

NEJ postpones second bishop election to 2024

By Maidstone Mulenga, DCA Editor and Beth DiCocco, New England Conference



Faced with what seemed to be unsolvable impasse, delegates to the 2022 Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference voted to postpone the election of a second bishop until the 2024 Conference.

While the motion does not bind the 2024 NEJ Conference, it put an end to further balloting in the current session and, with the other business completed, brought the business to a close.

Over the course of 18 ballots total, 15 since the ballot electing Bishop Hector Burgos, the top two candidates were consistently close, with no significant movement toward the needed majority for either candidate.

Presiding over a tangle of rules and interpretations of the rules, presiding Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi walked the body through the process of suspending the rules, calling the question, and other parliamentary procedures.

The NEJ rules state that voting must continue until a candidate gets 60 percent of the ballots or “all the vacancies are filled.”

Delegates then raised the question of whether it was necessary to suspend the rules in order to reaffirm the original motion. That motion passed.



However, to ensure that the motion “would be protected,” Bishop Moore-KoiKoi allowed further questions and points of inquiry to ensure the motion “would be protected” and could not be undone later. The second vote on the motion also passed.

Rev. Aylce Weaver Dunn asked for a moment of privilege to speak to the body after the motion not to elect a second bishop had passed. Even to be considered has just been a privilege and an honor, she said.

She spoke of the difficulty of this day and the personal difficulty she is feeling at the loss of her mother, who had died four years ago today.

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CORRECTIONS

Please email corrections in the Daily Christian Advocate to DCA Editor Maidstone Mulenga (mmulenga@umc-cob.org).

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CORRECTION

Judi Kenaston's name was spelled incorrectly in Advance Daily Christian Advocate and in the November 3 issue of the Daily Christian Advocate.

Agenda: Friday, November 4, 2022

- 6:30 - 8:00 a.m. Breakfast
- 8:30 - 9:30 a.m. **Plenary**
 - Report: Sessions Committees
 - Final Business
 - Report: Committee on Episcopacy
 - Assignments to Episcopal Areas
 - Assignments of Bishops to Episcopal Areas
- 9:30 - 10:15 a.m. Conferences meet Bishops
- 11:15 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Consecration of Bishops

Friday Menu

BREAKFAST

- Freshly Squeezed Orange Juice
- Whipped Butter and Assorted Fruit Preserves
- Seasonal Fruit, Berries and Bananas
- Breakfast Potatoes
- Turkey Sausage
- House made Muffins and Seasonal Scones, Assorted Danish,
- Sliced Breakfast Loafs
- Freshly Brewed Regular and Decaffeinated Coffee and Assorted Hot Teas

Candidates speak to body, continued

"I want to speak a word," she said. "I am the first female candidate endorsed by the Western Pennsylvania Conference. ... and, so, I stand here giving thanks for those who have gone before me who never had this honor. I stand here as a testimony to younger clergywomen coming after me. There may be hope yet that a female from Western Pennsylvania can one day become a bishop."

Rev. Dr. Jay Williams, who had been alternately second and first among the candidates, also spoke to the body.

"When I was baptized in the Metropolitan UMC in Buffalo, New York, I decided to follow Jesus, I decided to follow Jesus. No turning back," Williams said.

He recalled his confirmation and the baptismal vow to fight evil and oppression in whatever form they present themselves.

"My heart is heavy that The United Methodist Church still makes a willful choice to oppress," he said.

"To my beloved siblings, friends, colleagues, especially those who love like me, even though the Church may be broken, we are not. We're created beautifully in the image of a God who loves us into freedom."

Rev. Cristian De La Rosa, who was polling third, led the body through a practice that she had done with the interview groups.

"Reach your hands forward to give thanks to God and all our ancestors who came before us," she said. "Reach your hands back and pull the generations that will come after us forward. Reach back on the other side to tell them to hurry up. We need them here today. And finally, reach out to person next to you because God calls us to recognize and respect god's dignity of all of us."

Thursday morning: Delegates pass budget, other measures

On Thursday morning, 155 NEJ delegates took care of some of the business that did not involve episcopal ballots.

OFFERING

It was announced that with the addition of the donation from the auction of Bishop Mark J. Webb's cup of coffee, \$3,875 was raised for Seeds of Security, an entity of the Baltimore-Washington Conference that serves victims of domestic violence.

APPROVED: Resolution #1: Relating to Child Care during Jurisdictional Conference Sessions

The resolution was brought by Bethany Amey of the Greater New Jersey Conference, who said that safe, affordable, accessible childcare during the session is needed in order not to disenfranchise delegates who are parents of young children, particularly women and younger people.



Since providing daycare would have costs, the Committee on Finance and Administration was asked to respond to the financial implications. CFA Chair Rev. Sherri Rood said CFA had met and “we want to resource the jurisdiction; we will fund this request.”

APPROVED: Budget

Delegates approved the jurisdiction’s budget after hearing from Treasurer, the Rev. David W. Simpson, who offered an update to the balance sheet printed in the ADCA to \$1,141,016.26.

APPROVED: Apportionments

The delegates also approved the apportionment structure (also outlined in the ADCA).

Simpson explained how the structure is created. It is based on the conferences’ payments to the World Service Fund. Each conference is responsible for a percentage of the NEJ budget that is equal to the percentage that conference has paid to the World Service Fund in the year prior to the beginning of the quadrennium.

The good news, Simpson said, is that the NEJ conferences “pay 100 percent [of their apportionments] 100 percent of the time. That’s our history; that’s our expectation,” he said.

Pointing out that November is Indigenous Peoples’ Month, and the denomination has elected its first Native American bishop, New England Delegate Noah Spicer asked if funding is available for the Committee on Native American Ministries (CONAM). CONAM is funded \$14,000.

In doing their mid-quadrennium evaluation, it was decided that two entities would not be funded. One is the Boston-based Anna Shaw Center. While the center’s work is important, it does not extend across the whole jurisdiction, so funding for the center will not continue.

EPISCOPAL ELECTION QUESTIONS

Viable candidates

The Rev. Rebecca Holland from the Susquehanna Conference addressed the body, saying that she

didn’t understand if all the candidates for bishop were viable.

“I do not understand,” she said, “please explain to me: are all candidates for bishop eligible to serve?” She further noted that she didn’t know that the Rev. Giovanni Arroyo is openly gay and that even though she would like to see the Book of Discipline changed, “only the General Conference has the authority to change it.”

Bishop John Schol, from Greater New Jersey, who was in the chair, said that all candidates who are in good standing are eligible to receive a vote.

BIOGRAPHIES

In the sixth ballot, the Rev. Tony Love, Assistant to the Bishop in the Baltimore-Washington Conference, received nine write-in votes and allowed to distribute his bio to the delegates (eight votes are required).

The delegates approved receiving Love’s bio via email, forgoing a print copy. A motion to require both an electronic and printed copy failed to pass. NEJ Secretary, the Rev. Tom Salsgiver, confirmed that the rules do not require a written copy but simply that the information be distributed as quickly as possible.

A question was also asked about the allowed length of candidate bios. Presiding Bishop Thomas Bickerton explained that the bio requirements for endorsed candidates are set by the Committee on Episcopacy; however, he added, based on the current rules, those strictures do not apply to write-in candidates.



WITHDRAWN CANDIDATES

In the course of the morning, four endorsed candidates removed themselves from consideration: Rev. Thomas L. Blackstone, Rev. Sang Wong Doh, Rev. Andrew L. Foster, III, and Rev. Giovanni Arroyo. When a vote was cast for a candidate who had previously removed his name from consideration, Robert Zilhaver, it was asked whether that invalidated the ballot. While that vote did not count, the ballot overall was still valid.



Business conducted Thursday evening

In addition to the balloting, delegates conducted the following business after dinner.

APPROVED: Boundaries Committee came back with their budget request for the proposed Task Force. The committee is asking for \$70,000 to fund the consultant and work of the task force. Boundaries Chair Lydia Munoz said it was the goal to complete the work in six months.

CFA Chair Sherri Rood said the proposal could be supported with the funds that have been set aside for realignment.

APPROVED: ENDORSE CHRISTMAS COVENANT

Presented by Rev. Tom Lank, Greater New Jersey Conference, and Ian Urriola, Upper New York Conference

As amended with two additional points

With the following:

1. Amend lines #1-5 of the RESOLVED by replacing these lines with, " THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER

(Continued page 6)



RESOLVED that the Northeastern Jurisdiction endorses the regionalization intent expressed in both the Christmas Covenant and legislation from the Connectional Table, including the creation of a U.S. Regional Conference, and urges all Northeastern Jurisdiction delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conference, including alternates, to support these regionalization efforts and to make such legislation a priority for the delegation; and"

2. Amend lines 16-20 by replacing these lines with: "BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Northeastern Jurisdiction urges the General Conference and the Council of Bishops to expedite the process of voting on the constitutional amendments as Annual Conferences necessary to enact regional conferences legislation during regular or special sessions in the summer, fall, or winter of 2023 in the hope that their ratification may be completed by Christmas 2023; and"

APPROVED: LEADING WITH INTEGRITY (PAGES 26-27 OF THE OCT. 31 DCA)

Presenter Rev. Ginger Gaines-Cirelli, Baltimore-Washington Conference

It reads, in part, "The Northeastern Jurisdiction expresses both respect and gratitude to those who

have voluntarily stepped away from positions of leadership as they journey away from membership in The United Methodist Church ... as we continue this period of transition the Northeastern Jurisdiction calls upon every United Methodist, as a disciple of Jesus the Christ, to move forward in fairness and with integrity."

Speaking against, Dan Fuller, Upper New York, said that not all conservatives are leaving. "We're hanging in there for the people who elected us and who deserve a voice."

Sarah Schlieckert, Baltimore-Washington Conference, speaking for, said, "This is not directed at those who plan to remain part of The United Methodist Church," but those who have decided they are leaving.

Chongho Kim, New York Conference, called the measure "white, liberal racism" and said it was designed to scare people.

Youth representative Galen Schad, New England Conference, said those who are leaving have a conflict of interest and being asked to step away is no different than the way any conflict of interest is handled in leadership.

After the vote on the above, Rev. Hannah Bonner, Eastern Pennsylvania delegate, asked for a moment of personal privilege and called on the body to recognize that there may be some shared pain.

She said as a queer clergy she was speaking to “those who feel as if they’re being pushed away.”

“I invite you to seek how we, in our very different but common pains, can find connection,” she said.

2024 NEJ CONFERENCE

Alyce Weaver Dunn, Western Pennsylvania Conference Director of Connectional Ministries, invited the Northeastern Jurisdiction to Western Pennsylvania for the 2024 Jurisdictional Conference. Presiding Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi, who serves Western Pennsylvania, said that she would “be there in any case,” alluding to the possibility of being assigned to a new Area after this conference.

MONITORING REPORTS

The delegates heard the monitoring reports from COSROW and GCORR. In response, Bishop Moore-Koikoi said that “we have much to celebrate and there is much work to do. Both can be true.”

Jurisdictional Conference Motions, Amendments & Votes Thursday, November 3, 2022

Results from 10th Ballot for bishop election: No Election (153 Ballots cast/92 needed for election)

11th Ballot to elect one bishop: No election (138 Ballots cast/83 needed for election)

Motion on Boundaries Motion given yesterday, November 2, 2022

The Boundaries committee moves that the NEJ authorizes the Jurisdictional Episcopacy Committee and the Boundaries Committee to contract an outside facilitator who will organize, convene, and facilitate a joint task force of the Episcopacy Committee, Boundaries Committee, and College of Bishops. This joint task force will be charged with envisioning and recommending the strategic direction and alignment of the Jurisdiction in light of the emerging circumstances, including potential reduction or realignment of episcopal areas, declining attendance and membership, and reimagining of the church in these liminal times.

Finance asked Boundaries Committee for a dollar amount to fund this endeavor

Committee estimates \$20,000 needed

CF&A would be able to support the \$20,000

Amendment made to ask if the \$20,000 could be increased

Motion put on hold earlier today (11/3) for a later

time to give CFA and Boundaries Committee time to confer

After the finance committee and the boundaries committee conferred, they agreed on a dollar figure needed as \$70,000 (will be supported by Finance Committee)

Vote taken with show of hands: Approved/Passed

12th Ballot to elect one bishop: No election (150 Ballots cast/90 needed)

After the 12th ballot, Rev. Tony C. Love & Rev. Sang Won Doh withdrew their names from future ballots

Resolution: Endorse Christmas Covenant Legislation (pgs. 25 & 26 of October 31st DCA)
Presented by Tom Lank

Amendment of Christmas Covenant Legislation
Resolution: Ian Urriola-Upper NY

1. Amend lines #1-5 of the RESOLVED by replacing these lines with, “ THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Northeastern Jurisdiction endorses the regionalization intent expressed in both the Christmas Covenant and legislation from the Connectional Table, including the creation of a U.S. Regional Conference, and urges all Northeastern Jurisdiction delegates to General and

Jurisdictional Conference, including alternates, to support these regionalization efforts and to make such legislation a priority for the delegation; and"

2. Amend lines 16-20 by replacing these lines with: "BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Northeastern Jurisdiction urges the General Conference and the Council of Bishops to expedite the process of voting on the constitutional amendments as Annual Conferences necessary to enact regional conferences legislation during regular or special sessions in the summer, fall, or winter of 2023 in the hope that their ratification may be completed by Christmas 2023; and"

3. Amend by adding a new BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED after line 20 that reads: "BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in line with the intent of the non-disciplinary petition submitted by the Connectional Table the Northeastern Jurisdiction requests the Council of Bishops to immediately appoint a 20-25-member interim Committee on Organization for a U.S. regional conference to develop and propose to the 2024 General Conference the structure and organization of a U.S. Regional Conference. In line with the Connectional Table's legislation, this body would organize and plan for the establishment and functioning of a new U.S. Regional Conference comprising the five Jurisdictions of the U.S. Committee membership should have a minimum of three members of each U.S. Jurisdiction, three Central Conference members, and shall meet standards of racial and gender diversity. The committee should recommend a structure for the U.S. Regional Conference including considerations such as its membership, committee structure, meeting time, agency and function."

Amendment to the Amendment: Stephen Quigg; GNJ; Strike point #3 from the proposed amendment to Resolution #2 (Christmas Covenant Legislation)
Vote taken by show of hands: Amendment

has passed; Point #3 will be removed from the amendment

Vote taken by show of hands on the amendment as amended: Approved/Passed

Vote taken by show of hands on the Original Resolution Christmas Covenant Legislation as amended:
Approved/Passed

13th Ballot to elect one bishop: No election (150 ballots cast/92 needed)

14th Ballot to elect one bishop: No election (151 ballots cast/92 needed)

Resolution: Leading with Integrity (pgs. 26 & 27 of October 31 DCA) Presented by Ginger Gaines-Cirelli

Vote taken: Resolution Passed; Yes-86 No-63

A motion was made to reconsider number of bishops for election: Bishop Moore-Koikoi ruled that Roberts Rules states that motions may only be reconsidered once. It has already been reconsidered.

15th Ballot to elect one bishop: No election (152 ballots cast/92 needed).

Point of order was raised by Creed Pogue to have a standing vote. One fifth of the vote of the body is needed to consider a standing vote. Bishop Moore-Koikoi stated that the electronic vote was the "or" in rule # 11 under Voting Procedures.

An appeal to Bishop's decision on the point of order was made by Creed Pogue. Bishop Moore-Koikoi ruled that a standing vote is used to "count" and the electronic devices were the tools used to count the vote.

The appeal was withdrawn by Creed Pogue.

16th Ballot to elect one bishop: No election (150 Ballots cast/1 invalid/90 needed for election)

Invitation regarding the 2024 Jurisdictional

Conference: Alyce Dunn Weaver; Western PA

Monitoring Report:

Rev. Mark Conners; CSROW

Rev Enger Muteteke: GCPRR

Motion made: The candidates who are in the top two with votes be allowed to speak

Bishop Moore-Koikoi stated that the rules do not allow speeches from candidates-this is why there are interviews held before the conference begins
Another question: If the top two are allowed to speak, the request was made to allow the other candidates, as a matter of equity, to also be allowed to speak.

This was ruled out of order unless the rules are suspended

Motion made: Suspend the rules in order to limit the total number of ballots for episcopal elections to twenty.

Vote taken: Does not pass; No-77; Yes-73

Motion made to suspend the rules

Vote: Does not pass; No-87 Yes-65

17th Ballot to elect one bishop: No election (147 ballots cast/89 needed)

18th Ballot to elect one bishop: No election (150 ballots cast/90 needed)

Motion: Matthew Lake; SUS; "I move that we postpone the election of our second bishop until 2024."

Point of order raised: Rebecca Laird; Upper NY
Would this bind the next conference to an action?
Bishop Moore-Koikoi ruled it would not be binding as that conference could determine the number of bishops they would like to elect.

Point of order raised: Creed Pogue; GNJ
Would this fall under the rule of reconsidering a motion/vote already made/taken? Bishop Moore-Koikoi stated that this is not the same motion.

Motion made to Call the Question

Vote taken: Approved

Point of Order- Roberts Rules, 12th edition, Rule 14-6 states that a postponement cannot be longer than three months. Bishop Moore-Koikoi clarified the rule in that you cannot postpone the question. An action may be postponed.

Question was raised on the rules, #38, that valid ballots be cast and until all vacancies are filled

Question was raised: Isn't it the understanding that once the number of bishops to elect is determined that would fulfill the vacancies? Yes, that is the bodies understanding.

Vote taken on the motion to move the election of the second bishop until 2024 conference:

Approved/Passed; Yes-92 No-58

Point of Order: The rules would still need to be suspended because of rule #38 pertaining to the fulfillment of two vacancies.

Motion made to suspend the rules: Tracy Collins; BWC; "I move to suspend the rules so that lines 39-40 of rule 38 (ADCA pg 47; 'balloting shall continue until an eligible person receives sixty (60) percent or more of the valid ballots cast and until all vacancies are filled.') are suspended.

Vote taken: Approved/Passed Yes-102; No-48

Another vote taken (to make sure it is a valid vote) on the motion to move the election of the second bishop until 2024 conference: Approved/Passed; Yes-95 No-56

Question raised: Will we start where we ended? This will be up to the body of the 2024 conference.

Delegates approve two changes to adapt to pandemic



With some amendments, NEJ delegates approved two changes to the rules that would adapt them for the current reality brought by the pandemic: namely the need for online meetings and the delay in convening a General Conference session.

The body first had to approve suspending the rules in order to consider the two proposed changes brought by the Committee on Rules.

The first change was the addition of a new rule placed in the Rules of Order and Organization that would allow for online meetings. (It would be added as #12 on page 24 of the Advanced Daily Christian Advocate).

As proposed, by Rules Committee Chair Janet Harman, the new rule read:

When the College of Bishops and the Program Committee are in agreement, adaptations to the

NEJ Conference may need to be made to online conferencing. The conferencing platform must ensure that all duly elect delegates, reserves and youth representatives can hear one another, that their presence is recorded, can cast secret ballots and vote; with the results of balloting shown on screen.

An amendment by Creed Pogue, Greater NJ Conference, to add that the chat function would remain open unless the body voted to close it did not succeed.

Among those speaking against that amendment was Rebecca Holland of the Susquehanna Conference, who has visual impairment. She pointed out that those who use voice over technology would hear the entire chat being read aloud.

Asked by Harman what she would propose, Holland suggested that someone with a disability be part of the committee planning the conference to help ensure concerns are raised.

Sarah Schlieckert, of the Baltimore Washington Conference, also pointed out that there is no mechanism when the body meets in person for the entire group to converse with each other.

Questions were raised about how the suspension of the rules might affect any ballots taken during that time.

Presiding Bishop John Schol said suspending the rules does not negate all of the rules, rather just the ones, in this case, pertaining to how and when a rules change is presented to the body.

An amendment proposed by Tom Lank of the Greater NJ Conference regarding the speaker queue was approved.

He asked that the speaker queue [which shows those seeking to be recognized on the “floor”] would be available to the presiders would be made visible to the entire body “in the interest of transparency and to build trust.”

Harriet Olson, also from the Greater New Jersey Conference, proposed a change to the wording to clarify the syntax:

When the College of Bishops and the Program Committee are in agreement, adaptations to the NEJ Conference may need to be made to online conferencing. The conferencing platform must ensure that all duly elect delegates, reserves and youth representatives can hear one another, that their presence is recorded, can cast secret ballots and vote; with the results of balloting shown on screen.

Replaced with:

If the College of Bishops and the Program Committee are in agreement, meetings of the NEJ may be held virtually on the following conditions:

Leo Yates, Baltimore Washington Conference, made an amendment, which was approved, to ensure that the proceedings would be livestreamed and that interpreters would be provided.

The new rule was adopted with the approved amendments.

The second rule change pertained the composition of the standing committees (page 29 ADCA) which are:

- Rules
- Program and Arrangements
- Finance and Administration
- Annual Conference Boundaries

That the standing committees not populate their current committee membership and allow the same individuals to work together for the next 18 months. At which time new elections and selections can take place at 2024 Jurisdictional Conference.

The proposed change was adopted without amendment.

**For photos of the Northeast Jurisdictional Conference, visit
[flickr.com/nejumc](https://www.flickr.com/photos/nejumc)**

Call to Action: DCMs raise up steps taken on journey to combat racism

By Beth DiCocco, Director of Communications, New England Annual Conference

The Directors of Connectional Ministries from the Northeastern Jurisdiction came together in person and online to present a report on progress made on the Call to Action (CTA), adopted by the NEJ in 2016.

The CTA charges the conferences of the NEJ to “engage in the important work of creating an anti-racist, diverse, equitable and inclusive United Methodist church.”

Beginning with a video presentation about the history of Methodism relating to slavery, the DCMs acknowledged that the Call to Action is a work in progress.

Every journey of 1,000 miles begins with a single step, they said. The DCMs highlighted ministries and initiatives in each of the jurisdiction’s conferences that are steps along the journey to end systemic racism and white privilege.

From new faith communities and retreats for youth of color to efforts to create equity around salary and apportionments, and to increased representation in board and committee leadership, each conference has committed to this work in a variety of ways.

Delegates were then asked to engage each other in conversation around two questions:

- What encourages you about what you have heard?
- What are you committed to do between now and the next time we gather?

Acknowledging these steps in the journey, the DCMs laid out future plans for the NEJ as it seeks to live into this anti-racism work:

- Continue to receive progress reports from conferences on becoming an inclusive, diverse, equitable, anti-racist church.
- Share best practices and learnings which will support conference efforts to create new models of ministry and strengthen and equip Black churches for contextual ministry.



- Conduct a study on the issue of structural and institutional racism and the impact of Black people in the NEJ. Then share the outcomes, best practices and strategies with all Annual Conferences.
- Encourage cross-conference conversations and develop a shared resources site.
- Develop a collaborative online platform or forum to share, discuss, encourage, and resource this work.

At the end of the presentation, New England Delegate Sandra Bonnette-Kim spoke, saying:

“I celebrate and I am grateful for the work that has been done for anti-racism; I am grateful that we are on this journey together,” she said. “I just want to voice and be seen that racism is not just a black and white issue.”

“As an Asian we are always invisible, or we are always a foreigner,” she said.

People often say hello to her in Korean, she said, which means that people think that she’s first-generation immigrant. “Asians have been in this country for over 400 years,” she said.

And that long history has dark moments, she

said, including the internment of Japanese during WWII and the Chinese Exclusion Act. She also spoke of the more recent fear that she and other Asians experienced amid the pandemic.

"I hope as we continue to work toward this," she said, "that we go beyond just Black and white."

The response to the report and Rev. Bonnette-Kim's remarks continued following the lunch break. The conference offered floor time to delegates who wanted to share their stories and pain.

Delegates share pain and witness on the sin of racism

By Erik Alsgaard, Baltimore-Washington Conference

The Thursday afternoon plenary session of the NEJ dug deep into sharing the pain, anger, and sin of racism. For about two hours, delegates shared their thoughts and feelings in response not only to the "Call to Action" report given earlier that day, but also to the Episcopal Address given Wednesday by Bishop John Schol of the Greater New Jersey Area.

Lay delegates from the New England Conference came to the microphone seeking a point of personal privilege. While the Call to Action urged United Methodists to start a journey toward anti-racism with small steps on a journey of 1,000 miles, the delegates noted that small steps are not enough and that African Americans were not, and are not, the only people of color who have suffered racism.

No one can fully comprehend the pain that 400 years of slavery can leave in one's spirit, they said. However, Asian and Latinx people have also been harmed, they said, and the very land we were meeting on was stolen from Native American people.

"It is still happening," they said. "The reports of the Episcopal Address and the Call to Action continue to ignore us."



"I still have a lot to learn," said Bishop Schol, who was in the chair for the session. "Part of what we're hearing, in my estimation, is the continual failure of white people to end racism, and how by our actions or inactions, we keep people of color comparing to one another. I may be wrong, but that is one of the things that I see and watch."

He then added, "I just want to give a little room in our agenda today for people who feel they want to bear a witness to go to a microphone and share your heart."

And they did.

One by one, or in small groups, NEJ delegates came forward to pour out their stories and experiences, their thoughts and feelings.

Ian Urriola, lay delegate from the Upper New York Conference, said that the problem is "whiteness ... it's white supremacy. I need to exorcise and cut out the whiteness in me. Every delegate needs to cut out the whiteness." He also noted that the Call to Action report showed what Annual Conferences were doing, "but not what the Jurisdiction is doing."

What, he asked, “is the Northeastern Jurisdiction doing to divest itself from whiteness?”

The Rev. Sandra Bonnette-Kim, from the New England Conference, said that this was not about “my pain being more than your pain. The real issue is that we’re not seen, not recognized, not valued.”

She urged people to stop fighting one another.

“Let’s embrace one another,” she said, “not discard one another.” A native of Puerto Rico, Bonnette-Kim noted that “we turn against each other because of what Colonialism has done to us. It is ingrained; we just do it; we don’t think about it.”

The Rev. Joe Hill, from the West Virginia Conference, said that whiteness also does harm to white communities. “It’s toxic to the whole family of God,” he said.

At the end of his sharing, he broke into a sung prayer with one word in it: Jesus. We’re not trying to convince Jesus to come but to remind us where our focus should be,” he said in introducing it.

Fred Brewington, a lay delegate from the New York Conference, said that the United States today is the product of systems and institutions “that I often refer to as an octopus of a quagmire.”

Part of his work, he said, requires him to stand and advocate for people.

“I stand before you as an African American man who can’t go back more than three levels of my family tree,” he said. “But I know, that unless we look to a much higher power, we will be trapped by the systems that are created to keep us down.”

Don’t be afraid to have these difficult conversations, he said.

“It is painful, but it is necessary,” he said. “Because the rest of the world doesn’t want us to talk about our Asian brothers and sisters. They want me to think that what they experienced is not important. It is.”

Sharon Milton, a lay delegate from the Baltimore-Washington Conference, said that she rose to

speak against every system of oppression for every race and every color.

“I’m speaking as a Black woman who has worked with Black youth,” she said. “When people speak about oppression, I want you to understand that they come to church knowing that their 16-year-old friend was lost to gun violence. The reality of the situation is that, every day, children are dying and it’s become the norm. I’m holding you accountable for what you’ve written on paper ... but faith without works is dead.”

The Rev. Giovanni Arroyo, delegate from the Baltimore-Washington Conference, who serves as the General Secretary of the General Commission on Religion and Race, said he came to the microphone in that capacity.

“I come hearing the pain in this room,” he said. “I know the importance of sacred space, to hear the pain and the trauma. I think its harmful to open the space and not continue the journey.”

With that, he invited the NEJ College of Bishops and the NEJ Vision Table to partner with GCORR to determine direction “so that when we gather in 2024, knowing our stories, we can address the systemic and institutional barriers of racism together. I invite you to walk with me.”

Bishop Schol said that he looked forward to that partnership and to continue the work begun here.

The session ended with Bishop Schol inviting Rev. Hill to lead the conference in singing the Jesus prayer.



The wounded healer: Who is Epaphroditus?

By Beth DiCocco, Director of Communications, New England Annual Conference

"One in ministry to all the world"
– Philippians 2:25 to 30

Giving her sermon on that passage for the morning worship on Thursday, Bishop Jane Middleton, retired, asked delegates to play some "Jeopardy!"

"So, the category is Bible," she said. "I'll make it even easier for you. New Testament."



And in true "Jeopardy!" form, the bishop offered the answers while delegates had to come up with the questions.

- Betrayed Jesus three times: Who was Peter?
- Climbed a tree to see Jesus: Who was Zacchaeus?
- Gave Jesus a drink of water: Who was the woman at the well?

These first three were easy for the body. Then came the tough one:

- Messenger for Paul: Who was Epaphroditus?

"I can tell you that if I were a contestant on 'Jeopardy!', not in a million years would I have shouted out 'Who was Epaphroditus?'" Bishop Middleton said. "And, frankly, I'm not even sure Ken Jennings would have gotten it."

"What do we know about Epaphroditus," the bishop asked. "Well, we know that he was the second choice."

"Second choice," she mused. "Has that ever happened to you? In this season of election of bishops there will inevitably be several second choices. It's a painful time in many ways. I know."

Recalling 1996 when she was a candidate for bishop, but not elected, Bishop Middleton said it was difficult, but "because of that 'no' I was set on a course I would not have otherwise taken and I grew tremendously. I had incredibly rich experiences in ministry that I would not have had."

We also know that Epaphroditus was sickly, wounded, she said.

"And yet he responded to the call to go to the Philippians and in doing so he bore witness to the healing power of God," she said.

"Surely today, as a people called United Methodist, we know woundedness don't we?"

Among those wounds, the bishop said, are the pandemic, inflation, fewer resources for ministry, income disparity, homophobia, the curse of racism, culture wars in our country, rampant lying and false witness, destruction of our precious earth home, concern about the Russian predatory war in Ukraine.

"We are wounded indeed," Bishop Middleton said. "So, we, in our time and in our context, surely understand what it means to be wounded healers. Epaphroditus, what would you say to us?"

What we learn about this dear man, she said, that even though he's a footnote in Scripture, Epaphroditus was the beloved, trusted friend of Paul.

"And he joins a wondrous stream of followers of Christ," Bishop Middleton said. "You and I are in that line, as well, my beloved. We are followers who understand sacrifice, who experience healing, who are filled with a spirit of generosity, who know what it means to be given new life in Jesus Christ, who live with hope, who dare to proclaim the gospel message: Jesus saves!"

"In the spirit of Paul and of this servant minister Epaphroditus and most especially in the spirit of Jesus Christ, let us love sacrificially, all people, and with our whole hearts," she said.

Monitoring Report from GCOSROW



MORNING REPORT- November 2, 2022

I stand before you as a monitor for the General Commission. On the Status and Role of Women. I also stand before you as a white male who continues to learn and hopefully grow in my understanding of the power that my white skin and my sex give to me. This has been a difficult and a long day. I want to thank those who shared your stories and your pain today. I so appreciate your courage in bravely opening yourselves with us. I look forward to the ongoing opportunities to share these stories together and seek your help that I may continue to understand my sin, and find ways to journey from guilt to effective work to battle racism. I will also share with GCSRW the challenge to continue their work on the sexism that is a particular part of racism.

In the midst of this important day, I also rejoice in the inclusivity of our music leadership. I rejoice in the gift of the music you have shared and the inclusive language offered in our songs and hymns.

I celebrate your action to provide child care for all jurisdictional events—and the funding that will be provided by CFA. I would encourage your advocacy for similar action to be taken by the General Church.

I celebrate the diversity of our speakers and the passion with which you share your work. I especially appreciate the voices shared by our youth.

I jokingly celebrate the sounds of the electronic voting pads as you cast your votes. It is a usual sound of music.

I celebrate the long and hard work of our signers as they offer your work and words in ways for understanding. I have no idea how the caption writers keep up with all our words. Thank you. You make this time more inclusive.

The work that monitors share is not merely counting speakers, although that is a part of the work we do. We seek to continue to work for the inclusion of all persons so that all voices may be heard.

May God's spirit continue to work among us.

EVENING REPORT- November 3, 2022

Good evening Bishops and members of the conference. I am Mark Conner, a retired elder of the West Virginia Annual Conference. I am serving as the monitor for the General Commission on the Role and Status of Women.

I want to thank you on behalf of GCRSW of the United Methodist Church for your time, dedication, preparation, and willingness to serve as a delegate to this session of the Northeast Jurisdictional Conference.

Our Book of Discipline mandates the responsibilities of GCSRW. One of the many responsibilities is the monitoring for gender inclusion and for reporting those findings back to the Jurisdictional Conference and to the United Methodist Church to assist us as we seek to live into the "beloved community." The goal of monitoring is to help the Conference, its delegates, and its plenary leaders hold the most inclusive sessions possible, where every voice is respected and given opportunity to be heard.

Monitoring is not policing, finger pointing, shaming, or participation in the discussion or vote.

Monitoring is observing with intentionality and reporting back the observations to assist the members of the Jurisdictional Conference in being self aware of her or his conduct toward one another.

I seek to observe the persons who are called upon to speak, the manner in which speakers address and show respect for one another, and the manner in which others show respect in listening to the speakers.

This is not a report about the October 15, 2022 Special Called Session of the Jurisdictional Conference but I would like to offer a few observations. As a monitor, it was difficult to access the various characteristics of those who were recognized to speak (clergy/lay, ethnicity, or age). What could be noted were a nearly equal number of women and men speaking. Of those who identified their role, more clergy spoke than lay. I noted one Young Adult speaking (although there may have been more). I could not note any youth speaking to any issue.

As large meetings are conducted by means of electronic applications, the conferences will need to carefully develop rules for the governance of these meetings. Care needs to be given to proving time within the formal meeting structure for informal conversation and “the moving of the Spirit” among the body. It is difficult to engage in Holy Conferencing when delegates are in isolation.

Although we do not have a break down of the official count of delegates here this week, it appears that we have a nearly equal number of women and men in attendance.

GCORR Monitoring Report

MORNING REPORT - November 2, 2022

Good evening, friends. My name is Rev. Enger Muteteke. Again, I come this evening to bring the monitoring report on behalf of the General Commission on Religion and Race for today’s plenary sessions. And by the grace of our Lord Jesus, the tenor of today’s sessions did not run me off. I am still here.

Yesterday evening, as I reported before you, I mentioned our theme for this week “one in ministry to all the world” taken from our Communion liturgy. While we are still called to be living, embodied sacraments of Jesus’ sacrificial love, I believe we experienced today how difficult

I appreciate the attention you have given throughout the day to one another. We experienced a wide range of participation. Lay/clergy; women/men; older adults, adults and young adults all shared time on the floor of the conference. Even though youth have the opportunity of speaking to the body, we have not heard from them, yet.

I appreciate the help of our signers and the addition of the close captioning on the screen. There have, however been some times when it can be difficult to read that information from the seats in the back of the hall. (That was especially notable in charts with figures or longer lists of names—especially with the ballot reports.)

I appreciate your careful attention to the work of inclusivity. My hope is that the attention you have given here will make its way into the work we share in our annual conferences and, especially, in our congregations, remembering Bishop Schol’s reminder that equality does not always mean equity.

May God’s spirit continue to guide us.

Rev. Dr. I. Mark Conner

Monitor for the General Commission of the Status and Role of Women

it is to truly be one with each other – in our collective cultural and racial traumas, pain, and dis-ease. And yet, there were some celebrations today:

- We celebrate the ongoing racial and cultural diversity in our worship leadership and diverse languages in the music.
- We celebrate missional funds going to both the Philippines and Florida in the wake of the storm devastation in both places.
- We celebrate the painful yet much needed conversation that arose from the Call-to-Action report by our NEJ Directors of Connectional Ministries.

However, we must also recognize and name significant challenges that arose as we engaged holy conferencing today. During the homily in opening worship, the preacher named some of the challenges the Church faces in being a truly inclusive church. In the spirit of being Communion people, we must also name the challenges that arose today in the NEJ's ongoing anti-racism and intercultural competency work:

- the absence of the voices of white delegates during the racial justice afternoon discussion response to the Call-To-Action report
- presentation of Call-To-Action report on racial justice created a black-white binary
- other people of color's witnesses re: their lived experiences of racism was met with defense and dismissal
- facilitation of racial justice conversation in the afternoon, while needed, caused harm and re-traumatization of black, indigenous, people of color
- the active and present voices of white delegates re: institutional accountability to resolution #5 passed yesterday acknowledging queer delegates' call to center justice and empowerment for LGBTQIA+ people in the UMC

And friends, all the deep challenges named above are the work of being a truly inclusive church. As NEJ Conference endeavors to move deeper into the work of dismantling racism at all levels of the church, we must be willing to examine and assess where we need to improve. We must be willing to examine and assess:

- how we are currently using institutional power and where we need to shift our use so power is shared, not hoarded
- being honest as a jurisdiction about the willingness to create institutional equity for all in Christ's church and those not yet present
- our willingness to engage institutional accountability to hold NEJ to its commitment to racial justice
- our intent versus our impact.



Church, it is vitally important that we examine and assess our intent versus impact. As a church, we can intend to do good, do no harm, and stay in love with God. And yet, we are unwilling to deeply examine and change the ways in which we hold power, unwilling to deeply examine and change how we engage institutional equity, and unwilling to be held accountable, then we will intentionally and unintentionally cause harm every time.

EVENING REPORT - November 3, 2022

Good evening Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference delegates and College of Bishops! My name is Rev. Enger Muteteke. I come this evening to bring the monitoring report on behalf of the General Commission on Religion and Race for today's plenary sessions.

Today, and for the remainder of this week, we gather as Christ's Church centering our work on the theme "one in ministry to all the world." This phrase, taken from our Communion liturgy, reminds us that when God's people are together, we are called to be a living, embodied sacrament – one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world. Just as we celebrate Christ's sacrifice of love, reconciliation and forgiveness in Communion, great celebrations were present in our midst!

- We celebrate the rich racial and cultural diversity evident in our worship leadership both in representation and singing in different languages.

- We celebrate the rich racial and cultural diversity in the College of Bishops and their decision to preside in a team approach centering more than one voice.
- We celebrate the rich racial and cultural diversity in our slate of episcopal candidates.
- We celebrate that we are doing God's work in person with 152 delegates present – 6 of whom are youth and almost half of the delegation serving as first time delegates – with our jurisdiction being the only one that ensures youth are represented.
- We celebrate the presence of childcare during our conference session and a well-labeled, private area for new mothers. **(CORRECTION: The favorable vote to have childcare during NE Jurisdictional Conference session was not approved until November 3, 2022. Additionally, the private area for new mothers was advocated for by young mothers in the delegation.)**
- We celebrate the passage of the resolution acknowledging queer delegates' call to center justice and empowerment for LGBTQIA+ people in the UMC.
- We celebrate the naming in the episcopal address of systemic racism, equality versus equity, and implicit bias as challenges the UMC must face and act to dismantle as disciples of Jesus Christ.

Friends, we give thanks and praise to God for how the Spirit of God in Christ Jesus has moved mightily in our plenary time amid our diversity of backgrounds, identities, races and cultures. However, this great diversity we

share, as Communion people, poses continual challenges for how we covenant to be together and how we engage holy conferencing. As disciples of Jesus, continually being shaped and perfected by the sanctifying grace of Jesus Christ, our words and actions must match to be authentic in our oneness in ministry to all the world. To this end, I lift up some questions for our collective consideration:

- How are we being mindful of how we truly listen to one another – especially those of a different racial, cultural, church leadership status, and/or theological background?
- How are we willing to move beyond naming and acknowledging our challenges with implicit bias, equity and systemic racism as a Church to examining and assessing the ways in which the stewarding of our own power and privilege adds to these challenges?
- How are we honoring the cultural backgrounds of all clergy and laity? Are we willing to give up seats at tables of power so that those of other racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds can participate to create change?

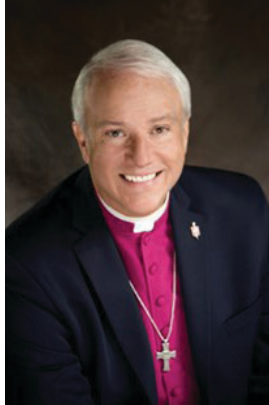
As we continue our work as Christ's Church – seeking to be one in ministry to all the world, we must continually examine and assess HOW we are being one in ministry with Christ and one another. It is God's extravagant, wondrous, amazing grace that is faithful – in our celebrations and challenges – and graces us to be one faithfully.

Rev. Enger Muteteke
GCORR Monitor

NEJ Residential Bishops



Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball



Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton



Bishop Hector Burgos



Bishop LaTrelle Easterling



Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi



Bishop John Schol

TRANSPORTATION TO THE CONSECRATION SERVICE:

Transportation will be provided from The Hotel to the Consecration Service on Friday November 4, 2022. The first group to be boarded beginning at 10:20. The last trip leaving The Hotel for the chapel will depart at 11:15am. Transportation from the consecration service back to The Hotel will also be provided with the last trip leaving the chapel at 1:45pm.

Daily Christian Advocate

The Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference
of The United Methodist Church

