foundation’s clinical study. The goal of the study is to find 100,000 participants, age 60 and above - without Parkinson’s, to participate in this clinical trial. Changes in smell, while not an absolute indicator that you will get Parkinsons, can be indicator of risk. This trial will take Parkinsons research to the next level. CCY is proud to be leading the charge and supporting further research and development to combat Parkinsons and its symptoms. If you or someone you know is interested in this clinical trial, check [www.michaeljfox.org](http://www.michaeljfox.org) and search “smell test” to get started. The kits are free and will be mailed to you.

**Another blessing for CCY** is the fact that we have internal TV channels which enable us to communicate with residents in all levels of care. Besides just general information as to what is happening on campus, we can also send out programming at The Point, air previous recordings, and even show specially purchased movies or documentaries to all individual apartments on campus. The timing of the TV upgrade in July 2020 caused an evolution of our media capabilities on campus. Our enhanced campus broadcast capabilities were a primary selling point to our friends and partners for the OLLI/UNT program mentioned above. That program may have never happened without the timely and forward-thinking enhancements to our studio.

In March this year, we hosted a company from Colorado called TaleGate. We met this group at the national convention for our state and national association, LeadingAge. TaleGate’s team was here to interview and record residents and staff. The footage gathered will be used to create promotional videos for new prospects – residents and staff alike. The TaleGate team was very impressed with CC Young and, in fact, said we were one of the top two campus events they had ever experienced nationwide. This is high praise indeed and speaks to our unique status nationwide and the continuing evolution of our staff, our offerings, and our technology.



**One final note to mention and celebrate** is our participation with the LeadingAge Texas Leadership Collective. Since 2014, CC Young has supported this leadership development program which is offered by our state association. We recognize the importance of developing leaders and providing a platform for staff to develop and grow. CC Young hosts a group of participants annually and provides speakers throughout the day. Through the years, CC Young has sponsored 20+ team members as leadership fellows. Certainly, our industry and CCY both benefit from the continuing education and development of leaders supporting senior living and senior services.

In conclusion, 2023 is already proving to be a robust year! We celebrate the successes and continually strive to think outside the box and develop programming for all levels of care. In the midst of it all, we continue to provide excellent care to our residents and a premier experience for our residents and families. Our partnerships and programs are thriving and we are proud to be at the forefront of Parkinson's research and care. The Tale Gate team's high praise only reinforces our commitment to excellence and our relative standing nationwide.

If you have not been to our campus lately, we recently refreshed our website. Come "see" us virtually at [www.ccy.org](http://www.ccy.org). Or even better? Visit us on campus and experience CC Young for yourself as we embrace the next 100 years!

### **About CC Young**

Since 1922, for more than 100 years, CC Young has been serving senior adults. The community is nestled in the heart of East Dallas on a lush 20-acre campus across from White Rock Lake. CC Young is a forward-thinking, non-profit Continuing Care Retirement Community with a long history of excellence. Known for stellar services, CC Young holds a 5-Star overall Quality Rating from the Centers of Medicare Services in skilled nursing care, home health and hospice.

CC Young provides opportunities for Independent Living, Assisted Living, Memory Support, Long-Term Care, Respite Care, Short-Term Rehabilitation, Aquatics and Outpatient Therapy, and Hospice General Inpatient services. The Community Services Program offers Home Healthcare, Hospice, and Private Duty Solutions on campus and is also licensed in 13 counties throughout North Texas. The Vista's opening in 2020 launched a new era of healthcare for residents and surrounding community members. Coming later, The Terraces will be the newest Independent Living residence featuring views of White Rock Lake. Additionally, The Point & Pavilion, located in the heart of the campus, offers creative, educational, recreational, fitness and spiritual opportunities for residents and the public.

To schedule a tour or learn more, call 214-258-4000 or visit [www.ccy.org](http://www.ccy.org).

### **DUKE DIVINITY SCHOOL (DDS)**

Duke Divinity School has been blessed to be part of the fresh work of the Holy Spirit this year and to participate in "little Pentecosts"—signs and foretastes of the hope we profess and the calling we follow.

The school has continued in its commitment to form ministers of the gospel who will seek God's justice and mercy. Our faculty have been leaders in the Duke Climate Initiative participating with colleagues from the Nicholas School for the Environment in the event "Pastoral Care for Climate Change: Weaving Together Science and Theology for Justice," at the Duke University Marine Lab. Divinity faculty have also co-taught a university course titled, "Let's Talk about Climate Change," and welcomed 30 young faith leaders from various religious traditions to understand better how to engage their faith communities in the fight for our climate.

The Office of Black Church Studies, commemorating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, hosted "Justice Ministry Reimagined: Reentry Simulation" for pastors, students, and lay leaders to learn more about how to support people reenter-

ing the community after incarceration. We launched the Prison Engagement Initiative with the Kenan Institute for Ethics. Divinity faculty taught a “Trauma Engaged Duke” seminar and led the team Developing Best Practices for Trauma-Informed Teaching and Learning. These programs and events complement the ongoing work of field education and ministerial formation that puts our students in contexts ranging from rural churches to hospital chaplaincy to farm ministry, and more.

We welcomed 226 entering students from 35 different states and eight other countries. The Master of Divinity program gained 88 residential students and 42 in the hybrid program. The Master of Arts in Christian Practice enrolled 13 new students; the Doctor of Ministry, 28; Master of Theology, six; Master of Theological Studies, 22; the Doctor of Theology welcomed six residential, and one special student has enrolled. The Certificate in Theology and Health Care welcomed four residential students and 16 in the hybrid program. Across all degree programs, 30 percent of the incoming class identified as a race or ethnicity other than white. Black students made up 18 percent of all students; Latinx students, six percent; Asian students, five percent; and American Indian students, one percent. Fifty-seven percent of students in the incoming class are female.

DDS continued to build on its rich tradition of ecumenical engagement, with Dean Colón-Emeric participating in the Methodist-Roman Catholic International Commission Dialogue meeting with Pope Francis at the Vatican. Student Eliza Love, M.Div.’23, was awarded the \$10,000 Bossey Institute scholarship from the United Methodist Church Council of Bishops to attend the World Council of Church Ecumenical Institute.

Three new associate deans have accepted appointments: Daniel Castelo as associate dean for Academic Formation; Jung Choi as associate dean for Global and Intercultural Formation, and Sangwoo Kim as associate dean for Vocational Formation. Linda Coley has also joined as the executive director for the Ormond Center.

Several new programs demonstrate Duke’s sustained commitment to connecting with churches and ministers. The Ormond Center launched the Community Craft Collaborative to create resources for equipping lay and congregational leaders. The Certificate in Conflict Transformation and Reconciliation, facilitated by leading scholars and practitioners in the fields of conflict transformation and reconciliation, provides a learning opportunity for pastors and other church leaders seeking theological and practical skills to foster reconciliation in their congregations and surrounding communities. We celebrate the expansion of our connection to UMC colleges through a partnership with Wesleyan College in Macon, Georgia, to enable qualified undergraduates to take courses through the Duke Accelerated Pastoral Formation Program.

Convocation & Pastors’ School returned to an in-person format for the first time since 2019 with the theme, *Creativity & Courage: From Trauma to Tough Hope*. Professional dancers, visual artists, musicians, and scholars guided participants in facing brokenness and sin honestly, as they offered glimpses of “the beauty of holiness.” *NY Times* Best Selling Author & Associate Professor of Christian History, Kate Bowler kicked off the event with a live taping of her *Everything Happens* podcast with over 1000 registered participants.

Duke Divinity School continues to be grateful for our ongoing participation in The United Methodist Church and partnership with this annual conference. To learn more about Duke Divinity School, please visit our website at [www.divinity.duke.edu](http://www.divinity.duke.edu).

—Respectfully submitted by Edgardo Colón-Emeric, Dean of Duke Divinity School

## METHODIST CHILDREN’S HOME (MCH)

Greetings from Methodist Children’s Home (MCH) and the more than 10,000 children, youth, and families we serve each year. In light of changes occurring in the church, and as an independent 501c3 organization, your continued voluntary support of our vision to empower all we serve to experience life to the fullest is as important as ever. I invite each of you to visit our website at <https://www.mch.org/> to learn more about how to refer a child for placement, or a call to join our ministry.

Your support provides the resources needed to offer the care, programs and talented individuals needed to positively impact the lives of those we serve through residential care on the Waco campus and Boys Ranch and through 14 MCH Family Outreach offices, including Dallas (serving the greater DFW Metroplex).

We are now in our 133<sup>rd</sup> year of ministry. Here are some highlights of the past year:

- **The MCH Board of Directors** unanimously approved a proposal to begin a master planning process for the MCH Boys Ranch. This includes expansion of programs and examining how MCH can be even more effective in meeting the needs of children through residential placement.
- **For the tenth consecutive time** since 1986, MCH earned national reaccreditation from the Council on Accreditation (COA). MCH was evaluated on more than 800 standards, which examined all areas of our operations.
- **Secured funding for the Stone and Harris Homes** on the Waco campus. These homes are the tenth and eleventh new additions and complete Phase 4 of the Building Hope Capital Campaign.
- **Raised more than \$900,000** in support of the launch of the fourteenth MCH Family Outreach office, which will be located in the Permian Basin and open in 2023.
- **Strengthened the “Together We Flourish” initiative** designed to maximize and steward our resources for ministry through collective impact, generosity, and support in order to achieve the MCH vision and mission in a greater way. This initiative guides us as we seek out collaborations with other organizations and strengthen the cohesion between our ministry programs.
- **Launched a new Emergent Services program** with MCH Family Outreach. Emergent Services allows staff to offer referral consultation, assistance, and support in an efficient and impactful manner.
- **Launched a pilot program** to provide free professional counseling services for individuals and families. The program is being offered through the MCH Family Outreach offices in Abilene and Waco, with hopes of expanding to other MCH Family Outreach locations.
- **MCH recognized Stephanie Cummings**, residential supervisor on the Waco campus, who received the award for “General Residential Operation Staff of the Year” from the Texas Alliance of Child and Family Services.
- **MCH leadership attended** the 2022 United Methodist Association of Health and Welfare Ministries (UMA) Conference in Savannah, Georgia. President and CEO Trey Oakley, Vice President for Programs Traci Wagner, and Community Engagement and Training Specialist John Warren, presented at the conference.
- **Children, youth, and families enjoyed** fun summer activities across our residential and Family Outreach programs. Youth participated in faith formation camps, volunteer opportunities, and service-based mission trips.
- **The MCH football team** was named Texas Private School of the Week by Dave Campbell’s Texas Football. The Bulldogs were recognized for their 46-40 win against state champion Wylie Prep in Week 3.
- **Dedicated the Florence C. Howard Prayer Labyrinth** on the Waco campus. The prayer labyrinth is a space for outdoor worship, personal spiritual growth, and contemplation.

Our achievements in the past and those yet to come are directly related to the many individuals and congregations throughout our service area, including the North Texas Annual Conference, who support our work and ministry through financial gifts, prayers, advocacy, and service on the Board of Directors. May God continue to bless MCH and the ministries of the North Texas Annual Conference.

—Trey Oakley, President and CEO

## PERKINS SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY

Perkins (<https://www.smu.edu/Perkins>) celebrates our vital connections with the North Texas Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church.

- **Thirty-nine (39) students affiliated with the North Texas Annual Conference** are enrolled at Perkins, including: 19 Master of Divinity students, six Master of Theological Studies students, six Master of Arts in Ministry students, five Doctor of Ministry students, one Master of Theology student, one Master of Sacred Music student, and one non-major Theology student.
- **During the 2022-23 academic year**, seven students from the North Texas Annual Conference received funding from the PACE (Perkins Annual Conference Endowment) grant, with the average overall financial aid award per student totaling \$2,827.86.
- **Seven Perkins students from the North Texas Annual Conference** currently are taking part in internships.

### Enrollment Update

Enrollment at Perkins for the 2022-23 academic year totaled 257 students. The hybrid Houston-Galveston Extension Program, in its fifth year of providing a combination of online and residential classes leading to the M.Div. and M.A.M. degrees, totaled 96 students during the 2022-23 academic year.

### Institutional Highlights

- **Craig C. Hill, who became the 11th dean** of Perkins School of Theology in July 2016, retired as dean December 31, 2022, due to medical reasons. Hill, the Leighton K. Farrell Endowed Dean and Professor of New Testament, will remain a member of the Perkins faculty until December 31, 2023. During his years at Perkins, he led a thorough study and reorganization of the Office of Enrollment Management, doubling new student enrollment from 2016-17 to 2019-20. Under his leadership, financial aid to students increased by 50 percent. He also reinvigorated the Houston-Galveston extension site as a hybrid program. Hill broadened academic offerings to include the development of the Baptist House of Studies, the Black/Africana Studies and a healthcare chaplaincy program.
- **Bishop Michael McKee began his service** as Dean of Perkins School of Theology *ad interim* effective January 1, 2023. He will serve until a permanent dean has been named. Bishop McKee previously served as episcopal leader of the North Texas Annual Conference since his election by the South Central Jurisdiction in 2012, from which he retired on January 1, 2023. As interim dean, he will provide leadership development with students and alumni and, at a time of particular challenge within the United Methodist denomination, will further strengthen SMU's ties with donors, congregations and institutions within our region as well as nationally.
- **Perkins was honored to have Bishop Cynthia Fierro Harvey preach** a Chapel service during the first week of classes for our Houston/Galveston in January 2023. That same week, Bishop McKee traveled to Houston to visit with our hybrid students for the first time as interim dean.
- **The inaugural William J. Abraham Memorial Lecture** took place October 17 in Perkins Chapel, with Dr. Fred Aquino delivering the lecture and a reception following in the Blue Room in Bridwell Library. Bridwell Library (SMU Libraries) and Perkins School of Theology established the annual Memorial Lecture to bring a scholar to the SMU campus each year to engage in a topic related to Abraham's work of the scholar's choosing. Dr. Abraham, 73, died suddenly in October 2021. He was the Albert Cook Outler Professor of Wesley Studies at Perkins from 1995 until his retirement in May 2021.
- **Bishop Ruben Saenz Jr. (M.Div. '97, D.Min. '09) was honored** as the 2022 recipient of the Perkins Distinguished Alumnus/a Award. Saenz, a native of south Texas and lifelong United Methodist, was elected bishop in 2016 at the South Central Jurisdictional Conference. He currently serves as episcopal leader of the North Texas and Central Texas annual conferences. The banquet, which took place Nov. 14, also recognized

the 2021 Award recipient, Evelyn Parker, and the 2020 Award recipients, the Rev. Donald W. Underwood and the Rev. Dr. Sidney G. Hall, III.

- **Eight congregations were selected for the second cohort** of the Lilly Endowment-funded Testimony HQ initiative to develop thriving congregations through the practice of testimony as community engagement. These congregations were selected from applications submitted from churches within a 350-mile radius of Dallas. The cohort congregations will each receive up to \$5,000 in grant funding to support their Testimony HQ work from January through December, 2023. The following year, in 2024, each of these churches will mentor a church selected to participate in the third cohort.
- **An anonymous donor gifted to Perkins and Bridwell Library** a Heritage Edition of the St. John's Bible. Only 299 copies are being produced, with only a few copies in the State of Texas. Renowned calligrapher Donald Jackson produced the hand-written, hand-illuminated Bible. The volumes are bound – by hand – in a single piece of Italian calfskin leather and adorned with a solid silver clasp. The headbands are handsewn in Pakistan. Each volume is numbered and initialed by Donald Jackson and protected in a burgundy clam-shell box.
- **Perkins is continuing its curriculum review process**, chaired by Dr. Rebekah Miles, as it seeks refinement in its degree programs that will enhance flexibility for students while also providing opportunities to engage with the school's degree concentrations. We hope to implement the revised curriculum beginning Fall 2024.
- **Following a formal campus visit by a seven-member review committee** in September, the University Senate of the General Board for Higher Education and Ministry provided SMU and Perkins School of Theology a positive recommendation with regard to institutional integrity, well-structured programs, sound management and clearly defined church relationships. This review process takes place once every 10 years.
- **Dr. Rebekah Miles and Dr. Ted Campbell were formally installed** as the holders of two endowed chairs: Miles as the Susanna Wesley Centennial Professor of Practical Theology and Ethics and Campbell as the Albert Cook Outler Professor of Wesley Studies. Not only do the two chairs involve professorial positions, but the new chairholders also received an engraved desk chair as part of the formal installation ceremony. Miles and Campbell also each delivered a lecture on a topic of their choosing as part of the installation.
- **Dr. Bruce Marshall, Lehman Professor of Christian Doctrine**, was awarded the 2023 Altshuler Distinguished Teaching Award. Bestowed annually since 2001, the award recognizes four SMU faculty members for their notable commitment to and achievements in fostering student learning. These are teachers whose concerns for higher education go beyond classroom boundaries and often the boundaries of their own disciplines. In student mentoring, in discussions about teaching, and in continuous reflection about their own successes and ways to improve, they represent the highest achievement in reaching the goals of higher education.
- **Rev. Dr. Elias H. Lopez (M.Div. '10, D.Min. '18) joined** the faculty and staff as Associate Director of the Intern Program. Dr. Lopez brings a strong background in pastoral care and theology to this position. Prior to Perkins, he served as Director of Pastoral Care at Methodist Health System in Dallas, leading a team of 36 chaplains in providing spiritual support to the entire healthcare system.
- **We are saddened to announce the death of Kenneth Hart**, Professor Emeritus of Sacred Music and former Director of the Sacred Music program from 1987 to 2005. Among his scholarship, he wrote and published the 2014 volume titled *A Day for Dancing: The Life and Music of Lloyd Pfautsch*.

The highlights listed above are reflective of the vibrant engagement of Perkins faculty, staff and students. Our mission is to equip persons for faithful leadership and Christian ministry in a changing church and society; to educate those seeking a deeper understanding of the Christian faith, and to strengthen the church, academy, and world through service, scholarship, and advocacy. We thank our many colleagues, friends and alumni in the North Texas Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church for your generous support, including referrals of prospective students.

–Grace and peace, Bishop Michael McKee, Leighton K. Farrell Endowed Dean, ad interim,  
Perkins School of Theology

## PROVIDENCE PLACE

Bishop and the members of the North Texas Conference, thank you on behalf of our Board of Directors, staff, and those on our campus who are working hard to achieve their own personal level of success. Your dedication in partnership with the ministry of Providence Place is immeasurable.

The year of 2023 marks 128 years of service, all possible because of your loyal and faithful support from individual donors and United Methodist Churches throughout the North Texas Conference. Every day, we have the wonderful opportunity to see God's hand in our ministries as the lives of women, children and families are transformed.

Providence Place works to end the cycle of generational trauma through innovative services and continues to evolve its programs and services to meet the ever-changing needs of those we serve. The world is changing; inflation has caused new uncertainties for many. Families are struggling with the rising costs of gas, food, diapers, and formula. Providence Place serves over 2,000 individuals each year; 100 percent of those we serve are living day-to-day trying to make ends meet.

The relationship between Providence Place and the North Texas Conference, along with individual churches, has been lifechanging in so many ways. Together, we have helped young women facing unplanned pregnancies, provided a home for countless young adults, offered hope and restoration for survivors of complex trauma, and created loving homes for children in foster care. What makes our programs unique is our ability to serve women, children and families using a trauma informed care model. This commitment to women and families started with our founder, Madame Volino, when she first sought help from Travis Park Methodist Church in San Antonio and changed her life from a brothel owner to a sanctuary for women and young children in need. Without a doubt, churches and their congregants have played a significant role in the success of Providence Place for 128 years; something we will never forget.

I encourage you to call to arrange a speaker for your congregation or church group, and request offering materials for an annual church offering. We couldn't continue these ministries without you and we would love to come and share the stories of Providence Place! If we could be a resource to you, contact our Mission Advancement Team at (210) 696-2410 or at [mission.advancement@provplace.org](mailto:mission.advancement@provplace.org). Also, please visit our website at [www.provplace.org](http://www.provplace.org) to learn more about these special ministries and to hear first-hand stories from those we have served.

*—Respectfully,, Dr. Judith Bell, President and CEO*

## SAINT PAUL SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY (SPST)



Educating tomorrow's leaders by offering on-campus, online, and hybrid learning courses at a FLEXible schedule, Saint Paul School of Theology (<https://www.spst.edu/>) 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 in 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.

We continue to implement the changes the last few years have integrated into our daily lives. Our weekly chapel service utilizes a hybrid format, where participants may join in-person or online, allowing staff and students to come together as one institution where all are invited to create a sacred atmosphere from wherever they are. In addition, Saint Paul offers weekly Spiritual Formation allowing students to engage in spiritual practices led by Rev. Jen Logsdon-Kellogg. Some practices will take us outdoors or to other sacred spaces, and others will have us connect with community leaders.

Saint Paul welcomed over 30 new students for the 2022-2023 academic year. Enrollment remained solid for the Master of Divinity (M.Div.) degree program with promising growth on our Oklahoma campus. With COVID-19 restrictions lifted yet monitored, prospective students returned to in-person visits on both campuses, experiencing community meals, worship, and the newly implemented "Hammock ministry" on the Oklahoma campus. The Admissions team continues to expand travel to meet new students, including the Carolinas, Washington, D.C., and various parts of Texas.

This year we have focused on strengthening the Master of Arts in Christian Ministry (MCAM) by creating two specializations: Women, Society, and Church; and Social Justice and Advocacy. In each case, the student takes 22 hours of MACM required courses, and then the remaining 12 hours of the degree are comprised of courses focusing upon the specialization. The two existing specializations, Prophetic Witness and Service; and Deacon Ministries, will continue to be offered as well. The Women, Society, and Church Studies specialization is also available in the M.Div. program, as is a specialization in Wesleyan Studies.

Saint Paul staff and faculty continue contributing to the academy, church, and society. This year, we welcomed Rev. Dr. Sharon Betsworth as our new Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean and Professor of New Testament. The faculty of Saint Paul School of Theology maintains high standards of scholarship, research, publication, and engagement. Over the past year, their many activities and publications have been so numerous that space permits only sharing selected highlights.

- **Rev. Dr. Sharon Betsworth co-authored a journal article with Julie Faith Parker**, "'Where Have All the Young Girls Gone?': Discovering the Girls of the Bible through Childist Analysis of Exodus 2 and Mark 5–7," in *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, 38, no. 2 (Fall 2022).
- **Dr. Casey Sigmon, Assistant Professor of Preaching and Worship** and Director of Contextual Education, was the keynote speaker for the United Methodist Church Missouri Preaching Academy "Offering the Word to a Digital World." She published "Failure to Discern the Online/Hybrid Body: A Captivity of the Eucharist" for the special issue of *Currents in Theology and Mission: Eucharist and Online Worship: Toward Extended Theological Reflection*, vol. 50, no. 1 (2023) and published the chapter "Liturgical Authority and the Table in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)" in *Liturgical Authority in Free Church Traditions*, edited by Sarah Johnson and Andrew Wymer, Calvin Worship and Witness Series.

- **Dr. Joshua Bartholomew, Assistant Professor of Ethics, Church, and Society**, led a “Race, Liberation, and Political Economics” series at Second Presbyterian. He also spoke at The Open Table KC on “Race, Liberation, and Economics.”
- **Dr. Amy Oden, Adjunct Professor of Early Church History and Spirituality**, was a guest speaker at numerous events around the country this year, including at a Five Day Academy for Spiritual Formation in Oklahoma, the Beyond Conference in St. Louis, and the Academy for Spiritual Formation in Alabama.

In October, Saint Paul hosted a forum on “Innovative, Creative Ministry” featuring alumni Matt Austin ‘18, Fabian Gonzalez ‘20, Bo Ireland ‘18, Matt Patrick ‘18, and Abby Peper ‘22, with each sharing their personal stories of innovation in ministry. In November, Saint Paul Evangelical Society, led by Dr. Israel Kamudzandu, hosted a forum given by Rev. Mike Slaughter, former lead pastor at Ginghamburg Church, on “Spiritual Awakening: the here and the not yet.” Later in the year, the Evangelical Society hosted a lecture featuring Dr. Cheryl Bridges Johns, Visiting Professor of Pentecostal Studies and Director of the Global Pentecostal House of Study at United Theological Seminary. And on May 12, Saint Paul again held a hybrid commencement celebration via Zoom, allowing graduates to come together from both campuses with attendees viewing from around the country. During the ceremony, we honored the 2023 Distinguished Graduate Award Winner and Commencement Speaker Bishop Delores J. “Dee” Williamston.

Saint Paul Board of Trustees changed leadership this year as long-time faculty and board member Rev. Dr. Tex Sample concluded his term as chair of the Board. Dr. Amy Hogan, Professor of Education and Dean of the School of Education at Ottawa University, has succeeded him as chair. Dr. Hogan possesses a deep reservoir of experience in teaching, research, and accreditation. In response to President Neil Blair’s announcement that he will retire on December 31, 2023, Dr. Hogan appointed a search committee composed of faculty, staff, students, and trustees charged with identifying Saint Paul’s next president. The search committee is currently conferring with Saint Paul’s constituent groups to prepare the position prospectus that will describe Saint Paul’s needs and aspirations to candidates.

In September 2022, Saint Paul School of Theology hosted a review team from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), one of Saint Paul’s primary accreditation agencies, as part of the Seminary’s regular reaffirmation cycle. On November 18, 2022, the Higher Learning Commission notified Saint Paul that the Commission “continued the accreditation of Saint Paul School of Theology with the next Reaffirmation of Accreditation in 2028-2029.”

We are happy to report that Saint Paul School of Theology is financially sound. We operate with a balanced budget, no debt, and an endowment 9-10 times the size of our annual expenses. As always, we continue to be grateful for donations from the community that provide technology, scholarships, and evolving academic programs to students. As of the close of 2022, over one hundred alumni and friends of Saint Paul contributed more than \$60,000 to create the Tex and Peggy Sample Endowed Scholarship Fund honoring the life and work of Tex and Peggy Sample. Sustainability has been our focus over the past five years, and we have achieved our goal. Investments in our future bring exciting new opportunities for our students, staff, and faculty. Our significant technological investments have allowed us to maintain a hybrid educational delivery model providing a flexible working arrangement for our students.

Saint Paul School of Theology is blessed to be your partner in ministry and help those seeking to discover more and answer the call. We are grateful for your support of our students and our seminary. May we continue to live into the call of Jesus Christ to be faithful witnesses for generations to come.

*—President Neil Blair, Saint Paul trustees, faculty, staff, alumni, and students  
thank you for your prayers and support  
<https://www.spst.edu/>*



## SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY (SMU)

Southern Methodist University (SMU), <https://www.smu.edu>, has served as a nonsectarian institution of higher learning since its founding in 1911 by the citizens of Dallas and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. SMU's mission is to expand knowledge through research and teaching and to serve as an igniter and facilitator of growth in Dallas and North Texas. With continued Methodist representation on the Board of Trustees and by welcoming students of all faiths, SMU is reaching a higher level of accomplishment and global recognition in our second century of shaping world changers. Consistent with the University's appreciation of our Wesleyan heritage, SMU voluntarily submits this report to the North Texas Annual Conference.

### Students, faculty, and staff

Each year SMU continues to attract more academically qualified and diverse students. The 1,639 students of the Class of 2026 entered with the highest grade-point average (3.71) of any previous first-year class. Equally important, nearly a third of these incoming students (32%) identified as being from an underrepresented background. Just over 100 of these new Mustangs had their tuition fully met through SMU's scholarship for high-achieving Texas students who are eligible for federal Pell grants. Most of them (59%) come to Dallas from other states, 38% are homegrown Texans and 3% are international students.

As our incoming students reach new heights of academic excellence, research by our faculty members, graduate students, and even undergraduates benefits our region and the world around us. SMU remains committed to our goal of becoming a Research One (R1) institution in the Carnegie Classification system, which will further elevate our national rankings and reputation.

### Rankings

SMU continues to receive strong recognition and high rankings among prestigious reviewers, including:

- **Top 20% best national universities** by *U.S. News & World Report* (2023). Also cited among the Top Performers on Social Mobility and Best Colleges for Veterans and Best Value Schools (2023).
- **Top 12% (No. 94 out of 796) of U.S. public and private universities** by the *Wall Street Journal/Times Higher Education* (2022).
- **One of the nation's best institutions for undergraduate education** by *The Princeton Review's* The Best 388 Colleges and among its 2023 Best Colleges: Region by Region.
- **Top 5% best nationwide colleges (91 out of 2,241)** by College Factual (2023). Also, SMU alumni ranked among the top 10% in pay for graduates across a range of fields.
- **SMU's Perkins Chapel at No. 16 out of 35** of the nation's most beautiful college churches and chapels by College Rank.
- **"Higher research activity"** as classified by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

### Capital campaign and research funding

Momentum is growing as the University moves into the second year of the comprehensive campaign *SMU Ignited: Boldly Shaping Tomorrow*. As of March 1, 2023, donors have contributed over \$991 million to this multiyear \$1.5 billion campaign to attract and support outstanding students and faculty, explore new fields and cutting-edge technologies, and positively impact Dallas and the world beyond.

In fiscal year 2023, SMU received nearly \$46 million in external funding for domestic and global research. Current funding agencies include the National Science Foundation, National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Department of Energy, Google, and Toyota USA Foundation.

### Perkins School of Theology

After six and a half years of service, Craig Hill retired as dean of the Perkins School of Theology on December 31, 2022, but is continuing as a member of the faculty until December 31, 2023. We are pleased to have Bishop Michael McKee '78 serving as interim dean until a successor is brought aboard.

The Caren and Vin Prothro Organ project is fully funded. The 1927 Skinner organ has been restored, and installation of this rare instrument in our Perkins Chapel should be completed by November 2023.

SMU remains grateful for the enduring work of our Perkins School of Theology in the instruction and training of clergy for all Wesleyan traditions and other denominations. We ask for your prayers and continued support as we strive to further our mission to make a positive impact on the world around us.

Warm regards,

—R. Gerald Turner, President, Southern Methodist University

### SOUTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

Southwestern University (<https://www.southwestern.edu>) continues to rank among the best liberal arts institutions in the nation. In 2022, Southwestern rose 13 places in *U.S. News & World Report's* Best Colleges rankings, the biggest single-year jump in school history. The publication ranked the University 85th among national liberal arts colleges and first among national undergraduate liberal arts colleges in Texas. Southwestern also ranked 44th in the social mobility category, which measures how well schools graduated students who received federal Pell Grants.

Southwestern officially closed the class of 2026 in June, marking one of the earliest dates the University has finalized its incoming class in institutional history. A record 5,557 applicants competed for a spot, an increase of 17% over last year. Southwestern ultimately welcomed 436 first-year students for a total enrollment of 1,483 in fall 2022. The University's acceptance rate fell by 7%, and Southwestern also met its academic and diversity goals, with more than 25% of incoming students identifying as Hispanic for the third year in a row.

Our world-class faculty of scholar-teachers celebrated a number of accomplishments in 2022. Ten faculty members received Sam Taylor Fellowships from the United Methodist General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. Jessica Hower (history) published *Mary I in Writing: Letters, Literature, and Representation* and *Writing Mary I: History, Historiography, and Fiction*, a two-volume edited collection. Michael Gesinski (chemistry and biochemistry) was awarded a \$16,000 grant from Organic Syntheses Inc. to fund student research on gold catalysis. Jennifer Stokes (kinesiology) received the 2022 Early Career Award in Education Research from the American Physiological Society Teaching Section.

Our students received several honors and recognitions. Thirty-four students were inducted into Southwestern's chapter of the Phi Beta Kappa honor society. Two students were awarded scholarships from the Texas United Methodist College Association, two students received Benjamin Gilman International Scholarships, and one student was named a Newman Civic Fellow. Three recent graduates were selected as 2022–2023 Fulbright award winners.

In athletics, Southwestern finished second for the SCAC President's Trophy. The Pirates garnered 76 all-conference selections, including 38 first-team selections, 19 second-team selections, and 19 honorable mention selections, as well as four SCAC Coach of the Year awards. The Pirates also earned three All-America honors in 2022 and six All-Region selections. Men's golf won the SCAC Championship. Three programs earned NCAA Tournament bids.

In 2022, Southwestern hosted the 40th Brown Symposium, which featured five distinguished experts who spoke on the theme of attraction. More than 250 students, mentored by 52 faculty and staff, led panels, presented posters, gave performances, and set up exhibitions during the 23rd annual Research and Creative Works Symposium. Southwestern recognized the class of 2022 during its Commencement Convocation in May, with Southwestern alumna and applied mathematician Cassandra M. McZeal '92 serving as the keynote speaker.

### **Ratification of Trustees**

As stated in the University By-Laws, “Conference trustees are nominated by the University’s board of trustees, upon recommendation to the board’s trusteeship committee, and elected by their respective conferences.” Conference confirmation of “trustees at large” is no longer required by the By-Laws.

There are no trustees requiring ratification by the North Texas Conference.

### **Conclusion**

I would like to take this opportunity to personally invite you to visit Southwestern and experience, in person, our vibrant intellectual community.

*—Respectfully yours, Laura E. Skandera Trombley, President*

## **TEXAS METHODIST FOUNDATION (TMF)**



Texas Methodist Foundation (<https://tmf-fdn.org>) ended 2022 with deep gratitude for the many investors, philanthropists, borrowers, and leaders we have been blessed to serve in ministry. In 2022 TMF honored Tom Locke for 33-years of service, awarding him the Medallion of Merit at his retirement celebration in November. Over the last five years, TMF has cumulatively invested over \$130.1 million of revenue and endowment distributions in Methodist churches and nonprofits across Texas and New Mexico. During this time of change, and with our new President & CEO, Rev. Lisa Greenwood, we remain steadfast in our commitment to partnering with the North Texas Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, walking alongside congregations, together creating cultures of purpose, generosity, and courage.

Rev. Carol Montgomery, LPC, is North Texas Senior Area Representative and the primary contact and bridge between congregations, clergy and laity, and Texas Methodist Foundation. As partner in ministry, Carol connects members of the North Texas Conference to relevant resources available at Texas Methodist Foundation.

Texas Methodist Foundation, headquartered in Austin, Texas, serves Methodist individuals, churches, and agencies with the six annual conferences in Texas and New Mexico. We appreciate the opportunity to report some of the ways we served Methodists last year.

### **Within the North Texas Conference**

- **Loans to churches in the North Texas Conference** totaled \$80.6 million at the end of 2022.
- **Churches and agencies, not including individuals**, within the North Texas Conference had \$33.1 million invested in the Methodist Loan Fund.

### Throughout Texas and New Mexico

- **As of December 31, 2022, total assets** under management by TMF were \$647.9 million.
- **Methodist Loan Fund investments** ended the year at \$312.2 million, and our loan portfolio at \$290.4 million.
- **Total gifts to TMF’s ministries** equaled \$1.2 million, including gifts to Leadership Ministry, Grants, and TMF’s Undesignated Endowment.
- **Total gifts to TMF for the benefit of others** ended 2022 at \$1.8 million, including all planned giving Endowments, Charitable Gift Annuities, Trusts, Donor-Advised Funds.
- **In 2022, the TMF Grants Ministry** funded approximately \$2.03 million in support of 82 churches and nonprofits. Of that total, TMF granted \$1.49 million from its restricted permanent endowment funds, and the remainder from its operating budget.
- **TMF’s Leadership Ministry** works to equip leaders for deep change through conversations of courage, learning, and innovation. Some of these conversations take the form of ongoing peer groups and others as stand-alone conversations around an adaptive issue. These peer relationships offer fresh perspectives, renew their sense of calling, and embolden them for courageous leadership.
- **In March 2023, TMF hosted Launch 3.0** in Houston, Texas, a gathering of 90+ leaders from around the United States exploring innovative ministry.
- **Fueled by the desire to encourage and support**, the TMF team of Area Representatives continues to remain steadfast and loyal to those they serve. As walk-beside partners in ministry, the Area Representative team equips and empowers faith communities by providing financial best practices, inspiring cultures of generosity, and cultivating strategies of legacy giving (often initiated by the workshop Putting Your House in Order). Churches who desire to nurture purpose and innovation embrace a process of discernment guided by this question, “What difference is God calling us to make in this time and in this place?” Engaging both informal conversation and contract services, church leadership use Holy Conversations (4-6 months with a team of 7-9) and Holy Excavations (half-day workshop with 25-30 people) to explore their call.

### TMF Board Members

TMF has submitted the following candidates for re-election to the Texas Methodist Foundation Board of Directors from the North Texas Conference:

- Rev. Richie Butler, Clergy, 3-year term (Dallas)
- Mr. Kelvin Walker, Layperson, 3-year term (Dallas)
- Ms. Julie Yarbrough, Layperson, 3-year term (Dallas)

TMF Board members previously elected by the North Texas Conference include:

- Rev. Jeff Lust, Clergy, currently serving through Annual Conference 2023 (McKinney)
- Rev. Katherine Glaze Lyle, Clergy, currently serving through 2024 (Dallas)
- Dr. Andrew Stoker, Clergy, currently serving through 2024 (Dallas)
- Mr. Jim Adams, Layperson, currently serving through 2025 (Dallas)
- Dr. Will Green, Layperson, currently serving through 2025 (Dallas)

—Rev. Lisa Greenwood, President

## TEXAS UNITED METHODIST COLLEGE ASSOCIATION (TUMCA)

The Texas United Methodist College Association exists to advocate for our Texas Methodist college students attending one of the six United Methodist institutions of higher learning in Texas. Gifts received from our Annual Conference partners are passed along to deserving students through the Texas Methodist Scholarship Program. During the 2022-23 academic year, we awarded over \$172,000 in scholarship support through this program to students at Huston-Tillotson University, McMurry University, Southern Methodist University, Southwestern University, Texas Wesleyan University and Wiley College. These scholarships are given on the basis of financial need and oftentimes make the difference in a student attending college and persisting to graduation. The importance of these specific scholarships cannot be overstated especially given the impact on *access* and *affordability* for those who receive these funds.

The students receiving support through the Texas Methodist Scholarship Program represent a wide range of vocational interests. Attending United Methodist institutions, they have the opportunity to develop their faith and find a career path leading to a life of service and contribution to the greater good. It is our hope that in supporting our Methodist students at our own institutions that they will contribute to the growth of the Church, whether that be as an ordained minister, in another church-related role or as active laity. By encouraging their exploration of faith, we know that some will enter the ministry – whether that be a direct path out of college to seminary or as second-career ministers, which is increasingly the norm.

On behalf of the Texas Methodist Scholarship recipients, we would like to express our appreciation to the Texas Conference for your continued generous support of this vitally important program. To learn more about the Texas Methodist Scholarship Program, the impact on students, and the Texas United Methodist College Association, please visit [www.tumca.net](http://www.tumca.net).

*–Gratefully, Michael Hutchison, President, TUMCA*

## UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY DAYTON, OHIO

United Theological Seminary (<https://united.edu>) celebrated rising enrollment in the 2022-2023 academic year. In the previous year, 464 students were enrolled at United; in 2022-2023, the seminary is serving 541 students, a 17% increase. A diverse community of many denominations, races, and nationalities, United welcomed students from 36 states, 21 countries, and 43 denominations, with 42% of students identifying as United Methodist.\* The Seminary prepared 103 Course of Study students\*\* and served 10 students through the Hispanic Christian Academy, a three-year on-line course of ministry program for Hispanic/Latino lay pastors and leaders serving United Methodist congregations.

### Houses of Study

In large part, this enrollment growth is a result of the seminary's House of Study initiative, which is supported by a \$1 million grant from Lilly Endowment Inc.'s Pathways for Tomorrow Initiative. As of 2022-2023, the Seminary has established five Houses of Study that are equipping master's students for the unique ministry needs of the communities, movements, and denominations in which they serve:

- **Fresh Expressions**, directed by Dr. Michael Beck;
- **Full Gospel Baptist Fellowship**, directed by Bishop Lisa Weah;
- **Global Methodist**, directed by Rev. Gregory Stover;
- **Global Pentecostal**, directed by Dr. Cheryl Bridges Johns, and
- **Hispanic**, directed by Dr. Jorge Ochoa.

The largest of these communities is the Hispanic House of Study (Casa de Estudios Hispana), which is meeting a need for Hispanic/Latino pastors and church leaders ready to pursue a Master of Divinity in their native language. Nearly 50 students from across the United States and Latin America, including students from Mexico, Cuba, Columbia, and Peru, started in the online program in the 2022-2023 academic year.

As United continues to expand its offerings to support church leaders, it is preparing to launch three new Houses of Study in the 2023-2024 academic year: a Korean House of Study, taught 100% in Korean for Korean-speaking students, led by Dr. Seok Jae Jeon; an African Methodist Episcopal Zion House of Study led by Bishop Eric Leake; and a Global Lutheran House of Study led by Dr. Richard Blue, Dr. Tom Thorstad and Dr. Dan Landin.

### **Doctor of Ministry**

The Seminary is also seeing growth in its Doctor of Ministry program. In 2022-2023, the Doctor of Ministry program has grown to 250 students, an increase of 32% over the past five years.\* Doctoral students at United are actively engaged in ministry and seeking to become more effective leaders for the Church through a Doctor of Ministry degree. Students identify a need within their congregations or communities and, with the support of a peer group, mentor, and United faculty, they develop a model of ministry to address the challenge.

### **Bishop Bruce Ough Innovation Center**

Launched in Fall 2021, the Bishop Bruce Ough Innovation Center, directed by Rev. Sue Nilson Kibbey, is connecting with pastors, ministry leaders, and congregational members hungry to bring God's renewal to their faith communities. In the past year alone, the Innovation Center has engaged more than 1,000 participants through more than 40 live webinars, training events, and courses. The Innovation Center has also partnered with The Center for Spiritual Formation, a connectional ministry of the Susquehanna Conference of The United Methodist Church, to offer a two-year online training course for those called to the ministry of spiritual direction. In addition, the Center is partnering with two United Methodist conferences to provide its Breakthrough Prayer Initiative training for all clergy in these conferences. Through these and other new opportunities, the Innovation Center seeks to set the stage for the increased vitality of leaders and congregations everywhere.

*—Dr. Kent Millard, President*

\* Student data represent 2022-2023 headcount enrollment, as of March 1, 2023. Denominational figures represent those who responded.

\*\* Course of Study figures represent the most recent four terms.

## WESLEY-RANKIN COMMUNITY CENTER

In collaboration with our West Dallas neighbors, Wesley-Rankin Community Center (<https://wesleyrankin.org/>) identifies and bridges gaps in education, health, and skills development by providing multigenerational programs that empower families to access their full potential.

### The Why Behind Our Mission

- According to the most recent *U.S. News and World Report* High School Scorecard, only 18% of students attending the feeder high school of L.G. Pinkston graduate ready for college.
- Only 12.5% of West Dallas adults have a college degree compared to 88.5% of adults living in more affluent areas of Dallas (*U.S. Census*).
- According to the *American Community Survey* the average median income of the 75212 Zip Code is \$42,000. The median income of the city of Dallas is \$58,000.

### After School Program

The After School Program for students in grades K-12 is holistic in providing transportation, homework assistance, enrichment in math and reading, recreation, reading intervention, interest clubs and a snack and warm dinner. We have several counselors on site, thanks to our partnership with Pastoral Counseling Center, and many students take advantage of their services. Our enrollment is at capacity with 100 students. The Scholars program, in partnership with the June Shelton School, is currently tutoring 45 students with learning differences. Wesley-Rankin partnered with St. Mary of Carmel School last fall, and 15 of the 45 students are onsite at the school. These students receive tools and techniques through 1:1 volunteer to student ratios. This tutoring is specifically designed to teach students in ways that they best learn. Wesley-Rankin has three supervisors on staff who are fully trained and certified.

### Beakers, Base Ten and the Beat (B3X) Summer Camp

B3X is an energizing enrichment camp that provides expansive, hands-on learning experiences to reinforce core learning in science, math, art and reading. Campers attend field trips and have breakfast, lunch and snack provided daily.

### GoH GoH Girls (Girls of Hope, Girls of Honor)

This program, designed to foster leadership, service, responsibility and sisterhood, strives to create a safe space to discuss sensitive subjects and provide accurate information in a supportive environment. Weekly, 4<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade girls explore and practice a character trait such as empathy, gratitude, and generosity. Every fall, the girls attend a retreat at Riverbend Retreat Center. In fall 2022, **Tri-B Hue (Boys of Honor, Boys of Unity, Boys of Equality)**, a program designed to parallel GoH GoH Girls but for young men, shifted to a Boy Scouts of America program. Students prefer to identify themselves as Tri-B Scouts, preserving their history and embracing Scouts' values.

### Aspiring Professionals

This program is Wesley-Rankin's latest initiative designed to increase the living wage for families in West Dallas. Serving as a high school apprenticeship, the model is grounded in technical skills in auto repair and business technology, soft skills training, financial literacy and student stipends and parent education. In April 2022, Wesley-Rankin placed Top Five in the United Way Social Innovation Accelerator program and won the Audience Award for this program.

### Adult Academy and Leadership Council

Adult parenting classes continue at Wesley-Rankin in topics as computer basics, nutrition, and ESL. The Leadership Council is a group of parent advocates who hold local schools accountable to the best education for their children.

### Casa Feliz Senior Adult Program

The senior citizen health program encourages strength and balance through exercising and nutritious meals, creates social networks and reduces isolationism, and promotes cognitive health and chronic disease management. The seniors celebrate nearly every holiday and birthday with dances and special guests such as instrumentalists and break dancers. The seniors are preparing for their fifth annual **Casa Feliz Summer Camp!** The program also includes a Home Bound Program of 10-12 seniors who are regularly visited by the staff team and senior friends. Last year, Casa Feliz was featured in the Dallas Morning News publication, *Al Dia*, recognizing it as one of the only Latino focused senior adult programs in the DFW area.

Wesley-Rankin continues to assess the neighborhood to ensure programs meet community need. A three-five year strategic plan will be completed in May. The Center has partnered with Ethos Equity to provide Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion Training (DEI) training to staff and review its Employee Handbook and policies.

—Shellie Ross, Executive Director

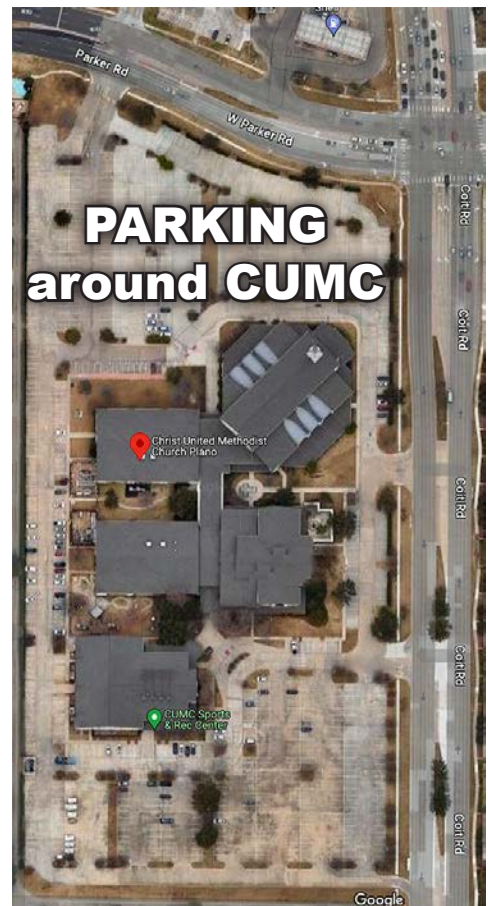
## CHRIST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH PLANO

### DIRECTIONS and PARKING

Find the  
**Google Map directions**  
 to Christ UMC at  
 3101 Coit Road  
 Plano TX 75075  
 by clicking below:

[\*\*LOCATION MAP  
 TO CHRIST UMC\*\*](#)

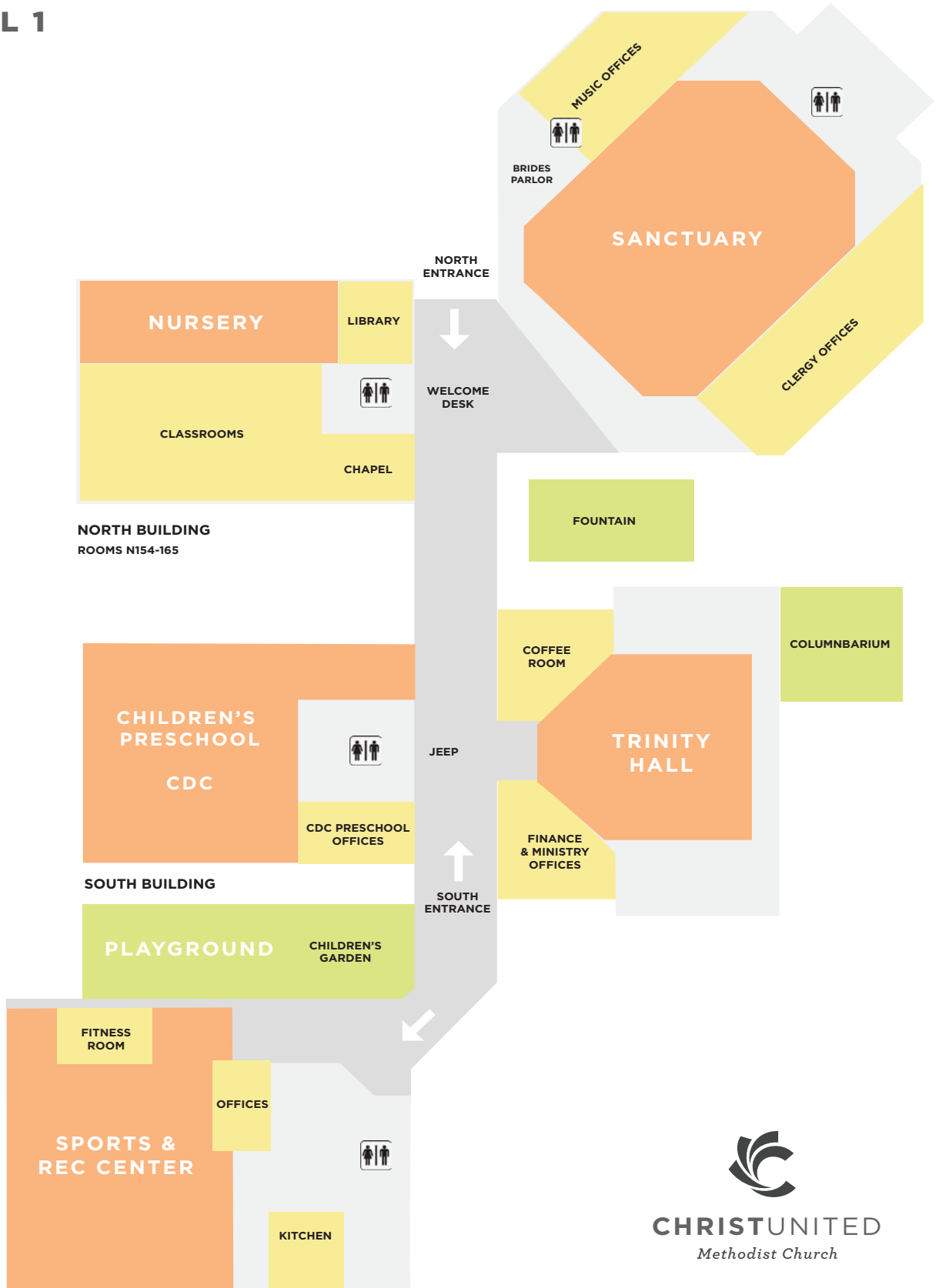
Parking surrounds the Christ UMC buildings as shown in overview on right.



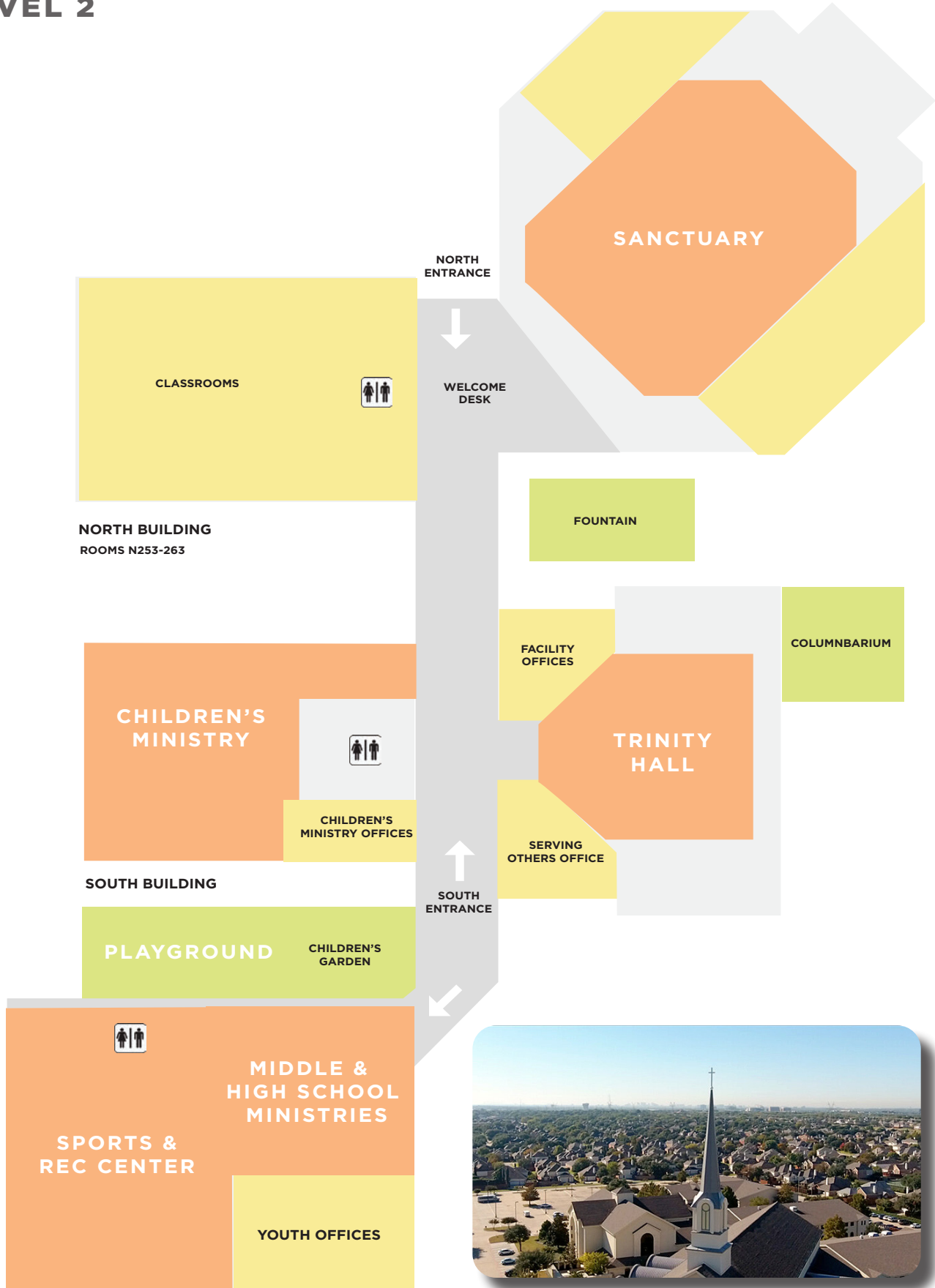


# CAMPUS MAP

## LEVEL 1



**LEVEL 2**



# 2023 NORTH TEXAS CONFERENCE JOURNAL ORDER FORM



The conference *Journal* will be available on the conference website, [ntcumc.org/ac2023](http://ntcumc.org/ac2023) in September in FULL COLOR in the 8 ½ x 11 size.

If you wish to have a full bound copy of the **2023 NORTH TEXAS CONFERENCE JOURNAL**, it will be available for purchase at \$50 each to those who pre-order and pre-pay for their copies and will only be printed in BLACK AND WHITE, no color, 8 ½ x 11 size.

If you do not need a printed copy of the entire *Journal*, but would like a bound copy of the **2023 CONFERENCE PERSONNEL DIRECTORY** (consisting of the clergy directory, the lay member directory, the appointment pages, and the roster of conference agencies) will also be available for purchase at \$15 each to those who pre-order and pre-pay for their copies.

Please use the form below to indicate how many books you wish to purchase and calculate the total cost of your order. **PAYMENT MUST ACCOMPANY THE ORDER.**

\_\_\_\_\_ # of printed black and white 2023 North Texas Conference Journal(s) at \$50 each

\_\_\_\_\_ # of printed black and white 2023 North Texas Conference Directory(s) at \$15 each

\_\_\_\_\_ **Total cost of order**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Shipping Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make your check payable to “North Texas Conference” and write “2023 Journal” in the memo line. Mail your order to North Texas Conference Journal Order, P.O. Box 866128, Plano, TX 75086-6128 **BY AUGUST 1, 2023.**

**\*\*Online ordering will be available at [ntcumc.org/ac2023](http://ntcumc.org/ac2023) through August 1.\*\***

If you have questions, please contact Shirley Miller at [miller@ntcumc.org](mailto:miller@ntcumc.org) or 972-526-5008.

North Texas Conference



United  
Women  
in Faith

*present*

## Mission u 2023

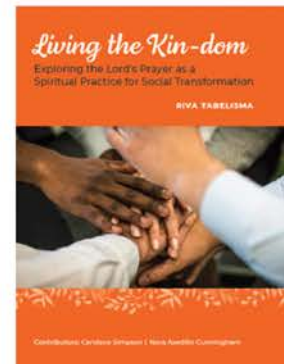


**LIVING THE GOOD NEWS**

**Reflecting God's Love**

Explore the heart of Jesus' good news and the fresh vision it offers today as we seek to be in mission.

Live and experience the kin-dom -- from the Lord's Prayer to the beatitudes to the parables with the good news at the heart of Jesus' preaching, teaching and ministry.



**Mission u 1-night Retreat**

July 14 & 15  
on the UTD campus

**Mission u - Virtual**

Tues. & Thurs. evenings  
July 18 -27

**More information & registration:  
[UWFNorthTexas.org/missionu](http://UWFNorthTexas.org/missionu)**

Study book \$14.95 at our AC ministry table or [uwfaithresources.org/](http://uwfaithresources.org/)