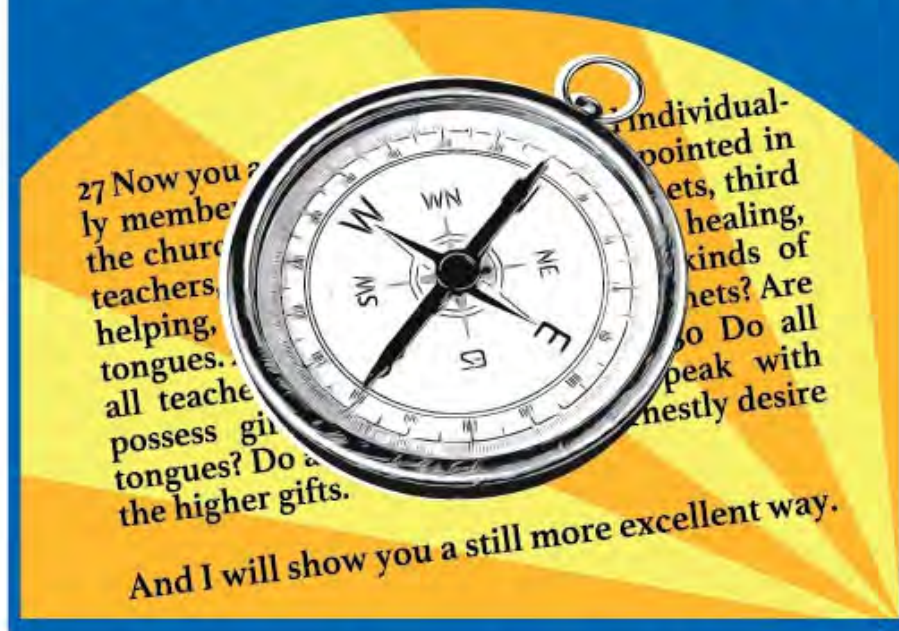


SEEKING A MORE EXCELLENT WAY



Taking the next faithful step

SOUTH CAROLINA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The United Methodist Church

June 6-7, 2021

Broadcast Virtually from
The Florence Center,
Florence, South Carolina

Hosted by
The Florence District and
Cumberland United Methodist Church



THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

SOUTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE

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L. JONATHAN HOLSTON
RESIDENT BISHOP

LOLLIE HASELDEN
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the 2021 session of the South Carolina Annual Conference! As we gather virtually this year, we give thanks to almighty God and celebrate the ways in which we have been seeking and **fulfilling God's** purpose for the Church.

This year's theme – “Seeking A More Excellent Way: Taking the Next Faithful Step” – calls us to courageously go where God is leading us, entrusting God with each step that we take.

Miraculous things can happen when we leave our place of comfort and allow God to stretch us in new and different ways. We will convene this summer filled with hope, remembering who God has called us to be and what God wants for us.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, **this year's Annual Conference will** again be held virtually. We have made this decision to ensure the safety and good health of all involved, and we look forward to engaging with you virtually as we live into a broadened definition of what it means for God's people to gather.

We are deeply grateful for the perseverance, innovation and faithfulness exhibited by all clergy and lay members as we have navigated the pandemic-driven challenges over this last year. We look forward to celebrating the mission and ministry of devoted South Carolina United Methodists who are **answering God's** call and taking the next faithful step.

We are delighted to have Bishop Debra Wallace-Padgett join us as the guest preacher for The Service of Commissioning, Ordination, and Retirement Recognition, and our very own Rev. Joe Long will join us as the preacher for the Memorial Service.

The hard work of so many people makes this gathering possible. A profound word of gratitude is expressed to the Rev. Terry Fleming and the people and churches of the Florence District, our host district, and to the Rev. Frederick Yebuah and members of Cumberland UMC, our host church. For many months, this team has worked closely with our conference secretary, the Rev. Ken Nelson, assistant conference secretary, the Rev. Mel Arant, and the Committee on the Annual Conference to consider every detail. I am certain that you will join me in saluting the proactive leadership of all of these people who have worked so diligently on our behalf.

As we prepare for the 2021 Annual Conference, I ask for your prayers that great and marvelous things will happen through the Holy Spirit who guides and sustains us. Pray that our presence online will be a living witness to the grace, mercy and love of Jesus Christ for all whom we meet.

Grace and Peace,

L. Jonathan Holston



SOUTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE
The United Methodist Church

Organized 1972
Continuing the South Carolina Conference (1785) and the South Carolina Conference (1866)

Kenneth L. Nelson
Secretary of the Annual Conference

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Friends:

Grace and peace you! For the last seven years, I have had the privilege of greeting you as we prepare to gather for annual conference! Certainly, our lives are very different since the time we last gathered in person. Change has been our constant companion.

I am inspired by the resilience of the clergy, laity, and congregations of this annual conference. Resilience is the ability to bounce back from difficult times and circumstances. In the face of such daunting challenges, you have shown yourselves both adaptable and resilient. With each passing day, “we have taken the next faithful step” in following Christ and advancing the reign of God. We have great cause for celebration!

Enclosed, you will find materials that will help you prepare for the 2021 SC Annual Conference. On June 6-7, 2021, we will gather virtually for Annual Conference. We will live stream the event from the Florence Center in Florence, SC. Clergy session will be held on Sunday afternoon. A service of *Commissioning and Ordination* will be held on Sunday night, June 6, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. **Bishop Debra Wallace-Padgett**, the Resident Bishop of the North Alabama annual conference, will serve as the ordination preacher.

Our business session will begin on Monday, June 7, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. with a training session on using our voting platform. Video reports of all actions items that require a vote by the body will begin at 10:00 a.m. Our goal is complete all conference business by 5:00 p.m.

The 2021 South Carolina Annual Conference will conclude with a memorial service. We will remember and give thanks for all of those who have joined the church triumphant since 2020. The preacher for the Memorial Service will be the **Rev. Joe Long**, the pastor of Central United Methodist Church in Newberry, SC.

All are welcome to follow the actions of the conference at www.umcsc.org or via social media using Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. I hope that you will join us as we “Take the Next Faithful Step” in Seeking a More Excellent Way!

Blessings for the journey,
Kenneth L. Nelson
Conference Secretary



TERRY FLEMING
SUPERINTENDENT

The United Methodist Church
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SOUTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE
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June 6, 2021

Dear Friends,

Welcome back...kind of!

It has now been two years since we last gathered in person for Annual Conference and five years since we last gathered in Florence. Let me simply say how honored I am to welcome you back to Florence, both virtually and in person, and the 2021 session of the South Carolina Annual Conference. Since we last gathered in the Florence Center, many changes have taken place here in this space, along with many new restaurants and hotels in the vicinity. I am looking forward with you to the day when we will joyfully join together for worship and fellowship in this place and community

As we gather together virtually, we are still recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic. Our first General Rule to **Do No Harm** forced us to close the doors of our facilities, pushed the church outside the walls, and moved many into creative forms of ministry never they had before experienced. Prerecorded worship, Zoom church, drive-in church, Facebook Live, YouTube Live, conference calls, online meetings, and other formats never prepared for or executed by most pastors and congregational leadership became a new normal. We wrestled in intense discussions about whether or not to celebrate the sacrament of Holy Communion while in isolation from the assembled community. Social distancing, a new phrase for most of us, meant that new believers are waiting to come to the waters of baptism. We realized over and over again, in painful and personal ways, that the hoarding of needed resources was to fail again at being a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ. Many experienced for the first time that financial gifts can be given and never pass through an offering plate. So much has happened in these many months that took "years" to pass by.

Now, here we are, virtually gathered together again with old friends, friends yet to be made, lay leadership, colleagues, ordinands, and others . . . members of our South Carolina United Methodist family. We have seen through eyes isolated for many months that the created world is not as God intended it to be. Yet, people of faith leaned into hope; the hope of God's good gifts of creation and community renewed.

During our Annual Conference, may we see each other, both virtually and in-person, with renewed eyes and experience each other with renewed joy!

And welcome back to the Pee Dee!



Reverend Terry Fleming
Superintendent

aob

CUMBERLAND UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

163 SOUTH COIT STREET
FLORENCE, SOUTH CAROLINA 29501



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The Invitation is extended to Annual Conference 2021

We Welcome you to Florence

On behalf of Cumberland United Methodist Church we welcome you to this great city of Florence, better known as “Flo Town”, that loves God and the desire for genuine worship is founded. Those founding members of Cumberland United Methodist Church envisioned this day and the kind of church that was open to all people even when they had no physical building in which to worship. Small wonder we are excited to extend you an invitation! It is our history. These founding members wanted others to experience the love of Christ in this church dedicated to doing God’s work. That is the legacy of this church passed on to each generation of our members—a sanctuary where love abides and the people believe that God’s word lives as a living testimony to His love.

The uncertainty in the current pandemic does not allow us to physically open our arms, dress up in smiles and make you want to come back, but it does not keep us from extending to you the kind of genuine, loving hospitality our founding members encouraged so that you would want to return. Even through our masks, you can see our smiles of welcome.

Our Methodist faith is built upon genuine hospitality and we at Cumberland mirror our faith’s purpose to be open to others in order to make disciples for Christ. Cumberland welcomes the opportunity we have been given to make you feel that you are at home. We are delighted and honored that you wanted to be here and we thank the Conference for choosing us as the host church for this annual conference 2021.

On behalf of our congregation, the officers of our church, and those stalwart servants of God who envisioned this possibility, we welcome you to Florence.

Grace and Peace

Bro. Fred

Reverend Frederick Yebuah



Taking the next faithful step

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for the 2021 Session

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2021 PRE-CONFERENCE MATERIALS

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**The Fiftieth Session of the
SOUTH CAROLINA ANNUAL CONFERENCE of THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**
Organized 1972, Continuing the South Carolina Conference (1785) and the South Carolina Conference (1866)

Sunday, June 6 – Monday, June 7, 2021
Florence Center, Florence, South Carolina

Bishop L. Jonathan Holston, Presiding

Seeking A More Excellent Way
Taking the Next Faithful Step

2021 VIRTUAL ANNUAL CONFERENCE PROGRAM

June 6, 2021

Sunday Afternoon, The First Day

2:00 PM Clergy Session
7:00 PM Commissioning, Ordination and Retirement Recognition Service
Bishop L. Jonathan Holston, presiding
Bishop Debra Wallace-Padgett, North Alabama Annual Conference, preaching
(The virtual offering this evening is for *SC Conference Seminary Students Scholarship Fund*, an endowment of the South Carolina United Methodist Foundation, which provides scholarship awards to candidates for ministry from South Carolina attending United Methodist seminaries and theological schools. Checks should be made payable to Treasurer, SC Conference, memo line: *Seminary Students Scholarship Fund*.)

June 7, 2021

Monday Morning, The Second Day

9:00 AM Training Session for Laity and Clergy on Voting Platform
10:00 AM Video Reports presented
11:00 AM Conference Organization (Welcome, Greetings and Introductions)
Call to Order & Opening Prayer – Bishop Holston
Greetings from:
Florence District Superintendent, Rev. Terry Fleming
Host Pastor, Rev. Dr. Frederick Yebuah, Cumberland United Methodist Church
Organizational Motions by the Conference Secretary
11:30 AM The Report of the Committee on Standing Rules (SR 18)
Consent Calendar (for information) (SR 22)
The Report of the Committee on Nominations (floor open for additional nominations) (SR19)
NOON Break

June 7, 2021

Monday Afternoon, The Second Day

1:30 PM The Report of Conference Connectional Ministries
1:45 PM The Report of the Council on Finance and Administration (for information) (SR21)
2:15 PM The Report of the Board of Ordained Ministry
2:30 PM Break

- 2:45 PM The Report of the Board of Pension & Health Benefits
- 3:00 PM The Report of the Commission on Equitable Compensation
- 3:15 PM The Report of the Cabinet (BOD 605.4)
- 3:30 PM The Report of the Conference Lay Leader (BOD 605.5)
- 3:45 PM Adoption of Consent Calendar
Elections – Committee on Nominations
Council on Finance and Administration (SR 21)
Resolutions for Church Closings and Charge Line Changes
Date of the 2022 Session of Annual Conference
Recommendation for the Site of the 2022 Session of Annual Conference
Expressions of Appreciation and Omnibus Motion
- 4:30 PM Sending Forth and Fixing of Appointments
Bishop L. Jonathan Holston, preacher

June 7, 2021

Monday Evening, The Second Day

- 7:00 PM **A Service of Remembrance and Thanksgiving**
Rev. Joe N. Long Jr., Central United Methodist Church, preaching

1 **ALDRSGATE SPECIAL NEEDS MINISTRY**

2
3 **Purpose:**

4 The mission of Aldersgate Special Needs Ministry (ASNM) is to provide the highest quality of life and greatest
5 level of independence in Christian homes for adults with special needs. Our Orangeburg home serves six men,
6 our Columbia home serves six women while our Florence home serves four men.

7 **Key moments from the previous year:**

8 The pandemic had a huge organizational impact. Our homes are licensed like long-term care facilities, and
9 safety was our priority. This included monitoring the frequently changing regulatory guidelines. Our residents'
10 activities and normal routines were halted. Visitation with their loved ones was limited. Yet our dedicated staff
11 stepped up, creating new activities and ways for those entrusted to our care to safely connect with their families.

12 A work group made progress to recruit representatives within the United Methodist community to join our
13 grassroots coalition. Another work group made progress researching the feasibility of establishing a congregate
14 respite program. The goal would be to provide a short-term break for caregivers of adults with developmental
15 disabilities. A program needs assessment is underway.

16 While there is no current government funding for additional homes similar to our models, we are hopeful this
17 may change. In the meantime, a work group focused on assessing possible alternative options.

18 August 9th was designated for churches to collect a special offering for the ministry. We are grateful to the
19 many participating churches. ASNM also appreciates the prayers and support of churches and individuals
20 throughout the year.

21 The ministry's greatest ongoing challenge relates to staffing. Two of our homes are licensed as Community
22 Residential Care Facilities (CRCFs) requiring an onsite licensed administrator. With our smaller homes and budget,
23 it's challenging to develop a succession plan since we compete with larger agencies for quality administrators.

24 **Objectives for the coming year:**

25 Our main objective is to keep our residents and staff safe and healthy. We will continue to monitor the
26 pandemic and implement the needed precautions.

27 We will continue our effort to identify local church representatives to join our grassroots network. These repre-
28 sentatives will be our liaisons for sharing updates, news and engagement opportunities related to the organization
29 and the industry within their church communities. They will also share needs related to serving those with develop-
30 mental disabilities with ASNM enabling us to become more of an educational resource as our ministry grows.

31 We are excited about the potential opportunity to start a congregate respite program to provide a short-term
32 break for caregivers of adults with developmental disabilities. Respite helps family caregivers relax, relieve stress
33 and maintain their own physical and emotional well-being.

34 We look forward to continuing to share ministry updates through our newsletter which we started in 2020.

35 We also look forward to a successful Aldersgate Sunday on Aug. 8, 2021.

36 **Action(s) required from the 2021 Annual Conference:**

37 1. Vote on our Board of Trustees

38 2. Vote on Bylaws amendment below

39 Amend Article Three-Board of Trustees, Section 1, to include:

- 40 • C) Honorary Members, maximum of two
- 41 • Honorary members shall not be counted for purposes of a quorum and shall not have the right
42 to vote but shall have the right to seat and voice. Honorary members shall be elected by a
43 majority vote of the Board for a two-year period.

44 **If you take away nothing from this report, know this:**

45 We are grateful to be able to provide homes to adults with developmental disabilities. Our residents enjoy
46 living in a Christian environment and are encouraged to be as independent as possible.

47 As we continue to make progress on our organizational priorities, we'll be poised to have a greater impact on
48 the lives of adults with special needs and their families.

49 "My people will live in peaceful dwelling places, in secure homes, in undisturbed places of rest." -Isaiah 32:18

50 **Narrative:**

51 **Xavier's Story**

52 Xavier had a difficult start in life. He received limited life skills training that affected his attendance in school,
53 as well as his learning environment. After hearing about his situation, his aunt moved Xavier in with her. With
54 medical concerns of her own, she worried about his future.

55 By working through the Department of Disabilities and Special Needs, she found Xavier a home at Aldersgate
56 Special Needs Ministry. "Since being at Aldersgate, Xavier is more independent," she said. "He has goals and is
57 learning new skills. Knowing he's in a loving home while getting the attention he needs brings me comfort."

58 Xavier is very polite, respectful and expresses himself through gestures and eye contact. He has great
59 relationships with his housemates and staff. Xavier enjoys all activities and loves to be complimented on his attire.

60 When you ask Xavier if he likes living at Aldersgate, his answer is always, "Yes!"

61 Respectfully submitted:

62 Elaine Mathis, Executive Director, asnm-sc@att.net, 843-754-8936
63 2021-2022 Executive Committee

64 Chairperson – Susan Kovas, Vice Chairperson – Suzette Catoe
65 Secretary – Mike Simpson, Treasurer – W.C. Hammett

EPWORTH CHILDREN'S HOME

Purpose:

The purpose of Epworth Children's Home is to break the destructive cycle of abuse, neglect, and shame and replace it with an opportunity for each person to live a life of self-respect, responsibility, and productivity.

Key moments from the previous year:

- I. Epworth Children's Home marked its 125th anniversary of serving children and families with the celebration of the date January 20th, 1896 that the first two children arrived on campus in Columbia. This date kicked off a year long birthday party and thanksgiving observance of the Methodist people in South Carolina who established Epworth Orphanage at the Annual Conference of 1895.
- II. Epworth opened regional hubs in the Greenville and the Spartanburg Districts, and received outstanding leadership support from superintendents, pastors, and church members.
- III. Epworth established a counseling center on the campus of Highland Park UMC in Florence and is in the process of establishing a regional Hub in the Florence District. Excellent leadership and help in that district was received as well.
- IV. Epworth was awarded regional contracts for providing Homebuilders ® services in the Upstate, Midlands, and lower state regions of South Carolina. Homebuilders is a certified Evidence Based program where in-home services are provided to families to both prevent the dissolution of the nuclear family while enabling family members to find resources that help strengthen families for long-term stability.
- V. Epworth's Institute for Child and Family Wellbeing continues to grow in scope and individuals served in spite of Covid-19. The Centers under the Umbrella of the Institute are:
 1. The Early Intervention Center (home based and campus-based programs) serves preschool age children who have developmental delays.

* see additional key moments in the next section

Objectives for the coming year:

- I. Establish district Hubs in at least two additional districts.
 - II. Complete the Every Child is a Miracle campaign during the year 2021. This will enable Epworth to continue to expand God's transformative work through Epworth Children's Home.
 - III. Complete the training of employees for the Homebuilders program and establish Homebuilders in three regions of the state.
- * additional key moments
2. The Independent Living Center serves youth 18-23 years of age who are transitioning from being high school graduates to college, job training, or the world of work.
 3. The Family Care Center serves mothers who struggle with substance abuse issues and their children to provide a safe environment in order for moms and their children to learn how to create a healthy family life.
 4. The Center for Family Engagement recruits, trains, and case manages strong foster parents who provide healthy and nurturing environments for children in DSS custody.
 5. The Epworth Counseling Center with locations in Columbia and in Florence, serves individuals and families who present with a variety of situations where licensed clinicians are available to lend aid and comfort.
- VI. Church giving increased for the 14th year in a row in spite of the majority of churches being closed for both Mother's Day and Work Day. The United Methodists of South Carolina responded in a variety of ways to make certain the ministry to children and families did not suffer.

* see additional key moments in the next section

Action(s) required from the 2021 Annual Conference:

* additional key moments

- VII. The Industrial and storage building burned because of an electrical malfunction. The supplies for the children who live on campus were consumed by the fire. People rallied all across the state to resupply the campus.
- VIII. The residential population was dramatically reduced when federal judge Richard Gergel issued an order that children should be removed from group homes because of a fear that group care could be a breeding ground for Covid. This turned out not to be the case, but the order continues to be in effect.
- IX. Epworth maintained the coveted 4-star rating from Charity Navigator for sound financial management, and its commitment to accountability, and transparency for the ninth year in a row. The four-star is the highest rating awarded.

If you take away nothing from this report, know this:

Epworth is operating in its 125th year of providing quality care and other foundational services for children and families from across South Carolina in a faith-centered environment. Epworth, while continuing to strengthen its traditional residential services, is also investing heavily in preventive and home-based services that help families

1 thrive. Epworth continues to deepen the commitment to help “all the people we can, as well as we can, with all the
2 resources we can gather.”
3

4 **Narrative:**

5 An historical moment captured in the Epworth Record in September of 1966 was titled “Preparing for Tomorrow.”
6 “Epworth students have already begun their school year. They join the throngs of Dreher High School, Hand
7 Junior High, and Schneider grammar school. Several are away at colleges and universities. School days remind
8 us of the preparation for life in all its meaning and fulfillment. True in the past, true now, true tomorrow – preparation is
9 the necessity of life.”

10 The article goes on to say, “The opening of school means to our children an opportunity to renew friendships
11 and make new friends. The coming of school days means an intensified program of work. But more than these
12 there is the fellowship and the satisfaction and fellowship that comes from the whole experience. In all, the experi-
13 ence of daily living, education, and religion unite in building the foundation for the great day ahead, and our
14 students find in the world that is made possible by those who support Epworth Children’s Home an opportunity
15 which might otherwise pass them by.”

16 And so, it has been for 125 years and continues to be, “an investment in childhood’s dreams is the true definition
17 of education in its finest.”
18

19 Respectfully submitted:

John Holler, President/CEO
jholler@epworthsc.org, 803-256-7394

23
24 **THE UNITED METHODIST MANOR**
25

26 **Purpose:**

27 Our mission is to provide an extraordinary Retirement Community that offers an exceptional selection of living
28 options and personalized services. We recognize that aging is a normal process which people experience in different
29 ways. We want to provide a lifestyle that enhances the quality of life for each person.

30 **Key moments from the previous year:**

31 For Methodist Manor 2020 has been an extremely challenging year with the COVID-19 virus. Our population
32 of residents are the most vulnerable group of individuals impacted by this pandemic. Our building has been closed
33 and quarantined for roughly 10 months out of the year. This as many of us know has been the most difficult for our
34 residents, the isolations and restrictive visitation from family and friends and even at times fellow residents. For
35 The Manor, it changed the way we delivered services such as dining, activities, socializing, even medical care.
36 Staff had to also learn new ways to perform their jobs under extremely challenging circumstance, but also had to
37 alter their personal lives as to not bring the virus into the building and ultimately our residents.

38 Despite all of the challenges Covid-19 brought to our campus, residents and staff, we are extremely proud of
39 our record in having one of the lowest cases of Covid-19 among our Residents and Staff in the State of SC.

40 We have provided Residents Assistance to 3 residents who have resided at The Manor for over 10 years each
41 and as they have gone through our various continuum of levels of care have exhausted their personal funds.
42 Through our Residents Assistance and Benevolence Fund we have been able to provide financial assistance for
43 these residents to continue to live out their lives in their homes at The Manor.
44

45 **Objectives for the coming year:**

46 Completions of our 2nd Floor Renovations which will continue to enhance the lifestyle of Residents through
47 amenities and services. This area will contain exercise and movement rooms, art workshop space and gallery to
48 display residents work, Family Life Center with game tables, living room spaces and dining and catering area,
49 enabling multi generations within a Resident’s family to spend quality time and have larger spaces for such visits.

50 Continue to provide Benevolence to any residents that may need financial assistance at any level within our
51 Community.

52 Add more ministerial opportunities to our Residents population at all the various levels of care. We have over
53 230 residents campus wide and the needs are many and varied, being able to recruit additional pastoral personnel
54 and volunteers would assist us in covering all spiritual needs.
55

56 **Action(s) required from the 2021 Annual Conference:**

57 We humbly ask for continued financial support from the United Methodist Conference to assist us in providing the
58 financial assistance to our Residents Assistance and Benevolence Fund, enabling us to continue to support Resi-
59 dents that may have exhausted their financial resources as many seniors are living longer but often times at higher
60 levels of care requiring and more medical care, treatments and therapy that some residents had prepared for.
61

62 **If you take away nothing from this report, know this:**

63 We are appreciative of the United Methodist Conference of South Carolina for their annual donations to assist
64 in the support of our Residents Financial Assistance and Benevolence Fund. These funds are used by the Manor
65 to assist those residents whose resources have been depleted and are now not adequate to meet their monthly

service fees. We are also seeing our Senior population as a whole live longer than previous generations and tend to need the full continuum of Care; Independent, Home Health, Assisted Living, sometimes Alzheimer's and Dementia Care, and Skilled Health Care that is offered at Methodist Manor

Narrative:

With continued leadership from Methodist Manor Board of Trustee and staff we are committed to providing a lifestyle that enhances the quality of life for each person. We continually strive to create an independent and secure living environment that encourages enriching and fulfilling lives through the practice of self determination for our current population and future older adults.

Respectfully submitted:

Teressa L. Reich (Tabor), President and CEO
treich@themanorseniorliving.com, 843-644-0700

THE METHODIST OAKS

Purpose:

The mission of The Methodist Oaks is to provide superior continuing care retirement living and a working environment that nourishes the human spirit and preserves personal dignity by addressing the whole person in an atmosphere which witnesses Christian values and love.

Key moments from the previous year:

The Methodist Oaks was impacted by the COVID Pandemic as was the rest of the world. Because of the dedication of staff and volunteers, The Oaks was able to mitigate the impacts of the pandemic and continued to provide for the hundreds of seniors served at the main campus, PACE Center and in the community. The pandemic also delayed the sale of The Oaks to The Oaks of Orangeburg for many reasons including slowed regulatory approvals and the generally difficult environment. As of the time of this writing, a closing date has been set for March 31, 2021 to consummate the sale. By the time Annual Conference convenes, it is anticipated that The Oaks of Orangeburg will be the new owners of The Oaks.

Objectives for the coming year:

To continue to serve seniors until the sale of The Oaks is completed.

Action(s) required from the 2021 Annual Conference:

None

If you take away nothing from this report, know this:

Although The Oaks will be sold, it will still continue to serve Orangeburg and surrounding communities with new ownership.

Narrative:

Respectfully submitted:

Robert Scarborough, Chairman, Board of Trustees
res@tds.net, 803-730-8577

WESLEY COMMONS

Purpose:

Master-planned CCRC in Greenwood, South Carolina. Legacy of continuous reinvention creates active life-style neighborhoods enhanced by exceptional services and amenities. The finest in hospitality living, wellness, assisted living, skilled nursing, specialized Alzheimer's care, as well as critical therapy/post acute programs. A destination community, Wesley Commons' reputation and market reach attracts consumers from across the US.

Key moments from the previous year:

While our nation, state and community were ravaged by the global pandemic; Wesley Commons remains grateful for our staff, our protocols, our residents and our supporters. The impacts of COVID 19 were devastating on so many fronts and touched the lives of every member of our Wesley Commons family in some fashion. However, our mission remained resilient and our drive never diminished. Not only have we remained at high alert protocols for an entire year, we have also navigated through the correlating financial impacts related to those safety efforts. While taxing, we are grateful to have traversed through this awful storm and now see the hint of clear skies ahead. As of this writing, our campus vaccination clinics (giving vaccination access to residents and staff) are almost complete. We are very happy with the vaccination levels for our Wesley Commons family and are hopeful about a better 2021.

1 **Objectives for the coming year:**

2 As our country moves forward with vaccination distributions for all citizens and incident rates of infection begin
3 to decline, we will look forward to our country regaining some semblance of normalcy. Furthermore, Wesley Commons
4 looks forward to celebrating our 50th year of service in 2021, as we also experience two completely reimagined
5 campus amenities. In conjunction with normalizing our own operations this spring season, we will reopen a
6 completely remodeled Wellness Complex with enhanced experiences for aerobics, yoga, water aerobics, weight
7 training, etc. and we will reopen our community garden that will offer better access to flower and vegetable beds,
8 an interactive, human sized sun dial and a hidden garden for meditation. After the year we have all been through,
9 it is a joy to anticipate such enriching spaces for our wellbeing!

10
11 **Action(s) required from the 2021 Annual Conference:**

12 We are grateful for the support of the Methodist Conference. The support of the Conference enables Wesley
13 Commons to provide support for many in financial need when they have outlived their resources.

14 On behalf of our residents, customers, employees and board members, we want to thank the South Carolina
15 United Methodist Conference for its continued support of our mission. Wesley Commons' current level of support
16 is extremely taxing on our resources. Our ongoing Ministry will not be possible without the constant support of our
17 friends, such as the Conference. We thank you for your continued financial support of those who built our great
18 nation and deserve our fullest attention.

19
20 **If you take away nothing from this report, know this:**

21 We are a grateful and blessed community that continues to fulfill our mission and growth through both, the
22 good and the bad, times. We are only able to do this through God's Grace and our acknowledgment of such. Our
23 employees, residents and greater community have all coalesced around our common bond of service to one
24 another. Over this past year, Wesley Commons has poignantly lived out its mission to enrich lives by providing
25 innovative living opportunities in accord with Christian principles.

26
27 **Narrative:**

28 Respectfully submitted:

29 David Buckshorn, CEO
30 dbuckshorn@wesleycommons.org, 8642277258
31
32

33 **CLAFLIN UNIVERSITY**

34
35 **Purpose:**

36 Claflin University is continuing its upward trajectory towards being recognized as a leading 21st Century institution
37 of higher education that develops a diverse and inclusive community of globally engaged visionary leaders. Claflin
38 has consistently achieved recognition as one of America's best liberal arts colleges by U.S. News and World
39 Report, Forbes.com and Washington Monthly.

40
41 **Key moments from the previous year:**

42 Philanthropist MacKenzie Scott donated \$20M to Claflin, the largest gift in the university's history. Scott's gift
43 will support student success and retention, sustainability, community workforce and economic development.

44 Claflin and Zoom, a leader in the video communications industry, established a multifaceted foundational
45 program that represents \$1.2M in educational and financial investments. Program components include paid intern-
46 ships, merit and need-based scholarships, curricula development support, faculty and student advisory, support
47 for Claflin's general operating fund, and alumni engagement.

48 Claflin launched its Center for Social Justice in May 2020. The role of the Center is to: serve as a resource to
49 unite, educate, and advocate against social injustices that impact Claflin, as well as local, national, and global
50 communities; support and engage students, faculty, and staff to be transformational leaders in their communities;
51 develop innovative curriculum, encourage creative expression and thought, and cultivate programs that engage,
52 affirm, and uplift those most impacted by systems of oppression; and expand relationships and partnerships
53 throughout the greater Orangeburg community, the state of South Carolina, and beyond.

54 U.S. News and World Report ranked Claflin ninth in its 2021 list of the nation's top HBCUs. U.S. News and
55 World Report also ranked Claflin ninth overall among the schools in the Best Regional Colleges in the South ranking.

56 Claflin was awarded \$525,000 from Gilead Sciences Inc., to support initiatives and programs conducted by the
57 university's Center for Social Justice. Claflin was selected because of its recognition as a high-impact organization that
58 is working to tackle racial inequities affecting Black communities across the United States.

59
60 **Objectives for the coming year:**

61 Process of developing new Strategic Plan: Five C's (Cutting Edge Academic Enterprise, Continual Improvement
62 in Student Engagement, Student Success and Technology Infrastructure, Collaborative Economic and Workforce
63 Development, Creative Global Strategies, Consistent Friend-raising and Fundraising.

64 Launch Master of Science in Nursing (Fall 2021)

65 Launch Pathway from Prison Program for incarcerated individuals. Claflin will offer bachelor's degree

programs in criminal justice, psychology, and organizational management through its partnership with the SC Department of Corrections. Students also will be able to obtain minor and certificate credentials. (Summer 2021)

Claflin's Mass Communications program was selected to participate in NBCU Academy, a new, innovative, multiplatform journalism training and development program for four-year university and community college students coordinated by NBCUniversal. The program will offer on-campus training, online programming, a curated onsite curriculum for hands-on learning experience with world-class NBCU News Group journalists, funding for accredited journalism programs and scholarship opportunities. (Fall 2021)

Claflin will join South Carolina State, Orangeburg-Calhoun Technical College, and city and county officials to establish the Regional Orangeburg Innovation Center. The center will be the organizing force for startup companies specializing in technology innovation and other high growth areas in the Orangeburg region. (Fall 2021)

Action(s) required from the 2021 Annual Conference:

If you take away nothing from this report, know this:

Support from The United Methodist Church is critical to Claflin's ability to sustain its proud legacy of nurturing and cultivating future leaders for the ministry of The United Methodist Church. Furthermore, the University remains steadfast in its commitment to honor, promote, and support its affiliation with The United Methodist Church locally, nationally, and globally.

Narrative:

Respectfully submitted:

Dr. Dwaun J. Warmack, President
dwarmack@claflin.edu, (803) 535-5412
Rev. Dr. Robin Dease '92,
superintendent of the Hartsville District and Board of Trustees member;
Rev. Larry McCutcheon '72, interim chaplain.

COLUMBIA COLLEGE

Purpose:

Columbia College prepares every student personally and professionally for success through strong liberal arts and professional programs emphasizing service, social justice, and leadership development.

Key moments from the previous year:

Perhaps the most important accomplishment during the past year was the successful transition to entirely remote learning in March 2020 followed by the successful transition to in-person activities in August 2020. Despite daunting infection numbers across the country and our region, we experienced low numbers of positive test results. Thus, we were able to safely operate in an environment as close to normal as possible, facilitating the best possible situation for our students.

We announced in March that men would be admitted to what had formerly been the women's college beginning the fall semester of 2020. This was a late start for recruiting, but three men enrolled in what is now called the undergraduate day program, making the entire college inclusive of all people. Another important first was the launch of an innovative master's program in trauma-informed education. This program combines social work and education to help professionals build the trust needed to be effective in a world where high percentages of people have experienced some form of trauma. Who could have known when the program was developed and submitted to our accreditor in November 2019, that the entire world would be traumatized by the time of its public launch in June 2020? We filled our first cohort of 50 students and still had a waiting list, which was reflected in the strong enrollment of 38 students in our second cohort that started in January 2021.

Objectives for the coming year:

Beginning in August, we will have male students living on campus. Our residence life staff thoughtfully developed gender-inclusive policies so that our residence halls will truly be welcoming environments for all of our students. We expect to enroll about 50 men in the undergraduate day program.

During the summer of 2020, the campus community came together to develop a shared vision: "Columbia College empowers our students to change the world with Courage for Innovation, Commitment to Social Justice, Confidence through Service, and Competence in Leadership." We are completing a strategic plan to highlight top priorities for implementing that vision. Planning work will be completed later this year and making progress on the top priorities will begin immediately.

One important activity will be to finalize our institutional self-study report for our decennial reaffirmation of accreditation. A key dimension of that work is to define a "quality enhancement plan" (QEP) that is designed to improve the environment for student learning. Our QEP topic is "streamlining and integrating the student experience for holistic development." This topic reflects the growth in the scope of program offerings during the past decade, as the college has moved from a primarily residential and traditional undergraduate school to a comprehensive institution both in scope of programs and in modes of delivery.

1 **Action(s) required from the 2021 Annual Conference:**

2 None

3

4 **If you take away nothing from this report, know this:**

5 Columbia College is proud of our historic and ongoing affiliation with the United Methodist Church. We continue to
6 emphasize service, social justice, and leadership development as part of our holistic approach to educating
7 students. Our students thrive in a setting that values each of them as unique individuals.

8 As the college prepares for the future, it remains responsive to the needs of the community and to the dynamic
9 environment in higher education. We are an important asset for equipping students who will add value to our
10 campus, the community, the region, and the world.

11

12 **Narrative:**

13 Our focus is to help students develop in multiple dimensions. Heather Woolard is a senior business major who
14 exemplifies our approach. She was a finalist in the 2020 SC Innovates Inaugural Statewide Pitch Competition.
15 There were 77 entries from 16 schools across the state and she excelled as one of the top 15. Beyond the class-
16 room and the entrepreneurial arena, she is also an important part of our highly successful cross-country and track
17 teams. And importantly for this church-related college, Heather is a person of faith. During her time at Columbia
18 College, she has operated 2FlowersCo, a company whose mission is “to spread the love of God through products
19 that allow women to see their own beauty the way our Heavenly Father does.” After graduation, she plans to
20 pursue a master’s degree in Christian Education.

21

22 Respectfully submitted:

23

William T. Bogart, President

24

tbogart@columbiasc.edu, 803-786-3178

25

William T. Bogart, President, Wilma Allen, VP of Finance and Administration

26

LaNae’ Budden, VP of Student Affairs, Vincent Maloney, Dean of Enrollment

27

Madeleine Schep, Provost, Francis Schodowski, Executive Vice President

28

29

30

SPARTANBURG METHODIST COLLEGE

31

32 **Purpose:**

33 Spartanburg Methodist College is a two-year private residential institution within the United Methodist Connection.
34 At SMC, lives are transformed in a values-oriented, student-centered atmosphere in the Christian tradition that
35 encourages academic excellence, intellectual exploration, social awareness, and character development within
36 the liberal arts tradition.

37

38 **Key moments from the previous year:**

39 SMC has withstood the COVID – 19 pandemic due to the hard work and persistence of our outstanding faculty
40 and staff. The institution provided fully online instruction in the fall of 2020 as well as a hybrid program in the
41 Spring of 2021. Our facilities were refitted to provide the best protection possible for our students and staff, and all
42 members of the campus community followed our safety guidelines for behavior.

43 SMC graduated our first class of Bachelor’s Degree students in May, a major milestone for our institution.

44 Our admissions department continues to excel under difficult circumstances, once again exceeding previous
45 class sizes, meaning that we are reaching more students who need the education we provide. SMC implemented
46 a test-optional admissions policy in response to COVID -19, and will continue that policy for the next few years.

47 SMC renovated the top floor of the Burgess Student Center which now houses the SMC Experience, our
48 revamped student services department. We believe this refreshed facility will pay great dividends in improving our
49 student experience and helping students to connect to each other and their desired future.

50

51 **Objectives for the coming year:**

52 SMC has developed a plan to return to face to face learning on campus in the fall of 2021.

53 We are looking at innovative strategies to provide office space for our growing faculty and staff that is needed
54 to support our larger classes.

55 We continue to add to our course offerings and schedule with an eye towards accommodating our 3rd and 4th
56 year students. Our faculty have developed multiple new course offerings for in person learning as well as our
57 growing online program.

58 SMC currently has a Science building that is in dire need of updating. We are currently investigating renovation of
59 that space. A group consisting of representatives from across the campus community is reviewing our master plan to
60 adjust our priorities due to the changes our institution has undergone.

61 SMC is reviewing and adjusting our alcohol policy due to the presence of 21 year old students. The new policy
62 will have a strong focus on education, addiction prevention, and restorative justice.

63

64 **Action(s) required from the 2021 Annual Conference:**

65 No action is required.

If you take away nothing from this report, know this:

Since 1911, SMC has provided education and opportunity to young people who might otherwise be able to access it. Every person on this campus, from the staff, to our faculty, to President Cochran, is committed to shepherding these young people in the direction of love, peace, and prosperity.

It is our belief that the ongoing work to move into offering a four-year option at SMC will enable us to better reach these students. Time and again, we have heard from graduating students that they wish they could remain at SMC in our familial, supportive atmosphere. Now we can offer them that opportunity to continue to grow in knowledge, citizenship, and faith while continuing to be nurtured by our committed, caring faculty and staff.

Narrative:

What makes SMC special are our students and the hard work they put in to make their dreams come true.

One of our Sophomore students has embodied that work ethic. She comes from a challenging home situation in which she is the primary caregiver for her child as well as her critically ill grandfather. On top of her home challenges, she also works multiple jobs to support her extended family.

She has not let these responsibilities hold her back from making the most of her college experience, however. She has been a full time student, an athlete, and a college ambassador during her first two years at SMC. Even in the midst of all that work, she has excelled - being named to the Dean’s List twice during her Freshman year!

This student is an example of the determination to succeed and grow towards a bright future that SMC students embody. Thank you for your support of our work with students like this one.

Respectfully submitted:

Rev. Timothy C. Drum, II, Chaplain and Director of Church Relations
drumt@smcsc.edu, 1-846-587-4282

WOFFORD COLLEGE

Purpose:

Wofford College provides a superior liberal arts education that prepares students to be leaders who think critically while possessing the knowledge and skills to turn thoughts into action to make positive contributions to the world around them.

Key moments from the previous year:

Chief among the 2020 challenges were navigating the COVID-19 pandemic and a heightened focus on racial justice and equity.

The Wofford College community rallied, following wellness guidelines and adopting shared safety commitments, so the majority of the 2020-2021 academic year occurred on campus with in-person classes. A 16-member committee consisting of staff and faculty was formed in the spring of 2020 to plan for the return to campus of students and employees. This Working Group considered every aspect of campus life and met throughout the academic year to monitor conditions as well as the guidance of local healthcare advisors and public health officials.

Wofford embraces the work required to provide an inclusive learning community. The college created a 16-member steering committee focused on Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) to help create a strategic plan and vision for an equitable and just Wofford for the future. The committee’s work includes collecting and reporting relevant disaggregated data, facilitating listening sessions, and amplifying and building on equity work already being done.

In addition, the college is among 51 higher education institutions that are inaugural members of the Liberal Arts Colleges Racial Equity Leadership Alliance (LACRELA) launched by the University of Southern California Race and Equity Center.

In preparation for the November 2020 election, students participated in voter registration efforts in the Spartanburg community. A few student researchers also developed a podcast, “Voices of Latinx” to better share information gathered from research with people in the community.

Objectives for the coming year:

Wofford’s future was transformed on Feb. 24, 2021, when 1959 graduate Jerome J. Richardson announced a \$150 million gift to the college — the largest in the college’s history. It brings Wofford’s endowment to \$395 million and will support need-based scholarships and experiences for students, ensure support staff earn a minimum of \$15 an hour and provides for the maintenance of buildings. The gift will be transitioned into the endowment.

Wofford will continue addressing issues of diversity, equity and inclusion. Its JEDI committee will make recommendations to the Board of Trustees in May. Wofford’s Multicultural Scholarship has been revamped and renamed the GOLD Scholarship to attract high achieving students from underrepresented populations with \$5,000 per year scholarships that are stackable with other aid.

Wofford continues to be a national leader in the collegiate interfaith movement while led by the Rev. Dr. Ron Robinson, a 1978 Wofford graduate and the Perkins-Prothro Chaplain and Professor of Religion, and Dr. Trina Jones, associate professor of religion and associate provost for curriculum and co-curriculum. Robinson serves on the Development Committee of the United Methodist General Board of Church and Society and as a credentialed coach through the United Methodist Church. The Rev. Paige Matthews Wolfe, a 2007 Wofford graduate and

1 minister of Christian education and programs at Central United Methodist Church in Spartanburg, works with the
2 college's Wesley Fellowship.

3 The college continues to house the S.C. Conference Archives, administered by Wofford and S.C. Conference
4 archivist Dr. Phillip Stone, a 1994 Wofford graduate.

5
6 **Action(s) required from the 2021 Annual Conference:**

7 Please continue to support our state's United Methodist colleges and university.

8
9 **If you take away nothing from this report, know this:**

10 During the 2020-21 academic year, Wofford distributed more than \$71 million in merit and need-based schol-
11 arships, federal and state aid, as well as outside scholarships and loans. A third of Wofford's budget goes toward
12 scholarships and financial assistance, and 97 percent of Wofford students receive some form of financial assis-
13 tance. Specifically, the college's 246 United Methodist students (14 percent of the student body) shared in more
14 than \$9.1 million in financial aid this year (100 percent of the South Carolina Annual Conference's contribution
15 goes toward financial assistance for these deserving students).

16
17 **Narrative:**

18 At Wofford College, we have faced the challenges of 2020 together and found ways to innovate and perse-
19 vere that will benefit us well into the future. We remain committed to our mission and core values, and we remain
20 hopeful for brighter days to come. Our sincere gratitude goes to the South Carolina Conference of the United
21 Methodist Church and the many servant-leaders for their continued support of higher education.

22 Nayef H. Samhat, President

23
24 Respectfully submitted:

25 Robert Dalton, Writer/editor, daltonrw@wofford.edu, 864-597-4199

26
27
28 **THE CHARLESTON WESLEY FOUNDATION**

29
30 **Purpose:**

31 To make disciples of Jesus for world transformation on the 5 major campuses in Charleston. We seek to help
32 students to grow in their faith and proclaim the truth of the Gospel as articulated by the historic doctrines of the
33 UMC. We welcome all who join us on this journey regardless of where they are.

34
35 **Key moments from the previous year:**

- 36 1. CWF baptized 4 students this school year and had several professions of faith, celebrating their step of
37 faith in Jesus Christ and commitment to growth as His disciples.
- 38 2. The global pandemic only allowed on campus activities at The Citadel. In spite of this, attendance grew to
39 nearly 350 weekly across three worship gatherings.
- 40 3. Even in the pandemic, CWF engaged with over 3,000 students through outreach events across three
41 campuses we were able to engage on this year. Our access to the College of Charleston and Charleston
42 Southern was extremely limited, and we were not able to engage with MUSC or Trident Tech.
- 43 4. CWF is fostering 13 students exploring calls to vocational ministry. These students have heard God's call
44 and are prayerfully discerning how God is calling them to fulfill this call. Two are in the beginning stages of
45 the process to become ordained elders in the UMC. One is being appointed as a licensed local pastor this
46 year. 5 other graduates are pursuing ministerial calls outside of the UMC. Two graduates are entering
47 Chaplain Candidate programs in the military.
- 48 5. While local church support dipped significantly, CWF has been able to adjust and creatively engage despite
49 the \$25,000 less in support received this year. We have plans to reengage fundraising to allow ministry to
50 continue to thrive.

51
52 **Objectives for the coming year:**

- 53 1. Transition to the new director, Aly José. She has been a part of the CWF family for 6 years and will make
54 a fine director. This will be her first ministerial appointment, so the Board of Directors will need to nurture
55 her as she starts this ministry venture.
- 56 2. Continue development of the Wesley Lounge (an intentional Christian community space at Trinity UMC).
57 Even in the pandemic we were able to launch this space and it has been a huge success with our college
58 students, serving up to 40 students per week.
- 59 3. Relaunch The Way, a contemporary United Methodist worshipping community located at Trinity UMC. We
60 were able to launch The Way this school year. The pandemic severely hampered the ability for students
61 and the community to attend, but good progress was made. This summer will allow for time to prepare to
62 relaunch this fall.
- 63 4. Continue to develop student leadership and discipleship programing, including relaunching missional efforts
64 as the pandemic subsides.

5. Secure adequate funding for campus pastoral staff. With the fluctuation in fundraising connected with the pandemic, CWF needs to secure more reliable sources of income (specifically the Annual Conference funding an associate position would be ideal) to allow CWF to focus on discipleship development with adequate pastoral staff for the hundreds of students connected to our ministry.

Action(s) required from the 2021 Annual Conference:

While CWF and the students we serve would benefit tremendously from an appointed associate minister, we have been told that the annual conference will not consider such an investment and we would be required to retract this need on the floor of Annual Conference in order to avoid a floor debate as was done at the last in person conference. While this investment in CWF would radically increase an already fruitful ministry for the benefit of the conference and the Kingdom of God, we are compelled to not ask for an appointed associate unless the annual conference has reconsidered such an advantageous investment.

If you take away nothing from this report, know this:

While many churches have pulled back and struggled during the pandemic, CWF has thrived and grown in spite of the many roadblocks over these past few months. Our students have found avenues to responsibly place in-person worship and Christian community as central part of the Christian life, and done so in safe ways, practicing good precautionary measures. This has allowed the CWF community to grow during the pandemic and be a shining example of the fearless hope held by those experiencing the Christian faith and life.

Narrative:

I look back with gratitude for the many things God has done over the last seven years that He has blessed me to lead CWF. I couldn't have imagined He would have taken those 15 students and grown them into a community of hundreds. I find joy in the numerous students who have come to faith and chosen to follow Jesus against the current of the surrounding culture. I am proud of the numerous mission trips that our students have gone on and that CWF has a missional spirit as a part of its core identity. The strength of the CWF community is a testament to the vibrancy of the Gospel. The constant calls to capitulate to the prevailing mores of societal trends and perspectives as a necessary are proven false by lived example of CWF. By proclaiming historical Wesleyan theology and missional focus, with a bold stance for justice and love, the CWF community has grown and will remain strong.

This year, participation has grown numerically. We launched a worshipping community, created a lounge that hosts intentional Christian community, sent several students go into vocational ministry, had students come to faith, get baptized and grow into leadership roles and disciple others. We have watched outpourings of the Spirit lead to students breaking from their bondage and proclaiming truth against inequity. We have watched our students surround each other in the midst of tragic loss and violence with the love of Christ and help them see and live into the better way of the Gospel.

Respectfully submitted:

Aaron Meadows, Director/Campus Pastor

aaron@wesleychs.org, 8433453832

Alexis José – Alexis has served as a part time campus pastor for CWF for two years now and will be appointed as the full-time director at Annual Conference.

Ja'Brion Grice – Part Time Campus Pastor

Haydn Miller – Part Time Campus Pastor

William José – Worship Leader

CLEMSON WESLEY FOUNDATION

Purpose:

Clemson Wesley is a Christ centered community that seeks to welcome all students, treat them like family from day one, challenge them to grow in their faith and encourage students to love God and neighbor in concrete ways. We emphasize radical hospitality, growth and service.

Key moments from the previous year:

Welcome to the great outdoors! This statement defined much of what our ministry looked like this year. Ministry in a pandemic has been different but also inspiring. We spent the first half of the semester worshipping outdoors. Lauren Hundley, junior from Fort Mill and worship leader, noted, "Outdoor worship was our way of staying grounded and connected to each other through the chaos of starting a new semester during COVID. We were all so grateful to be able to meet and worship together as a community while staying safe." CW met outdoors for worship, meals, small groups, bonfires and other physically distanced events. We knew that we couldn't be in close proximity to one another physically but that didn't stop us from being close to each other on a personal level. Small groups continued to be an integral part of Clemson Wesley's mission and our students adapted so well. Allie Randazza, junior from Duluth, GA, commented, "As a small group leader, I learned how to adapt and try to make the most out of bad situations. Being able to discuss God and other random things with my Wesley family has definitely been the highlight of every week!"

1 This has been a difficult year for many of us as we had to navigate our way through a global pandemic and a
2 polarizing national election. However, CW continues to be a vibrant ministry even in the midst of it all. Through
3 worship and discipleship opportunities we are in ministry to an average of 145 students each week.

4
5 **Objectives for the coming year:**

6 In many ways this upcoming year is filled with great opportunity. The global events of this past year forced us
7 to examine what is important to our ministry and it also required us to rethink how we live our calling as a campus
8 ministry. The students of Clemson Wesley are excited to launch new ministries and creative ideas for reaching
9 students as we, hopefully, move out of this pandemic.

10
11 **Action(s) required from the 2021 Annual Conference:**

12 We are grateful for the support we receive from the SC Conference. We look forward to a continued partner-
13 ship as we reach students on our campuses.

14
15 **If you take away nothing from this report, know this:**

16 Campus ministry at Clemson Wesley is alive and well! Even a pandemic can't keep us down. With your support
17 we are continuing to provide welcoming place for students to find community, faith growth and service opportunities.
18 We are also sending graduates into ministry both in the church and community. This is a vital ministry that when
19 supported will provide dividends for the church for years to come.

20
21 **Narrative:**

22 Respectfully submitted:

23 Steve Simoneaux, Executive Director
24 steve@clemsonwesley.org, 864-650-3177
25
26
27

28 **METHODIST STUDENT NETWORK – COLUMBIA WESLEY FOUNDATION**

29
30 Like most faith communities this past year, COVID 19 has been a major shaper of ministry. Pastoral concerns,
31 physical/mental well-being and related societal issues have been crucibles for spiritual formation. COVID did not
32 happen in isolation. The pandemic exposed racial, economic disparity and further polarized the nation and Christians
33 and churches. So here at the Methodist Student Network-Columbia Wesley Foundation we have been trying to realize a
34 Christian community where we attend to one another, allow ourselves to be graciously vulnerable with each other while
35 also focusing on the world around us and the great social justice issues of this time that call us to prophetic action.

36 We spent Spring Break 2020 (March) serving in Ecuador with an optometry and medical clinic as well as work/
37 ministry with children. Upon returning to USC we immediately became a virtual community though there was still
38 some in person ministry on campus as some students remained and did not go home. When USC reopened in
39 person in August, we adapted to hold our ministry activities in person (with a mix of zoom and FB Live) with all the
40 COVID precautions.

41 One thing that became apparent was that students were hungry to be with one another in person (and online)
42 and that the pandemic with attending issues had revealed a spiritual thirst for meaning and purpose and order. We
43 have focused on small groups and also on meeting in twos and threes over coffee and tea. Our small groups have
44 been guided by several books. "The Awakened Life" addressed issues of spirituality, mental health and prayer and
45 helped to equip young adults to find resiliency and wellness in faith traditions. We also read together, "I'm Still
46 Here: Black Dignity in a World Made for Whiteness" and personally reflected on the state of racial, economic
47 inequities in our nation and in the church and challenged ourselves to be Christians who work to address and
48 eliminate these inequities. In the fall we also spent time on religion and politics and the place of faith and discipleship
49 in that volatile combination. Included was a zoom program with Rev. Susan Henry-Crowe from the Board of
50 Church and Society. In fact, the zoom platform allowed us to bring in a number of guest speakers who we normally
51 would not have had as immediate and easy access to. Students have expressed great interest in learning Christian
52 meditation and bible study has been in unusual demand.

53 Much of our ministry has been outside on our front patio. We worship and eat outside often. Our Table of
54 Abraham (Christian, Muslim and Jew) group meets outside. The Jewish group Hillel that now shares the renamed
55 building with us (Carolina Faiths Center) also made space outside. The majority of our service projects have
56 moved to being outside which has allowed for some creativity and new experiences. Some retreats were accom-
57 plished through camping. So the pandemic has reminded us that too much of ministry and church has been defined
58 by a local brick and mortar structure.

59 Thanks to the students/servant leaders, staff, churches, the CWF board, Sunday school classes, UMWs and
60 alumni who have encouraged and supported through this challenging year. We have needed much grace and
61 have tried to offer grace-grace upon grace.

THE WESLEY FOUNDATION, ALIVE IN CHRIST, FRANCIS MARION UNIVERSITY

1

2

Purpose:

3

The Wesley Foundation at Francis Marion University is a student-led campus ministry and open to all students who are interested in the Christian Faith. Our purpose is to minister to students where they are in their faith and let them experience God’s love through our ministry.

4

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Key moments from the previous year:

8

Our ministry has had many challenges this past year, including how to get information to students about our organization, because the university held no student organizational fair nor many of the other normal activities. We asked permission for our group to have a table (our own student organizational affair) out on the lawn for one afternoon. The request was granted. It was very successful in helping us to reach new students. Therefore, our plans are to continue, doing our own organizational fair on the lawn next year too, in addition to the one planned by Francis Marion University. Our Monday night meeting had to be adjusted to make sure we stayed inside of the safety guidelines set forth by the university. With so many things not happening on campus, students involved our ministry were grateful for the ministry operating, even though there were a lot of changes and things we could not do. A continuing challenge is the meeting space for our students.

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Objectives for the coming year:

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However, the students are asking for retreats, mission events, small groups, fun fellowship etc. to return next year. While all these events are not new, they are an important objective for next year. We will be ready to minister in all of these ways again, in order to meet the needs of our students. We will continue to use old ways and seek new ways to reach new students to be involved in our ministry , such as the way already mentioned, our own student organizational fair next year. Each year we have a student survey that students in the group fill out to provide us with feedback on the previous year. The information from this survey is taken into consideration when making plans for the upcoming year. Also, we look at our social media we use and make sure we are using the platform that most of our students are using.

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Action(s) required from the 2021 Annual Conference: None

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If you take away nothing from this report, know this:

31

Thank you for all the support Alive in Christ, The Wesley Foundation at Francis Marion University receives. Many of you know the importance of this ministry. Whether it is praying for our ministry, giving financial support, bringing suppers or offering words of support, we are grateful for your help. Thank you and God’s Blessings to you.

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Narrative:

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Respectfully submitted:

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Lou Jordan, Campus Director

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mjordan@umcsc.org, 843 665 9276

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FURMAN WESLEY FELLOWSHIP

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Purpose:

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The ministry of Furman Wesley Fellowship serves the Furman University community in the values of the United Methodist Church. We seek to be “A Place to Be, Belong, Connect, & Engage” for the student of Furman.

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Key moments from the previous year:

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This has obviously been a crazy year for collegiate ministry, and Furman Wesley is no different. With COVID restrictions, we were not allowed any off-campus activities or gatherings over 30 people. However, there are still many reasons for our Furman Wesley to feel blessed. Our focus this year was Connections, as we realized that COVID could cause isolation and we felt it was vitally important to stay connected. We had to begin each semester with virtual Weekly Gatherings and Freshmen Groups, but after time were allowed to meet in-person. We enhanced our student-led small groups, and began a new Daily Devotional Bible Study, in which we all read a daily devotional and then virtually chat about our insights. In addition to our returning students, we have experienced an amazing group of new folks getting involved in our activities. We are also thankful for an amazing Leadership Team. I believe this is the hardest year, in my 13 at Furman, to do ministry; however, these students embraced the challenge and have done an incredible job. It is our belief that as students get more involved in their classes and other campus events, their time becomes precious; as a result, it is our desire to provide the students many opportunities to be in fellowship, study, worship, and service. And while many of our normal activities and events could not happen with COVID restrictions, we still believe our group offered students an opportunity to grow in their faith and life.

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1 **Objectives for the coming year:**

2 Obviously, our biggest priority is the sustainable ministry with young adults at Furman University. We have
3 been blessed in our ministry with gracious supporters who see the value in our ministry. However, we recognize
4 the importance of being proactive in the ever-changing environment of the UMC and the world in which we live.
5 Our Wesley Board is continually looking at ways to remain a healthy and vibrant ministry. Another priority continues to
6 be finding ways to speak into, and connect with, all of our wonderful students at Furman. We have a diverse campus,
7 and it is important for us to live into the whole of United Methodism. We value our role in leadership development
8 and vocational discernment. As each student finds their way into our ministry, it is our desire to help them identify
9 their gifts and discover the ways God may desire to use them for the kingdom. Our hope is that we can help each
10 student find their voice in the mission of Christ. One of the things we continue to emphasize to our leadership
11 team is the value of caring for self; it is hard to lead when you have nothing to give. Finally, it is our strong desire
12 at Furman Wesley Fellowship to find ways to engage the larger Greenville and UMC communities. We recognize
13 the connectional nature of our church, and honestly our world, and desire to reach beyond the walls in order to
14 give back to the people who are so gracious in supporting our ministry.

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16 **Action(s) required from the 2021 Annual Conference:**

17 None, this report is for information only.

18
19 **If you take away nothing from this report, know this:**

20 The ministry at Furman Wesley Fellowship, and all our collegiate ministries across the denomination, is some
21 of the most important work we do as an Annual Conference. Our Furman Wesley Fellowship desires to pour into
22 the lives of young people, and we pray that our Annual Conference will join our collegiate ministries' mission by
23 making ministry with young adults a priority in our church.

24
25 **Narrative:**

26 "Wesley means family and home to me. It's a place where I can be myself and show my true colors. Every Tues-
27 day night, we gather together to worship and have fellowship. These nights are my favorite days of the week because
28 I get to praise God and see my best friends. When I come into the Garden Room, I know that I will truly be accepted
29 for who I am. I can be open and honest with everyone about what has been going on in my life. If I am having a bad or
30 quiet night, I know that I can just relax, and everyone will not judge me for my minimal interactions. I also love Thurs-
31 days because this is the day that we all get to eat lunch together. There is just something special about communal
32 bonding around the table. We all get to laugh, smile, and have intentional conversations together. Tuesdays and
33 Thursdays are the highlights of the week for me." [Natalie Anderson, Atlanta, GA]

34 Respectfully submitted:

35
36 Rev. Edward Lovell McCutcheon,
37 Director and Campus Minister, Furman Wesley
38 edward.mccutcheon@furman.edu, 864-238-7273
39 The names of our Furman Wesley Board
40 are listed in the nominations portion of the Journal.

41
42 **THE ORANGEBURG WESLEY FOUNDATION**

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44 **Purpose:**

45 The purpose of the Wesley of Orangeburg (#The W.O.O.), is to create a space where students of Claflin
46 University and South Carolina State University can discover and live out their purpose through worship and fellow-
47 ship with a community that accepts them just as they are. And to help them grow deeper in their faith through
48 discipleship and service to the community and world through outreach and witness.

49
50 **Key moments from previous year:**

- 51 • Bible Study program for Claflin University during Power Hour
- 52 • Bible Study for SCSU at lunchtime
- 53 • Provide opening prayer to SCSU ROTC during their Branching Ceremony.
- 54 • Established a UMW Limitless ministry for female students.
- 55 • Students supported the SC UMW Limitless program in Columbia in February 2020.
- 56 • Students provided community service in support of the Granville Hicks Academy
- 57 • Supported Claflin University for the MLK Jr. Program in January 2021
- 58 • Supported SCSU Massacre commemorate day February 2021.
- 59 • Students performed "God's Trombones Reading" for Black History Month for Claflin University
- 60 • The W.O.O. celebrated Founder's Day with a fundraiser to support the financial needs of the ministry.

61
62 **Objectives for the coming year:**

- 63 • Continue to bring awareness of ministry opportunities at The W.O.O. to students of Claflin University and
- 64 South Carolina State University.

- Establish a student leadership mentoring program for the continuity of the ministry of The W.O.O. 1
- Partnering with African American church, so students are aware of the ministry of The W.O.O. 2

Action(s) required from the 2021 Annual Conference: 3

- Change the position of the Campus Minister/Director from interim to permanent appointment. 4

If you take away nothing from this report know this: 5

That Jesus is at The W.O.O. and Jesus will woo you, so meet us at The W.O.O. (The Wesley of Orangeburg). 6

Narrative: 7

Since my arrival at The W.O.O. considerable amount of time has been spent in bringing awareness of the Wesley Foundation’s ministry to African American churches throughout the state as well as to the students of Claflin University and South Carolina State University. As one of the students pointed out in her reflection of her time spent at The W.O.O., she said, “I really love the program and atmosphere; it is a place to go just to hang out and take a break from school. It really gives you a peace of mind. Rev. Shirley is the best person ever, and I really do appreciate her. So, if you are wondering about The W.O.O., you need to check it out”. So, come check us out, and check out our new website and connect with us on the realm. 8

Respectfully submitted: 9

Rev. Shirley P. Gordon, Director and Campus Minister, Wesley of Orangeburg
 spgordon@umcsc.org, 803-662-3909 10

THE BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND CAMPUS MINISTRY 11

Purpose: 12

To serve as the Annual Conference board related to higher education, including collegiate ministry, campus ministry, United Methodist colleges and universities, and more. 13

Key moments from the previous year: 14

This year we saw several key leadership changes underway. After an incredibly fruitful year in her post at the Orangeburg Wesley Foundation, Rev. Shirley Gordon transitioned from interim campus minister to the fully-vested minister to Claflin and South Carolina State Universities. The Winthrop Wesley Foundation also saw a leadership change roughly one year ago as the Rev. Charlie Farnum took up the role of campus minister, relocating to South Carolina from the Michigan Annual Conference. 15

Third, the Charleston Wesley Foundation has only just completed the search for a new campus minister, as Rev. Aaron Meadows transitions into the role of Chaplain at the Citadel. Rev. Aly Jose is the new director, with a presence on the campuses of College of Charleston, the Citadel, Charleston Southern, and more. This is Aly’s first appointment, after serving as assistant campus minister in Charleston. She is an excellent candidate for this work. 16

Similarly, both Claflin University and Columbia College celebrate new leadership. We welcome President Dwaun Warmack of Claflin, and President Tom Bogart of Columbia College. With all of these changes, join us in praying for fruitfulness in service and discipleship. 17

This year, with COVID-19, has been one of the most unique and trying times in recent history. Imagine how much more challenging it’s been on college campuses everywhere. Our United Methodist educational institutions and campus ministries have been incredibly creative and dedicated for the duration, so thanks be to God for their faithfulness! 18

Objectives for the coming year: 19

To help ease new leadership into place, and continue evaluating the potential for new and existing campus ministry to work together for the best of South Carolina’s students. 20

To prepare to navigate our denominational struggles as they become evident in the coming months and years, including as much local sustainability as possible from Campus Ministries. 21

To disciple new, younger, and more diverse disciples in the primary setting available to the church: college ministry. 22

Action(s) required from the 2021 Annual Conference: N/A 23

If you take away nothing from this report, know this: 24

Collegiate ministry is alive and well, despite recent challenges, and should continue to be a major priority for United Methodists in South Carolina. 25

Narrative: 26

Respectfully submitted: 27

Rev. Joshua McClendon, Chair
 jtmclendon@umcsc.org, 8039849662 28

THE SOUTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Purpose:

Encourage preservation of the history of Methodism in South Carolina by encouraging the study of Methodist history and providing resources to local churches. To serve as a “ministry of memory” helping the church remember how God has worked through the Wesleyan-inspired Methodist Movement.

Key moments from the previous year:

The Society faced the same challenges of other groups and was forced to cancel programs. Nevertheless, work continued. We provided the majority of the financing for rebuilding the Burdine Lodge, now almost complete, as a place to tell the story of early Methodist circuit riders. Prior to the pandemic, the Society President gave a presentation to the Rock Hill District Clergy on the importance and practice of preserving local church history. We provided historical education and encouragement through newsletters to Society members, as well as a monthly column in the SC UMC Advocate. Work continues in documenting the history of more than 40 sites in the state with historical significance that will form the nucleus of a “historical trail” for interpretation of Methodist history.

Objectives for the coming year:

We plan to sponsor one or more programs either through an online platform or in person. Our expectation is that we can complete documentation of the historical trail during 2021. We also hope that a celebration to reveal completion of the Burdine Lodge may occur either in late 2021 or by Spring of 2022.

Action(s) required from the 2021 Annual Conference:

If you take away nothing from this report, know this:

Protection of the historical record is not merely an esoteric study of the past, it is an education for the future. We must remember both our successes and our failures so that we can be better servants of Christ. History teaches us the difference.

Narrative:

Respectfully submitted:

Joyce E. Plyler, President
joyce@charlotte.twcbc.com, 7048476096

THE COMMITTEE ON THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Purpose:

The Committee on the Annual Conference is a team of persons tasked with envisioning, planning, implementing, and evaluating the annual conference. In the midst of rapid changes resulting from the global pandemic, our team has learned a great deal about adaptability.

Key moments from the previous year:

Over the last two years, we have re-evaluated the ways and means of conducting the business of the annual conference. In the midst of every shifting realities on the ground, our team has shown tremendous resilience, forbearance, and adaptability.

We have focused on outcomes and creating accessibility for the clergy and lay members using of technology that would allow us to conduct the business of the annual conference while still celebrating all that God is doing through our churches, clergy, and laity.

Objectives for the coming year:

The theme chosen for the 2021 Annual Conference is “Seeking A More Excellent Way: Taking the Next Faithful Step.” This theme highlights the ways in which we continue moving forward in mission and ministry trusting God for the “next faithful step.”

Action(s) required from the 2021 Annual Conference:

¶603 of *Book of Discipline* provides that the Annual Conference sets the place of the meeting for the sessions of the annual conference, and the presiding bishop sets the date. Under the leadership of Bishop Holston, we projected June 5-8, 2022 as the projected dates pending changing realities in the global pandemic.

The standing rules of the conference provide that the Committee on the Annual Conference recommend the site of the next annual conference. The Committee on the Annual Conference recommends that we return to Florence Center in 2022.

If you take away nothing from this report, know this:

Finally, the committee expresses its gratitude to the 2021 host team under the leadership of the Rev. Terry Fleming, Florence District Superintendent, for their spirit of adaptability. This team has done tremendous work under some of the most trying circumstances. They have helped care for many of the important details along the way. We owe them tremendous level of thanks. We also express gratitude to our host church, Cumberland United Methodist Church and its team under the leadership of the Rev. Dr. Fredrick Yebuah.

We are most grateful to our Bishop and the Committee on the Annual for their faithfulness in this season. A special word of gratitude to expressed to Pat Mack, Mel Arant, and Sharome Henry for going above and beyond the call of duty this season.

The work of the Committee on the Annual Conference continues and we are proud of the work of the team!

Narrative:

Respectfully submitted:

Kenneth L. Nelson, Conference Secretary
L. Jonathan Holston, Resident Bishop
knelson@umcsc.org, 8033122824

THE CONFERENCE STAFF RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Purpose:

To provide for consistent Annual Conference staff personnel decisions, management and policy.

Key moments from the previous year:

The committee has worked to interpret and update policy issues and employee compliance needs.

Objectives for the coming year:

The committee will work together with the Council on Finance & Administration to determine conference staff salary adjustments, oversee the evaluation of staff and consider policy issues and employee compliance needs.

Action(s) required from the 2021 Annual Conference:

If you take away nothing from this report, know this:

The committee supports conference personnel in their efforts to provide the highest quality services, support and resources for churches and clergy across the annual conference.

Narrative:

Respectfully submitted:

Bishop L. Jonathan Holston, Chair, bishop@umcsc.org, 803-786-9486
Pat Gannaway, Larry McCutcheon, Alphonza Jones, Pamela Cook,
Diana Currence, Mike Galloway, Jane Smith, Robert Bedell, Barbara Ware,
Mitch Houston, Ross Chellis

THE TRUSTEES OF THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The primary work of the Board of Trustees ("Trustees") is to oversee the maintenance and the ultimate disposition of the properties of closed local churches. Trustees also holds in trust properties received by bequest or gift to the Annual Conference.

Utilizing the recent changes in the *2016 Book of Discipline*, individual local churches may be closed by action of the Annual Conference or may be closed on an exigent basis on an *ad interim* basis. Some of the resolutions before you involve such *ad interim* closures.

Some of the properties before you are requested to be disposed of by sale, while others are pending sale. It is the standing policy of the Trustees to seek alternate uses of properties as tools to be used in making disciples of Jesus Christ; thereby affording such properties the opportunity to remain in active mission and ministry within the Church Universal.

Trustees receives no apportionment funds, and are therefore self-funding. The principle source of such funding is derived from the 10% administrative fee assessed on those properties sold after closure. The Trustees would respectfully remind the Annual Conference that is it the responsibility of Trustees to maintain, insure, and protect all properties received in trust by Trustees until the properties final distribution.

Attached to this report and incorporated herein by reference is an accounting of the funds of the Board of Trustees for the preceding year; as well as a listing of all real property being overseen by Trustees, as is required by paragraph 2512.6 of the *Book of Discipline*.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Michael Wood, Chair of Conference Trustees.

(See next page for attached report.)

Trustees of the Annual Conference
Accounting by Property for AC Trustees
December 31, 2020

| Property | District | 12/31/2019 Balance | Sale Proceeds | Other Receipts | Expenses | Transfer to beneficiary | Retained by Trustees | Ending Balance | Designation |
|--|------------|--------------------|---------------|----------------|--------------|-------------------------|----------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|
| Orville (South Main Chapel & Mercy Center) | Anderson | (13,230.84) | | | (5,648.00) | | | (18,878.84) | Urban Center/Mission Church |
| Smiths Chapel | Anderson | (772.24) | | | (111.68) | | | (883.92) | Undesignated |
| Union | Anderson | (2,320.00) | | | | | | (2,320.00) | |
| Berea (Cordesville) | Charleston | 29,278.53 | 42,005.00 | 28.09 | (5,819.19) | (47,289.17) | (2,470.00) | 15,733.26 | Pending resolution |
| Berea (Cordesville) cemetery | Charleston | - | | | | 15,209.17 | | 15,209.17 | Pending resolution |
| Cedar Creek | Columbia | (606.78) | | 6.23 | | | 600.55 | - | Resolved |
| Cedar Creek Cemetery | Columbia | 110,041.91 | | | | (110,041.91) | | - | Resolved |
| St James | Columbia | 61,368.91 | | | (2,040.00) | | | 59,328.91 | Urban Center |
| St Luke | Columbia | (886.65) | | | | | 886.65 | - | Resolved |
| Beulah (Kingstree) | Florence | 1,117.00 | | | | (967.00) | (150.00) | - | Resolved |
| Greeleyville | Florence | - | | | (45.68) | | | (45.68) | |
| Trinity | Florence | 926.63 | | | (111.68) | | | 814.95 | |
| Trinity cemetery | Florence | - | | | | | | - | |
| Concord (Greenville Korean Mission) | Greenville | 29,907.01 | | | (3,668.00) | | | 26,239.01 | Urban Center |
| Dunean | Greenville | 141,137.55 | | | (155.55) | (125,982.00) | (15,000.00) | 0.00 | Resolved |
| McKinney Chapel | Greenville | (2,733.82) | | | (744.00) | | | (3,477.82) | Urban Center |
| Piedmont Park | Greenville | 42,172.59 | | | (5,942.95) | | | 36,229.64 | Urban Center |
| Zion-Andrews (New Beginnings) | Greenville | 59,626.78 | | | | | | 59,626.78 | Urban Center |
| Bath | Greenwood | (4,273.91) | | | (3,512.12) | | | (7,786.03) | |
| Bath (parsonage) | Greenwood | 7,168.93 | | 4,000.00 | (6,076.48) | | | 5,092.45 | |
| Gassaway | Greenwood | 1,306.27 | | 100.94 | (1,467.67) | | | (60.46) | Urban Center |
| Sandy Springs | Greenwood | 19,277.86 | | 109.49 | (2,886.04) | | | 16,501.31 | |
| Sandy Springs cemetery fund | Greenwood | 6,213.72 | | | (240.00) | | | 5,973.72 | |
| Mt Tabor (Chesterfield) | Hartsville | (181.93) | | | (412.00) | | | (593.93) | |
| Oro | Hartsville | 38,191.96 | | 1,696.84 | | | (39,888.80) | - | Resolved |
| Snowhill | Hartsville | (160.00) | | | (460.80) | | | (620.80) | |
| Christ/Myrtle Beach | Marion | (44,805.91) | | 10,420.93 | (121,251.37) | | | (155,636.35) | Urban Center |
| Iona | Marion | (1,822.23) | | | (111.68) | | | (1,933.91) | |
| Old Galilee | Marion | (240.41) | | | | | | (240.41) | |
| Central Rowesville | Orangeburg | (1,132.04) | | | (111.68) | | | (1,243.72) | |
| Charles Wesley | Orangeburg | 102,955.12 | | | | (91,799.56) | (11,155.56) | - | Resolved |
| Rocky Swamp Mission Church | Orangeburg | (5,736.11) | | 155,799.36 | (52,671.79) | | | 97,391.46 | |
| Broomfield | Walterboro | (37.36) | | | | | | (37.36) | |
| Jerusalem | Walterboro | (427.24) | | | (146.68) | | | (573.92) | |
| Retained by Trustees | Conference | 331,668.98 | | 6,561.78 | (10,311.28) | | 67,177.16 | 395,096.64 | |
| Total | | 902,992.28 | 42,005.00 | 178,723.66 | (223,946.32) | (360,870.47) | - | 538,904.15 | |

THE COMMITTEE ON CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Purpose:

We exist to continue finding ways to create new spaces for new people. We work with existing congregations to revitalize ministries or buildings. We work with District Boards and the Cabinet to identify, resource, and deploy new church plants to reach a changing area. We strive to be a resource for local pastors and congregations.

Key moments from the previous year:

Like so many others, 2020 was a year of constant evaluations and adjustments to an ever-changing culture and world. As many of our churches engaged our online communities in new ways, we as a Board pivoted to provide mirco-grants to churches stepping into virtual ministry for the first time. We were also excited to support 3 existing church grants that span the spectrum of vital ministry in this conference. From investing in new property to expand a much needed homeless ministry in Charleston, a new expression of college ministry partnership, and making the necessary facility repairs to make a sacred space able to be occupied again, those accomplishments are only possible because of you and your church’s generosity.

As a Board we have also been working to learn best practices from each other and our District Boards of Congregational Development. There is a large pool of resources, grant money included, in each of our Districts and a large portion of our meeting times have been devoted to learning what is and is not working in our respective districts so that we can be the best stewards of what we have been given.

Objectives for the coming year:

Our goal is to continue and improve upon our ideals of being a resource for local churches interested in new ministry and the spark for planting new places. We will continue supporting our churches through existing grants. We will continue supporting the current plants and partnerships across the connection, while discerning what next steps or projects could be coming down the line.

One of our major goals this year is intentional reflection on values, purpose and communication. As with many of our congregations 2020 and the year of COVID has pushed all of us to take the pulse of where we are, how we got here and where we’re going next. So, we’ll be spending some intentional time updating our applications and streamlining our communication with Districts and the local church. We also hope to continue our learning of best practices from within this Conference and conversations with other Conferences, so that we can continue making what is good better, and what is better the best it can be.

And, as a reminder, in previous years we had a unique opportunity this year to set aside some existing church grant money for future leadership development. For example, we’ve thought about offering multiple smaller conference-like workshops on things like staff/team development, how to lead a visioning process, multi-site challenges, multi-ethnic transitions, etc. We were so excited about what could be and, for the first time in my tenure, people wanted to meet more often to dream big about what could be in the year ahead!

Action(s) required from the 2021 Annual Conference:

There are no specific actions or votes needed for our report, only submitting it to the record.

If you take away nothing from this report, know this:

If there was one take away for you as a delegate it would be this, how we can we help you? We want to be a resource for you, your pastor, your staff, your leadership and your church. That support could look like a variety of things: funding, training, coaching, or something we haven’t thought of yet. Whatever it is you are wrestling with, if you think we might be able to help, then call us! We are here for you!

Narrative:

Respectfully submitted:

Richard Reams, Chaiperson
Richard.reams@gmail.com, 8649852440
Rev. James Friday, Director

THE COMMITTEE ON EPISCOPACY

Purpose:

Offer support to Bishop in oversight of spiritual and temporal affairs of the church:

- Interpret nature, function of episcopacy office
- Determine, communicate episcopal needs
- Advise about concerns that affect relationships and people of the conference
- Consultation and appraisal of Bishop’s relationship and responsibilities
- Report episcopal leadership needs to SEJ COE

1 **Key moments from the previous year:**

2 The COE fully agrees that Bishop Holston has continued to lead this conference by example and provided
3 insight, encouragement and motivation for our congregations to grow spiritually. He has led the conference in
4 prayer each morning and recorded several worship services throughout the year.

5 Bishop Holston has remained faithful to the leadership of the clergy and laity. During the past year, he led virtual
6 lay leadership retreat sessions with district and conference laity and participated in virtual gatherings with clergy.

7 This past year's theme "Seeking A More Excellent Way: Beyond the Bounds of Expectations" fit actions by
8 conference staff, clergy and laity as we faced the COVID-19 pandemic. Congregations across the conference
9 learned much about social media and other virtual platforms while staying engaged and reaching out to meet the
10 needs in their communities. Support of apportionments and missions exceeded expectations.

11 The Committee on Episcopacy continues to support requesting the SEJ COE to assign Bishop Holston to the
12 South Carolina Conference for a third term.

13 Some of the Bishop's involvement:

- 14 • General Board of Global Ministries, Director
- 15 • Strengthening the Black Church for the 21st Century, Chair
- 16 • Pan-Methodist Commission, Chair
- 17 • Columbia College Board of Trustees
- 18 • Emory University Board of Trustees
- 19 • Gammon Theological Seminary Board of Trustees, Chair
- 20 • Council of Bishops Missional Engagement Committee
- 21 • Fellowship of South Carolina Bishops
- 22 • Lake Junaluska Board of Trustees
- 23 • One in the Spirit curriculum, Presenter
- 24 • Guest Preacher, Asbury UMC, Washington, DC
- 25 • Come Follow Me, Contributor

26
27 **Objectives for the coming year:**

28 We will continue to support Bishop Holston in the oversight of the spiritual and temporal affairs of the South
29 Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church by interpreting to our church members the nature and function
30 of the episcopacy office.

31 We are to advise the Bishop concerning conditions within the conference as they affect the relationships and
32 the people of the conference.

33 We will continue to present to the SEJ COE about Bishop Holston's success over the last 9 years in South
34 Carolina in support of his return for a third quadrennium.

35
36 **Action(s) required from the 2021 Annual Conference:**

37 None.

38
39 **If you take away nothing from this report, know this:**

40 This 16 member committee which includes the two South Carolina conference SEJ Committee on Episcopacy
41 members and the conference lay leader meets 2 to 4 times a year to provide support for the bishop's work in our
42 conference and interpret the work of the bishop and the conference staff to our conference church members.

43 It is also the function of this committee to review and evaluate the bishop in eight categories, led by the two
44 SEJ COE members. This information is forwarded to the SEJ COE to provide guidance and insight into effective
45 episcopal leadership. The Committee offers its unanimous support of Bishop Holston's ministry in SC.

46
47 **Narrative:**

48 Respectfully submitted:

49 Holbrook Platts, Chairperson, hplatts@earthlink.net, 803-943-2777
50 Jennifer Pettit, Genevieve F. Burgess, Ken Jenkins, Calvin Smith, Barbara
51 Ware, Tim McClendon, George Ashford, Candice Sloan, Jeannette Cooper,
52 David Taylor, Ronnie Norton, Loretta McKelvey, Dorothy Harrison, Herman
53 Lightsey, Martha Thompson

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56 **THE OFFICE OF CLERGY SERVICES**

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58 The primary purpose of the Office of Clergy Services is to serve as a support for and liaison between the Bishop
59 and Cabinet and the Board of Ordained Ministry in areas related to leadership development and clergy licensing,
60 ordination and status. This office maintains the personnel files for all the clergy of the conference. The Coordinator of
61 Clergy Services also serves as a member of the Conference Ministry Advisory Team.

62 Mr. Sha'Rome Henry, Executive Assistant to the Office of Clergy Services, continues to provide excellent
63 support to district offices and candidates. His concern for each of our congregations and candidates is apparent in
64 his endless willingness to help guide candidates through the process. He maintains our database and oversees
65 the process of requesting and receiving the annual reports for which this office is responsible. The work of this

office literally would not happen without him. I continue to be grateful to the twelve district administrative assistants for their work. They give diligent oversight to a great deal of information vital to so many different people. We owe them a profound measure of gratitude.

We have continued the process of uploading all of the personnel records into e-Bridge. We have also been tweaking the format of the information in the new Shelby Church Management System. The process of migrating the information from our former database system into Shelby was smooth, but there have been places where we needed to clean up data. We are excited to have been able to produce our Business Questions completely out of the Shelby System this year. We are still working on the transition, but we are now better able to align our records with both the Conference Benefits and Administrative Service offices.

Another responsibility of this office is the management, monitoring and record keeping of criminal background checks conducted on all Clergy, Certified Lay Ministers and Lay Supplies every three years. This year we began the process of migrating from requiring persons to submit information directly to our office in order for us to manually run background checks, to a process that invites persons to input their information directly into the screening system. It was our hope to protect persons' personal information by not requiring it to be delivered to us first, but directly to the background screening company. The new Shelby system has also provided us a better way to keep track of current and expiring background screenings.

Like everywhere and everyone this office has experienced a great deal of adjustment and adaptation during the COVID-19 pandemic. We held our first Clergy Session (and Annual Conference) virtually, and even now are preparing to do so again. We had to switch our Licensing School for Pastoral Ministry, Candidacy Retreats, Clergy Orders and Board of Ordained Ministry interviews to virtual formats. We have also needed to find ways for persons to complete, sign and submit documents electronically. This allowed us to the time to begin evaluating and updating our forms, not to mention it significantly reduced our paper usage.

I am grateful for the work of the Board of Ordained Ministry, many of whom had their tenures on the Board unexpectedly continued with the extension of the quadrennium. Their dedication and commitment has allowed us to adapt and continue with excellence both credentialing and leadership development during this difficult year. And it is a pleasure to work with our Bishop and Superintendents on many matters related to our clergy, and to attempt to support them as they continue the vital and demanding work necessary to identify, nurture, instruct and supervises the clergy of our Conference.

Without trying to list every event or undertaking of the past year, we continue to respond to requests by phone, email, and correspondence related to licensing, ordination, and all matters related to clergy and their status within the conference. We have met with individuals seeking personal guidance in these areas and have worked to update the training of our District Committees on Ministry. It is a pleasure to serve in this area of ministry and I look forward to the year ahead.

A. Melton Arant, Jr.
Coordinator of Clergy Services

THE SOUTH CAROLINA UNITED METHODIST *ADVOCATE*

Purpose:

The mission of the Advocate is to inform and connect South Carolina United Methodists by independently reporting relevant news, engaging readers, providing a forum for dialogue and sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Key moments from the previous year:

What a year this has been! Yet, in the midst of a life-changing, status-quo-challenging pandemic that claimed lives, jobs, and much more, the Advocate has managed to continue its work delivering news and information about God's work through His people in South Carolina. We are truly blessed to glorify Him and make disciples in this way.

Not only did we produce high-quality journalistic coverage through our award-winning monthly newspaper, but we also produced two more books in 2020 through our Advocate Press: *What Would Granny Say?* an essay collection by the Rev. Tony Rowell, and *Called by God*, 20 personal ministry call stories. We are slated to launch several more books this year and saw our best book sales to date in 2020. Learn more/purchase books at <https://advocatesc.org/books>.

We are grateful for the apportionment funding we receive from this annual conference, and we are continuing our efforts to reduce our requested amount. We are working hard to raise additional income for our nonprofit 501 (c)3 ministry through tax-deductible donations from private individuals and business. We're pleased to announce we saw our best year in contributions ever in 2020, with readers donating more than \$14,000 to the Advocate. Your support makes a big impact. A little more than half of our funds come from our efforts in advertising, circulation income, book sales and fundraising; the rest comes from UMC apportionments. We are striving to increase the amount we receive from donations so we can ask for less from the Annual Conference. To learn more, visit <https://advocatesc.org/donation>.

Objectives for the coming year:

Our print and digital Advocate is striving to be the very best it can possibly be, from articles to design and photography, and we continue our commitment to fair, balanced news and journalistic excellence.

1 We are also in the process of planning and writing new books to be published by the Advocate Press, as well
2 as increasing our commitment to raising funds from private individuals so we can ask for fewer funds from Annual
3 Conference apportionments.

4 We are also in the midst of a readership and subscription growth campaign.
5

6 **Action(s) required from the 2021 Annual Conference:**

7 Approve our requested budget and subscribe to the Advocate (<https://advocatesc.org/subscribe>).
8

9 **If you take away nothing from this report, know this:**

10 You can help by spreading the word about the Advocate as a news resource in your church. Many people
11 don't know the Advocate is an independent publication led by a staff of two and published by a board of trustees—
12 though we are most definitely part of the South Carolina Annual Conference "family" and receive conference funding.
13 We are independent for purposes of journalistic integrity. The Advocate staff and board are incredibly grateful for
14 the many people who read the Advocate and tell others about it so they, too, can benefit from the great news
15 happening for Jesus across South Carolina through the People Called Methodists. Thank you!
16

17 **Narrative:**

18 The South Carolina United Methodist Advocate is one of a very few religious newspapers that are not only
19 surviving today but thriving. We believe it is because we are a prayer-driven ministry seeking to do the will of the
20 Lord foremost, and also because we strive to include all news that is relevant to South Carolina United Methodists.
21 We welcome your church's news, feature articles, calendar items, classified ads, photos and other submissions.
22 Our goal is to include every submission we receive; if we do not have room one month, we try our best to get it in
23 the next. Our deadline is the 10th of every month for the following month's paper (with the exception of the July/
24 Annual Conference edition, which has an early deadline of June 1). Email submissions to advocate@umcsc.org or
25 mail to Advocate, 4908 Colonial Dr., Columbia, SC 29203.

26 Respectfully submitted:

27 Jessica Brodie, Editor

28 jbrodie@umcsc.org, 803-807-0018

29 Staff includes Editor Jessica Brodie and Assistant Editor Allison Trussell, as
30 well as sales representative Toni Strawther. Board of Trustees members for
31 2020-2021 include Dr. Christopher Greene, chairperson; Dyron Anderson,
32 vice chairperson; Creg Smith, secretary; the Rev. Steven King, treasurer; the
33 Rev. Carleatha Benson; Dr. William Click; Linda DuRant; the Rev. Sh'Kur
34 Francis; Dr. Sheila Elliott Hodge; Enid Jenkins; Glen Levine; the Rev. Karen
35 Radcliffe; the Rev. Chrisie Reeves-Pendergrass; Selena Ruth Smith; Dr. Phillip
36 Stone; Dan O'Mara, ex officio; and the Rev. Cameron Levi, ex officio.
37
38

39 **THE TRUSTEES OF THE UNITED METHODIST CENTER**
40

41 **Purpose:**

42 The Trustees provide, operate, supervise, and maintain office and meeting space for the South Carolina
43 Conference of the United Methodist Church.
44

45 **Key moments from the previous year:**

46 The Trustees' most recent activities include installing Phenomenal Aire cold air plasma generators in three
47 areas of the building. These units are additional components to the heating and air conditioning units that serve
48 the lobby, the bishop's conference room, and the upstairs conference room. The purpose of these units is to
49 cleanse the air and reduce dust, mold, viruses, etc. During most of 2020 the United Methodist Center has been
50 closed to meetings due to the pandemic. It is the hope of the trustees that the building can reopen in 2021 when it
51 is safe to do so. Because of the pandemic, the Trustees were not able to perform an onsite inspection of the facility.
52 The next onsite inspection is tentatively scheduled for October 2021.
53

54 **Objectives for the coming year:**

55 The Trustees will continue to seek opportunities to operate the building in a manner reflecting good stewardship
56 of Conference resources providing suitable office and meeting space to carry support the mission and ministry to
57 which we are called.
58

59 **Actions required from the 2021 Annual Conference:** None
60

61 **If you take away nothing else from the report, know this:**

62 The Trustees of the United Methodist Center appreciate the continued support of the churches through the
63 apportionment system. The Trustees strive to be superb stewards of the funds for ensuring the facilities are safe,
64 secure, and properly maintained. The building stands ready to support the various ministries of the Annual Conference.

Narrative: 1
 The Trustees thank Ms. Christine Dominick for the numerous years of awesome and dedicated work she did 2
 in ensuring the Center was well maintained. The Trustees welcome Ms. Heather Nordeoff who is equally focused 3
 on caring for the building and its occupants. 4
 5
 The Conference Trustees nominate or re-elect the following persons as conference center trustee: 6
Clergy Members 7
Class of 2025 8
 Thessa Smith (17-21) (UM) RE-ELECT (21-25) 9
Lay Members 10
Class of 2025 11
Replace 12
 Ronald Friday (13) (UM) term expired 13
ELECT 14
 Hal Clarkson (UM) (21) 15
 Ronald D. Friday, Chairperson 16
 Email: bwestbury@umcsc.org 17
 18
 19
 20

THE MINISTRY ADVISORY TEAM 21

Purpose: 22
 23
 The MAT exists to create excellence in ministry by advising the Bishop, District Superintendents, programmatic, 24
 administrative and personnel teams of the Annual Conference. This team also provides oversight for the Bobo 25
 Trust Fund which is designated for leadership development. 26
 27

Key moments from the previous year: 28
 While meeting during the 2020-2021 year, the team echoed the belief of remaining faithful to the mission of 29
 making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Together with the extended cabinet and 30
 congregational specialists, the Ministry Advisory Team is working to communicate conference priorities and align 31
 conference resources toward these identified areas. 32
 In 2020, funds from the Bobo Trust were dispersed as grants for leadership development training. 33
 The end of year balance was \$80,769. 34
 35

Objectives for the coming year: 36
 The Ministry Advisory Team will continue to build on partnerships across ministry areas of the annual conference. 37
 38

Action(s) required from the 2021 Annual Conference: 39
 40

If you take away nothing from this report, know this: 41
 This team works together to keep the annual conference bodies focused on how to best support the efforts of 42
 local churches working to strengthen connections with their communities to witness to the grace, mercy and love 43
 of Jesus Christ. 44
 45

Narrative: 46
 Respectfully submitted: 47
 L. Jonathan Holston, Resident Bishop 48
 bishop@umcsc.org, 803-786-9486 49
 Rev. Stephen Love, Dean of the Cabinet 50
 Ms. Barbara Ware, Conference Lay Leader 51
 Rev. Millie Nelson Smith, Director of Connectional Ministries 52
 Rev. Ross Chellis, Convener, Conf. Connectional Ministries 53
 Rev. James Friday, Director of Congregational Development 54
 Rev. Richard Reams, Chair, Conf. Board of Congregational Development 55
 Ms. Laura Hill, MAT Secretary 56
 Ms. Beth Westbury, Conference Treasurer & Director of Administrative Services 57
 Mr. Smith Patterson, Vice Chair, Conf. Council on Finance & Administration 58
 Rev. Mel Arant, Coordinator of Clergy Services 59
 Rev. Fran Elrod, Chair, Conf. Board of Ordained Ministry 60
 Rev. Chris Lollis, Conference Benefits Officer 61
 Ms. Valerie Brooks-Madden, Chair, Conf. Board of Pension and Health Benefits 62

THE REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE CHANCELLOR

It is my privilege to serve this conference as Conference Chancellor, legal advisor to the Bishop and the Annual Conference by Conference standing rule 98, requests for my services are made through the Episcopal office.

Thank you for allowing me to serve the Conference. I appreciate and look forward to the opportunity to continue work with the dedicated clergy, staff and laypersons of the Conference.

My work this year has included serving as a resource for lawyers defending local Churches and the Conference in litigation, in working with the Conference Board of Trustees by preparing leases, deeds and sales contracts and in assisting in drafting resolutions and resources for Churches as we have dealt with COVID-19. The Boy Scout bankruptcy and issues created by COVID-19 and the pathway to a safe reopening have been important issues this year.

Once again thank you for the opportunity to serve this Conference and the United Methodist Church.

Kay G. Crowe, Conference Counsellor

SOUTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE UNITED METHODIST MEN

Areas of Work and Ministry

Charters

We continue to struggle in South Carolina to get increases in Chartered Churches. We just have not focus on it as we should. We currently have 270 Active Chartered Churches and continue to be one of leaders in the Southeast Jurisdiction.

EMS

We did have an increase in EMS this year but have lost some as well. Most of our EMS come from our Conference Leadership Team. At this point we have 46 active EMS members

Upper Room Prayer Ministry

We continue to promote the Upper Room Prayer Ministry, however it seems to have lost momentum with close of prayer line and start of Prayer Wall. Dennis Sullen our Prayer Advocate is still recovering from medical problems.

Spiritual Retreat

Our **One in the Spirit** In Person / Virtual event was February 26, 2021 from 6:30 to 8:30. It was produced from Mt. Horeb and livestreamed to Churches across South Carolina. We had 6 Major Host Sponsor churches that was able to seat at least 100 men social distanced, and had the technology to live stream the event. We also had 20 smaller churches donate \$100.00 and provided space for their men's group in their local church. Individuals will be able to login in to the event after a free registration. We believe over 700 attended the event. Keynote Presenters were Carlos Whitaker, John Eldredge, and Bishop Jonathan Holston. Rev Jeff Kersey and Rev Stephen Love were also on the program. WE were blessed to have Rev. Trevor Miller of Mt. Horeb to help us plan and lead the event.

Teaching Churches

A plan follow up to the 2021 Event is to have District Meeting In person or Virtual during 2021. The February Event was designed to be first part of total. Two extra sessions were available to be use as follow up.

Leadership

South Carolina is continuing to build leadership teams in each District. The above Event we hope will push this along. Last year MennMinistry lost two great men Dale Sherrin, past district and Conference President, and also Neel Hollis, the current District President. Their death leaves a void that will take time to fill.

YoungER Men

We continue to focus on YoungER Men's Ministry. Several of our Districts have provided contact information for men to work with SEJ to help to build leadership.

Scouting

Rev. Robert Cox served 2 years as SC Scouting Coordinator. Assembled an awesome leadership team and this year has moved on in his retirement plan. Before he left he found a great replacement. Roland Finch has taken over and has great plans to continue to build leadership and Scouting connection in SC

Give Day 2020

We had a great response to Give Day 2020 from our leadership team. Thanks to GCUMM for providing great promotional materials and videos. It would have been better to have had the materials and videos sooner. Something to think about for 2021. South Carolina's total contribution to date is \$2,527.00. This is from a check \$1,727 from UMMSC and contributions from Men's Groups and Individual Men.

Goal for 2021

We will continue to Work our 8 basic Goals

Grow the Connection

Support Prayer Ministry

Support Society of St Andrew

Seem support for PET carts

| | |
|--|---|
| Support Strength for Service | 1 |
| Encourage Small Group Studies | 2 |
| Work to get Teaching Churches in the Districts | 3 |
| Build YoungER Men Ministry | 4 |

The pandemic this year has brought change to our way of operating. Some have gone in hiding but some have seen this as positive change. A time to explore new and different ways of doing Ministry. We are certainly Blessed by having a connecting tool like Zoom. Our February Event has been key to our success in past years. God has use that time in so many special ways. He is already working to help us see new opportunities in new direction for 2021. When we yield to His call, Great and Awesome things happen. Glory to God. Amen.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marvin Horton, President
MennMinistry, SC Conference

SOUTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

Purpose:

The organized unit of United Methodist Women shall be a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.

Key moments from the previous year:

Two in person events were held in February 2020.

- Legislative Advocacy Days February 11th at Epworth Children’s Home hosted 254 attendees for “Bold United Methodist Women Called to Action”. Learning through select workshops and keynote speaker J. Blasingame “Reclaiming the Previously Incarcerated” and presenter T. Void “Active Shooter Awareness” inspired us all.
- Leap Day February 29th Limitless Fun Day at Lebanon United Methodist Church, Eastover, brought 77 together for talent and performances of Limitless members, ages 14-30.

Both our Spiritual Growth Retreat and Come Together Be Together were cancelled due to pandemic and safety needs.

Virtual activities and meetings completed our year.

- Mission u was a virtual learning series of three sessions (July 18, 25 and August 8) led by Rev. Scarlett Hester, Bluffton United Methodist Church. Spiritual Growth study was “Finding Peace in an Anxious World”, with 206 registered attendees. Mission u Youth series included dialogue and idea exchange over two sessions.
- Our 48th Annual Meeting “Let Your Light Shine”, hosted by Main Street United Methodist Church, Greenwood, brought 254 registrants together for worship, fellowship and conducting business of our organization. Keynote speaker Rev. Thessa Smith, New Trinity United Methodist Church and Bible Study leader Rev. Susan Maddox, St. Paul United Methodist Church inspired us to keep our lights shining brightly in the days to come.

Joyfully we awarded three Presidential Scholarships to bright, caring young women, SC Conference Methodist Church members, each one pursuing higher education degrees. This was our fourth year awarding \$1000 scholarships, totaling fourteen awards.

Objectives for the coming year:

We celebrate two South Carolina Conference United Methodist Women members serving on the 2020-2024 Program Advisory Group for United Methodist Women National. Sue Owens, Spartanburg District, is President Southeastern Jurisdiction. Samoria Session, Hartsville District is Member representing South Carolina Conference. Our prayers go with Sue and Samoria as they serve the next four years.

We continue to offer our Presidential Scholarship for women, members of our SC Methodist Churches who are seeking degrees of higher education. Awards are announced in May. Plans are to connect with our previous winners. They are our future leaders.

Our purpose emphasis for 2021 is “to develop a creative supportive fellowship”. We will work hard to grow closer, reassure and support one another. As we experience isolation and pause our traditional gatherings, we will create new means of staying connected. Our Spiritual Growth Mission Coordinator Vickie Harvey is connecting members requesting Prayer Partners.

Communication is critical during times of isolation. Our quarterly Mission Echo newsletter is an online resource. Our monthly Advocate column highlights current events and service work. District quarterly newsletters share local activities. Our website and face book page are growing. Who are we missing?

We support South Carolina Mission projects, Bethlehem Center Spartanburg, Columbia Bethlehem Community Center, Killingsworth and Wallace Family Life Center. Our Education & Interpretation Mission Coordinators, leader Eunice White Conference E&I are tasked with “telling the story” of their good deeds and services. We support their work which provides a way for women, children and youth to thrive.

1 **Action(s) required from the 2021 Annual Conference:** None.

2

3 **If you take away nothing from this report, know this:**

4 South Carolina Conference United Methodist Women welcome new members. We have a desire to grow in
5 mission and fellowship with all women, children and youth, seniors too!

6 Our vision is turning faith, hope and love into action on behalf of women, children and youth around the world.

7 We provide opportunities and resources to grow spiritually, become more deeply rooted in Christ and put faith
8 into action.

9 We equip women and girls around the world to be leaders in communities, agencies, workplaces, govern-
10 ments and churches.

11 We work for justice through compassionate service and advocacy to change unfair policies and systems.

12 We provide educational experiences that lead to personal change in order to transform the world.

13 We are the fourth largest conference in America.

14 Membership worldwide is over 800,000 strong.

15 We celebrated 150 years in mission on March 23, 2019. Our Legacy Fund, permanent endowment, continues
16 to financially prepare for our future.

17

18 **Narrative:**

19 We are a community of women, coming from all twelve districts in South Carolina Conference. Our network of
20 fellowship and friendship is strong. Our bonds and care for each other grow deep. We pray together! Love and
21 compassion rule.

22 We are organized for growth, with flexible structures leading to effective witness and action. Our Limitless
23 young women will provide our path into the future. We encourage them. Our Reading Program, Prayer Calendar,
24 Program Book, and national websiteunitedmethodistwomen.org are resources which sustain member growth and
25 learning.

26 We invite all women to join our organization. We welcome new members. Come be part of our journey “to
27 know God” and to know Him well.

28

29 Respectfully submitted:

30 Cathy Ford, Conference President 2019-2022
31 cathyford@gmail.com, 8642316740
32 President - Cathy S. Ford
33 Vice-President – Janice Eaddy
34 Secretary – Dr. Renee Ritter
35 Treasurer – Ruby Hannah
36 Communications – Kim Love Quick
37 Secretary of Program Resources – Shirley Crosby
38 Education & Interpretation – Eunice Y. White
39 Membership Nurture and Outreach – Lavonne James
40 Social Action – Linda Eichenbaum
41 Chair CONominations – Kathy Roys
42 Dean Mission u – Betty Swinton
43 Assistant Dean – Vanessa Key

44

45

46

SALKEHATCHIE SUMMER SERVICE LLC

47

48 **Purpose:**

49 Salkehatchie Summer Service LLC is a South Carolina United Methodist program for youth age 14 and older
50 and adult leaders that volunteer for a week in the summer to rebuild homes for families needing help.

51

52 **Key moments from the previous year:**

53 Unfortunately, Salkehatchie did not hold the 2020 scheduled camps due to the Covid-19 Pandemic.

54

55 **Objectives for the coming year:**

56 Unfortunately, Salkehatchie will not be holding the 2021 scheduled camps due to the Covid-19 Pandemic.
57 This year the Board examined how we could hold camps because we know of the great need across the state for
58 rebuilding homes. By the time we reviewed the CDC and SCDHEC guidelines for overnight camps, we realized
59 that the guidelines would force us to make too many changes to Salkehatchie. In order to keep homeowners,
60 campers (youth and adults), church folks, schools and communities safe and well, we had to cancel.

61 We are praying that Salkehatchie will be back in 2022 with a mighty roar.

62 Our challenge is to promote Salkehatchie to every SCUMC church because we will have much to do 2022.

63

64 **Action(s) required from the 2021 Annual Conference:** None

If you take away nothing from this report, know this:

Please pray for Salkehatchie to come back in 2022 and help us promote this to everyone.

Narrative:

Respectfully submitted:

Kathryn Hart, Chair of Board of Managers
kathyivey@sc.rr.com, 8033182646

THE SOUTH CAROLINA METHODIST CONFERENCE CREDIT UNION

The year 2021 marks sixty-six years of service by the South Carolina Methodist Conference Credit Union (SCMCCU) to the Ministers and their families, the churches and their members, and the institutions of the South Carolina United Methodist Conference. The Credit Union was chartered on September 19, 1955, by ten elders of the South Carolina Conference (1785). The Reverend Hawley B. Lynn was elected to serve as the first President. Initially the Credit Union was chartered to serve ministerial members of the annual conference and others under appointment of the bishop, employees of the Boards and Agencies of the annual conference, and their family members. Today, membership encompasses not only the clergy of the South Carolina Conference and their families, but also members of the churches, and employees of the local churches, the Annual Conference, and the United Methodist Colleges, and Retirement Homes of the South Carolina Conference.

In 2020 the Credit Union was negatively affected by the COVID19 pandemic; however, we continued to conduct member business, never closing a single day due to COVID19. As a financial institution, we confronted the lowest return on investments in over a century, but we are already experiencing the early stages of a recovery.

On January 25, 2021, at the Credit Union's Annual Meeting, due to the pandemic, was held virtually, the members elected Board of Directors and the financial condition of the credit union was reported. Please note below the financial condition of the credit union at the end of 2020.

The staff of the SCMCCU remains focused in its mission to serve its members. Mr. Rex Wilson serves as President of the Credit Union, a role he has held since 2007. Mrs. Latasha Whitaker is Accounting & Operations. Mrs. Donna Lollis is Loan Officer & Member Services and Ms. Carolyn Lucas is Receptionist & Member Services.

You are most likely a member of a United Methodist Church in South Carolina. As a member you are invited to join the South Carolina Methodist Conference Credit Union as it continues to serve United Methodism and United Methodists in South Carolina. Visit our website (www.scmccu) to learn more.

The Board of Directors, Committees and staff of the SCMCCU are grateful for the trust placed in us as our members' financial stewards.

Directors: Mr. James Bradley Jr., Rev. Eugene L. Curry, Rev. Roger M. Gramling, Mr. Joel S. Hughes, Rev. Dennis R. Lee, Mrs. Lisa K. Livingston, Rev. Ronald A. Pettit, Rev. Robert M. Vincent, Rev. Lillian H. Washington

Credit Committee: Rev. John E. Holler, Chairperson, Rev. John W. Culp, Mr. H. Parker Evatt

Supervisory Committee: Mrs. Christine C. Dominick, Chairperson, Rev. Willis E. Haselden, "Rett," and Mr. Alston Brooks.

James Bradley, Jr., Chairperson, Board of Directors
Reginald D. Wilson, Jr., President

See next page for Charts

| South Carolina Methodist Conference Credit Union | 12/31/19 | 12/31/20 | Change |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Assets | \$ | \$ | % |
| Cash & Equivalents | 460,086 | 616,284 | 34 |
| TOTAL INVESTMENTS | 647,274 | 1,199,274 | 85 |
| Real Estate Loans | 441,828 | 326,167 | -26 |
| Unsecured Loans | 348,815 | 117,316 | -66 |
| Other Loans | 3,123,880 | 3,232,528 | 3 |
| TOTAL LOANS | 3,914,523 | 3,676,010 | -6 |
| (Allowance for Loan & Lease Losses) | (54,020) | (35,784) | -34 |
| Land And Building | 67,788 | 65,473 | -3 |
| Other Fixed Assets | 2,663 | 10,723 | 303 |
| NCUSIF Deposit | 44,106 | 42,402 | -4 |
| All Other Assets | 16,087 | 15,192 | -6 |
| TOTAL ASSETS | 5,098,507 | 5,589,574 | 10 |
| | | | |
| Liabilities | | | |
| Dividends Payable | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Notes & Interest Payable | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Accounts Payable & Other Liabilities \3 | 18,298 | 20,904 | 14 |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES | 18,298 | 20,904 | 14 |
| Regular shares | 2,869,178 | 3,419,575 | 19 |
| All Other Shares & Deposits | 1,639,810 | 1,617,600 | -1 |
| TOTAL SHARES & DEPOSITS | 4,508,988 | 5,037,175 | 12 |
| Regular Reserve | 304,175 | 304,175 | 0 |
| Undivided Earnings | 267,046 | 227,320 | -15 |
| TOTAL EQUITY | 571,221 | 534,495 | -7 |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES, SHARES, & EQUITY | 5,098,507 | 5,589,574 | 10 |
| | | | |
| Income | 12/31/19 | 12/31/20 | Change |
| | \$ | \$ | % |
| Loan Income* | 255,232 | 250,235 | -2 |
| Investment Income* | 28,763 | 7,478 | -74 |
| Other Income* | 12,481 | 8,783 | -30 |
| Total Income* | 296,476 | 266,496 | |
| Expenses | | | |
| Total Employee Compensation & Benefits* | 203,138 | 197,651 | -3 |
| Total Other Operating Expenses* | 70,644 | 74,361 | 5 |
| Provision for Loan/Lease Losses* | 10,658 | 25,543 | 140 |
| Cost of Funds* | 6,624 | 6,523 | -2 |
| Total Expenses* | 291,064 | 304,078 | |
| | | | |
| Net Income (Loss)* | 5,412 | (39,725) | -6.39 |
| | | | |

AFRICA UNIVERSITY FUND

1
2

3 What a joy it is to share with you, the members of the South Carolina Conference, as partners in ministry with
4 Africa University. The opportunity to update and thank you is truly a bright spot, given the uncertainty and upheaval
5 that have been our shared reality, locally and globally, from the onset of the coronavirus pandemic.

6 I pray that you, your loved ones and wider church family are keeping safe and remaining hopeful and connected,
7 as you address common challenges and safeguard each other's health and well-being.

8 Africa University is deeply grateful to the local churches of the South Carolina Conference for investing 100
9 percent of the asking to the Africa University Fund apportionment in 2020. Thank you for supporting the ministry of
10 Africa University with such faithfulness and generosity. By giving as you do, even in difficult times, South Carolina
11 United Methodist congregations are a source of encouragement and strength.

The multilayered impact of COVID-19 and the measures instituted to control the public health crisis it engendered have brought about profound and lasting adjustments how we live, work, serve and connect. For Africa University, these included:

- **A shift to online-only teaching and learning from late March through to December 2020.** Online teaching and remote work required more equipment and training for faculty and staff as well as creative actions to ensure consistent internet access for the students, regardless of location. As the only university in Zimbabwe accredited to offer online degrees, Africa University had the infrastructure and expertise to transition smoothly and break new ground with competence-based student assessment tools.
- **Gifts totaling more than \$300,000 from across the United Methodist connection that were designated for COVID-19 relief efforts.** These second-mile gifts enabled Africa University to house, feed and encourage almost 300 international students who were stranded on its campus between March and late July 2020.
- **Excellent student retention and modest enrollment growth,** with a more than 99% uptake of online learning by students. Due to Africa University's highly proactive approach and adherence to shared governance, more than 3,000 students enrolled for the 2020-2021 academic year—16% more than the previous year—with 2,395 studying full-time. Fifty-seven percent of full-time students were female and 24% were international.
- **Innovation, outreach and service** through:
 - ◊ The development and distribution of masks and hand sanitizer (*of its own design/formulation*), that have now been certified and cleared for commercial production.
 - ◊ The launch, via a web application, of farm to household delivery of fresh produce, meat and poultry products by the Africa University Dream Farm Trust.
 - ◊ Two student-led initiatives—**Feed a Family** and **Ben Hill UMC Women's Residence Girl Child Support Program**—that provided medical care, food and school fees assistance to vulnerable families in the wider community. Campus-based and home-based students raised resources, procured supplies and organized safe distribution to families.
- **The successful completion of two new buildings**—the Highland Park UMC-funded student union facility and a dormitory for female students. A new solar farm powers the Highland Park women's dormitory.

Africa University's online campus is here to stay, thanks to infrastructure enhancements and the lesson learned while staying on mission in 2020. Africa University is working to grow its pan-African presence and impact through new programs, partnerships, and an effective blend of in-person and online learning options.

Thank you, South Carolina United Methodists, for helping to prepare young leaders to be "an aroma that brings life" to a world that is crying out for justice, compassion, healing and wholeness (2 Cor. 2:14-16). Through your prayers and gifts, you are an integral part of the outstanding efforts of the students, lecturers and administrators to remain engaged in disciple-making by example. In a fragile and interconnected world and family of faith, your deep commitment, loving concern and steadfast support matter greatly.

Thank you for aiding Africa University in never missing a day of lectures or a meal or a paycheck. In remaining steadfast in their support for the Africa University Fund, the local churches of the South Carolina Conference help Africa University to maintain a balanced budget, carry no debt and focus on transformative ministry.

Thank you for the many scholarship and financial aid gifts from individual South Carolinians, church districts and organizations that are making dreams possible for young people who would otherwise never have a chance of pursuing a college education.

In journeying alongside Africa University in ministry and mission, South Carolina United Methodists are the church in the world—seeding hope and sharing the love of Christ. **You affirm that when we are all in it together, God's grace is indeed sufficient.** To God be the glory.

James H. Salley, Associate Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement
Africa University Development Office

BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Dear Colleagues in Ministry:

I am grateful for my first opportunity to thank you for your moral, prayerful, and material support of the Boston University School of Theology (BUSTH). Like many institutions, this past year at BUSTH has been largely influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic, outrage over enduring racial injustices in our country, and concern over rising white supremacy in our nation. Our work at BUSTH is to prepare religious leaders to encounter and engage complex challenges such as these. A year like 2020 makes the School's historic and ongoing commitments to social justice even more relevant. Below are some BUSTH highlights from 2020. We remain hopeful in our continued partnership with you in the work and witness of the School toward advancing social justice, fostering compassionate communities, and shaping wise leaders for a hurting world.

BREAKING NEWS:

- **Virtual Learning:** Our faculty, staff, and library successfully pivoted to fully remote learning in Spring 2020 upon the COVID-19 lockdown, which continued through the summer terms. Fall 2020 offered a hybrid approach to learning, due to Boston University's "Learn from Anywhere" initiative, which included a comprehensive on-campus testing program and strict COVID-19 precautions to ensure the safety of students, faculty, and

1 staff. Students were given the most flexibility, with allowances to learn in-person in socially distanced and
2 masked classes or in the comfort of their own homes via Zoom. The redirection to online learning served as an
3 opportunity for BUSTH faculty to develop new online pedagogical proficiency and positions the School for greater
4 engagement with current conversations concerning best practices in distance, hybrid, and online learning
5 options for students worldwide.

- 6 • **Students:** We continue to increase and celebrate diversity in our student body, creating opportunities
7 for in-depth exchanges and a rich virtual community life. Our Fall 2020 entering class was among our largest
8 classes ever, with 128 new students enrolling in September, despite the fact that recruitment had to transition to
9 be fully online.
- 10 • **Faculty:** We celebrated *dean emerita* Mary Elizabeth Moore's 12-year service to the School as she stepped
11 down on December 31, 2020. The institution will be forever grateful for her historic tenure as its dean. The new
12 dean G. Sujin Pak began her appointment on January 1, 2021. Dean Pak is known for her commitments to
13 academic rigor, social justice, and United Methodism, which made her a wonderful fit for the deanship of
14 BUSTH at this time. In the coming months, the School plans to appoint a new Martin Luther King, Jr. Professor
15 of Ethical Leadership.
- 16 • **Lilly Endowment Grant for Thriving Congregations Initiative:** BUSTH was awarded a nearly \$1 million,
17 four-year grant to work with urban congregations responding to trauma. The project will be focused on
18 responding to congregants who are continually shaped by and reacting to compounding domestic and global
19 traumatic events, such as systemic racism, gun violence, homelessness, or immigration stressors.
- 20 • **Scholarships:** We continue to offer free tuition to UMC registered candidates for ordained ministry.
21 Building student scholarships and housing opportunities remain key priorities. BUSTH also offers leadership
22 fellowships to support students in ethnic, gender, and sexuality studies: Raíces Latinas, Sacred Worth,
23 Indigenous Studies, Korean Studies, Women in Leadership, and Black Church Studies.
- 24 • **Online Lifelong Learning:** Through a generous grant from BU's Digital Education Incubator, BUSTH
25 began to offer online mini-courses, workshops, and reading groups for interested professional and spiritual
26 enrichment of alumni and other religious leaders. Inaugural groups covered topics such as religious
27 Afro-futurism, spirituality through the writings of Howard Thurman, and rituals and practices of grief in a time
28 of pandemic. To learn about or participate in the next BUSTH Lifelong Learning offerings, visit bu.edu/sth/oll.
- 29 • **Theology and the Arts Initiatives:** Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our traditional exhibits moved to an
30 online space. The art of John August Swanson is available at [https://butheartsgallery2020.wordpress.com/](https://butheartsgallery2020.wordpress.com/john-august-swanson-social-justice-artist)
31 [john-august-swanson-social-justice-artist](https://butheartsgallery2020.wordpress.com/john-august-swanson-social-justice-artist).
- 32 • **Development:** BUSTH's "On a Mission" campaign surpassed all expectations when it concluded in
33 September 2019, raising \$29.4 million—well beyond the \$15 million goal set in 2010. These funds reflect
34 broad support from alumni, friends, faculty, staff, and students, with a far-reaching impact on the School's
35 ability to pursue its mission. More than 2,800 donors, including 1,927 alumni (a 50% alumni participation
36 rate), contributed to our campaign.

37 **PARTNERING FOR MINISTRY AND TRANSFORMATION:**

- 38 • **Doctor of Ministry:** The DMin in Transformational Leadership flourishes with lively student cohorts that
39 are interfaith, broadly ecumenical, culturally diverse, and global. The model includes intensives, online courses,
40 and faculty mentoring.
- 41 • **Ecumenical partnerships:** We now have four denominational Communities of Learning: Wesleyan/
42 Methodist, Episcopal/Anglican, United Church of Christ, and Unitarian Universalist.
- 43 • **Partnership with Hebrew College:** Together we are able to enrich interreligious learning through joint
44 courses and public events, and also co-sponsor *The Journal of Interreligious Studies* and the *State of*
45 *Formation* for emerging leaders.
- 46 • **Chaplaincy education:** BUSTH and the Chaplaincy Innovation Lab received a grant to support the joint
47 project "Innovations in Chaplaincy Education," which will seek to redesign courses on chaplaincy in higher edu-
48 cation, and centralize education for chaplaincy curricula, including competencies needed for chaplains or other
49 professionals in spiritual care.

50 **TAKING ACTION GLOBALLY AND LOCALLY:**

- 51 • **Campus action:** Work continues to improve accessibility, sustainability, and responsible investing.
52 BUSTH is the first certified Green School in BU and is active in the Green Seminary Initiative.
- 53 • **Internships in global service and peacemaking:** Students participate in apprenticeship ministries
54 across the world.

55 **COMMITMENT TO JUSTICE:**

- 56 • Faculty, staff, and students are active in #BlackLivesMatter efforts to seek racial equality, and in collabora-
57 tive services to support people suffering the consequences of immigration practices or disability inequities.
- 58 • In Town Hall meetings, the community has deep conversations on issues that divide, seeking to develop
59 capacities for relating across difference and to create a community based on the dignity of all.

60
61 BUSTH celebrates transformational leaders of the United Methodist Church. Your legacy and witness and your
62 partnership give us hope and courage for the future.

63
64 Blessings and gratitude,
65 G. Sujin Pak, Dean

DREW UNIVERSITY THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL

As with most other schools in the northeast of the U.S., Drew University evacuated its campus in early spring 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Drew Theological School faculty and staff adapted to this challenge with resilience, compassion, and creativity. The Theological School faculty put their courses all online, led development workshops for faculty across the university, and, in order to accommodate our many international admits who would not be able to enter the United States for fall 2020, designed an asynchronous Master of Divinity program. As a result of this work, the Theological School welcomed 147 new students, its largest entering class in a decade, with an enrollment of 380 for the current academic year. Our chapel team has also led the way in creating online worship experiences that connect the Drew community now across the globe. All degree programs at the Theological School include interdisciplinary courses that demand out-of-the-box thinking, apprenticeship training that addresses real-world issues, and modes of learning that promote adaptability and innovation. Our MDiv and MATM degrees include a required gateway year, vocational pathways, and experiential learning that develops and deepens adaptive leadership skills. The curriculum features a team-designed and taught interdisciplinary sequence of core courses reflecting the integration of the theological disciplines and practices characteristic of the life of faith. The faculty have also articulated shared values that are infused across the teaching and learning at Drew: a commitment to anti-racism; gender and sexual-identity equality; eco-sustainability and environmental justice; and interfaith understanding and cooperation. Drew cultivates pastors, preachers, deacons, activists, teachers, and thought leaders who go all over the world to take their place as the next generation of faith leaders and change agents.

Melanie Johnson-DeBaufre, Interim Dean

GAMMON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY The United Methodist Church

Gammon Theological Seminary, located in Atlanta, GA, is The United Methodist constituent member of the Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC), a consortium of historically African American theological schools. Gammon/ITC is a co-educational, professional graduate school of theology. Its faculty personifies vigorous scholarship, rigorous academic discipline, and significant research in the service of the church and other communities in the world. Gammon/ITC is a premier resource for black church scholarship and faith-based solutions to the spiritual and socio-economic challenges confronting the African American community and beyond.

Founded in 1883 by The Methodist Episcopal Church and with assistance from the Freedman's Aid Society, today Gammon Theological Seminary is one of the 13 theological schools of The United Methodist Church. The faculty and administration of Gammon/ITC create an environment in which critical thinking, investigative reflection, decision making, and responsible action are fostered. Gammon/ITC is a member of the Atlanta University Center Complex, the world's largest enterprise of African American higher education. It is also a member of The University Center of Georgia and the Atlanta Theological Association. The school is fully accredited by the Association of Theological Schools and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. Gammon/ITC offers the following degree programs: the Master of Divinity, the Master of Arts in Religion and Education, and the Doctor of Ministry. Admission is open to qualified men and women.

The support given to The United Methodist Ministerial Education Fund by The South Carolina Annual Conference continues to enable Gammon students to carry on a proud Wesleyan tradition of theological education. They are taught to think independently and communicate effectively. They are also challenged to become involved in finding solutions to problems that affect the human condition and to become active in the community beyond this campus. Additionally, graduates of this institution are encouraged to maintain a lifelong desire for intellectual growth, spiritual development, and the acquisition of skills for the practice of ministry in The United Methodist Church.

Gammon/ITC has experienced a challenging but productive year amid the alternate mode of instruction and learning due to the COVID19 PANDEMIC. We continue to live out our mission to recruit, support, and educate pastors and lay leaders for The United Methodist Church. Gammon Theological Seminary is extremely grateful to this Annual Conference for your support of theological education and for your commitment to ensuring that God's church will be served by persons who are called and trained to lead us forward in the Wesleyan tradition.

Yours in Christ,

Joseph L. Crawford, Sr.,
Interim President-Dean, Gammon Theological Seminary
653 Beckwith Street SW, Atlanta, Georgia 30314-4143
Email: deancrawford@gammoon-itc.org
Office: 404-581-0300, Fax: 404-581-0305

1 **METHODIST THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL IN OHIO**

2 www.mtso.edu

3
4 Thank you for this opportunity to bring you news from MTSO.

5
6 **MTSO preserves learning and community despite COVID-19**

7 Confronted by the challenges of a pandemic, MTSO's students, faculty and staff joined together to
8 preserve a learning environment and a sense of community. In March 2020, the school announced that Spring
9 Semester and summer classes all would move online. A virtual commencement was held for the class of
10 2020, featuring submitted video of individual graduates, as well as faculty members in full regalia. Addressing
11 the graduates, President Jay Rundell said, "The pandemic has prepared you in ways that you might not realize.
12 There will be surprises in the future. You now know how to adapt."

13 Fall 2020 classes began in a "hyflex" format, blending online learning and optional campus-based classes.
14 As the virus became more widespread in mid-October, the school pivoted to all-online learning, extending the
15 online-only format through the 2021 Spring Semester. During all COVID-related adaptations, MTSO's tradition
16 of Tuesday chapel services continued – in person and distanced when possible, online when necessary. In
17 addition, the dining hall staff offered free Thanksgiving dinners for pickup to students and employees, and
18 continued to provide to-go lunches on a regular basis. Student organizations and study groups have continued to
19 meet virtually. Most recently, plans were made to hold the 2021 commencement virtually.

20 **Full-tuition scholarships extended to those pursuing United Methodist candidacy**

21 MTSO and the school's generous donors pledged to extend a full-tuition pledge to all prospective students
22 who are pursuing United Methodist elder or deacon candidacy. The MTSO admissions staff is happy to
23 answer questions at 800-333-6876 or admissions@mtso.edu.

24 **\$1 million Lilly Endowment grant will promote thriving in ministry**

25 In December 2020, MTSO received a grant of \$995,731 to help establish "Spaces for Thriving: Cultivating
26 Authentic Pastors for Small Membership Churches and Communities of Color." The project is part of Lilly Endow-
27 ment Inc.'s Thriving in Ministry, an initiative that supports a variety of religious organizations across the nation
28 as they create or strengthen programs that help pastors build relationships with experienced clergy who can
29 serve as mentors and guide them through key leadership challenges in congregational ministry. The central
30 goals of MTSO's project are to improve pastoral thriving through attention to well-being, authenticity in
31 vocation, and connections to fellow pastors.

32 Respectfully submitted,

33 Danny Russell, director of communications

34
35
36 **SAINT PAUL SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY**

37
38 Saint Paul School of Theology, a seminary of the United Methodist Church, is committed to the formation of
39 people for innovative, creative ministry. We are one institution, online and on-campus, in Kansas and Oklahoma.

40 This past year, we have all faced new challenges amid these unsettled times. Saint Paul School of Theology
41 began the 2020-2021 academic year offering students an online option for all courses. With many students choosing
42 to attend class solely online, our Student Council created a monthly "Chat & Chew" where students, faculty, and
43 staff come together to eat lunch and talk about life, seminary, and ministry. In addition, Rev. Rod Newman, our
44 Oklahoma Campus Chapel Coordinator, crafts a weekly Community Prayer to provide encouragement and faith-
45 fulness as the school seeks to provide spiritual formation in new ways.

46 Kansas Campus Chapel Coordinator Dr. Casey Sigmon took worship to new technological levels by introducing
47 our weekly online worship service via Zoom, bringing our separate campus chapel services together for one service
48 where all are invited to create a sacred atmosphere from wherever they are. Along with our featured alumni worship
49 preachers, the community was blessed this fall by the presence of Musician in Residence Hannah Rand, from The
50 Many, who led the music each week for worship. In Spring 2020, Odell Talley, Director of Music for Swope Parkway
51 United and organist for Zion Travelers Missionary Baptist, served as Musician in Residence. For those who cannot
52 join us live, chapel recordings are available on the Saint Paul YouTube channel.

53 Saint Paul staff and faculty continue to contribute to the academy, church, and society. This year, we have added
54 new adjunct professors, including Rev. Dr. Carol Cook-Moore and Rev. Dr. Tiffany Nagel Monroe both of the OKUMC,
55 Rev. Dr. Robert Turner of Vernon Chapel AME, UMC Deaconess Cindy Johnson of Rio Grande Conference, Rev.
56 Adam Hamilton and Debi Nixon both of Church of the Resurrection, Rev. Chebon Kernell of the UMC Native
57 American Comprehensive Plan, and Rev. Dr. Shannon Fleck of the Oklahoma Conference of Churches.

58 The faculty of Saint Paul School of Theology continue to maintain high standards of scholarship, research,
59 publication, and engagement. Their many activities and publications over the past year are so numerous that
60 space permits only the sharing of selected highlights.

- 61 1. Dr. Jim Brandt, Professor of Historical Theology, will publish "Schleiermacher's Christian Ethics" in the forth-
62 coming Oxford Handbook of Schleiermacher, which will appear in 2022 from the Oxford University Press.
63 2. Dr. Nancy Howell, Professor of Theology and Philosophy of Religion and Oubri A. Poppele Professor
64 of Health and Welfare Ministries, continues her service on the Executive Committee of the International
65 Society for Science and Religion, working on several committees advancing the aims of the Society.

3. Rev. Dr. Israel Kamudzandu, Associate Professor of New Testament Studies, will see the publication of his book, Reading and Interpreting the Bible with Global South Christians: A 21st Century Model for Europe and North America Christendom, by Wipf and Stock Publishers this summer. He has also written four Commentaries on 2 Corinthians and Ephesians which appeared on WorkingPreacher.org in April.
4. Dr. Hal Knight, Donald and Pearl Wright Professor of Wesleyan Studies, continues his work as a contributing writer in *The Missouri Methodist* magazine.
5. Dr. Kristen E. Kvam, Professor of Theology, serves as co-chair for the American Academy of Religion's Program Unit "Martin Luther and Global Lutheran Traditions." Over the last several months, she has conducted invited presentations to the Great Plains UMC Clergy and its Clergy Excellence in Liminal Time Conversations and the Fall Theological Conference of Central States Synod (ELCA) on October 14, 2020.
6. Dr. Casey Sigmon, Assistant Professor of Preaching and Worship and Director of Contextual Education, continues to contribute regularly to WorkingPreacher.org and served as the keynote speaker at the Wesleyan Liturgical Society in Kansas City in March 2020. Her scholarly writing will appear in the Preaching the Manifold Grace, Vol. 2, edited by Ronald J. Allen and published by Wipf and Stock.

This year, we have faced several challenges that turned into opportunities for new recruiting spaces and partnerships to enhance students' seminary experience. With the change from in-person to virtual events, Rev. Shannon Hancock, Director of Admissions and Communications, has expanded her reach to prospective students by participating as a virtual exhibitor at online conferences. Rev. Hancock engages with prospective students via apps such as Whova and HopIn to highlight Saint Paul's unique course delivery system and formative community.

In February, Saint Paul held the 2021 Slater-Willson Lecture online featuring Rev. Dr. Miguel A. De La Torre. His lecture, "Why Do They Come?" explored the political, economic, and social causes of our current immigration crisis. Before the lecture, Rev. Dr. De La Torre participated in a student-led forum, entering a conversation centering around the practical aspects of ministry and immigration. Later in April, Saint Paul Evangelical Society, led by Dr. Hal Knight, hosted a lecture given by Dr. Sammy G. Alfaro, Associate Professor of Theology at Grand Canyon University and Pastor of Iglesia Nuevo Dia (New Day Church), on the "Pastoral Strategies for Ministering Among Latinx Immigrant Communities." And for the first time, on May 22, Saint Paul held a virtual commencement celebration with videos, cap and gown photos, online congratulatory messages from friends and family, and a commencement address by Rev. Chebon Kernell. The class of 2021 had 22 graduates, including 16 Master of Divinity and 1 Doctor of Ministry graduates. Due to the pandemic, for safety concerns, Saint Paul has postponed our 60th Anniversary Celebration. However, we have rescheduled the event for Friday, October 22 and look forward to coming together as a community for a safe, in-person gathering.

For the 2020-2021 fiscal year, Saint Paul Course of Study (COS) School educated 255 individual students of which were new students, with a total registration of 520 classes and offering a total of 51 courses. Due to Covid-19, the school quickly pivoted its course offerings and delivered lessons in both asynchronous and synchronous online formats. In Winter 2019, Saint Paul began a hybrid (online and on-campus) schedule for six courses. Although for 2021, this went fully online, plans to increase the number of hybrid course offerings are in development.

Saint Paul Board of Trustees added three new members to their ranks: Bishop James D. Tindall, Sr., Pastor Emeritus at Metropolitan Spiritual Church of Christ Kansas City; Ms. Sharon Cleaver, Senior Director of Marketing, Communications, and PR for the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Kansas City; and Mr. Rogers Strickland, Founder/CEO of Strickland Construction.

Through a Board initiative related to diversity and inclusion, Saint Paul created a working group on Native American theology and ministries comprised of Native theologians and church leaders. Their efforts are focused on how the church and academy can work together toward healing generational trauma related to the spread of Christianity and the genocide of Indigenous North Americans.

As we have happily reported in past years, Saint Paul is financially sound and operates with a balanced budget. The changes made these last years have established a solid financial foundation for years of sustainability. We continue to be grateful for donations from the community that provide technology, scholarships, and emergency assistance to students. Our significant investments in technology have recently allowed our staff, faculty, and students to transition to a fully hybrid educational delivery model providing a safe learning environment during the pandemic. Our faculty was uniquely adept at managing technology in the classroom before the pandemic, making the transition to all online courses a smooth process.

With the Board's assistance, led by Board Chair Rev. Dr. Tex Sample, the seminary focuses on its mission. Our trustees work to continuously enhance and evaluate the strategic plans in place to guide us into the future. Perhaps most importantly, we have learned much and grown closer as a community due to the pandemic.

Saint Paul School of Theology is blessed to be your partner in ministry and help those seeking more to answer the call. We are a seminary that offers online and on-campus classes with a flexible schedule to help our students manage pastoral leadership demands in the 21st century. 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 healing in these unsettled times and for generations to come.

President Neil Blair, Saint Paul trustees, faculty, staff, alumni, and students thank you for your prayers and support.

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| <u>Kansas Campus</u> | <u>Oklahoma Campus</u> |
| 13720 Roe Avenue, Building C | 2501 North Blackwelder, Bishop W. Angie Smith Chapel |
| Leawood, KS 66224 | Oklahoma City, OK 73106 |

spst.edu



Where Theology Meets Life

1 **UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**
2 **Dayton, OH**
3

4 *"I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?" — Isaiah 43:19*
5

6 It appears God is doing some new things at United Theological Seminary, even in the midst of health, racial,
7 and political crises.

8 **God is doing a new thing at United financially.** United continues to make progress toward its goal of
9 becoming debt-free by the Seminary's 150th anniversary on October 11, 2021. Thanks to the faithfulness and gener-
10 erosity of alumni/ae and donors, less than \$1 million remains of the original \$4 million mortgage debt. After the
11 mortgage is paid in full, the Seminary plans to convert those mortgage payments into money for student scholarships.

12 **God is doing a new thing in enrollment.** Over the last five years, United's Doctor of Ministry program has
13 grown by 48%, from 170 students in the 2016-17 academic year to 251 in 2020-21. In Fall 2021, Dr. Elvin Sadler,
14 General Secretary of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, will become the Associate Dean for Doctoral
15 Studies, upon the retirement of Dr. Harold Hudson who has been a vital leader at the Seminary for 17 years.

16 **God is doing a new thing with partners in church renewal.** In the 2020-21 academic year, United has
17 partnered with Fresh Expressions US and the Mosaix Global Network to introduce two new Houses of Study.
18 These houses oversee specialized tracks in the Doctor of Ministry and Master of Divinity programs. Rev. Dr.
19 Michael Beck is director of the Fresh Expressions House of Studies, and Dr. Harry Li is director of the Mosaix
20 House of Studies.

21 In collaboration with the Northwest Texas Conference of The United Methodist Church, United also introduced
22 Rooted/Enraizados, a certificate program for coaches and mentors of Hispanic/Latino church planters. In 2020-21,
23 the program served students from more than five annual conferences.

24 **God is doing a new thing with the establishment of The Bishop Bruce Ough Innovation Center.** Beginning
25 in 2021, the Innovation Center honors the ministry of Bishop Bruce Ough by providing a hub of learning for church
26 leaders seeking the framework, support, and courage to introduce the Gospel of Jesus Christ in new and creative
27 ways. Rev. Sue Nilson Kibbey joins United as the inaugural director of the Innovation Center.

28 United's prayer is that United Methodists will perceive the new things that God is doing in our communities,
29 congregations, and ministries as we strive to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

30 Grace and peace,

31 Dr. Kent Millard, President
32
33

34 **WESLEY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**
35

36 For the world, 2020 was a year like no other. In the midst of a global pandemic, plus resurgent racism, mass
37 unemployment, and politically challenging times in the US, Wesley remained committed to fostering wisdom and
38 courage, preparing graduates to lead innovative ministries while remaining grounded in our biblical and theological
39 traditions for the sake of God's inbreaking kingdom. The mode of educational delivery changed overnight, as we
40 became an all-online seminary on March 15, 2020 and have remained so to keep students, faculty, staff and all
41 members of the Wesley community safe from COVID-19 exposure on campus. This is simply Wesley modelling
42 what we teach our students: to be committed to our God-given mission while being innovative and responsive in
43 the delivery of ministry. Here are some of the ways we are accomplishing that with our many partners in this
44 mission, as we seek to faithfully minister to the world in the future.

45
46 ***Research projects support congregational community engagement and envision future ministry***

47 Wesley is pleased to announce new opportunities for UMC congregations to explore, clarify, and pursue
48 thriving in their communities. Through **The Source Collaborative**, Wesley will work with three cohorts of regional
49 congregations in a two-year process of prayer, community engagement, congregational visioning, and coaching,
50 with the goal of following Jesus in mission and ministry. Interested congregations can contact
51 innovation@wesleyseminary.edu for more information. This work, funded by a \$1 million Lilly Endowment, Inc,
52 grant, raises Wesley's role as a leading research and development seminary for the whole church and comple-
53 ments Wesley's other Lilly Endowment-funded projects focused on congregational vitality.

54 The **Religious Workforce Project** is an expansive study of the current and future nature of religious work,
55 particularly in local congregations, so as to understand what opportunities and constraints may exist in the future
56 and to adapt resources and training accordingly. Through the **Wesley Innovation Hub**, the seminary has worked
57 with 18 congregations in the greater Washington area to experiment with ministries with young adults outside the
58 church. Together, these projects forge insight into future ministry and local church development, influencing the
59 way students are trained in master's, doctoral, and course of study education, but also informing workshops,
60 podcasts, articles, and training for church leaders working in their communities across the country.

61 We invite you to discover the latest research and conversations generated by the Wesley community through
62 our new web portal, #EngageInTheseTimes, at www.wesleyseminary.edu/#engage.

Using research and partnerships to reach and equip the next generation of ministers

Research shows that the primary way people learn about and begin to consider seminary options is through their pastor or an alumnus. Whether you feel called or you know someone who does, **Wesley is ready to work with you** as we make theological education more accessible and relevant to the realities of ministry today—for laity and clergy, for those seeking a degree or certification or continuing education, and for ministry from within or beyond the church.

Wesley offers an 81-hour Master of Divinity, a 36-hour Master of Arts, and a 60-hour Master of Theological Studies, any of which can be focused around specializations in public theology, urban ministry, arts and theology, missional church, children and youth ministry and advocacy, or African American church leadership.

For full-time students, we offer a modern and affordable residential community in the nation's capital. Our **Community Engagement Fellows** program prepares students to engage in entrepreneurial, community-based ministry. Generous stipends are available for each Fellow while they complete their MDiv degree. Our **3+3 Fast Track BA/MDiv program with Shenandoah University** allows students to complete both degrees in six years, entering ministry more quickly and with less debt.

For people with work, ministry, and family commitments, **Wesley's Master of Divinity degree can now be completed via online, weekend, short-term intensive, and weeknight courses in 5 years.** Check out upcoming flexible course offerings for Summer and Fall 2021 at www.wesleyseminary.edu/admissions/try-a-class-3.

Wesley works with each student to make seminary affordable. Thanks to the consistent support of graduates, congregations, and friends, Wesley provides more than \$2 million annually in scholarships. In addition to our regular merit awards, ranging from 25% to 100% tuition with stipends, Wesley has released special additional scholarships: **full-tuition scholarships** for people recommended by Wesley alumni, campus ministers, or Christian camping or service ministries who feel called to leadership in the church as it is becoming; **Next Call in Ministry scholarships** for students who have worked in a non-ministry setting for at least 10 years; and **Generación Latinx Scholarships** for emerging Latinx/Hispanic leaders for ministries both within and beyond the church.

Take your ministry to the next level

In addition to full master's degrees, Wesley offers graduate certificates for those preparing for specialized ministry! The new **Certificate for Children and Youth Ministry and Advocacy (CYMA)** is designed for people who work with and advocate for children and young people, whether in churches, schools, or non-profit organizations. The **non-residential certificate can be completed in 12 to 15 months** through online coursework and up to two residential sessions. For more information, visit www.wesleyseminary.edu/admissions/cyma-3. The **Certificate in Faith and Public Life** explores the foundations of public theology, religious freedom, and civil discourse through graduate courses. For more information, visit www.wesleyseminary.edu/ice/programs/public-theology/public-life/.

Wesley is a leader in **Doctor of Ministry programs** in specialized tracks that can include international study. Wesley is pleased to announce three new Doctor of Ministry tracks for 2022: Ministry in a Digital Age, a timely new track exploring the new opportunities and challenges of online ministry; Justice, Compassion, and Witness in a Turbulent World, hosted in Cambridge, England; and a program focused on Latinx ministry. As well, new 2022 cohorts for our popular DMin areas of focus will be offered for Military Chaplains and CPE chaplains, our international mission-focused Global Church Leadership program, and Wesley's premiere DMin program in innovative church administration "**Church Leadership Excellence.**" Find out more or apply at www.wesleyseminary.edu/doctorofministry/.

Enrich your congregational outreach and explore new dimensions of ministry

The **Lewis Center for Church Leadership** continues to be on the leading edge of research for the local church. The Lewis Center's **Leading Ideas e-newsletter** is the go-to source for over 20,000 people in ministry each week. Stay on top of their latest developments by subscribing to their podcast or newsletter at www.churchleadership.com. Also look for new practical online courses at www.lewisonlinelearning.org.

The **Community Engagement Institute** embraces a vibrant vision to be the premier center for churches and faith-based organization engaging their communities. The innovative online **Health Minister Certificate Program** prepares congregations for public health work in their parishes. Contact Dr. Tom Pruski at tpruski@wesleyseminary.edu for more information or to register for future certificate classes.

The **Center for Public Theology** equips pastors, seminarians, people of faith, and the media to create spaces for civil dialogue at the intersection of religion and politics. For more information, visit <http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/ice/programs/public-theology/>.

The **Henry Luce III Center for the Arts and Religion** works with students, religious communities, artists, and scholars exploring the intersection of the arts and theology. By engaging in innovative research, staging challenging exhibitions in our Dadian Gallery, and hosting visiting artists in our on-campus studio, the Luce Center seeks to promote dialogue and foster inspired creativity. For information on upcoming workshops and shows at the Dadian Gallery, visit www.luceartsandreligion.org.

Faculty leading the way

Our internationally regarded faculty are the heartbeat of transformative education at Wesley. Our faculty continue to advance theological scholarship with new research, publications, and courses. During this past year,

1 we celebrated the ministries of retiring faculty member Dr. Sondra Wheeler. We also welcomed New Testament
2 professor Dr. Laura C. Sweat Holmes to the Wesley community.

3
4 **Stay connected**

5 Contact us at (202) 885-8659 or admissions@wesleyseminary.edu about how Wesley's degree programs can
6 equip you for your next step in ministry.

7 Ready to join in our mission? Find out more about how you can be part of the future of Wesley
8 at www.wesleyseminary.edu/support/. Join the Wesley Community online via Wesley's social media,
9 www.facebook.com/wesleyseminary, on Instagram @wesleyseminary, and on Twitter @WesTheoSem, or sign up
10 for our electronic newsletter, *eCalling*, at www.wesleyseminary.edu/ecalling.

11
12
13 **HINTON RURAL LIFE CENTER**

14
15 **Purpose:**

16 Inspired by Jesus Christ, Hinton Rural Life Center's purpose is to engage individuals, congregations, and
17 communities in transformation through retreat ministries and missional outreach.

18
19 **Key moments from the previous year:**

20 I'm happy that 2020 is behind us and hopeful for 2021! At Hinton Rural Life Center, we are blessed to have
21 secured a strong foundation over the past decade and with the generosity of The Duke Endowment, North Carolina
22 Health Foundation, The Nantahala Health Foundation, Dub and Murray Martin, the Payroll Protection Program, and
23 our donors. We were blessed with an incredible giving response in 2020 from individuals, churches, and other organi-
24 zations -- with a 46% increase over 2019 giving. All of this financial support enabled Hinton to continue to cover
25 the cost of operations and to reach out in mission and ministry over the past year.

26 I'd love to have a standing ovation for Hinton's talented and dedicated staff. Even through lay-offs and payroll
27 deductions required to navigate cash flow in 2020, our staff facilitated online webinars and summer staff training,
28 hosted a virtual missional training event for young people, implemented and maintained new cleaning and operating
29 protocols, and creatively and safely met needs in our community through our Safe & Healthy Home Repair ministry,
30 firewood ministry, and garden ministry.

31
32 **Objectives for the coming year:**

33 As for 2021, we are excited about:

- 34 • Campus enhancements: completing renovations in the McCall Retreat House and Sells Cottage;
35 improving and creating new trails and "sanctuary" gardens; and updating our disc golf course.
- 36 • Partnering with a local medical provider to further connect our home repair ministry with improving the
37 health and safety of our neighbors.
- 38 • Continuing to offer virtual equipping and learning opportunities, including mental health first aid training
39 and webinars that explore and support the strengths and mission of the rural church.
- 40 • Offering discipleship and leadership training opportunities for young people that include training of our
41 summer staff, Hinton YouthLead Academy, Staffers-in-Training; these events are bearing fruit as
42 young people are discerning calls to ordained ministry! We are also planning a Confirmation Retreat
43 ministry to launch in Spring 2022.
- 44 • Celebrating Hinton's 60th Anniversary, in 2021, as an agency of the Southeastern Jurisdiction of The
45 United Methodist Church, with special events that recognize and give thanks for 60 years of fruitful
46 mission and ministry for the glory of God! We are excited to have Bishop Ken Carter as the guest
47 preacher at our Service of Celebration on September 25.

48
49 **Action(s) required from the 2021 Annual Conference:**

50
51 **If you take away nothing from this report, know this:**

52 Located in the Southwest corner of North Carolina in the Appalachian Mountains on Lake Chatuge, Hinton
53 Rural Life Center is dedicated to serving all with retreat and renewal ministries; mission outreach opportunities for
54 individuals, families, and church teams; and equipping and discipleship programs that impact individuals, groups,
55 and congregations for transformational ministry in their own communities.

56
57 **Narrative:**

58 Respectfully submitted:

59 Jacqueline Gottlieb, President and CEO, Hinton Rural Life Center
60 jackie@hintoncenter.org, 8283898336