

## 2024 REPORT OF THE CABINET Singing A New Song

Sing to the LORD a new song,  
his praise from the ends of the earth,  
you who go down to the sea, and all that is in it,  
you islands, and all who live in them. *Isaiah 42:10 (NIV)*

We greet you in the name of Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Isaiah the prophet, during a time of challenge and change, shared these words of hope. Sing to the Lord a new song. He reminds us of the importance of worship and praise. Many times we face the challenges of change. We are sometimes forced to consider something new and different. This year has led us to a place similar to the Israelites, facing the challenge of change.

The long awaited General Conference of the United Methodist Church was held April 23-May 3, 2024. We remain the body of Christ. In the words of 1John 3:2 “Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

We thank Bishop L Jonathan Holston and Mrs. Felecia Holston, our episcopal family for effectively leading us through uncharted waters.

We are grateful and excited to report to you that in spite of the challenges, in spite of the changes, Bishop Holston and the extended cabinet continue to pray, worship, and trust in God. Bishop Holston leads our Conference with integrity. We are doing the faithful and fruitful work of leading by example.

This year, the extended cabinet and the Ministry Advisory Team worked collaboratively. The MAT team joined the Extended Cabinet at our annual cabinet retreat to plan for the year. Bishop Holston visited our districts this past year and reminded us to care for our souls as leaders and followers of Jesus Christ. The extended cabinet, which includes our District Superintendents, Conference Lay Leader, Director of Connectional Ministries, Conference Treasurer, Director of Congregational Development, and Coordinator of the Office of Clergy Services, is blessed to be supported by the staff of Administrative Assistants and Congregational Specialists.

We have continued the work of the lay and clergy led salary equity task force. This team of leaders have taken another step toward helping us live into the Cabinet Covenant for Salary Equity. We have recently held tri- district trainings to share their findings and offer some practical ways in which we plan to address the salary equity disparities.

Our district superintendents are adapting to our current reality by launching a collaborative coverage model of our twelve districts. We will share responsibilities to effectively cover and lead as missional strategists. This year, we will provide coverage for twelve districts with ten district superintendents.

We have kept the four priorities identified by our Annual Conference as primary in our work. We provided leadership training and development for lay and clergy. We support the ministry of our laity as we offer support for our lay servant ministries and conference, district and local church lay leaders.

Under Bishop Holston’s leadership, we are working with one another as the extended cabinet and are sowing seeds of hope. The Appointive Cabinet has

identified an opportunity to empower the local church to accomplish their mission and ministry with resources such as the new "Hope Fund."

Four of our Superintendents will be leaving the cabinet at the end of this conference year, Rev. Jim Dennis, Rev. Joey McDonald, Rev. Dr. Sandra Stevens Poirel and Rev. Dr. Stephen Love. We welcome two new district superintendents, Rev. Chris Lollis and Rev. Jeffrey Salley.

The gifts of reasoning together has served our Annual Conference well. We are encouraged that working together in collaboration with lay and clergy, we are making a positive impact as we meet the needs of today and set the course for the future.

We continue to listen to God's voice as we live into our new reality as the United Methodist Church and specifically the South Carolina Annual Conference. We recognize our limitations but most important, we embrace the power of God at work in all of our lives. "When Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."

We invite you to join us as we pray together, walk together, serve together and join together with Isaiah and sing the new song as we offer our highest praise to God.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rev. Dr. Stephen L. Love