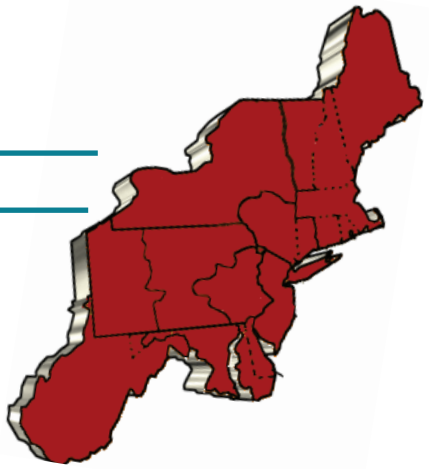
Daily Christian Advocate

The Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference of The United Methodist Church

Volume 22, Issue 2 Pittsburgh, PA July 8, 2024



Message from Bishop LaTrelle Easterling, president of NEJ College of Bishops

Beloved of God,

Grace and peace to you. We have arrived at the much anticipated Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference. As we gather, we do so under the theme, "Overflowing With Hope." That word greets me every day. It sits atop one of three bookcases in my home office, a beautiful piece of art. It is especially helpful on days when the clamor of conflicting voices within the conference or the denomination becomes a chorus of chaos. My eyes gaze upward and see those four letters, H-O-P-E, and I remember. I remember that God is yet in control. I remember that trouble don't last always. I remember that Christ can do exceedingly, abundantly more than I can ask for think. I remember that greater is the one that is within me that the one that is in the world. I remember…

The scripture from which our theme is taken, Romans 15: 13, comes from what many call the apostle Paul's masterpiece. It offers both challenge and theological vision. And it was written to a community facing significant challenges, not unlike those we face today. As they assembled to face either foe or fear, Paul wanted this faith community to also remember who and whose they were.

(Continued page two)

NEJ to share one bishop with the SEJ for the coming quadrennium

The NEJ Committee on Episcopacy has been meeting frequently since General Conference as we have contemplated the implications of the General Conference actions for our jurisdiction. On Wednesday, July 3, the Committee affirmed the recommendation of the Inter-jurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy (ICOE), which was released earlier on July 3. Our entire committee is a part of the ICOE. This decision, which was overwhelmingly supported by the ICOE (91 – 11), was more narrowly supported by a 60% majority of the NEJ committee (12 - 8). The necessity of reducing bishops across the jurisdictions has been challenging and we recognize that this decision may be disappointing to some. The ICOE has discerned creative solutions in a spirit of collaboration.

The decision is that the NEJ will share one bishop with the SEJ for the coming quadrennium. This arrangement would bring the total number of bishops to 32 across the United States. The bishop and the conferences involved will be announced at jurisdictional conference. In alignment with this decision, the committee is reporting to the jurisdiction that no elections will be held in the NEJ.

The Committee on Episcopacy will meet in Pittsburgh prior to the opening of the NEJ Conference. Because six bishops will serve 10 annual conferences, most NEJ bishops will serve more than one conference. For this reason, the COE will be recommending some newly aligned episcopal areas.

The NEJ COE has worked hard to honor the work of the General Conference through the Inter-jurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy, as well as the NEJ Task Force. We look forward to sharing the results of our work with the NEJ next week.

- Judi Kenaston
Chair NEJ COE

(Continued from page one)

Beloved, as we gather to offer prayer and praise, debate resolutions, confront our financial challenges, create new areas and form new partnerships, may do so with confidence. For just as we gather at the confluence of the Allegheny, Monongahela, and Ohio rivers, we also gather at the confluence of faith, hope and love. With Christ at our center, we have everything we need to create a strong, mission-minded, and resilient future. As we holy conference this week, may we remember the question posed during General Conference: Is it good for the children? And, may we also be reminded that the decisions we make will not only affect us, but many generations to come.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen and Amen

Connecting to Wi-Fi

- Search for available wireless networks
- Select **"Omni Meeting"** and click connect
- Once connected, open your web browser and the **Internet Access Portal Page** will appear
  - *If the page does not appear, type in any web address and you should be redirected*
- Enter the following non-case sensitive access code:

WPAUMC24

- **Click Connect** - you should now be online

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CORRECTIONS

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

DCA copy deadline for each day is 5 p.m. Please submit the information electronically.

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2024 NEJ Session Agenda: July 8-12, 2024

Monday: July 8, 2024

8:30-11:40 a.m.	Nominating Committee meeting: *Monongahela Room*
8:30-10:00 a.m.	Committee on Episcopacy (COE) Executive Committee: *Three Rivers-William Penn Level*
10:00-11:40 a.m.	College of Bishops (CB) meeting: *Allegheny Room*
11:30 a.m.-1:15 p.m.	COB Lunch break
1:30-5:00 p.m.	COB meeting

Delegates, Reserves, Youth and guests register throughout the day

5:00-6:30 p.m.	Dinner (who registered): *William Penn Ballroom, William Penn Level*
7:00-8:00 p.m.	Worship
8:15-9:15 p.m.	Delegation Meetings (if delegations choose to meet) • Baltimore-Washington: *Three Rivers-William Penn Level* • Eastern Pennsylvania: *Sternwheeler-William Penn Level* • Greater New Jersey: *Riverboat-William Penn Level* • New England: *Monongahela Room, 17th floor* • New York: *Lawrence Welk-Conference Room* • Peninsula-Delaware: *Oakmont, 1st floor* • Susquehanna: *Carnegie III-Conference Level* • Upper New York: *Oliver-Conference Level* • West Virginia: *Shadyside, 1st floor* • Western Pennsylvania: *Back of Urban Ballroom, 17th floor*

Tuesday: July 9, 2024

8:00-9:30 a.m.	Breakfast: *William Penn Ballroom, William Penn Level*
9:00-11:30 a.m.	Worship and Praise Spiritual Discipline, Prayer, Conversations • Delegates: *Grand Ballroom, 17th floor* • Guests: *Urban Ballroom, 17th floor*
11:45 a.m.-1:30 p.m.	Lunch: *William Penn Ballroom, William Penn Level*
1:30-3:00 p.m.	Continuing Spiritual Discipline, Prayer, Conversations
3:00 p.m.	Conclusion of the meeting
4:30-5:00 p.m.	Leave for the cruise and dinner

All Plenaries:

Delegates, Reserves and Youth: *Grand Ballroom*

Guests: *Urban Ballroom*

Wednesday: July 10, 2024

6:30-8:00 a.m.	Breakfast: *William Penn Ballroom, William Penn Level*
8:30 a.m.	Memorial Service and Holy Communion: *Grand Ballroom*

10:00 -11:40 a.m. PLENARY 1

10:00 a.m.	Call to Order - Bishop LaTrelle M. Easterling, *President of the NEJ College of Bishops* • Welcome • Introduction of Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi, *Host Bishop* Roll Call – Tom Salsgiver, *NEJ Secretary* • Delegates present and eligible to vote • Youth representatives present • Bishops unable to attend • The Bar of the NEJ • Naming of Sessions Committees • Adoption of agenda
10:20 a.m.	Holy Conferencing – Janet Harman & Giovanni Arroyo
10:35 a.m.	Voting Process: Good News TV – Paul Roadarmel
10:50 a.m.	Report: Rules for organizing the NEJ – Janet Harman
11:10 a.m.	Report: Episcopacy Committee – Judi Kenaston • Retirement certification for Bishop John Schol & Bishop Peggy Johnson • Episcopal Elections
11:40 a.m.	Announcements and Blessing of the Meal
11:45 a.m.	**Recess**
11:45 a.m.-1:30 p.m.	Lunch: *William Penn Ballroom, William Penn Level*

1:15 - 3:00 p.m. PLENARY 2

1:10 p.m.	Gathering Music
1:20 p.m.	Session Call to Order Report: Rules – Janet Harman
2:00 p.m.	Report: CFA – Sherri Rood Report: Finance – David Simpson
2:25 p.m.	Report: Rules – Janet Harman
3:00 p.m.	**Recess**

3:15 - 5:10 p.m PLENARY 3

3:15 p.m.	NEJ Conference convenes State of the Jurisdiction Address – Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton
4:10 p.m.	Report: Committee on Nominations – Bishop Peter Weaver
4:50 p.m.	Resolution • Resolution #2 (Boards of Trustees and Archives & History cooperative work)
5:10 p.m.	Announcements
5:15-6:45 p.m.	Dinner

6:55 - 8:30 p.m	**PLENARY 4**
6:45 p.m.	Gathering Music
6:55 p.m.	Election of NEJ Officers (Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer)
7:10 p.m.	Introduction of Monitors: Rev. Enger Muteteke and Rev. Denise Smartt Sears
7:40 p.m.	Announcements
7:40 p.m.	Retirement Celebration of Bishop John Schol

Thursday: July 11, 2024

6:30-8:00 a.m.	Breakfast: *William Penn Ballroom, William Penn Level*
8:15 -10:30 a.m.	**PLENARY 5**
8:15-9:00 a.m.	Worship: Bishop Alfred Johnson preaching – Grand Ballroom
9:00-9:20 a.m.	Daily Reports from Sessions: • Credentials – Vicki Gordy Stith • Journal – Sarah Ford • Courtesies – Ian Urriola
9:20-9:50 a.m.	Treasurers Report -David Simpson
9:50-10:15 a.m.	GCORR, NEJ College, Vision Table partnership
10:15-10:30 a.m.	**RECESS**
10:30-11:45 a.m.	**PLENARY 6**
10:30 a.m.	Resolutions • Resolution #1 (requirements for delegates to General Conference & Jurisdictional Conference • Resolution #3 (require the use of UMC resources when readmitting disaffiliated churches)
11:15 a.m.	NEJ Budget and Annual Conference Apportionments – Sherri Rood and David Simpson
11:40 a.m.	Announcements Announcements and Blessing of the Meal
11:45 a.m.	**RECESS**
11:45 a.m.-1:15 p.m.	Lunch: *William Penn Ballroom, William Penn Level*
1:15-3:00 p.m.	**PLENARY 7**
1:00 p.m.	Gathering Music
1:15 p.m.	Report: NEJ Task Force
1:45 p.m.	NEJ Business
2:50 p.m.	Announcements
3:00 p.m.	**RECESS**

3:15 p.m.	NEJ Committees and Members organizing process • Appeals: *Three Rivers-William Penn Level* • Administrative Review: *Sternwheeler-William Penn Level* • Episcopacy: *Riverboat-William Penn Level* • Vision Table: *Monongahela Room, 17th floor* • Program & Arrangements: *Lawrence Welk-Conference Room* • Rules: *Oakmont, 1st floor* • Boundaries: *Carnegie III-Conference Level* • Finance & Administration: *Oliver-Conference Level*
5:15-6:45 p.m.	Dinner

7:15 - 9:00 p.m.	**PLENARY 8**
6:45 p.m.	Gathering Music
7:00 p.m.	NEJ business to be completed 2028 JC announcement Reports: Monitors • COSROW – Rev. Denise Smartt Sears • GCORR – Rev. Enger Muteteke
9:00 p.m.	Announcements Evening Prayer

Friday: July 12, 2024

6:30-8:00 a.m.	Breakfast: *William Penn Ballroom, William Penn Level*

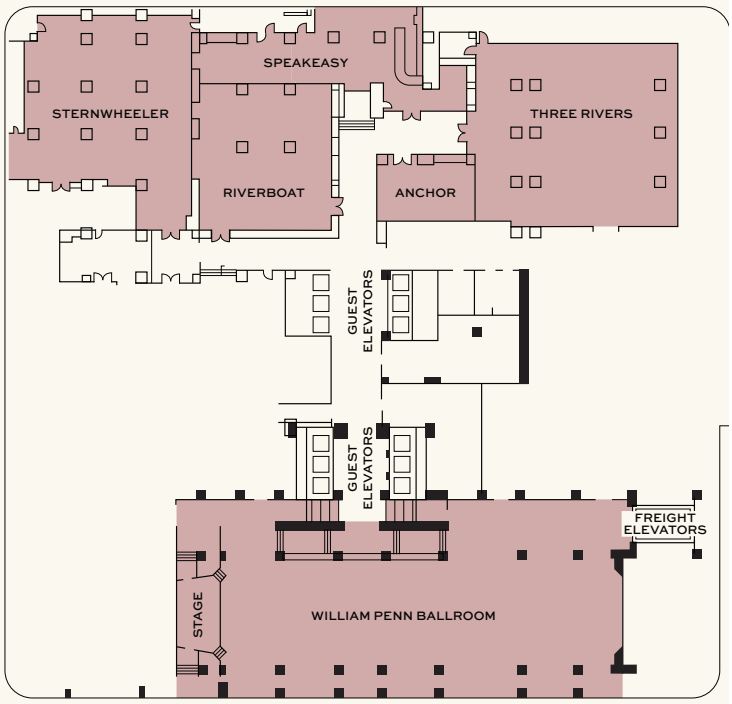
8:30-9:30 a.m.	**PLENARY 9**
8:30 a.m.	NEJ Conference convenes Daily Reports from Sessions: • Credentials – Vicki Gordy Stith • Journal – Sarah Ford • Courtesies – Ian Urriola
8:45 a.m.	Unfinished business Report/Assignments: Committee on Episcopacy – Judi Kenaston, Chair Announcements Adjournment
9:20 a.m.	Designated space for bishops to meet in assigned areas

The Service of Sending Forth will begin at 11:15 a.m.

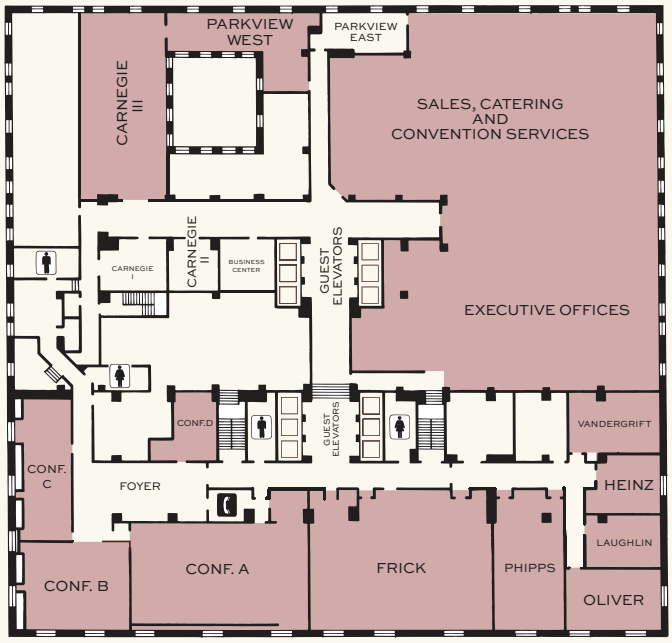
Omni William Penn Hotel Map

SEVENTEENTH FLOOR

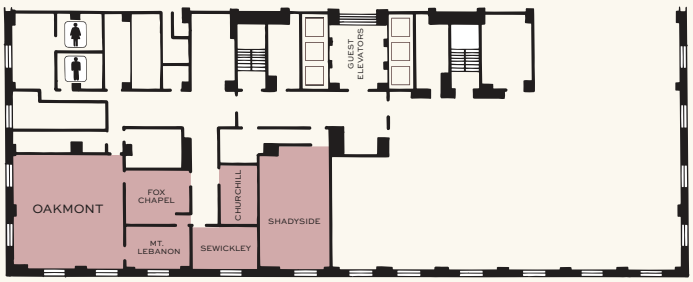
WILLIAM PENN LEVEL



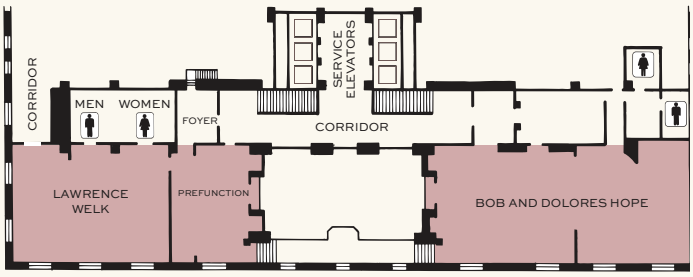
CONFERENCE LEVEL



FIRST FLOOR



MEZZANINE



Instructions for Secure Online Voting

Voting at Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference will be provided by GNTV on its web based platform for Jurisdictional Conference in Pittsburgh.

This will require each delegate to have a smartphone, tablet or laptop of their own or share with a close friend during voting. Voting devices are not provided to delegates. If you do not have a device that will load a webpage in Pittsburgh, it is possible for you to share with another member of your delegation by utilizing two web browsers on a single device.

While we typically rely on cellular data for voting there will be Wi-Fi available in the hotel ballroom if your cellular service is not sufficient.

The voting website is already prepared and you can find it at https://nej.gntvmedia.com.

As a delegate you will receive your Voter ID from your Delegation Head in Pittsburgh.

What Do You Need to Vote?

1. Six digit "Voter ID" as provided to you by your head of delegation.
2. A web browser on your computer or a second device (phone, tablet, etc.).

Once ready to vote:

1. Login at https://nej.gntvmedia.com by entering your Voter ID.
2. Wait for the presiding office to open the ballot.
3. Click the green Load Ballot button.
4. Make your voting selection(s).
5. Click the blue "Submit Vote" button.
6. Look for the "Thank you for your vote" confirmation.

Need Help?

GNTV Tech Support line will be available to assist you at 478-245-4042.

Wi-Fi Password: WPAUMC24

See page 2 for complete instructions on how to connect to Wi-Fi

Resolutions

RESOLUTION #1

Relating to Requirements for Delegates to GC and JC:

WHEREAS, in baptism and in our membership vows we commit to be loyal to Christ through The United Methodist Church, and do all in our power to strengthen its ministries; and,

WHEREAS United Methodists may not hold membership in two denominations simultaneously and upon joining another denomination, membership in The United Methodist Church is terminated; and,

WHEREAS serving on the Transitional Leadership Council of the Global Methodist Church (GMC) violates our core membership principles.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that, those who hold membership with the GMC or serve on the Transitional Leadership Council of the GMC withdraw from serving as part of the Jurisdictional delegation and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that those who hold membership in the GMC or serve on the Transitional Leadership Council of the GMC cease their involvement in the preparations and proceedings of Annual Conference, Jurisdictional Conference and subsequent General Conferences.

Person Responsible for Submitting Resolution: Members of the Eastern Pennsylvania Delegation: Kristine Adams; Hannah Bonner; Judy Ehninger; Monica Guepet; Robin Hynicka; Clarita Krall; Dave Koch; Sue Grimm McCoy Mattox; Mandy Miller; Lydia Munoz; Dawn Taylor-Storm; Lenora Thompson

RESOLUTION #2

Resolution from The Northeastern Jurisdiction Commission on Archives and History to Encourage Conference Boards of Trustees and Commissions on Archives & History to Work Cooperatively

WHEREAS the Bible frequently invokes people of faith to remember God's redemptive acts in History: "Remember the days of old; consider the generations long past. Ask your father and he will tell you, your elders, and they will explain to you." Deut. 32:7; NIV

And WHEREAS John Wesley, both by precept and example, endorsed journaling, record keeping and the publishing of annual conference minutes.

And WHEREAS the 2016 Discipline of The United Methodist Church paragraph 641.1 states, "In each annual conference there shall be a conference commission on archives and history."

And WHEREAS in 2023 the conference commission archivists and chairs of the ten annual conferences in the Northeastern Jurisdiction were surveyed about their archival space, staffing, and funding, and seven conferences responded.

And WHEREAS all seven responding conference commissions reported a great surge in the receipt of local church records from closed and disaffiliating congregations.

And WHEREAS six of the seven responding conference commissions reported that their available archival storage space is either at capacity, or very limited.

And WHEREAS at the time of the 2023 survey no additional funding had been provided by any conference to their conference commission on archives and history for additional space, archival storage supplies, or for additional staffing.

And WHEREAS archival storage of original documents and the digitization of Conference Records is a priority of the General Commission on Archives and History.

And WHEREAS it was reported that in most cases conference leadership, though sympathetic, do not "grasp the level of investment that we need to make in order to embrace digital archives capabilities."

And WHEREAS both the storage of physical records and preservation of digital archives are in the parameters of each conference commission's responsibility.

And WHEREAS the Susquehanna Conference has established a policy that makes one member of the Conference Commission on Archives and History a non-voting member of the Conference Board of Trustees.

And WHEREAS their experience has been beneficial to the work of their Commission on Archives and History in its assigned work of archival preservation.

And WHEREAS in the year since the 2023 survey both the Greater New Jersey Conference and the New England Conference have received additional funding from the Council on Finance and Administration, and Board of Trustees respectively.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Northeastern Jurisdiction of The United Methodist Church strongly encourages each Conference Board of Trustees and Commission on Archives and History to work together in assessing the facility, equipment, supplies, and staffing needs of the Conference Archives for storage and digitization of archival records, and develop a plan based on their conference's unique needs and situation.

Names of those voting in favor of the Resolution

NAME	ANNUAL CONFERENCE	POSITION
Earle N. Baker	Peninsula-Delaware	Jurisdictional President
Philip Lawton	Peninsula-Delaware	Jurisdictional Treasurer
Kun Chon Lee	Peninsula-Delaware	Conference At Large
Barbara Duffin	Peninsula-Delaware	Jurisdictional Archivist
Matthew Loyer	Susquehanna	Jurisdictional Secretary
Milton Loyer	Susquehanna	Conference Archivist
Elizabeth Mowry	Upper New York	Conference At Large
Nancy Rutenber	Upper New York	Jurisdictional Bulletin Editor
Richard Buckingham	Baltimore-Washington	Conference At Large
Samuel Smith	Upper New York	Conference Chairperson
Bette Johnson Sohm	New York	Conference Chairperson
Donald DeGroat	Greater New Jersey	Juris. Exctive. Com. At Large
Patricia J. Thompson	New England	Conference Chairperson
Nelson Thayer	Western Pennsylvania	Conference Chairperson
John Callanan	Greater New Jersey	Conference Chairperson
Bonnie McCubbin	Baltimore-Washington	Conference Archivist
Edward C. Patterson	Western Pennsylvania	Conference At Large
Rebecca Patterson	Western Pennsylvania	Conference At Large

Resolution #3

A Resolution Calling on the Annual Conferences of the NEJ to Require the Use of United Methodist Resources When Readmitting Disaffiliated Churches Into The United Methodist Church

Brief Rationale: This resolution encourages our Annual Conferences to use formal United Methodist resources when readmitting congregations that have disaffiliated from The United Methodist Church to ensure they understand the commitments of being United Methodist.

WHEREAS, the people of The United Methodist Church have successfully weathered a stormy season of disaffiliation, marked by division and strife; and

WHEREAS, United Methodist leaders across Annual Conference Cabinets and Boards of Trustees report that some of those disaffiliated congregations have said that those who presented information to them regarding the benefits of disaffiliation did not faithfully represent all of the known costs, financial and otherwise, to disaffiliation that they now bear after the fact; and

WHEREAS, United Methodist leaders across Annual Conference Cabinets and Boards of Trustees report that, due to the above fact, some of those disaffiliated congregations have expressed regret regarding on their decision to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church; and

WHEREAS, anticipating this, the General Conference of The United Methodist Church meeting in Charlotte, NC, from April 22–May 3, 2024, in their wisdom and grace, adopted Petition No. 21027-CO-¶2500, as amended in the Conferences Legislative Committee and by the plenary; and

WHEREAS, this petition, as amended, creates a new ¶2554 in the *Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church*, which reads: “With a spirit of grace, we welcome those churches which have disaffiliated or withdrawn to rejoin The United Methodist Church. Where applicable, every annual conferences [sic.] shall have a policy of reaffiliation for the churches seeking to return to the connection. Each such policy shall require that reaffiliating churches affirm their commitment to the Trust Clause in ¶2503.”; and

WHEREAS, it is right and proper that our Annual Conferences welcome back any church that had disaffiliated from The United Methodist Church in a manner that is non-punitive and fully transparent; and

WHEREAS, it is also right and proper that congregations that seek to rejoin the United Methodist Church possess a thorough understanding of the historical and contemporary practices, doctrines, polity, and social commitments of the United Methodist Church as they go about re-entering the United Methodist Church; and

WHEREAS, many of our General Boards and Agencies have labored to provide resources that educate individual United Methodists and United Methodist churches on the historical and contemporary practices, doctrines, polity, and social commitments of the United Methodist Church.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the delegates to the 2024 session of the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference do hereby express our gratitude to the General Conference for highlighting the need to carve out space to welcome back churches that disaffiliated from the United Methodist Church in a spirit of grace; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the delegates to the 2024 session of the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference do hereby encourage all of our Annual Conference leaders to discern a contextually appropriate process and policy by which churches that disaffiliated from the United Methodist Church may rejoin; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the delegates to the 2024 session of the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference do hereby encourage that these policies and processes include a formal education component on the historical and contemporary practices, doctrines, polity, and social commitments of the United Methodist Church; and

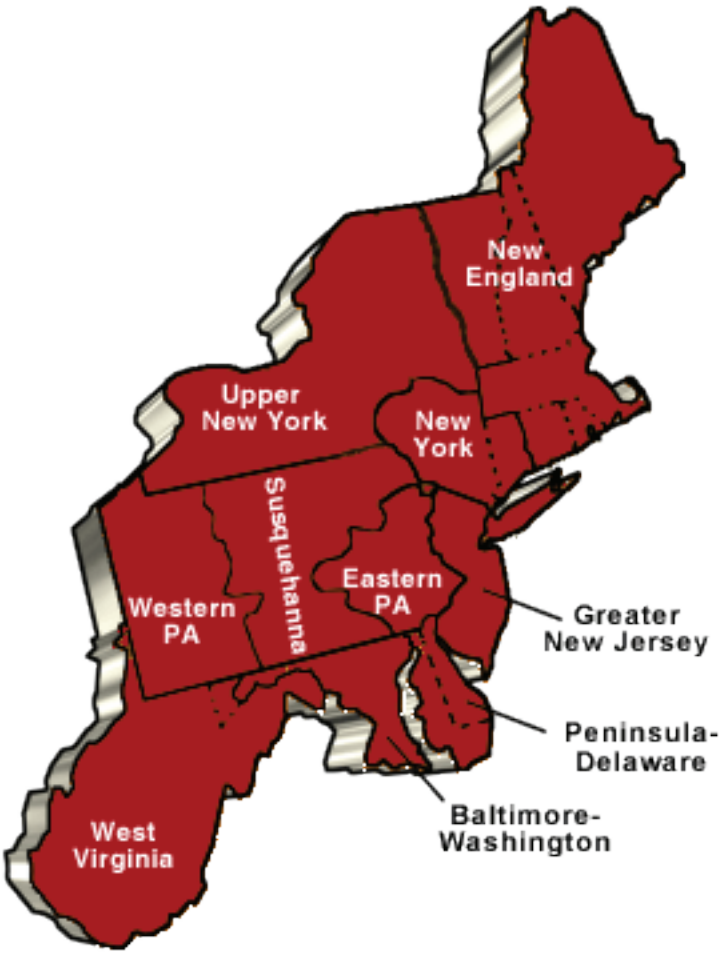
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the delegates to the 2024 session of the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference do hereby affirm that the sources that have been entrusted by the people of The United Methodist Church to teach on those topics, including our General Boards and Agencies, are the best and most accurate sources of information on matters pertaining to the history, doctrine, polity, and social commitments of The United Methodist Church.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the delegates to the 2024 session of the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference do hereby encourage that these formal education components be created in partnership with the General Commission on Archives and History, the General Board of Church and Society, the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women, the General Commission on Religion and Race, and the Committee on Faith and Order; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the delegates to the 2024 session of the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference do hereby encourage the aforementioned General Boards and Agencies be prepared to partner with Annual Conference on the creation and/or provision of these educational resources; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the delegates to the 2024 session of the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference do hereby direct the secretary of the Jurisdiction to furnish the Assistant to the Bishop, the Dean of the Cabinet, and the Chair of the Board of Trustees of each Annual Conference within its boundary as well as each of the General Secretaries of the aforementioned General Boards and Agencies with a copy of this resolution, in full, within thirty (30) days.

Submitted by: Ian Carlos Urriola, Lay Delegate from Upper New York Annual Conference



2024 Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference Sessions Committees

These committees are appointed by the College of Bishops and only serve while Jurisdictional Conference is in session.

JOURNAL COMMITTEE

Last	First	Email	Conference	Ethnicity	Male	Female	Lay	Clergy
Ford	Sarah	sarahford038@gmail.com	Baltimore-Washington	African American		X	X	
Chin	Noel	nobarchin@aol.com; noel.chin@nyac-umc.com	New York	African American	X			X
Hynicka	Robin	robin@archstreetumc.org	Eastern Pennsylvania	Anglo	X			X
Pendleton	Carolyn	cdpen@aol.com	Greater New Jersey	African American		X	X	

COURTESIES COMMITTEE

Last	First	Email	Conference	Ethnicity	Male	Female	Lay	Clergy
Meekins	William	wbmeekinsj@aol.com	Western Pennsylvania	African American	X			X
Kenaston	Judi	judikenaston@aol.com	West Virginia	Anglo		X	X	
McDermott	Christina	cmcdermott718@gmail.com	Susquehanna	Anglo		X	x	
Urriola	Ian	iurriola1992@gmail.com	Upper New York	Hispanic/ Latinx	X		X	

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE

Last	First	Email	Conference	Ethnicity	Male	Female	Lay	Clergy
Gordy-Stith	Vicki	vgordy-stith@epworth.faith	Peninsula-Delaware	Anglo		X		X
Shaffer	Richard	rshaffer1@suddenlink.net	West Virginia	Anglo	X		X	
Riss	Tim	timothy.riss@nyac-umc.com	New York	Anglo	X			X
Oduor	Ralph	jaramogi42@gmail.com	New England	African American	X		X	