

MISSION: POSSIBLE

ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2024

2024 CONFERENCE WORKBOOK



NTCUMC.ORG

Welcome to Annual Conference 2024!

This Conference Workbook contains an agenda, program announcements, schedules, reports, and legislative proposals for the 2024 North Texas ANNUAL CONFERENCE in Richardson, Texas.

VOTING MEMBERS:

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

VISITORS:

The balcony of First UMC will be reserved for visitors. In addition, the business sessions on Monday and Tuesday, as well as worship services Sunday and Monday evenings, will be livestreamed. For the link for each session and service, go to <https://ntcumc.org/ac2024>.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

- **The agenda** provides the schedule of events planned during Annual Conference.
- **General Meals** will be served in the Bartula Family Life Center, which is located on the Custer Road side of the campus. This will include Monday lunch and dinner, as well as lunch on Tuesday. Meals must be pre-purchased online at <https://ntcumc.org/ac2024>. Deadline is Monday, May 20. Those meals are listed on page 4. Please note there are some meals that are provided at no cost to participants. To ensure we have enough for those special meals, pre-registration is required. These meals will be held on the campus of First UMC Richardson.
- **Area Maps** are included at the back of this workbook.
- **Information/Registration** is at the Welcome Desk located in the Ministry Center and is easily accessed from the Shawver Welcome Center. Please check here for general information, messages, nametags, etc. Lost and Found will also be here.
- **Hearing devices** are available at the Welcome Desk.
- **First Aid supplies** are available at the Welcome Desk.
- **Snack Station** is in the Shawver Welcome Center. Bottled water, coffee, and other beverages will be available, along with snack foods. These are available for all attendees for a donation of your choosing at the stations.

SUNDAY, June 2

- 3:30 pm** Laity Session, First UMC, Plano
- 5:00 pm** Laity Dinner, First UMC Plano
- 7:00 pm** Opening Worship Service, **Rev. Lance Marshall preaching**, First UMC Richardson sanctuary. Worship to include commissioning of young adults serving with Project Transformation North Texas and Conference Youth Leadership Program. Childcare is available. Reception to follow in the Coleman Family Hall hosted by Bishop and Mrs. Saenz honoring Rev. Lance Marshall.

MONDAY, June 3 and TUESDAY, June 4

- 8:00 am** Holy Communion will be served by the Order of St. Luke, Monday and Tuesday mornings in Education Building Room 202.
- 8:00 am** Exhibitors in Coleman Family Hall.
- 8:30 am** General session in the sanctuary. The main floor of the sanctuary is for all voting members of Annual Conference. A section to stage left will be reserved for persons requiring sign language. The balcony is reserved for visitors. Please wear your name badge at all times.

7:00 pm The Monday Evening Service of Ordination and Commissioning, **Bishop Ruben Saenz Jr preaching**, First UMC Richardson sanctuary. Reception will be in the Bartula Family Life Center.

CHILDCARE AVAILABLE

Childcare for children who have completed 5th grade and under is available at no cost, but reservations must be made in advance for worship services and onsite sessions. On Sunday, childcare will be available for the Laity Session at First UMC, Plano, from 3:30-5:00 pm. Childcare will be available at First UMC, Richardson, for those involved in rehearsals from 2:45-4:30 p.m. and during worship from 6:45-8:30 p.m. Monday's childcare will be available from 8:15 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and from 6:45 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Tuesday's childcare will be available at 8:15 a.m. and end at 5:00 p.m. If your child will be in childcare during a mealtime, please provide food for them. Please register online at <https://ntcumc.org/ac2024> to register your child/children. Deadline to register is Monday, May 20.

PLEASE NOTE: *If you want a bound, printed, 8 ½ x 11, black and white copy of the 2024 North Texas Conference Journal, you must complete the order form located in the back of this workbook.*



NAME BADGE COLORS

BLUE	Clergy members who are entitled to vote except for the election of lay delegates to the General and Jurisdictional Conferences.
PEACH	Provisional clergy members, associate clergy members, clergy appointed under 346.2, and local pastors under part-time and full-time appointment, retired local pastors under appointment who are entitled to vote unless the subject is constitutional amendments or election of lay delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conferences and matters of ordination, character and conference relations of clergy.
GREEN	Lay members who are entitled to vote unless the matter pertains to the clergy, such as ordination, reception into full membership, or election of clergy delegates.
YELLOW	Diaconal ministers who are entitled to vote unless the matter pertains to the clergy, such as ordination, reception into full membership, or election of clergy delegates.
PINK	Student local pastors, retired local pastors, clergy from other annual conferences (§346.1), missionaries assigned by the GBGM, and certified lay missionaries from nations other than the United States, both who are serving within the bounds of the Annual Conference, who have voice but are not allowed to vote.
WHITE	Visitors who are not permitted to speak on the floor or allowed to vote.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE MEALS

All meals must be pre-purchased online at <https://ntcumc.org/ac2024>. No meals can be purchased on site. Room assignments for pre-purchased meals will be in your registration app, on signage, and on the screens at Annual Conference prior to dismissals. The Welcome Desk as well as volunteers will be available at First UMC Richardson to help you find your meal.

GENERAL MEALS:

Monday and Tuesday lunches, as well as Monday evening supper will be offered, by online reservation only, at First UMC, Richardson, in the Bartula Family Life Center (BFLC) Gym. These general meals are open to anyone. Please see the schedule below for special group meals and be sure to register for your choice. *No meals may be purchased after online registration closes on May 20.*

MEALS SCHEDULE (please register online to attend any of these meals):

SUNDAY, JUNE 2

5:00 pm	Laity Dinner.....	First UMC Plano
5:00 pm	Clergywomen.....	First UMC Richardson Worship and Arts Center
5:00 pm	Project Transformation Interns	First UMC Richardson BFLC Gym

MONDAY, JUNE 3 (all meals at First UMC Richardson)

Noon	General Lunch	BFLC Gym
	AAPI.....	Education Building Room 208
	Commission on Archives & History.....	Education Building Room 204
	Hispanic Ministry	Education Building Room 230
	Lay Servants	Education Building Mays Hall
	Retirees	Worship and Arts Center
5:00 pm	General Dinner.....	BFLC Gym
	Children and Youth Workers Dinner	BFLC Gym 1 D/E
	Ordinands/Commissionees (invitation only)	

TUESDAY, JUNE 4 (all meals at First UMC Richardson)

7:30 am	Perkins Alumni Breakfast.....	Ogden Fellowship Hall
	Town and Country Breakfast	Worship and Arts Center
Noon	General Lunch	BFLC Gym
	Administrative Assistants	Education Building Room 208
	Black Methodists for Church Renewal	Ogden Fellowship Hall
	Church & Society/UW Faith	Worship and Arts Center
	Clergy Spouse.....	Education Building Room 227 A/B
	Deacons.....	BFLC 1 D/E
	Duke Alumni.....	Education Building Room 205
	Evangelical Fellowship.....	Education Building Room 226 A/B
	Highland Park UMC	Education Building Room 217 A/B
	Local Pastors.....	Ed Mays Hall
	Young Clergy	Education Building Room 230
	Brite Reunion/Alumni	Education Building Room 213



Great Food, Great Friends, Total Convenience!

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AGENDA FOR ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2024 *(Revised on May 16)* “MISSION:POSSIBLE”

Sunday, June 2

3:15 - 5:00 pm	Laity Session Childcare Open	<i>First UMC, Plano</i>
3:30 pm	Laity Session	<i>First UMC, Plano</i>
2:45 - 4:30 pm	Childcare for rehearsal participants only	<i>First UMC, Richardson</i>
4:30 - 6:30 pm	Clergy Check-In and Receive Name Badges	<i>First UMC, Richardson</i>
5:00 pm	Laity Dinner	<i>First UMC, Plano</i>
	Clergywomen	<i>Worship and Arts Center at First UMC, Richardson</i>
	Project Transformation Interns.....	<i>Bartula Family Life Center Gym (BFLC) at First UMC, Richardson</i>
6:45 - 8:30 pm	Annual Conference Childcare Open.....	<i>First UMC, Richardson</i>
7:00 pm	Opening Worship with Rev. Lance Marshall, Guest Preacher	<i>Sanctuary at First UMC, Richardson</i>
8:30 pm	Reception hosted by Bishop Ruben Saenz Jr. and Mayé Saenz honoring Rev. Lance Marshall	<i>Coleman Family Hall at First UMC, Richardson</i>

Monday, June 3 *(all locations at First UMC, Richardson)*

7:30 am	Registration/Welcome Desk open	<i>Coleman Family Hall</i>
8:00 am	Holy Communion and Prayer Service.....	<i>Education Building, 202</i>
8:15 am - 5:00 pm	Childcare open.....	<i>Nursery</i>
8:00 am - 6:45 pm	Exhibitors open.....	<i>Coleman Family Hall</i>
8:30 am	Opening Music	<i>Sanctuary</i>
	Welcome and Organization of the Conference	
	Consent Calendar – Rev. Andy Lewis	
	Baptismal Renewal Service and Episcopal Address – Bishop Saenz	
	Episcopacy Committee Report – Rev. Dr. Clayton Oliphint	
	Laity Address – Kim Brannon	
10:05 am	Break	
10:20 am	Gathering Song and Prayer	
	Unification Plan – Kenneth Wolverton, Kim Simpson, and Richard Edwards	
11:05 am	Keynote 1 – Rev. Michael Gienger	
11:50 am	Announcements and Prayer – Rev. Kenny Dickson	
Noon	Lunch Break	
	General	<i>BFLC Gym</i>
	Retirees.....	<i>Worship and Arts Center</i>
	Lay Servants.....	<i>Education Building, Mays Hall</i>
	Hispanic Ministry.....	<i>Education Building, 230</i>
	Commission on Archives and History.....	<i>Education Building, 204</i>
	AAPI.....	<i>Education Building, 208</i>
	Highland Park UMC Clergy and Members (by Invitation only).....	<i>Education Room, 217 A/B</i>
1:20 pm	Gathering Music and Prayer.....	<i>Sanctuary</i>
	Delegation Report – Dr. Clayton Oliphint and Kelly Carpenter	
1:50 pm	Retiree Videos	
	Board of Ordained Ministry Report	
	Retiree Videos	
2:45 pm	Keynote 2 – Rev. Michael Gienger	
3:30 pm	Announcements and Prayer – Rev. Kenny Dickson	
3:45 pm	Dismiss to Toolbox Sessions and Resolution Working Groups	
4:00 pm	Toolbox Sessions and Resolution Working Groups	<i>More information in the Whova App</i>
	Empowering Youth Leadership in the Local Church Toolbox.....	<i>Mays Hall</i>
	Keynote Speaker’s Toolbox	<i>Sanctuary</i>
	Making Room at the Table: Intro to Disability Theology & Ministry Toolbox..	<i>Ogden Fellowship Hall</i>

	Reimagined Evangelism Toolbox	<i>Worship and Arts Center</i>
	Social Media Savvy: Building Your Toolbox.....	<i>Chapel in Sanctuary Complex</i>
	Resolution Working Groups	<i>Education Building Rooms</i>
5:00 pm	General Meal	<i>BFLC Gym</i>
	Children and Youth Workers Dinner	<i>BFLC Gym, 1D/E</i>
	Ordination Participants Dinner (invitation only)	
6:45 - 8:30 pm	Childcare	<i>Nursery</i>
7:00 pm	Ordination Service – Bishop Ruben Saenz Jr., Preacher.....	<i>Sanctuary</i>
8:30 pm	Reception for Ordinands and Commissionees	<i>BFLC Gym</i>

Tuesday, June 4 (*all locations at First UMC, Richardson*)

7:30 am	Perkins Alumni Breakfast.....	<i>Ogden Fellowship Hall</i>
	Town and Country Breakfast.....	<i>Worship and Arts Center</i>
7:30 am	Registration/Welcome Desk open	<i>Coleman Family Hall</i>
7:00 - 10:30 am	Quest Diagnostic Screening (by appointment only).....	<i>Bride's Room</i>
8:00 am	Holy Communion and Prayer Service.....	<i>Education Building, 202</i>
8:15 am - 5:00 pm	Childcare	<i>Nursery</i>
8:00 am	Exhibitors open	<i>Coleman Family Hall</i>
8:30 am	Opening Music	<i>Sanctuary</i>
	Welcome and Prayer – Bishop Saenz	
8:40 am	Memorial Service – Rev. Dr. Stan Copeland preaching	
9:20 am	Break	
9:35 am	Gathering Song	
	Ordinand Video 1	
	Combined Centers Report	
	Ordinand Video 2	
	GBGM – Cristian Slick	
	CF&A – Larry Womack	
	Nominations	
10:45 am	Consent Calendar – Rev. Andy Lewis	
	Resolutions	
11:50 am	Announcements and Prayer – Rev. Kenny Dickson	
Noon	Lunch Break	
	General	<i>BFLC Gym</i>
	Local Pastors	<i>Mays Hall</i>
	Clergy Spouses	<i>Education Room, 227 A/B</i>
	Black Methodists for Church Renewal	<i>Ogden Fellowship Hall</i>
	Deacons	<i>BFLC, 1D/E</i>
	Duke Alumni	<i>Education Room, 205</i>
	District/Conference Administrative Assistants	<i>Education Room, 208</i>
	Young Clergy.....	<i>Education Room, 230</i>
	Evangelical Fellowship.....	<i>Education Room, 226 A/B</i>
	Church and Society and United Women in Faith.....	<i>Worship and Arts Center</i>
1:20 pm	Gathering Music and Prayer.....	<i>Sanctuary</i>
	Deaconess Consecration – Kaitlyn Frantz	
	Clergy Spouses Report	
	Young People's Address	
	Back to School Initiative – Owen Ross	
2:10 pm	Award Presentations	
2:40 pm	Resolutions	
3:50 pm	Archives and History	
4:00 pm	Closing Worship with Holy Communion and Setting of Appointments – Bishop Saenz	
5:00 pm	Dismissal	

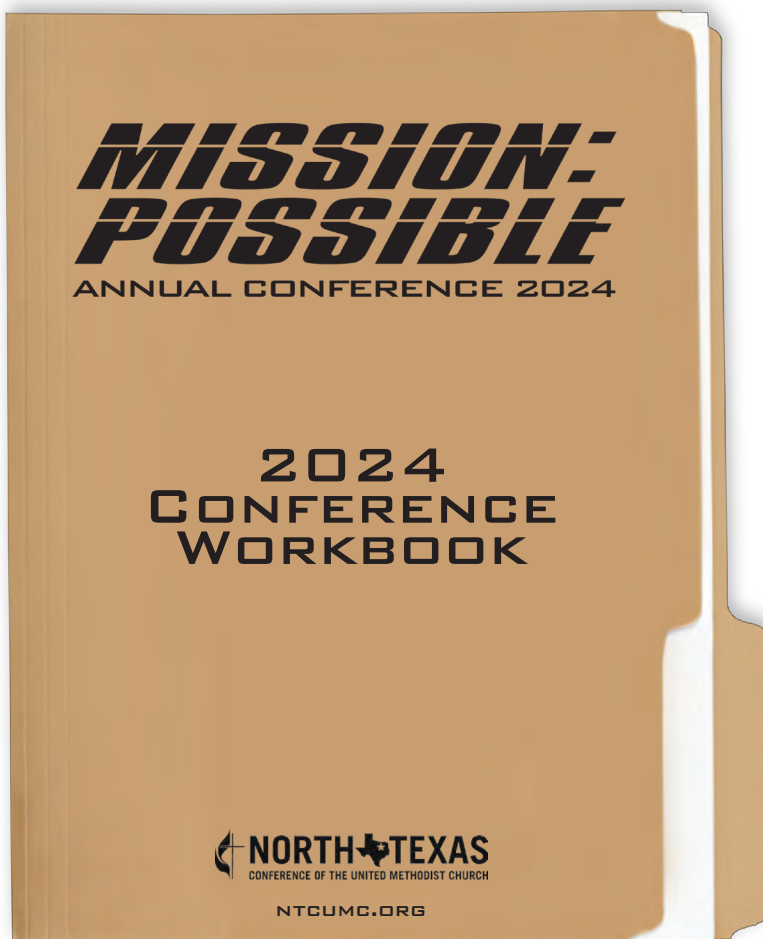
**GLORY TO GOD, WHO IS ABLE TO DO FAR BEYOND ALL THAT WE
COULD ASK OR IMAGINE BY HIS POWER AT WORK WITHIN US;
GLORY TO HIM IN THE CHURCH AND
IN CHRIST JESUS FOR ALL GENERATIONS,
FOREVER AND ALWAYS. AMEN.**

– Ephesians 3:20-21, *CEB*

At the core of Christian theology is the belief that God is omnipotent, possessing unlimited power, and capable of achieving anything. From the creation of the universe to the miracles that provided for God’s people – even in impossible situations – we see the boundless possibilities of God’s power. Through Jesus’ ministry and resurrection, He triumphed over sin, death, and the forces of darkness. God made the impossible possible. The ongoing work of the Holy Spirit in our lives affirms that nothing is beyond the grasp of God’s power. We embrace the truth that with God, nothing is impossible.

This theological premise – that all things are possible for God – is a core truth of our Christian faith. Through scripture, our own lived experiences, and the ministry and witness of the church, we see the extraordinary acts of God’s power displayed in creation, miracles, healing, redemption, and personal and social transformation.

We embrace this core truth and approach life with faith, hope, love and courage, knowing that with God, nothing is impossible.



2024 NORTH TEXAS ANNUAL CONFERENCE FEATURED SPEAKERS



BISHOP RUBEN SAENZ JR. ORDINATION PREACHER

Bishop Ruben Saenz Jr. serves as resident bishop of the Central and North Texas Conferences of The United Methodist Church, assigned in January 2023. Before these assignments, Saenz served as the interim bishop of the Central Texas Conference (2022) and resident bishop of the Great Plains Conference (2016-2022).

As the episcopal leader in Kansas and Nebraska, Bishop Saenz notably led three former annual conferences to complete a unification process that began in 2014. Under his leadership, the Great Plains Conference embraced a unified vision grounded in four pillars: Love God. Proclaim Christ. Serve Others. Do Justice.

In 2023, he began similar unification work for the Central, North, and Northwest Texas Annual Conferences, casting a vision and laying the groundwork for a new, unified conference that will harness and direct resources and efforts to reach a rapidly growing and diversifying mission field.

Before his election to the episcopacy, Saenz served as director of conference connectional ministries and executive director of the Rio Texas Conference's Mission Vitality Center, overseeing the conference's missional strategies and objectives for congregational vitality, new church starts, clergy and lay leadership vitality, and community transformation. He also served as the Southwest Texas director of congregational and new church development, helping to start 11 new churches.

As a pastor, Saenz focused on intentional spiritual practice and formation, developing a lay apostolate and giving people the tools and encouragement to move out of generational poverty. He has served congregations in East Dallas, Dallas' Oak Cliff neighborhood, El Paso, and at Edinburg's El Buen Pastor, the largest Hispanic American United Methodist Church in the country during his tenure.

Saenz is a graduate of Stephen F. Austin State University and a South Texas native. Before his call to ministry, he worked as a high school teacher and football coach, as well as in the business world. He earned his Master of Divinity and Doctor of Ministry from Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University. He now serves on the boards of Perkins School of Theology, the Texas Methodist Foundation, and the Methodist Health System. Saenz is also the President Designate for the United Methodist Council of Bishops.

Bishop Saenz and Mayé have been married since 1981. They have four children and 10 grandchildren.



REV. LANCE MARSHALL
GUEST PREACHER

Senior Pastor, First UMC, Fort Worth, Texas

The theologian Frederick Buechner once wrote, “The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger meet.” Rev. Lance Marshall, First UMC, Fort Worth, Senior Pastor, says he knows God’s call on his life pairs his love for starting new things with reaching new people in need of hope and purpose.

Ever since joining the First Fort Worth staff in 2013, Lance has focused on finding new ways to engage new people with the good news of Christ’s love, grace, and peace. He is passionate about teaching Scripture and discipleship in ways that are relevant, engaging, and life-giving. He would love to buy you a cup of coffee and hear your story — reach out and ask!

Born in Houston and raised in Colleyville, Lance is married to his best friend and Grapevine High School sweetheart, Elizabeth. They have four young children and reside in north Fort Worth. They love jumping on the trampoline, watching countless movies, and having pizza every Friday night.

Lance’s favorite way to relax is to spend time listening to podcasts and playing video games early in the morning. He’s played the electric guitar since he was 13 and really should be better at it by now.

Lance graduated from The University of Texas with a B.S. in Communication Studies and from Brite Divinity School at Texas Christian University with a Master of Divinity. In addition to his local church responsibilities, Lance also proudly serves on the Board of Ordained Ministry in the Central Texas Conference.



REV. MICHAEL GIENGER
KEYNOTE SPEAKER

*Co-Pastor, Central UMC, Galveston, Texas, and
 Founder, Galveston Housing Plus (GH+)*

Rev. Michael Gienger is an ordained elder in the Texas Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church. He received his undergraduate degree in Religion, concentrating in Christian Ethics, from Baylor University, and his Master of Divinity from Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University. Michael has been serving as Co-Pastor of Central United Methodist Church in Galveston, Texas, since 2014. He is also the founder of Galveston Housing Plus (GH+) – a new nonprofit providing supportive housing for persons exiting homelessness.

Central is a community in which radical grace is both believed and practiced. Ten years ago, Central had four regular attendees. Today, the church is the major provider of homeless services for the city of Galveston. Central is changing the culture of the city, inviting all towards a posture of compassion and kinship regardless of housing status. This is perhaps most evident on Sunday mornings when friends with homes and friends experiencing homelessness gather together for worship in a couch- and pew-packed sanctuary where all are more than welcome – they are wanted.

Gienger, known for his tenacious solidarity with the poor, has received multiple awards and honors for his work in Galveston, including being named one of Wesleyan Impact Partners’ Locke Innovative Leaders. Gienger is married to his partner, Moriah, who is an occupational therapist at TIRR Memorial Hermann. They have a 15-year-old dog named Crouton.



REV. DR. STAN COPELAND
MEMORIAL SERVICE PREACHER
Senior Pastor, Lovers Lane UMC, Dallas, Texas

Offering the sermon in the Memorial Service on Tuesday morning is Rev. Dr. Stan Copeland.

Since 1998, at the age of 38, Stan has served as Senior Pastor of the now 5,000-member urban congregation, Lovers Lane United Methodist Church in Dallas, Texas. His previous pastoral ministry includes appointments in Houston and East Texas. Through the years, he became well known as a storytelling preacher, a visionary leader, and a multiple-award-winning cook and canner, featuring his unique project, “Picklin’ Parson, Picklin’ with Purpose.”

With an understanding of the church as “business as unusual,” he has grown Lovers Lane UMC from 900 in weekly worship attendance to a multi-cultural, multi-worship service, small-group based, one-on-one disciple-making congregation with nearly 2,000 in weekly in-person and virtual worshippers from over 20 different countries around the world. The unusual business that he fostered was to incorporate a ministry that had become more outreach oriented and had potential to raise money beyond the congregation. Lovers Lane UMC has five non-profit corporations that include a school, a special needs respite ministry, the largest 12-step ministry in the country, a deaf ministry, and the Lovers Lane United Methodist Foundation.

Stan has served the larger community as chairman of the board of the Lydia Patterson Institute and as a member of the Methodist Health Systems Foundation for over two decades. He also helped found a hospital in rural Liberia, Africa, among many other God-inspired projects.

He is also an author of five books, including two pickling and canning cookbooks. His latest publication is *Feeling the Heat in an Alaskan Kitchen, Recipes, and Stories About Befriending Earth*. It features the art of pressure canning meats and vegetables, but, he says, “it’s the stories that inspire.”

Stan has been married to Tammy for 42 years and they have two children, their spouses, and two grandchildren. Tammy is the director of the Creative School located at Lovers Lane’s second campus, Walnut Hill UMC, also located in North Dallas.

Recently Dr. Copeland represented the North Texas Conference for the fourth and fifth time as a Clergy Delegate to the 2020 and 2024 General Conference of the UMC in Charlotte, North Carolina. Writing about his experience there, he observed, “Sometimes in my life I have felt I have been part of something that is historically significant and anointed by the Holy Spirit; this is such a time.” He also noted that, “United Methodists are people who believe in free will and choice; this General Conference is a reflection of our theological world and core values.”

PRELIMINARY CONSENT CALENDAR GUIDELINES

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

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

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

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

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

PRELIMINARY CONSENT CALENDAR

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STANDING RULES: PROCEEDINGS FOR THE MEETINGS OF THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Motions by Function Chart

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

Motions by Rank Chart

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

ACRONYMS

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

2024 AWARDS

HARRY DENMAN EVANGELISM AWARDS

For over 45 years, The Foundation for Evangelism has partnered with annual conferences to present the Harry Denman Evangelism Awards to youth, laity, and clergy whose ministries help to nurture and empower disciples so changed by their relationship with Jesus Christ that they cannot stop themselves from serving as Christ served, or sharing “Why Jesus” in all aspects of their lives.

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



CLERGY

Rev. Ken Kyoungwon Park

Umphress Road United Methodist Church

The North Texas Conference Bishop and Cabinet nominate Rev. Ken Kyoungwon Park for the Harry Denman Clergy Award Recipient for 2024. Rev. Park is the pastor of Umphress Road United Methodist Church in the Metro District. In 2023, Umphress Road reported a 63% increase in worship attendance (2nd only to Market Street UMC), and 400% increase in professions of faith (POFs), going from two non-confirmand POFs in 2022 to nine in 2023 and going from two total POFs in 2022 to ten total in 2023.

Pastor Ken identified the numerical growth of the church primarily from two sources. First, many Filipino nurses and teachers are immigrating to the Dallas area. Umphress Road members are active in Filipino teachers’ and nurses’ associations and connect with new arrivals to the area. Park noted that the adult professions of faith in the congregation in 2023 were from these connections. Second, Pastor Ken also began visiting people who had previously left the church and some of these persons reconnected with the congregation. According to Park, visiting these persons was “a matter of love and patience, and the work of the Holy Spirit.”

When Umphress Road was hit by Covid-19, it seemed the small church would not be able to survive membership-wise or financially. Rev. Park was first appointed to Umphress Road in 2020. Park reports that the financial report for the first month of his appointment in 2020 showed \$500 available for the operation fund. By request of church leaders, Rev Park preached a four-week sermon series on tithing and then has continued to focus on financial discipleship. The church also realized that it could not support any more salary than the pastor’s one; however, congregants increased their volunteering to work for the ministry as educators, administrative assistant, choir conductor, pianist, and in other areas, including landscaping.

Park noted about 2023, “I don’t know how to describe it well, but whenever we gathered, my heart was strangely warmed, and I felt the presence of the Holy Spirit strongly in our congregation.” After challenging years from Covid and being out of its building for a season due to a winter storm, Umphress Road is once again a strong congregation. Park smiles, “I don’t know what to say, but this is the happiest congregation that I ever saw in my 22 years of being a United Methodist pastor, and it is just a miracle to see our survival and even growth as a very tiny congregation.”

**LAITY****Carrie Minniear**

First United Methodist Church, Wichita Falls

Carrie Minniear, a native of Wichita Falls and long-standing member of First UMC, Wichita Falls, is the 2024 recipient of the Harry Denman Award for Adult Laity. Carrie has a warm and genuine servant's heart. Recently, Carrie had the idea to show movies to First UMC Wichita Falls neighbors as a way for them to feel comfortable inside the church walls. Most of the neighbors near the church are people in the margins or currently unhoused. Then Carrie thought to serve a meal, as well, and "Dinner and a Movie" was born. Carrie recruited volunteers for the kitchen crew and people to "Meet, Greet and Eat" with their neighbors. This ministry has grown from 15 guests the first night in 2022 to 80 guests by March 2023. A box to share prayer concerns has been added. Several drives to collect hygiene items have been held so other church members can feel included in this ministry. On "Dinner and a Movie" nights, each guest is invited to take three hygiene items that they need. Carrie continues to be the driving force behind this ministry, handing out flyers each month, recruiting volunteers, and thinking of new ways to serve these neighbors.

Carrie also serves The Wesley (campus ministry of The United Methodist Church) at Midwestern State University, Wichita Falls. She recently donated funds to help furnish and complete the renovation of The Wesley. She also shows up almost weekly to The Wesley's free lunch program. She helps prep and serve food to the students. She invites these students to attend worship while being mindful to ask where they are in their faith. Carrie emulates a lay servant ministry model. She does it in such a way that welcomes the stranger in the midst and calls them to join in. Carrie makes people who are often ignored feel seen and heard. She lets others know they are wanted and accepted just the way they are. She creates a space for church members to interact with neighbors and see who those neighbors truly are, children of God.

**YOUTH****Titus Moore**

First United Methodist Church, Paris

Titus Moore is an 8th grader at Paris Junior High and active member of the First UMC, Paris, youth group in Paris, Texas. He and his family (Mom Allison, Dad Alex and sister Lydia) have attended Connections modern worship service since 2021.

With a limited number of age appropriate activities for students in our rural community, Wednesday youth programming is a wonderful opportunity to give young people a place to belong. Shortly after being baptized and joining the First UMC Paris/Connections in August of 2022, Titus took such pride in his church home that he began inviting friends every Wednesday. In less than a year, his enthusiasm and weekly group texts to all his buddies about joining him for basketball, dinner, and bible study resulted in six new attendees to Wednesday night youth group!

The passion and inviting effort didn't stop there. Other students followed Titus's example and began inviting friends and even acquaintances from school to come hang out with us on Wednesday nights. In 2023 there were 20 new visitors that became regular youth attendees! By April of 2024 twelve additional youth visited and became weekly regulars. Now 50% of the youth group is made up of students with zero family connection to the church. Packing a gym with 35-50 students who choose to spend their Wednesday nights in a safe place with food and bible study is worth celebrating. But, knowing that the majority of them found this safe haven from the word of another student like Titus, speaks volumes to the youth led evangelism happening in Paris, Texas. *(Written by Rev. Katrina Culberston Smith, Youth Minister, First UMC, Paris)*

BISHOP WILLIAM B. ODEN ECUMENICAL AWARD



Grace Avenue United Methodist Church, Frisco Frisco Interfaith Alliance

The North Texas Conference Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns honors the faithful work of one congregation for the Bishop William B. Oden Ecumenical Award this year.

In 2022 Grace Avenue United Methodist Church developed a new strategic plan called “Grace Upon Grace.”

One objective was to foster interfaith relationships in Frisco; a community that has a population of over 230,000 with 80 different languages being spoken in their school district. They have had several events including “Better Together,” “Together We Dine,” and helped to re-establish the Frisco Interfaith Alliance. In March 2023 the alliance created the mission statement:



The Frisco Interfaith Alliance is a gathering of faith leaders, faithful adherents to a particular faith tradition, and curious seekers desiring to understand, respect, and celebrate the unique contributions of the various faith communities that are part of the diverse fabric of our Frisco community.

May 2023, the alliance held the first “One Love: A Celebration of Unity” that included an interfaith choir, information on all faiths, and 15 different faith communities readings from their sacred text. On May 8 they will hold the “One Love” event again hoping for great involvement and enthusiasm.

They host Thanksgiving events and are creating plans that will be introduced in secondary schools encouraging discussion and fellowship events.

Grace Avenue is embracing the holy work Bishop Oden believed in. The CCUIC community celebrates this witness of faith beyond our own!



ONE MATTERS AWARD



First United Methodist Church, Alvord Rev. Carol Sparks

The One Matters Discipleship Award celebrates churches that have moved away from zero baptisms or zero professions of faith to at least one. After a season of zero professions of faith, First United Methodist Church, Alvord, in 2023 reported 8 professions of faith in a congregation that worshipped 53. This means 15% of the average worshipping congregation made a profession of faith, and 53 in worship was 10% higher than in 2022.

Rev. Carol Sparks is the pastor of First UMC, Alvord. In 2020, “Pastor Carol” was appointed to the First United Methodist Church of Alvord. It was an unusual and challenging time for all churches as they navigated through the pandemic. However, even when quarantining was keeping everyone apart, the church was nurturing heart connections.

When the world returned to the “new normal,” First UMC, Alvord, got moving at a new speed in connecting with the community at ball fields, flagpoles, school auditoriums, hosting school dances, providing meals and celebration for students, bringing treats and letters of encouragement to teachers and staff, leading Fellowship of Christian Athletes events, baccalaureate, senior breakfast, and more. The year of 2021 was a “making it happen for our kids” kind of year!

The church’s investment in the community resulted in the church welcoming four new families into the congregation in November of 2021 and less active younger families began reconnecting, as well. The arrival of these new families resulted in a confirmation class in the congregation. In Fall 2023, eight young people from the sixth grade to the ninth grade confirmed their faith in Christ and joined The United Methodist Church.



LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS

**LEGISLATIVE
ITEM #1**

**LAY/CLERGY EQUALIZATION TABLE
2024 EQUALIZATION OF LAY AND CLERGY MEMBERSHIP**

DISTRICT	CLERGY	LAY	RULE IIIA(1)	TOTAL RULE IIIA(1)	LAY EQUAL FACTOR
EAST	60	49	6	55	5
METRO	264	98	19	117	147
NORTH CENTRAL	179	86	11	97	82
NORTHWEST	64	36	5	41	23
TOTALS	567	269	41	310	257

STANDING RULE IIIA(1)

	EA	ME	NC	NW	TOTAL
Conference Lay Leaders/Assoc. Lay Leaders		2	2		4
Core Leadership Team	1	2		1	4
UMM President					0
UMW President		1			1
Youth Organization President			1		1
Wesley Foundation Directors	1	2		1	4
District Lay Leaders	1	1	1	1	4
Young Adults under 25 yrs.	1	1	1	1	4
Council on Youth Ministry	1	1	1	1	4
Diaconal Ministers		8			8
Agency Chairs/GBOGM Secretary	1	1	5		7
TOTALS	6	19	11	5	41

	Membership 2023	% of Total	To Be Elected
East	5,330	5%	13
Metro	46,907	47%	121
North Central	38,911	40%	103
Northwest	7,766	8%	20
TOTALS	98,914	100%	257

1 **LEGISLATIVE**2 **ITEM #2****CONFERENCE TREASURER**

3

4 **FROM:**

Council on Finance and Administration

5

6 **LEGISLATION:**

7 The Council on Finance and Administration recommends Rev. Jeffrey Pehl for election as the Conference Treasurer.

8

9

10 **LEGISLATIVE**11 **ITEM #3****CLOSING OF MT. TABOR/SUMNER UMC – EAST DISTRICT**12 **FROM:**

North Texas Conference Board of Trustees

13

14 **BACKGROUND:**

15 Because only a small number of members remain at the Mount Tabor-Sumner UMC, Lamar County, the remaining members agreed that they cannot continue. Members of the church concluded that now is the time to close the church.

16

17 **LEGISLAION:**

18 The North Texas Conference Board of Trustees recommends the closure of the Mount Tabor-Sumner UMC. The property will be sold with the proceeds going to the North Lamar Parish.

19

20

21 **LEGISLATIVE**22 **ITEM #4**

**MERGER OF FLORAL HEIGHTS UMC
WITH FIRST WICHITA FALLS AND
UNIVERSITY UMC – EAST DISTRICT**

23

24

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27

28 **FROM:**

North Texas Conference Board of Trustees

29

30 **BACKGROUND:**

31 Because only a small number of members remain at the Floral Heights UMC, Wichita County, the remaining members agreed that they cannot continue. Members of the church concluded that now is the time to merge with the two remaining/larger churches in the community.

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RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION

#1

NORTH TEXAS ANNUAL CONFERENCE RESOLUTION REGARDING APPROVAL OF THE PLAN OF UNION FOR THE HORIZON TEXAS CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

The North Texas Conference (the “Conference”) hereby takes the following actions and adopts the following resolutions:

WHEREAS, the Central and North Texas Conferences have a history of shared episcopal supervision; and

WHEREAS, the Fort Worth Episcopal Area and the Dallas Episcopal Area now, once again, share episcopal supervision; and

WHEREAS, the cabinets of the Central and North Texas Conferences convened in 2023 with a shared understanding that the evolving landscape of the United Methodist connection necessitated a re-evaluation of conference boundaries; and

WHEREAS, the Central, North and Northwest Texas Conferences have a shared history as a single conference as Methodism was established in and spread across Texas; and

WHEREAS, we are committed to more than our geographical boundaries, and, in fact, we are committed to the mission of The United Methodist Church to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world; and

WHEREAS, the cabinets of Central, North and Northwest Texas Conferences met in August 2023 and collectively deliberated the prospect of consolidating into a single entity, sharing unified vision, mission and key strategic mission priorities; and

WHEREAS, the South Central Jurisdiction Episcopacy Committee notified the delegates of the South Central Jurisdiction (“SCJ”) on February 12, 2024, that it intends to recommend to the 2024 SCJ Conference that one bishop be assigned to the Dallas-Fort Worth Episcopal Area, which will encompass the Central, North and Northwest Texas Annual Conferences or their successor; and

WHEREAS, it is both necessary and appropriate for all three conferences to approve the Unification Plan that will govern the fully unified Horizon Texas Conference of The United Methodist Church;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Unification Plan attached to this resolution (go to https://ntcumc.org/Unification_Plan_-_NTC.pdf) is hereby adopted by the North Texas Annual Conference with the intention that the Unification Plan shall govern the creation and structure of the new Horizon Texas Conference of The United Methodist Church; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, in accordance with the actions taken at the respective 2024 annual conference sessions of the Central, North and Northwest Texas Conferences, that the SCJ Conference is entreated to take the following actions during the 2024 SCJ Conference:

- (1) to approve the realignment of the boundaries of the Central, North and Northwest Texas Conferences to form one new conference to be known as the “Horizon Texas Conference of The United Methodist Church” with boundaries coextensive with the current Central, North and Northwest Texas Conferences;

(2) to authorize the Central, North and Northwest Texas Conferences to conduct a joint organizational conference known as the Unifying Conference, prior to the formation of the new Horizon Texas Conference, consisting of the voting membership (lay and clergy) of the Central, North and Northwest Texas Conferences; and
 (3) to authorize the Horizon Texas Conference to commence operations as a fully unified conference of The United Methodist Church after the completion of the joint organizational conference, in accordance with the Unification Plan adopted by the Central, North and Northwest Texas Conferences during their respective 2024 annual conference sessions.

RESOLUTION

#2 RESOLUTION ON HISTORICAL SITE AND HERITAGE LANDMARK RECOGNITION for FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH DALLAS, DALLAS, TEXAS

FROM: Commission on Archives and History

WHEREAS, the General Commission on Archives and History (GCAH) of the UMC has implemented a program to recognize United Methodist Historic Sites and designate United Methodist Heritage Landmarks (paragraph 1712.a of *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, 2016*); and

WHEREAS, a designation as a United Methodist Historic Site and nomination to be a United Methodist Heritage Landmark are approved by formal action of the Annual Conference, following a review by the Conference Commission on Archives and History; and

WHEREAS, The Commission on Archives and History of the North Texas Conference of The United Methodist Church does hereby recognize and acknowledge that we occupy land in North Texas and near the Trinity River originally stewarded by multiple American Indian (First People) groups. Most notably, First People inhabitants included the Caddo, the Wichita, and nomadic tribes such as the Comanche and the Kiowa. Ancestral tribes included the Arkikosa, the Atakapa, the Karankawa, the Tawakoni, and others. In the love of Christ Jesus, this acknowledgment demonstrates our responsibility and commitment to truth, healing, and reconciliation and to elevating the stories, culture, and community of the original inhabitants of this land through ongoing and sustained relationship as brothers and sisters created and sustained by our God and Creator; and

WHEREAS, the Commission on Archives and History of the North Texas Conference has determined that First United Methodist Church Dallas (hereafter called “FirstChurch Dallas”) was established February 10, 1846, sending members to establish new Methodist churches as the city grew; and

WHEREAS, its first building was located on Lamar Street (1868); then at Commerce and Prather Streets (1894); and following the consolidation with Trinity (1916), property was purchased for the current downtown location at 1928 Ross Avenue; and

WHEREAS, ground-breaking for the Ross Avenue church was held May 7, 1921, and when the cornerstone was laid on October 29, 1921, its senior pastor, Dr. Charles C. Selecman, said, “In planting this cornerstone, we are serving notice that The First Methodist Church is in the heart of Dallas to do business for God for all time to come”; and

WHEREAS, it was called “The Million Dollar Church” when the building was dedicated on February 7, 1926, which proved to be a fitting description given the prominence of its Gothic style of architecture, leaded glass win-

1 dows, stone-cut stairway with three pairs of doors, a sanctuary with seating for 2,000, and neo-Gothic bell tower
2 visible in the downtown skyline; and
3

4 **WHEREAS**, the 1964 expansion included a two-story glass entry on Harwood Street called “Portals of Inspiration”
5 that featured large stained glass and mosaic tile art works by renowned Texas stained glass artist Cecil Casebier,
6 along with the addition of a theatre-in-the round, art gallery, and classrooms; and
7

8 **WHEREAS**, the masterplan for the 2013 expansion garnered a national Faith & Form Award for church architec-
9 ture from the American Institute of Architects for its design reflective of the contemporary ministries of the twenty-
10 first century urban church, which featured a glass façade and a two-story atrium providing a skylighted gathering
11 space that delivered daylight to sanctuary windows; and
12

13 **WHEREAS**, the current church building has hosted important denominational events, including the North Texas
14 Annual Conference in 1927, and the 1930 General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church South with se-
15 nior pastor Dr. Carl Gregory serving as the host pastor; and
16

17 **WHEREAS**, during the historic 1968 Uniting Conference in Dallas that merged The Methodist Church and the
18 Evangelical United Brethren denominations into The United Methodist Church, a worship service called “The
19 Preaching Hour” was held at FirstChurch Dallas every afternoon; and
20

21 **WHEREAS**, FirstChurch Dallas has provided significant leadership to the Conference and denomination, includ-
22 ing eight clergy who were elected as bishops: Dr. John M. Moore (1918), Dr. Sam R. Hay (1922), Dr. Charles C.
23 Selecman and Dr. William C. Martin (1938), Dr. W. Angie Smith (1944), Dr. Robert Goodrich, Jr. (1972), Dr. Ben-
24 jamin R. Oliphint (1980), and Dr. Walter L. Underwood (1984); and
25

26 **WHEREAS**, other important denominational leadership roles held by senior pastors have included Dr. Selecman,
27 President of Southern Methodist University; Bishop W. Angie Smith, Acting President of Centenary College; and
28 Bishop John M. Moore, co-chair of the historic 1939 conference that brought together the three major branches of
29 Methodism to form The Methodist Church; and
30

31 **WHEREAS**, women leaders have had a significant impact on FirstChurch Dallas and its ministry, including Sarah
32 Horton Cockrell, who provided land for the Lamar Street church in 1860; Virginia Knight Johnson, who founded
33 a home for young women in 1890; and Lura Hagy Potts, who created the Greater Dallas Board of City Missions in
34 1902, credited as the beginning of the Wesley-Rankin Center; and
35

36 **WHEREAS**, FirstChurch Dallas created important programs to help those in need, including the Golden Cross,
37 a unique church and health system ministry founded in 1921 and now a division of the Methodist Health System
38 Foundation; and Crossroads Community Services, founded in 1983 to serve those who were food insecure that is
39 now a major nonprofit organization for food distribution in North Texas; and
40

41 **WHEREAS**, FirstChurch Dallas became a pioneer in audio-visual ministry when senior pastor Dr. Robert Good-
42 rich, Jr. began *Chapel Radio Vespers* on Sunday evenings on KIXL radio in 1948, then created *The Pastor Calls*
43 in 1950, a weekly dramatic television program that ran for nine years on KRLD-TV (the CBS affiliate in Dallas at
44 that time); and
45

46 **WHEREAS**, with the opening of the Rotunda Theatre and an art gallery in 1964, FirstChurch Dallas became the
47 first church in Dallas to present performances by congregation and community members in its own theatre-in-the-
48 round and host exhibitions by local artists in its gallery; and
49
50
51
52

1 **WHEREAS**, in preparing to mark the centennial of its church at the corner of Ross and Harwood in 2026, First-
2 Church Dallas seeks to remember and honor the individuals, groups, organizations, and ministries that have been
3 part of its history; and
4

5 **WHEREAS**, the Commission on Archives and History of the North Texas Conference of The United Methodist
6 Church has approved this resolution on March 8, 2024, and supports the application of First United Methodist
7 Church Dallas for registration as a United Methodist Historic Site and will support the request that the GCAH
8 nominate it as a United Methodist Heritage Landmark, subject to approval of this resolution by the North Texas
9 Conference.
10

11 **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the North Texas Conference of The United Methodist Church design-
12 nates First United Methodist Church Dallas, of Dallas, Texas, as a United Methodist Historic Site; and it is
13

14 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the North Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church agrees with the nom-
15 ination of First United Methodist Church Dallas as a United Methodist Heritage Landmark; and it is
16

17 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Commission on Archives and History of the North Texas Conference is hereby
18 directed to advise the General Commission on Archives and History of the action here taken and provide such doc-
19 umentation as may be required in order to recognize FirstChurch Dallas as a United Methodist Historic Site and to
20 seek designation of First United Methodist Church Dallas as a United Methodist Heritage Landmark.
21
22

23 **RESOLUTION**

24 **#3** **RESOLUTION ON HISTORICAL SITE AND HERITAGE LANDMARK** 25 **RECOGNITION for ST. PAUL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH DALLAS,** 26 **TEXAS** 27 28

29 **FROM:** Commission on Archives and History
30

31 **WHEREAS**, the General Commission on Archives and History (GCAH) of The United Methodist Church has
32 implemented a program to recognize United Methodist Historic Sites and designate United Methodist Heritage
33 Landmarks (paragraph 1712.a of *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, 2016*); and
34
35

36 **WHEREAS**, a designation as a United Methodist Historic Site, and nomination to be a United Methodist Heritage
37 Landmark, are approved by formal action of the Annual Conference, following a review by the Conference Com-
38 mission on Archives and History; and
39

40 **WHEREAS**, The Commission on Archives and History of the North Texas Conference of The United Methodist
41 Church does hereby recognize and acknowledge that we occupy land in North Texas and near the Trinity River
42 originally stewarded by multiple American Indian (First People) groups. Most notably, First People inhabitants
43 included the Caddo, the Wichita, and nomadic tribes such as the Comanche and the Kiowa. Ancestral tribes includ-
44 ed the Arkikosa, the Atakapa, the Karankawa, the Tawakoni, and others. In the love of Christ Jesus, this acknowl-
45 edgement demonstrates our responsibility and commitment to truth, healing, and reconciliation and to elevating the
46 stories, culture, and community of the original inhabitants of this land through ongoing and sustained relationship
47 as brothers and sisters created and sustained by our God and Creator; and
48

49 **WHEREAS**, the Commission on Archives and History of the North Texas Conference has determined that St. Paul
50 United Methodist Church (hereafter called “St. Paul”) is home to the oldest African American Methodist congrega-
51 tion in Dallas, organized in 1873 when several inhabitants of Freedman’s Town, a community of recently freed
52 people just north of the Dallas city limits, met with Methodist ministers Rev. H. Oliver and Rev. William Bush; and

- 1 **WHEREAS**, with Rev. Oliver as their first pastor, the congregation erected a small, white-frame building on do-
2 nated land in 1874 for their church functions; and
3
- 4 **WHEREAS**, in 1876, the church was leased by a Methodist minister to start a school for African American youth
5 that was moved to Austin two years later, eventually being chartered in 1920 as Samuel Huston College, and after
6 the 1952 merger, becoming Huston-Tillotson University; and
7
- 8 **WHEREAS**, work on St. Paul’s present-day brick-clad sanctuary at 1816 Routh Street began in 1913, derived from
9 designs by William Sidney Pittman, the first African American architect in Dallas; and
10
- 11 **WHEREAS**, construction on the church continued for over a decade, with parishioners contributing funds and
12 materials as they could, including bricks, which is reflected in the various shades of bricks in the structure’s facade;
13 and
14
- 15 **WHEREAS**, the building is an excellent example of the Collegiate Gothic Revival style of architecture that in-
16 cludes towers, a worship space with a balcony, curved pews on a main floor that gently slope toward the pulpit, and
17 thirty-five original stained-glass windows; and
18
- 19 **WHEREAS**, when the church was completed in 1927, it became one of the few large public meeting spaces avail-
20 able to Black residents of Dallas, serving as the site for high school commencements and other educational and
21 social activities for the Black community, and as the site of Methodist Church conferences; and
22
- 23 **WHEREAS**, St. Paul was one of a handful of strong African-American churches in Freedman’s Town through the
24 middle of the twentieth century, with leading Black citizens in attendance and renowned pastors, including I. B. (Ira
25 Benjamin) Loud who served for thirty-two years (1948-1980); and
26
- 27 **WHEREAS**, the first Black students to enroll at Southern Methodist University in 1951 were James A. Hawkins,
28 John W. Elliott, Negail R. Riley, James V. Lyles, and A. Cecil Williams, all of whom were students in the Perkins
29 School of Theology; served as student pastors at St. Paul; and had distinguished careers as spiritual, denomination-
30 al, community, and social justice leaders; and
31
- 32 **WHEREAS**, St. Paul has been recognized for creating ministries that meet the needs of some of the most vulner-
33 able and underserved members of the community, including the Dallas Bethlehem Center founded in 1946, as part
34 of a ministry of the Methodist Church; and Body and Soul that has provided hot meals and clothing to unsheltered
35 neighbors every weekend for over twenty-five years; and
36
- 37 **WHEREAS**, the latter half of the twentieth century saw the African-American community around the church
38 gradually disperse, due in part, to the Woodall-Rodgers Freeway that divided central city neighborhoods, with St.
39 Paul being one of only three institutional buildings left of Freedman’s Town, and the only one serving its original
40 purpose; and
41
- 42 **WHEREAS**, St. Paul remains the only church in downtown Dallas rooted in African American traditions of wor-
43 ship and is now part of the city’s vibrant Arts District, where it is steps away from major performance halls and
44 across the street from the Booker T. Washington High School for the Visual and Performing Arts; and
45
- 46 **WHEREAS**, St. Paul’s historical significance has been recognized with a Dallas Landmark (1982), a Texas Histor-
47 ical Marker (2013), and a listing on the National Register of Historic Places by the National Park Service (2016);
48 and
49
50
51
52

1 **WHEREAS**, anchored in the same location for over 150 years, St. Paul remains a major spiritual, cultural, and
2 civic leader in the City of Dallas, resilient in adapting to its changing neighborhood, and steadfast in meeting the
3 needs of the community through its witness and ministry; and

4
5 **WHEREAS**, the Commission on Archives and History of the North Texas Conference of the United Methodist
6 Church has approved this resolution on March 8, 2024, and supports the application of St. Paul United Methodist
7 Church for registration as a United Methodist Historic Site and will support the request that the GCAH nominate
8 it as a United Methodist Heritage Landmark, subject to approval of this resolution by the North Texas Conference.
9

10 **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the North Texas Conference of The United Methodist Church designates
11 St. Paul United Methodist Church as a United Methodist Historic Site; and it is

12
13 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the North Texas Conference of The United Methodist Church agrees with the nom-
14 ination of St. Paul United Methodist Church as a United Methodist Heritage Landmark; and it is

15
16 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Commission on Archives and History of the North Texas Conference is hereby
17 directed to advise the General Commission on Archives and History of the action here taken and provide such doc-
18 umentation as may be required in order to recognize St. Paul United Methodist Church as a United Methodist His-
19 toric Site and to seek designation of St. Paul United Methodist Church as a United Methodist Heritage Landmark.
20

21
22 **RESOLUTION**

23 **#4** **RESOLUTION ON HISTORICAL SITE AND HERITAGE LANDMARK**
24 **RECOGNITION for WARREN CHAPEL UNITED METHODIST**
25 **CHURCH, TERRELL, TEXAS**

26
27
28 **FROM:** Commission on Archives and History

29
30 **WHEREAS**, the General Commission on Archives and History (GCAH) of The United Methodist Church (UMC)
31 has implemented a program to recognize United Methodist Historic Sites and designate United Methodist Heritage
32 Landmarks as provided in paragraph 1712.a of *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, 2016*; and
33

34
35 **WHEREAS**, a designation as a United Methodist Historic Site and nomination to be a United Methodist Heritage
36 Landmark are approved by formal action of the Annual Conference, following a review by the Conference Com-
37 mission on Archives and History; and

38
39 **WHEREAS**, the Commission on Archives and History of the North Texas Conference of The United Methodist
40 Church does hereby recognize and acknowledge that we occupy land in North Texas and near the Trinity River
41 originally stewarded by multiple American Indian (First People) groups. Most notably, First People inhabitants
42 included the Caddo, the Wichita, and nomadic tribes such as the Comanche and the Kiowa. Ancestral tribes includ-
43 ed the Arkikosa, the Atakapa, the Karankawa, the Tawakoni, and others. In the love of Christ Jesus, this acknowl-
44 edgement demonstrates our responsibility and commitment to truth, healing, and reconciliation and to elevating the
45 stories, culture, and community of the original inhabitants of this land through ongoing and sustained relationship
46 as brothers and sisters created and sustained by our God and Creator; and

47
48 **WHEREAS**, the Commission on Archives and History of the North Texas Conference has determined that Warren
49 Chapel United Methodist Church, Terrell, Texas (hereafter called “Warren Chapel”) was established on the date of
50 November 13, 1897, for “the benefit of the ministry and members of the Methodist Episcopal Church” (now United
51 Methodist Church); and
52

1 **WHEREAS**, on the date of November 13, 1897, Susan V. Moore—the widow of a town forerunner (John G.
2 Moore)—created a handwritten deed, conveying less than one acre of land as part of the Nash and Moore Addition,
3 in Kaufman County, Block 108, Lot 3 B, at or near what is now the corner of Adelaide and Wheeler to church trust-
4 ees: Reverend David C. Lacey, Reverend Dr. Wade Hampton Logan, and Julia Jones for the sum of \$75.00; and
5

6 **WHEREAS**, Warren Chapel encouraged a cluster of laity who history records as instrumental in the growth of
7 Methodism and ministries of the church. Notable laity included Dr. Lee Gersham Pinkston who author Olin W. Nail
8 in his *History of Texas Methodism 1900-1960* described as one of the “fine people who sacrificed to keep Meth-
9 odism marching forward across the state of Texas”; and who the 1917 Texas Annual Conference of the Methodist
10 Episcopal Church elected to its Annual Conference Board; and
11

12 **WHEREAS**, Warren Chapel’s mission further inspired the long-standing lay delegate to annual conference, com-
13 munity leader, and local educator Ruby Washington Shaw to faithfully serve Warren Chapel and the North Texas
14 Conference for seventy years; and
15

16 **WHEREAS**, Warren Chapel’s first trustee, Reverend David C. Lacey helped to establish another church by the
17 same name, Warren Methodist Church in the Booker T. Washington Addition (Queen City Community) now locat-
18 ed on South Malcom X Boulevard, Dallas; and
19

20 **WHEREAS**, Warren Chapel nurtured other young ministerial minds such as Edward Wendall Kelly (1912), who
21 was later elected bishop of the Central Jurisdiction of the Methodist Church (1944); and
22

23 **WHEREAS**, Warren Chapel also nurtured Methodist clergy who studied at the Perkins School of Theology, South-
24 ern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas such as Obie DeLano Groom, Josiah Nartey Oyata, and John Wesley
25 Tatum, Sr.; further, Rev. Tatum was instrumental in the North Texas Conference long-running program “Method-
26 ism’s Breadbasket” and other conference committees on equity; and
27

28 **WHEREAS**, Warren Chapel provided a training ground for African immigrant pastors such as Josiah Nartey Oyata
29 and Kwame O’Dame Lartey; and
30

31 **WHEREAS**, Warren Chapel also provided a training ground for one of the first six African American female cler-
32 gy appointed to the North Texas Conference, Reverend Dr. Clara M. Reed who served Warren Chapel (1990-1991);
33 and
34

35 **WHEREAS**, Warren Chapel served the community as a space for groups, families, and students, meeting their
36 needs for facility, workshops, scholarships, and mentoring. The congregation has partnered with city officials and
37 community groups in open houses; joint worship services; labor for neighborhood projects; plus, partners with the
38 local school district and hospital, providing critical food and supplies; and
39

40
41 **WHEREAS**, Warren Chapel for 127 years at its original location continues to make disciples for Jesus Christ in
42 Terrell, Texas and surrounding communities, through mission and ministry; and
43

44 **WHEREAS**, the Commission on Archives and History of the North Texas Conference of The United Methodist
45 Church has approved this resolution on March 8, 2024, and supports the application of Warren Chapel United
46 Methodist Church for registration as a United Methodist Historic Site and will support the request that the GCAH
47 nominate Warren Chapel as a United Methodist Heritage Landmark, subject to approval of this resolution by the
48 North Texas Conference.
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1 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the North Texas Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church
2 designates Warren Chapel United Methodist Church of Terrell, Texas as a United Methodist Historic Site; and it is

3
4 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the North Texas Conference of The United Methodist Church agrees with the nom-
5 ination of Warren Chapel United Methodist Church as a United Methodist Heritage Landmark; and it is

6
7 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Commission on Archives and History of the North Texas Conference is hereby
8 directed to advise the General Commission on Archives and History of the action here taken and provide such
9 documentation as may be required in order to recognize Warren Chapel United Methodist Church as a United
10 Methodist Historic Site and to seek designation of Warren Chapel United Methodist Church as a United Methodist
11 Heritage Landmark.

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15 **RESOLUTION**

16 **#5** **RESOLUTION FOR VITAL AND SUSTAINABLE CAMPUS**
17 **MINISTRY**

18
19 **FROM:** Rev. Ricky Harrison
20 University Chaplain and Director of Religious & Spiritual Life
21 McMurry University (Abilene, TX)
22 *(Charge Conference Membership Held at FUMC Boyd)*

23
24 On behalf of North Texas Conference Campus Ministers
25

26 **WHEREAS**, campus ministries play a crucial role in the spiritual and personal development of college-age stu-
27 dents, providing them with opportunities to encounter Christ, nurture their faith, and prepare for life beyond their
28 academic pursuits; and
29

30 **WHEREAS**, developing the next generation of Christians and leaders is essential for the future vitality of The Unit-
31 ed Methodist Church and its mission in the world, and the need for vital and sustainably funded campus ministry
32 has surfaced in our Unification consultation reports; and
33

34 **WHEREAS**, individuals who are engaged in campus ministries often become the backbone of our church commu-
35 nities, bringing vitality, enthusiasm, and fresh perspectives to congregational life; and
36

37 **WHEREAS**, the current fundraising burden on individual campus ministries diverts valuable time and resources
38 away from the essential work of discipleship and evangelism on college campuses; and
39

40 **WHEREAS**, *Book of Discipline* ¶634 states that the annual conference should “*encourage the development of a*
41 *permanent endowment fund for Wesley Foundations and campus ministries;*” and
42

43 **WHEREAS**, a permanent endowed fund can bring returns dependably to campus ministries while other funding
44 efforts may vary year to year; so
45

46 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the North Texas Conference affirms the importance of United Methodist
47 campus ministry and desires to contribute to the growth and sustainability of discipleship with college students; and
48

49 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the annual conference aspires to explore innovative ways to fund campus
50 ministry sustainably for current and future generations, including establishing a permanent fund for campus ministries.
51
52

RESOLUTION

#6

RESOLUTION IN SOLIDARITY WITH IMMIGRANT-SERVING CHARITIES

FROM: Mr. Jonathan Campoverde, Laity, First United Methodist Church Rockwall

WHEREAS, Christians have the right to practice their religion, including ministry to and with immigrants, without state interference as guaranteed in the First Amendment; and

WHEREAS, the State of Texas has enacted Senate Bill 4 (SB-4) usurping Federal immigration authority and granting broad local and state powers to surveil, interrogate, arrest, accuse, prosecute, imprison, and deport individuals presenting “probable cause” of unauthorized entry into Texas from outside the United States; and

WHEREAS, this probable cause could credibly deploy forms of social, ethnic, and racial profiling that put citizens and non-citizens at risk of official oppression, harming the relationship of law enforcement with the communities they serve; and

WHEREAS, in The United Methodist Church no conference or other organizational unit of the Church shall be structured so as to exclude any member or any constituent body of the Church because of race, color, national origin, status or economic condition (Article VI, The UMC Constitution); and

WHEREAS, The United Methodist Church shall confront and seek to eliminate racism, whether in organizations or in individuals, in every facet of its life and in society at large and The United Methodist Church shall work collaboratively with others to address concerns that threaten the cause of racial justice at all times and in all places (Article V, The UMC Constitution); and

WHEREAS, Texas Attorney General Kenneth Paxton has filed a lawsuit seeking to dissolve Annunciation House of El Paso, Texas, a faith-based NGO serving immigrants, and could credibly target other similar institutions; and

WHEREAS, the North Texas Annual Conference is committed to a Journey toward Racial Justice in which we seek to end active and passive racism and create an equitable future for all people in the North Texas Conference and the communities we serve; and

WHEREAS, the North Texas Annual Conference in preparation for unification with the Central Texas and Northwest Texas Conferences has established five strategic priorities, one of which involves pursuing and embracing diversity—a priority hindered by the Texas government’s desire to target a particular group of people with this law and the actions of the office of the Texas Attorney General; and

WHEREAS, local churches in the North Texas Annual Conference are actively serving and ministering to immigrant populations throughout the conference;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Texas Annual Conference calls upon the Legislature and Governor of the State of Texas to repeal Senate Bill 4; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the North Texas Annual Conference calls upon the courts to strike down Senate Bill 4 as unconstitutional and an overreach of state authority; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the North Texas Annual Conference calls upon the office of Texas Attorney General to cease and desist from the prosecution of immigrant-serving charities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the churches of the North Texas Annual Conference will serve as places of sanctuary for peoples of all races and ethnicities—regardless of their immigration status—by bearing witness to God’s amazing love as we provide them with physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual safety and support.

CO-SPONSORS

Rev. Amy Spaur, elder, La Fundición de Cristo Misión Metodista Unida
 Rev. Martha Valencia, elder, Elmwood-El Buen Samaritano UMC
 Rev. Eric Folkerth, elder, Kessler Park UMC
 Rev. Ashley Anne Sipe, elder, Vista Ridge UMC, President of the North Texas Clergywomen and Texas Impact Board Representative for the NTC
 Rev. Bill Eason, elder, Fellowship UMC Trophy Club
 Shandon Klein, laity, FUMC Richardson, North Texas Conference Lay Delegate to General Conference
 Rev. Kay Ash, deacon, Kessler Park UMC
 Rev. Dr. Edgar Bazan, elder, New World UMC
 Rev. Rosedanny Ortiz, certified candidate, local pastor, Spring Valley UMC
 Rev. Rachel Griffin, elder, Oak Lawn UMC
 Jenny Bates, laity, First UMC of Denton
 Rev. Heather Gottas Moore, deacon, St. Stephen UMC
 Rev. Geoffrey Moore, elder, St. Stephen UMC
 Rev. Phil Dieke, deacon, Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary
 Rev. Katie Newsome, elder, Union Mission Congregation
 Rev. Patrick Littlefield, elder, Suncreek UMC

RESOLUTION**#7 CHURCH LAND USE**

FROM: Rev. Philip Dieke, NTC Church and Society Board Chair
 Rev. Mel Caraway, Retired Elder

When God created the heavens and the earth, God put into place systems and cycles that would be life promoting and sustaining and made humans caretakers of all life on earth.

God gave the earth water, which is essential for all life, and created a cycle of cleansing, renewal, and release that makes the water that God gave us in the beginning usable and life-supporting still today.

God gave the earth soil where life abounds, filled with microorganisms vital to the health and fertility of the soil; where life can grow and thrive, taking nutrients and water from the soil to support the growth of plants; and where life is renewed when microorganisms perform the process of decay following death and bring forth new, fertile soil through the process.

God gave the earth plants that grow from the combination of nutrients in the soil, the sunlight, and the water, and that are used as food and shelter by other life forms on earth. These plants absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen, which cleans the air and provides humans and other animals with oxygen they require to live. Through transpiration, these plants release water into the air that cools the air and becomes the basis for precipitation that releases water back to the ground for use, once again, by plants and other animals.

God created humans, animals, creatures of the sea, and birds of the air, to live upon the earth.

And God created all these things, and more, to work together in harmony in a manner that promotes and sustains all life on earth. When we work together as our Creator intended, God multiplies the fruits of our labors and brings forth more and more blessings.

At present, humans are not working together in harmony with the rest of Creation as God intended. We are in the midst of a biodiversity and wildlife crisis that is so extreme it is often referred to as the Sixth Extinction. According to the Center for Biological Diversity, more than 30,000 species go extinct annually. Other wildlife studies reveal that mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and fish have seen a devastating 69% drop in numbers, on average, since 1970, with populations in Latin America and the Caribbean suffering far worse with an average decline of 94%.

1 While prior mass extinction events in history were due to natural causes, this one is being caused by humans through
2 land conversion, habitat destruction and fragmentation, use of chemical pesticides and biocides, as well as other
3 harmful synthetic chemicals that persist in the environment known as “forever chemicals,” water pollution, and air
4 pollution, including excessive release of carbon dioxide and methane into the atmosphere from the burning of fossil
5 fuels, which is causing the climate crisis.

6 The good news is this: Since human actions are the cause of these problems, they can also be the solution. And, be-
7 cause God created the earth to incorporate life-promoting and life-sustaining systems, we humans can follow God’s
8 intended order and renew the life-giving abilities of these systems that we have been harming.

9
10 **Therefore, as United Methodists and persons of faith who wish to promote and sustain life and follow God’s**
11 **intended order for Creation, be it resolved that all local churches and other holders of church lands, such**
12 **as camp and retreat centers, as well as offices of general boards and agencies, conference offices and district**
13 **locations, implement actions in their settings that bring their land back in harmony with God’s intentions**
14 **and systems.**

15 The following are examples of such steps:

- 16 ● **Evaluate the vegetation** on your land and identify the species that are present. Determine which of those
17 are native to your location, which are non-native, and which are non-native invasives. Plants and wildlife
18 have evolved over time to complement and depend upon each other, so plants that are native to a location
19 are required to promote biodiversity of species and support pollinators and other wildlife. Additionally,
20 only certain pollinators will fertilize certain species, so location-specific (native) pollinators are needed to
21 continue certain plant species.
- 22 ● **Plant at least three native trees** in a cluster so that they will support each other through storms, much as
23 we humans support each other through the storms of life. It has been determined that trees and other plants
24 form below-ground connections that help promote the health of the group and strengthen each other against
25 strong winds. Additionally, trees provide shade in hot weather, cool the air with their transpiration, slow
26 down the rain hitting the ground during downpours, facilitate water absorption versus runoff and flooding,
27 clean the air by absorbing carbon dioxide, and release oxygen that wildlife and humans require to live.
- 28 ● **Remove non-native invasive species** because they will often out-compete the native species, causing a
29 decrease in biodiversity for the area and using more water than do native species.
- 30 ● **Replace at least 50% of the lawn**, over time, with native plant species. Lawns promote water runoff rather
31 than absorption, are often a place where chemical fertilizers and pesticides are used that runoff into and
32 pollute nearby water sources, need to be mowed and trimmed using fossil fuel powered machinery, and do
33 absolutely nothing to support pollinators, insects, birds, other wildlife, or healthy soil, water, and air.
- 34 ● **Discontinue the use of synthetic fertilizers, pesticides**, and other biocides to promote soil health and
35 fertility.
- 36 ● **Include edible native species** in these plantings to make the landscape supportive of humans as well as
37 wildlife while they clean and cool the air and slow the rain. Food forests or forest gardens are one version
38 of this, where they more closely mimic the ecosystems and patterns already found in Creation.
- 39 ● **Work with an agricultural extension agency** to create a teaching garden or farm if the church has suf-
40 ficient acreage. Restoring the land by using regenerative agricultural techniques provides education and a
41 witness to congregation and community.
- 42 ● **Plant a rain garden** in areas where water runoff from hard surfaces flows into storm drains or nearby
43 creeks and rivers. A rain garden will serve to absorb some of the runoff, slow down the flow, and even clean
44 the water before it hits the storm drain or closest stream.
- 45 ● **Convert to renewable energy sources** some, or all, of the facility’s energy needs and let the sun, wind, and
46 water provided by the Creator supply the power. Often the change will be financially beneficial, as well.
- 47 ● **Curtail the destruction of existing forests, wetlands, peatlands, and grasslands** by identifying and sup-
48 porting projects and organizations that will. These areas, which are vital for absorbing the carbon dioxide
49 causing climate change, are also essential for halting the destruction and fragmentation of habitat that is
50 needed to maintain the biodiversity of the species on earth.
- 51 ● **Restore wildfire-damaged and degraded forests, wetlands, peatlands, and grasslands** by identifying
52 and supporting projects and organizations that will. Restoration will increase carbon absorption and habitat
needed for improved biodiversity.
- **Avoid purchases that contribute to deforestation.** Commit to purchasing lumber, food, building materi-
als, and paper products that are sustainably sourced and produced, or reduce the use of paper products, for
example, by forgoing the use of disposable plates and cups for church events.

1 **RESOLUTION**2 **#8** **GREEN TEAM FORMATION**

3
4
5 FROM: Rev. Philip Dieke, NTC Church and Society Board Chair
6 Rev. Patrick Littlefield, Sun creek UMC
7 Rev. Ashley Anne Sipe, Vista Ridge UMC
8 Rev. Mel Caraway, Retired Elder
9

10 **THEOLOGICAL IMPERATIVE**11 **Whereas:**

12 **Scripture** proclaims God created all—from Earth’s hospitable atmosphere, mighty seas, abundant forests, and other
13 plants to nutrient-rich soil, from majestic whales to the tiniest microbes and all sentient and non-sentient beings in
14 between; Scripture also proclaims God called humans to be caretakers of creation (Genesis 1–2). Jesus declared the
15 Greatest Commandments are to love God and to love neighbor, especially the most vulnerable (Luke 10:25-37).
16 Persons living in poverty, persons of color, and indigenous people in this country and throughout the world are
17 harmed first and most by the degradation of creation, and these same groups have the fewest resources to recover
18 from that harm. Care for creation is clearly a matter of justice. Creation, including all people, is already or will be
19 affected by the current and coming level of danger from climate change and its consequences that intersect with
20 multiple expressions of injustice. It follows that loving God, the Creator, means loving God’s Creation and that
21 loving neighbors in distress requires stopping harm and righting wrongs, in other words, working for justice.
22

23 **Tradition** for United Methodists includes John Wesley’s Three Simple Rules for living faithfully: First, do no harm;
24 second, do all the good you can; and third, stay in love with God. Our (proposed) Revised Social Principles begin
25 with “The Community of All Creation,” outlining the care and justice work that is needed in the midst of the crises
26 upon crises that are adversely affecting God’s creation and our neighbors. The 2009 Pastoral Letter of the Council of
27 Bishops of The United Methodist Church, God’s Renewed Creation: Call to Hope and Action, pledges leadership in
28 addressing the work of renewal. The *2016 Book of Discipline* (Paragraph 254) includes an Earth Advocacy ministry
29 group as a way “to fulfill the mission of the local church.” It follows that the church provides both a mandate and
30 guidance for doing what is needed.
31

32 **Reason** is a God-given gift. Our reasoning capabilities are informed by modern scientific research and practices.
33 The scientific community has given clear warning that creation is under tremendous strain due to the polluting of
34 air, water, and land; habitat destruction; the unsustainable consumption of earth’s finite resources; and the rapidly
35 accelerating extinction of species. Scientists have sounded the alarm of catastrophic harm to creation if global
36 warming and associated climate change are not halted and reversed. They point to how rising temperatures have
37 already intensified wildfires, hurricanes, drought, and sea-level rise throughout the world with devastating impacts.
38 Our reasoning capabilities are also informed by the examples of indigenous peoples whose traditional wisdom and
39 practices honor living in harmony with nature. It follows that, globally, humans have the capacity for understanding
40 the damage and danger and for stopping or mitigating the effects. Individuals and congregations have access to
41 trustworthy knowledge and the reasoning ability to discern what is needed and how to carry out plans in their local
42 situations.
43

44 **Experience** is honored by United Methodists as a way of recognizing lifetime gains of knowledge, understanding,
45 perspectives, and practices of individuals, which they all bring to the work before them. Functioning as a team, they
46 become stronger in their efforts (Ecclesiastes 4:12). Experience is also honored as the varied ways in which humans
47 encounter God. For many people that meeting is through God’s gift of the natural world. It follows that a group of
48 people who care about creation and justice, working together can use their wisdom and passion to create faithful
49 and meaningful experiences that help others love God and neighbor.
50
51
52

1 **BE IT RESOLVED:**

2 That every local church, charge, cluster, or district in the North Texas Annual Conference is urged to create a “Green
3 Team” or strengthen an existing one for action in four areas each year—**Worship, Education, Practice, and Advo-**
4 **cacy**—providing children, youth, and adults of all ages with inspiration, knowledge, encouragement, and practical
5 means for caring for creation and justice. These actions might include:
6

7 One or more occasions of worship, celebrating God’s grace, glory, and beauty in creation and connecting creation
8 care and justice to the scriptural call to love God and neighbor. (For example, observing Earth Day (April 22); cre-
9 ating an outdoor worship service; integrating creation care and justice in sermons and liturgy.)
10

11 One or more educational opportunities, held within and for the congregation and/or community, related to some
12 aspect of creation care and justice. (For example, facilitating nature experience events for various age groups and
13 groupings, including walks in the woods, wildflower walks, “I spy” challenges, trip to a beach or waterway, a zoo,
14 and so on to help people love and learn to protect creation; leading a Bible study and programs on creation care and
15 justice; arranging for speakers with environmental expertise, especially about local issues.)
16

17 One or more positive changes in the practices of the church’s life and/or to the church building or grounds. (For ex-
18 ample, stopping the use of Styrofoam and plastic plates and cups for meals; adding native trees to church property;
19 placing recycling bins where needed and visible; reducing energy consumption.)
20

21 One or more actions that advocate for change in systems that perpetuate injustice and harm to creation and com-
22 munities either locally, regionally, nationally, or globally. (For example, researching an issue, identifying the
23 change-makers, and communicating with them; informing the congregation on local issues related to creation jus-
24 tice and encouraging them to communicate their values to the appropriate decisionmakers.)
25

26 That creation care and justice will be lifted up in all areas of ministry and mission, including preaching, liturgy,
27 communications, education, outreach, and advocacy so that the church will become an increasingly effective wit-
28 ness of loving God and neighbor.
29

30 That each church should include a green team representative on the church’s leadership team/Administrative Board.
31

32 That these actions are to be communicated as an idea exchange and inspiration throughout the connection. They can
33 be reported at charge conference and should be celebrated locally, in the conference, and beyond.
34

35 That the North Texas Annual conference will assist churches with resources and mentors, as needed, particularly—
36 but not exclusively—through the conference’s Green Team.
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2024 NORTH TEXAS CONFERENCE REPORTS



JOURNEY TOWARD RACIAL JUSTICE

A Courageously Creative Partnership: Congregational Journey Toward Racial Justice, Version 2 (CJTRJ v.2)

The North Texas Conference Journey Toward Racial Justice Team (JTRJ) is strategizing around the launch of a second iteration of the Congregational Journey Toward Racial Justice experience (CJTRJ v.2). After diligently reflecting upon the experiences of local churches, journey companions, and creators, the Coordinating and Advisory Teams discerned this as a critical next step in our journey together.

We are grateful for all the people who have contributed to the transformative work of creating and implementing the first version of the CJTRJ process that launched in June 2021. We offer a special word of thanks to our CJTRJ churches who participated in the Congregational Journey Toward Racial Justice: Arapaho UMC, First UMC Denton, First UMC Richardson, First UMC Terrell, Flower Mound UMC, Grace UMC Sherman, Grace Avenue UMC, Northaven UMC, Oak Lawn UMC, St. Stephen UMC, Stonebridge UMC, and Vista Ridge UMC.

The value of relationships cultivated during this process in/between churches has emerged as a consistent bright spot for participants. However, sustained relationship-building requires additional opportunities for connection, conversation, and service. Therefore, CJTRJ v. 2 is designed to facilitate collaboration among UMCs (of different racial-ethnic makeup), a UMC church with a non-UMC church, or a UMC church in partnership with a community organization. Furthermore, an affinity group from a local church could even partner with another affinity group at a different local church in the CJTRJ v. 2 experience. We believe that this partnership-centric approach will allow for meaningful relationships as well as a deeper understanding, and awareness of oneself, group, and social context—rooted in Christ and the *imago Dei* (image of God). The CJTRJ v.2 experience is an envisioned safe space for people groups to explore the complexities of race and faith while working together to overcome the racial injustices in our minds, hearts, communities, and culture.

Blessings in Christ,

Rev. Silvia Wang, Chair, NTC Journey Toward Racial Justice Team

Rev. Joshua Manning, Vice Chair, NTC Journey Toward Racial Justice Team

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

The conference nominating committee is responsible for developing and implementing a plan to identify persons who are willing, qualified, and able to serve as members of the agencies of the annual conference, with attention given to representing the rich diversity of conference membership in terms of ethnicity, age, gender, geography, and church size. The conference nominating committee nominates members and chairs of agencies for election by the annual conference except where otherwise provided in the *2016 Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church* or the Standing Rules.

In 2024, in light of conference unification, the conference nominating committee will do its work under a different timeline. After the structure of conference agencies for the unified conference is developed and approved by the Central, North, and Northwest Texas Annual Conferences in May and June, a joint nominating committee consisting of members of the three conference nominating committees will nominate members and chairs for that new structure. The joint nominating committee will bring this slate of nominees to the Unifying Conference in September for election. The newly elected leaders for the unified conference will begin their terms on January 1, 2025. For the interim period of time from the May and June annual conferences until December 31, 2024, the leaders elected previously by the annual conferences in 2023 have been asked to extend their terms by six months and continue to serve in their roles. Nominees for any critical vacancies for the interim period will be presented to the June annual conference for approval.

The North Texas Conference Nominating Committee consists of the following persons:

- Our four District Superintendents
- A lay person elected from each district
- East District – LeAnn Barbee
- Metro District – Mae Alexander
- North Central District – Herman Totten
- Northwest District – Jane Gully
- Vice-Chair and Conference Lay Leader – Kim Brannon
- Conference Lay Leader Elect – Mary Nickson
- Director of Diversity and Cultural Engagement - TBD
- Chair and Assistant to Bishop Saenz – Andy Lewis

CENTER FOR CHURCH DEVELOPMENT (CCD)

The vision of the North Texas Conference (NTC) Center for Church Development (CCD) is “Every Church Planting.” Realizing this vision like *every* church planting may seem like an *impossible mission*. This year the North Texas Conference is claiming, “Mission Possible,” as the conference theme. While the CCD is not yet ready to proclaim, “Mission Accomplished,” this report shares how the CCD in collaboration with NTC laity and have made progress towards realizing our vision in 2023.

Planting Pledge

With the vision of every church planting, planting takes many shapes and forms. From two or three gathered in Jesus’ name to dozens or even hundreds congregating to grow in faith as a community. At the NTC 2023, the CCD asked the conference to “sign the planting pledge.” 72 churches took the pledge to initiate new endeavors within their communities to reach new people. We also know that many churches beyond those that signed the planting pledge launched new efforts to reach those they were not already reaching.

The Planting Pledge campaign emerged as a catalyst for fostering a culture of expansion and innovation across the NTC. Central to the success of the campaign was the ongoing support provided to participating churches, facilitat-

ing the development of innovative ideas, grant applications, and community engagement strategies. Through targeted follow-up and assistance, we ensured that churches received the resources and guidance needed to translate their pledges into tangible actions, fostering a culture of proactive outreach and growth across the conference.

The Planting Pledge campaign served as a catalyst for fostering collaboration and synergy among churches within the NTC. By uniting churches around a common goal of expansion and outreach, the campaign encouraged a spirit of mutual support and shared responsibility for the vision of every church planting. The success of the campaign underscores the collective commitment of churches within the conference to embrace innovation, adaptability, and a missional mindset in response to the evolving needs and opportunities of their communities. Moving forward, we are dedicated to building upon the momentum generated by the campaign, continuing to support churches in their planting efforts, and fostering a culture of innovation and growth that permeates every aspect of our conference's ministry and outreach efforts.

The Planting Pledge demonstrated the collective commitment of churches within the NTC to embrace a forward-thinking approach to ministry. Through ongoing support, collaboration, and a shared vision of expansion and innovation, we are laying the groundwork for a future where every church is inspired, empowered, and equipped to reach new people and make a lasting impact in their communities. As we look ahead, we are excited to build upon this momentum, leveraging the lessons learned and the relationships forged through the campaign to further advance our vision within the NTC and beyond.

Genesis Cohort

Genesis cohort continues to be a cornerstone program aimed at nurturing and equipping church planters within the NTC. Working closely with our design team, we embarked on a thorough review to enhance the effectiveness and relevance of the cohort in light of emerging challenges and opportunities. The culmination of this endeavor was the launch of a revamped Genesis cohort in 2023, introducing innovative elements that garnered significant praise and engagement from participants.

Central to the success of the new Genesis cohort was the addition of flexibility in how folks could engage with the learning and shortening the duration of the cohort. By shortening the duration of the cohort and intensifying the curriculum, we aimed to empower participants to engage more deeply with the material while accommodating their busy schedules. This strategic adjustment allowed planters to glean valuable insights and practical tools for ministry, positioning them for greater success in their planting endeavors.

The Genesis cohort embraced a participant-centered approach, allowing individuals to determine their own level of engagement based on their capacity and learning objectives. Through a personalized learning inventory assessment, participants set goals for the cohort and created engagement roadmaps tailored to their unique needs, goals, and capacity. This flexibility empowered planters to chart their own course for growth and development, ensuring that the cohort experience was both enriching and impactful. Nearly 20 participants engaged in the Genesis Cohort at various levels this past year.

Discernment Academy

In response to the evolving needs of church leaders within the NTC, we embarked on a comprehensive revamp on how we equip laity and clergy for the work of planting. The primary training is through the Genesis Cohort. In the summer of 2022, we revamped the Genesis cohort, resulting in the inception of the Discernment Academy. This initiative was guided by collaborative efforts with a design team of NTC church planters and NTC laity. We aimed to provide leaders with a robust framework for self-discovery and leadership development. One of the most significant enhancements introduced through the Discernment Academy was the inclusion of a comprehensive assessment process. Participants underwent a thorough evaluation encompassing personality assessments such as the Big-5 assessment, skills evaluation, and the Enneagram. These assessments, coupled with personalized interviews and reports, offered participants invaluable insights into their leadership strengths and areas for growth.

Within the Discernment Academy and Genesis we also include the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) and a learning growth plan which have been instrumental in fostering inclusive leadership within the NTC. The IDI served as a tool for participants to assess their current capacity for supporting diversity and inclusion. Through one-on-one coaching sessions with qualified IDI administrators and the development of customized growth plans, participants were empowered to cultivate a deeper understanding of their intercultural competency and develop strategies for further growth. Additionally, the academy's emphasis on introducing a post-Christendom missional lens underscored the imperative for church leaders to adapt to changing cultural landscapes. Through exploration of new paradigms and tools such as MissionInsite, participants were equipped to engage missionally and relationally within their communities, laying the groundwork for sustainable and impactful ministry endeavors.

Overall, the Discernment Academy represents a significant step forward in equipping leaders within the NTC to navigate the complexities of contemporary ministry. By providing participants with a robust framework for self-discovery, intercultural competency development, and missional engagement, the academy empowers leaders to lead with authenticity, vision, and effectiveness in a rapidly evolving context. This year we had 14 participants in the Discernment Academy and 7 of them are currently participating in the Genesis Cohort. As we continue to refine and expand this program, we remain committed to nurturing a diverse community of leaders who are equipped to meet the challenges and opportunities of the future with confidence and resilience.

Spiritual Formation Retreat

A highlight of our efforts in nurturing the holistic development of church planters was the organization of a dedicated Spiritual Formation Retreat in August. Recognizing the demanding nature of ministry and the importance of self-care and spiritual renewal, we curated a retreat experience aimed at providing planters with a sacred space for reflection, rejuvenation, and deepening their spiritual practices.

NTC church planters participated in a respite from the demands of their daily ministry responsibilities, allowing them to step away and engage in intentional spiritual practices. Through a blend of guided meditations, prayer exercises, and reflective journaling, participants were encouraged to reconnect with their spiritual roots, deepen their relationship with God, and discern the direction of their ministry journey.

Enhanced Support Structure

The CCD staff continues to dedicate itself to strengthening and refining the support structure offered to our planting projects within the NTC. One of the key improvements introduced is the implementation of a refined rhythm of stakeholder meetings and individual planter check-ins. By convening stakeholders on a quadmester basis (once every four months), we provide a regular forum for planters to connect with their support network, share updates on progress and challenges, and receive valuable feedback and guidance. This structured approach ensures that planters remain engaged and supported throughout their journey, fostering a sense of accountability and collaboration among all stakeholders involved.

In addition to our stakeholder calls we have a bi-monthly (once every two months) individual check-ins with planters, providing them with personalized attention and support tailored to their specific needs and circumstances. These check-ins serve as an opportunity for planters to receive one-on-one coaching, address pressing concerns, and chart a course for growth and development in their ministry endeavors. By maintaining regular communication and engagement with planters, we can identify potential challenges early on and provide timely support.

We have also continued to evolve our quadmester learning tool, refining our approach to measuring and tracking key metrics and outcomes related to planting projects. By collecting and analyzing data on a regular basis, we gain valuable insights into the effectiveness of our support initiatives, identify areas for improvement, and inform strategic decision-making moving forward. This approach measures both quantitative and qualitative data so it enables us to adapt and iterate our support structure in real-time, ensuring that we remain responsive to the evolving needs and challenges faced by planters in the field.

Inaugural Vision Day

Recognizing the critical importance of vision and strategic goal-setting in the success of planting projects, we convened all planting pastors and their teams for an extended Zoom call dedicated to vision casting, goal setting, and strategic planning.

The Vision Day provided a dedicated space for planting pastors and their teams to come together, share insights, and collaboratively chart a course for the future of their ministries. Through facilitated discussions, participants were guided through the process of articulating their vision, identifying strategic priorities, and setting actionable goals for the upcoming year.

One of the key outcomes of the Vision Day was the alignment of planting pastors and their teams around a shared vision and set of strategic priorities outlined in the Quadmester Learning Tool. The Vision Day served as a platform for planting pastors and their teams to get on the same page and begin thinking about the impact they hope to make in their community over the next year.

The feedback from participants following the Vision Day was overwhelmingly positive, with many expressing appreciation for the opportunity to come together as a community, clarify their vision, and receive practical support and guidance. Building on the success of this inaugural event, we are hoping to make the Vision Day part of our annual rhythm, providing ongoing opportunities for planting pastors and their teams to come together, set goals, and receive the support and encouragement needed to thrive in their ministry.

Young People of Color (YPOC) Fellowship

The Young People of Color Fellowship (YPOC) is central to our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion within the NTC. Designed to identify and nurture emerging leaders under the age of 35, the YPOC Fellowship offers a transformative two-year journey of leadership development, vocational discernment, and missional engagement.

In the first year of the Fellowship, YPOC fellows participate in both the Genesis Cohort and the Discernment Academy. Through these immersive programs, fellows are equipped with the foundational knowledge, skills, and tools necessary to discern their vocational calling, deepen their understanding of Wesleyan theology, and explore innovative approaches to missional engagement.

In the second year of the Fellowship, the focus shifts towards individualized coaching and leadership development, providing fellows with personalized support and guidance as they navigate the complexities of ministry.

Currently, we are proud to have three fellows, each bringing their unique perspectives, experiences, and gifts to the program. As we invest in the development of emerging leaders from diverse backgrounds, the YPOC Fellowship continues to play a pivotal role in shaping the future of ministry within the NTC. Through ongoing support, mentorship, and advocacy, we remain committed to fostering a culture of inclusion and empowerment, where all voices are heard, valued, and celebrated.

New Faces in New Spaces (NFNS)

This year, we improved the New Faces New Spaces (NFNS) grant application to be more simplified and user friendly. Along with the help of the Function Area Team of Multiplying the Local Churches, we have isolated and defined the following values to be embodied by the NFNS's:

- **Deep-Listening:** Is conceived by Deep Listening from neighbor learning conversations and data from the neighborhood, communities, or individuals it aims to reach.
- **Community-Building:** Builds a community by reaching out to those who haven't been involved in your existing church community before and by creating a sense of belonging and a shared support system.
- **Experimenting:** Meets regularly with a clear start and pause date, in a spirit of experimentation, reflection, and learning.
- **Discipleship in Mind:** Has a Discipleship pathway in mind, intentionally opening the door to help people grow in their faith journeys.

Every NFNS embodies the four values in their gatherings, and we are grateful to the Function Area Team members for helping us discern these values to give a clear picture of what a NFNS is. Some of the NFNS projects CCD supported this appointive year include:

- **Turn 180** (The Woods UMC): The Woods UMC launched Turn 180 to connect with homeless people and provide essentials for children entering foster care. Their unhoused neighbors filled Christmas stockings for the children, creating a cycle of mutual support within the community.
- **The Lois Project** (Aley UMC): The Lois Project aims to connect senior citizens in the community with church members by providing reading materials and fostering fellowship. Named after Timothy's grandmother who instilled faith in him, the project hopes to bridge the gap between generations and combat loneliness among seniors.
- **C3'D** (First UMC Jacksboro): The C3'D ministry works to provide youth of the Jacksboro community a safe space to meet and talk about faith and life challenges in a non-judgmental environment. C3'D (Coffee-Cocoa-Christ) strives to create a space for young people to seek healing and wholeness.
- **The Bridge** (First UMC Rowlett): The Bridge is a collaborative young adult ministry for five churches in the Dallas suburbs (First UMC Garland, First UMC Rockwall, First UMC Rowlett, First UMC Sachse and Wylie UMC), filling a gap for 18-27 year olds by providing a supportive community, open discussions, and opportunities to learn and grow their faith. The group fosters leadership, open discussions about faith, and a strong support system for young adults navigating life's challenges.

We hosted a ministry innovation lab called "Sparkathon." Sparkathon was designed to help churches develop a new ministry idea by practicing intentional listening, design thinking, asset mapping, and Disciple Making Social Enterprise. The program included four online sessions and one day in-person event. At the end of the Sparkathon Cohort, the participants had opportunities to apply for grants in the NTC. We had over 90 registrants and over 11 individuals and ministry teams are planning on applying for a grant at the end of the journey. We found hosting an innovation lab like this was helpful for churches who are eager to start something new but are not sure where to start. We also learned that one of the biggest challenges of innovation that many churches experience is deep listening. Much of our coaching and support went in helping church leaders to listen to their neighbors with various tools available. We are beyond thankful for those who participated in the Sparkathon experience, and especially those who courageously took risks to start something new!

We also hosted a learning cohort for semi-rural/county/town pastors and church leaders to share ministry practices and ideas. We have found that many of our church leaders yearn for a learning community like this and serve as a sounding board for one another. We continue to champion and support safe spaces for asking questions and taking risks, because we believe that the posture of curiosity and learning is the key to unlocking creativity and innovation.

Rev. Danielle Kim, the Associate Director of Research and Development, had the privilege of preaching and offering training to over 30 churches and visited numerous congregations in the NTC. She also had close to 100 one-on-one calls and meet-ups with numerous innovators in our conference. One of the first things she reports learning in this role is that we have so many faithful and talented clergy and laity in the NTC who are committed to the mission of the Church: to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Latinx Ministries

A few highlights from the Hispanic ministries of the NTC:

- We started the year with an Epiphany luncheon with the LatinX pastors with members of the extended cabinet present. Rev. Juan Garay was a keynote speaker.
- The Seed, a sight of Christ's Foundry United Methodist Mission, continued its planting work in and as Pleasant Mound UMC closed.
- Gracia Viva ministered to thousands of migrants coming through Oak Lawn UMC.
- Agape Memorial UMC and Hispanic ministry in First Grand Prairie have begun a process of visioning for the future.

- The CCD hosted a day of workshop and reflection with Pastor Juan Marcos Garay who led a workshop with over 50 pastors and lay leaders on how to empower Lay Leaders and how to instruct, guide and nurture the leaders to inspire them to trust in their abilities to lead. The workshop was held in Spanish, with 57 attendees from both the NTC and the CTC conference.

Webinars and Conferences

National Planting after Disaffiliation Webinar: The CCD hosted a webinar geared to those in areas affected by disaffiliation with the main focus on the power of planting, cultivating growth, and fostering renewed faith. This event brought together a diverse panel of experts who shared insights, experiences, and practical strategies for building vibrant communities of faith after disaffiliation.

Monetizing your assets webinar: What started with an idea to help churches maximize their income, transformed into finding ways to inspire our churches to leverage their income for Discipleship. With a committee composed of members of the CCD Staff, pastors, and lay leaders, we undertook the task of compiling information through a survey of what our churches are doing about renting space and what are the main questions they have about this. With the information compiled, we are working on putting a Rental Information packet that we are planning to launch with a series of webinars and cohorts.

Walking through grief webinar: In support of the NTC Blue Christmas initiative the CCD in connection with the CMO hosted this webinar to provide our churches with tools to equip them to walk alongside those who are grieving. We wanted to inspire churches to be the space where people walking through grief find solace and a safe space to grieve.

National Planters Gathering in Denver, Colorado: After serving as the inaugural host of this gathering in 2022, The CCD staff and five NTC planters attended the National Planters' Gathering in Denver, where we had the opportunity to connect with other planters and participate in workshops and training from presenters of diverse backgrounds. We also had the chance to visit Free Community, a church plant that was created from the need of people in recovery and their family.

Notable Numbers in the NTC

The NTC experienced a cumulative 6% increase in in-person worship attendance. Among the churches that experienced growth are churches that have worked with the Center for Church Development:

- Market Street in its first year of existence grew from a small group of 30 gathering in a music studio or in the public library or in borrowed space from the Presbyterians to a strong congregation with an average worship attendance of 70 in 2023 and had 10 non-confirmation professions of faith and touched the lives of dozens more through their ministries.
- A few years ago Walnut Hill UMC asked to become of a campus of Lovers Lane UMC through an adoption merger. In 2023, Walnut Hill experienced a 400% increase in non-confirmation professions of faith.
- The Seed, a plant of Christ's Foundry United Methodist Mission began gathering in preview worship services and averaged 35 in each service.
- Church of the Disciple went through the CCD's Black Church Initiative, had two CCD Young People of Color Lay Residents, and invested in a process of consulting and discernment through various resources and officially changed its name to Life Center United Methodist Church. In this process, Life Center experienced a 40% increase in in-person worship attendance.
- Fairview Korean UMC, formerly First Korean UMC – Richardson, moved to Fairview during the pandemic. Fairview Korean UMC has experienced growth since making such a bold move, including a 25% growth in worship attendance in 2023.
- Grace Chapel, a campus of Grace Avenue UMC, also experienced a 25% increase in average in-person worship attendance.
- The Gathering UMC in Krum began preview worship services and had 70 in attendance in their first Easter celebration.

While some persons may speak disparagingly about giving weight to numbers like in-person worship attendance, the CCD does not take lightly persons sacrificing time out of their schedules to congregate in a United Methodist house of worship nor do we take lightly the work of congregations, pastors, and staff in their work connecting with and gathering persons outside of worship that gets celebrated in their worship gatherings. We agree that numbers are not what matter. However, we believe the souls, families, and communities that these numbers represent matter immensely, and the CCD staff, function area teams, and collaborators are grateful to participate in the work of the laity and clergy of the NTC to gather new faces while living into the vision of Every Church Planting.

CENTER FOR LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT (CLD)

Our mission in The Center for Leadership Development is to “Develop principled Christian leaders for the transformation of the world.” Since our inception nearly 15 years ago, staff, clergy and laity have collaborated and supported each other to cultivate a diverse ecosystem for living, leading, and developing fruitfulness across the North Texas mission field and beyond.

Rev. Cammy Gaston retired from vocational ministry effective Jan. 1, 2024, after more than 35 years of dedicated service, most recently as Center for Leadership Development Director. Kelly Carpenter took on the role of Interim Center Director from January 1 until the implementation of the new unified conference structure. Throughout the previous year, CLD staff have created and utilized events and initiatives to introduce and engage in the newly developed conference vision and strategic priorities. Vision: We are followers of Jesus, seeking the loving, just and free world God imagined for all people. The five strategic priorities are to Multiply Followers of Jesus, Champion Children and Youth, Maximize Care and Healing, Pursue and Embrace Diversity, and Tell our Story.

In 2023, for the third year in a row, North Texas has the largest percentage of young elders in the US Conferences of the UMC (12 years ago we were the lowest in our Jurisdiction). We continue to welcome a diverse group of candidates into our vocational discernment journey each year in addition to specialized ministry and lay leadership recognitions. Our Collegiate Ministries are stepping into gaps created by increasing demand for mental health resources and left by changing state laws regarding Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Our children, youth, and family ministries are collaborating to multiply their impact through counseling, curriculum, mission partnerships, and professional development. The Response Team is deploying proactive resources, updating policy, and responding to emerging conflicts and crisis with high quality. Lay and Clergy leadership expand their impact potential through excellent events, seminars, cohorts, and coaching resources sourced and supported through the CLD staff and partners.

Thank you to all who have developed, led, supported, shared, and engaged ministry opportunities through the Center for Leadership Development. You are a Blessing!

Advanced Leadership Coaching – The Fall of 2023 was our seventh round of launching an 8-month season of 1-1 and group coaching relationships between over 50 laity and clergy with our trained Advanced Leadership Coaches. We co-active coaches to come alongside clergy, laity, and groups as they pursue our vision and strategic priorities, especially in times of transition and to maximize learning. All Advanced Leadership coaches have completed a minimum of 60 international Coaching Federation (ICF) approved hours of coach training.

A Time for Children (ATFC) and A Time for Youth (ATFY) engage Children, Family, and Youth leaders from across the North and Central Texas Conferences through retreats, monthly cohorts, and coaching for renewal, continuing education, and connection. The wisdom of Rev. Dr. Leanne Hadley and fostered connection between Children, Family, and Youth ministry staff across the conferences increases the capacity for these ministry professionals to strengthen their relationships and advocacy to champion children and youth in their local churches and communities.

This year, Children, Family, and Youth ministry leaders, led by Rev. Dr. Leanne Hadley, gathered at Prothro Retreat Center in the fall and spring. In addition to gathering in person, ATFCY participants also meet monthly online to share wisdom and learning and are supplied a co-active coach through the CLD’s Advanced Leadership Coaching.

The Fall retreat focused conversation and idea sharing of the new conference vision statement and five strategic priorities. Following the Fall retreat, a group of attendees developed a curriculum based on the five strategic priorities that can be used as a Vacation Bible School, Sunday School, or small group series. It will be piloted across the conferences in the summer of 2024 and then resources will be collated and made available for even more congregations in the coming year.

In the Spring, we were thrilled to introduce our first-ever Holy Listening Workshop, an opportunity to develop a tool for the Conference's strategic priority of "Maximizing Care and Healing." This workshop, led by the esteemed Rev. Dr. Leanne Hadley, is an invitation to explore the profound practice of Holy Listening, a spiritual practice steeped in biblical stories and refined for contemporary application. Through deep listening rituals and symbolic language tools, facilitating authentic conversations where hope and healing thrive. This workshop is suited for individuals across various walks of life, including educators, healthcare professionals, and spiritual leaders.

The Spring Retreat directly followed this workshop and further engaged our ministry leaders in connecting life milestones to meaningful holy moments and how to foster a deeper integration of the bible into the daily lives of our children, families, and youth.

Bishop's Rally – The Bishop's Rally offers a unique opportunity to transition children into Youth Ministry and acquaint them with the broader church community, particularly the bishop of our conference. In October 2023, FUMC McKinney hosted the Bishop's Rally, replete with a multitude of games, diverse food options, and several worship opportunities. For his inaugural appearance as the bishop of the North Texas Conference, Bishop Ruben Saenz Jr. delivered a sermon and responded to questions from confirmands.

Camp Bible – One of the best ways for children to develop their faith is by learning how to explore the Word of God. Children's Ministers from across the conference organized an overnight camping experience at Bridgeport Camp and Conference Center for children in third through fifth grades, along with volunteers, to come together and learn about God, scripture, camping, and community life. This year's theme, 'God is Light,' guided our exploration of scriptures that utilize the concept of light, deepening campers' connection with God.

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

Committee on the Status and Role of Women (COSROW) – The work of this team is to challenge the UMC for the full and equal participation of women in the total life and mission of the Church. We do that by providing educational opportunities and resources for local church leadership and collecting data in our annual conference to aid us in doing that work. We continue to encourage all pastors and church leadership teams to consider how women are in leadership in their church, to include women in decision-making positions, to invite women—both clergy and laity—to preach at least once each year, and to preach and teach on the call of Christian service in all vocations including ordination and consecration in The United Methodist Church. This year, we worked to revise and update the conference sexual misconduct policy making it a better resource for the local church. It can be found on the COSROW page of the conference website, with easy-to-navigate links. As always, we are committed to further conversations with clergy, laity, district superintendents, the extended cabinet, and the bishop to develop tools and resources to empower, encourage, and enable women to serve at all levels of ministry leadership within the North Texas Annual Conference.

Conference Youth Leadership Program (CYLP) – In 2023, we successfully merged two programs, Conference Council on Youth Ministry (CCYM) and Conference Camp Youth Leadership Program (CCYLP), sharing a vision to provide leadership opportunities to the next generation in the North Texas Conference. CYLP consists of a diverse group of youth from 6th to 12th grade. The 2023 Midwinter Retreat at Bridgeport Camp and Conference

Center included worship, study, prayer, and play. This year's theme, 'Growing with God,' aimed to enhance participants' connection with God and each other. During the camp's two weekends, CYLP (as the combined CCYM and CCYLP) led over 300 youth and adults in a journey of growth in love and service. The Snack Shack at Midwinter, always a hit, raised funds for the North Texas Migrant Welcome Center, demonstrating our commitment to service and community support.

CYLP offers further opportunities at the Bridgeport Summer Camp, selecting Junior and Youth Counselors for leadership roles. These roles are designed to enhance their leadership skills and deepen their spiritual experiences. Our program now includes over 60 youths and continues to grow, adding new leadership training and opportunities. Over the last seven years, we've dedicated extensive resources to developing a robust system for empowering the next generation of church leaders, and we're excited to see this effort continue to flourish in the years to come.

Intentional Interim Ministry (IIM) – Interim ministers are experienced clergy persons, committed to Wesleyan theology and the UMC, who have proven effective in their service to Christ and the church. Intentional Interim Ministers adapt well to a congregation's context and particular needs, are highly relational, and provide pastoral leadership and management for a season of ministry. IIMs are vetted by the Bishop and NTC Cabinet, trained and certified through an accreditation process, and may be deployed across conference boundaries. IIM's serve many contexts which include: Sabbatical, Renewal or Study Leave; Pastoral Transitions; Conflict Management; Disability, Terminal Illness or Death of a Pastor; Clergy Misconduct. In 2023-2024 the Cabinet and the Center for Leadership Development made 13 Intentional Interim Ministry placements.

Vocational Discernment and Candidacy – God is calling! Fifteen inquiring candidates attended Candidacy Summits held in August of 2023 and January 2024. Candidacy Summit is an orientation to the candidacy process event focused particularly on preparing people for the certification interview and building connections with representatives of the Annual Conference and other inquiring candidates. Summit also launches the first of six group mentoring sessions of the inquiring candidacy process. Nine young adults from our Wesley Foundations, local churches, and seminarians attended *Exploration* presented by Discipleship Ministries for 18-26 year-old UMs to discern their calling to vocational leadership in the UMC. More than twenty clergy from outside the denomination or annual conference inquire each year for an appointment in North Texas. Vocational Discernment resources such as the 5 Cups of Coffee brochures, Christian as Minister, resources for the SPRC interview and more can be found on the North Texas Board of Ordained Ministry website.

Response Team Ministry for Congregational Crisis (*formerly CART*)

The Congregational Assessment, Response, and Transformation Teams (CART) was the umbrella name comprising 2 teams, The Crisis Response Team who responds to acute congregational crisis, and the Conflict Resolution Team who attended to churches with chronic conflict issues. Each discipline, crisis intervention and conflict resolution, requires different education and training, skill sets, policies and procedures, and best practices for serving individuals and churches. The team for conflict resolution no longer exists due to member attrition. Conflict issues over the past few years have been referred to professional mediators. Lisa Hancock has provided most of the training and conflict resolution work for the North Texas Conference. (Conflict resolution services may be obtained by local churches through Lisa Hancock and other professional mediators.)

Therefore, the Center for Leadership Director and the Crisis Response Team Coordinator decided there is a need to bring clarity to the existing team's resources and responsibilities in meeting the needs of the conference, clear any confusion around what CART was supposed to be, and differentiate this team from other conference teams. The new name of the existing team that continues to respond to congregational crisis needs and administer the Resource Person Program for assistance and advocacy with individuals who feel they may have been victims of misconduct is the **Response Team Ministry for Congregational Crisis (Response Team.)** This name is more commonly used in other conferences and by the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (GCSROW) who championed the movement to establish a Response Team in every conference of the UMC.

The Response Team served 16 churches over the past year and helped numbers of individuals in our conference including cabinet members, clergy, church staff, lay leadership, congregants, and aggrieved persons. Services included educational and community resourcing, training, consultation, help with local church policies, and partial to

full crisis response. Three cases required extensive help from additional team members and conference staff, and the Coordinator was able to address the needs of 13 churches without deploying any additional team members. The Response Team Coordinator deployed five Resource Persons for individual advocacy regarding both formal and informal complaints in two separate church incidents. This year, one church required comprehensive crisis response services with 416 combined hours of Response Team Coordinator (312) and Response Team (96) work on the case. Of the 16 cases, 12 related to sexual misconduct. The other four cases involved racism, child abuse, and threats to a church, clergy, and/or church staff safety.

The Response Team Coordinator, the Commission on the Status and Role of Women (COSROW,) several Response Team members, and the HR department of GCFA collaborated to update our Conference Personal Ethics/ Sexual Misconduct Policies, updated and resourced new information for the SPRC Toolkit webpage, and created the new Sexual Misconduct, Prevention, and Support webpage to resource District Superintendents, clergy, local church lay leadership, and aggrieved persons and their family members seeking help regarding misconduct by clergy or laity.

In January of 2023, the Response Team Coordinator recruited and trained four new team members, increasing the diversity of the team. We now have five languages represented (Korean, Spanish, Portuguese, English, and German.) The team has 24 trained and active members (clergy gifted in pastoral care and laity including licensed counselors/psychologists, licensed social workers, lawyers, law enforcement, and a judge) who serve on a volunteer basis. The coordinator provided two training courses for the Residency Program: *Conference Crisis Response Services* and *Sexual Misconduct Information and Resourcing*.

Brief Outline of NTC Response Team History

- 1997:** Annual Conference establishment of Task Force regarding sexual misconduct, complaints, advocacy, education, policies, screening, and resources.
- 1998:** First Conference Policies established, creation of Resource Person Program/advocacy for aggrieved.
- 2000:** Resource Person Oversight Committee established- oversight of Resource Persons and beginnings of Response Team formation; led by Carole Carsey, LCSW and Alice Zaccarello, LCSW- both conference leaders.
- 2004:** Resource Person Oversight Committee began educating/training SPRC Chairs, Residency Program, and began the conference wide quadrennial clergy sexual ethics training.
- 2006:** Bishop's Committee on Sexual Ethics (BCOSE) established, education/trainings; continued administration of Resource Person; formation of a Response Team for the NTC set in motion.
- 2006-2010:** BCOSE continued education/trainings; continued administration of Resource Person program; built first Response Team; Response Team deployed for 2 church crisis situations due to clergy sexual misconduct.
- 2010-2012:** The BCOSE and several committees/commissions/agencies/boards/teams not utilized as NTC were working on restructuring into a new model (Mission, Connectional Resources, Leadership, and Church Development.)
- 2012:** In 2012, under Center for Leadership Development (CLD) Congregational Assessment, Response, and Transformation Teams (CART) born, included two teams: Crisis Response Team and Conflict Resolution Team.
- 2012-2018:** Two volunteer Crisis Response Team Coordinators served Crisis Response Team- Pastor Liz Greenwell 2012-2015, Pastor Dretha Burris 2012-2018, 13 churches served, all related to sexual misconduct, three Resource Persons deployed.
- 2018-Current Time:** In 2018, Pastor Dretha Burris stepped back from leadership but stayed on team and Bishop appointed Pastor Liz Greenwell to the NTC staff under CLD and its director, as Crisis Response Team Coordinator, (by this time, Conflict Response Team existed previously had ceased;). 68 churches served (517% increase over previous 6-year period), 45 related to sexual misconduct and 23 non-sexual misconduct (300% increase in work not related to sexual misconduct), nine Resource Persons deployed (300% increase in use.)

Camp and Retreat Ministry

Bridgeport Camp and Conference Center – 2023 was another great year for camping and retreat ministries. We held six weeks of conference camps and hosted a little over 800 of our summer friends. We also welcomed back our friends from SEEK camps to a weeklong session, their first time back since the pandemic.

Our non-conference calendar continued to grow this past year with 52 groups bringing us just over 2800 attendees in those events with five of the groups being new to us this year. We are excited about all the ministries and events that are continuing to utilize our facilities and are looking forward to another great year and continued growth that will happen at Bridgeport Camp and Conference Center.

We do ask that you continue to pray for all the churches, groups, and friends that continue to join us here, and you need any additional information about hosting a retreat or event, or attending a camp, please visit our website, www.bridgeportcamp.org, and follow us on social media @bridgeport.camp.

Prothro Center at Lake Texoma - As a host site to numerous events, with different programs being brought in, we pride ourselves in being able to adapt to each group's ideas. Our 2023 goal was to focus our attention on what it truly means to "retreat," and how we could add that aspect to even the most formal events. With our 100 acres of deep forest, lake views, amazing wildlife, beach fronts, tree canopy, and natural beauty, we want for every person that steps on our grounds to feel God's peaceful presence. We do this by drawing your eye to the outdoors, creating private spaces for people to get away from the business of today's world, and adding subtle reminders of what we stand for. Indoor spaces can be replicated, but landscapes are truly unique. This year, we continued to find those places and make them as comfortable and inviting as we can. Adding new canopy structures and seating areas to our beach areas and stone patios have provided a big face lift to those areas.

As we continued to host many conference outings, such as: The Bishop and Cabinet, NTCUWF, Board of Ordination, Clergy Spouse Retreat, Summer Internship, three Seek Camps, and numerous individual church/youth retreats, 2023 brought in new events with Cultiv8Community, weddings, special needs events, staff retreats, band retreats, cheer retreats, and banquets.

To add to the character of our cabins, we decided to go away from the uniform look of green and tan buildings and give each cabin its own personality. Coastal farmhouse colors – soft yellows, nautical blues, and easy-going whites were added to tie our property into our lake theme.

We have grown so much of the past decade. With an open mind, The Prothro Center has listened and executed ways to make our location one of the most desired places to visit. From our kitchen providing specific dietary needs to adding queen beds to each private room, our focus has always been on our guests and their comfort. We recognized a need for family growth and provided a safe and naturally intriguing place to spend quality time together, without distraction.

The Prothro Center is proud to be a great reflection of the North Texas Conference of The United Methodist Church and we are so appreciative for the support shown on its behalf.

Cliff Dyer

Executive Director of The Prothro Center at Lake Texoma
Prothro Center at Lake Texoma
269 Methodist Ln., Pottsboro, TX 75076
903-786-2141
prothro@ntcumc.org

Collegiate Ministry

Denton Wesley (UNT/TWU/NCTC) – The Denton Wesley serves the students of the University of North Texas, Texas Woman's University, and North Central Texas College. DWF is an LGBTQ+ affirming ministry, providing discipleship and relationship-building opportunities for students through worship, Bible study, community groups, and leadership development. Our ministry gives students an opportunity to connect with God and each other in meaningful community, as well as for students to explore their gifts in a safe environment.

We sent two students to Exploration in Orlando, Florida, where they discerned God's call to ordained ministry. Both of our undergraduate participants are researching their options to seminary education and finding ways to grow in their gifts and graces at the Wesley.

Our Open Doors hours, featuring free lunch, free coffee, and free groceries, host a wide diversity of students from all over the world. Students connect with each other, local church volunteers, and our ministry staff to build community and discern the Spirit's prompting in things as consequential as our response to global conflicts and as mundane as picking a roommate for the new semester.

We are excited to announce that we are entering a three-year discernment agreement with Lutheran Campus Ministries, one of our long-time friends in ministry. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Synod of North Texas and North Louisiana will send financial support to the Wesley, and we will provide programming and discipleship for new and existing ELCA students. We are looking forward to living into our full communion and helping our ecumenical partners discern ways to be in campus ministry most effectively.

Wesley building is a place for students to rest, connect, and seek support. We have been a space for students to zoom with their therapists in private, to use a restroom that is safe for them regardless of gender identity, and in some cases to even take a nap. We also serve as a space for other vital ministry partners: North Texas Chinese Church, Born2B Free Ministries, and Voices of Praise.

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

Paris Wesley Center - Hello, Annual Conference 2024! This year, we've prepared a video and photo update to share with you all! Please head on over to www.pariswesleycenter.org/ac24 to check it out and meet some fabulous Paris Junior College students.

More about us: Paris Wesley Center is a campus faith community in Paris, Texas, committed to journeying together, boldly questioning and deepening our beliefs, and living in a way that makes the world more like God's dream.

Paris Wesley Center creates a space where diverse students come together and are transformed by one another and God in their midst. Throughout the week, students are gathering between classes, playing together, encouraging one another, and inviting their friends to join them. Every semester, including summer term, four student interns are hired to cultivate and grow their leadership capacity through leading fun events, connecting students with needed resources, and facilitating small group discussions on mental health, world religions, the bible, and life skills. In Spring 2024, we launched The Open Table Bible Study, which has created space for some meaningful conversations, spiritual growth, and collective learning.

Last year, the Paris Wesley Center served over 2,500 meals during Thursday free lunches. The Paris Wesley Center also has a food pantry, which is treated as "walking into your home kitchen" to lessen any stigma around using extra support. Shelf stable meals, snacks, drinks, and freezer meals are available for students whenever the building is open. There has recently been an increase in the number of students wanting to prepare their own meals outside of the school cafeteria. We are glad to offer the Paris Wesley Center kitchen to students living in the dorms at PJC.

The Loads of Love Laundry has been one of the best investments we've made in the life of our students. Through offering free laundry, we've become a part of students' weekly life rhythms in a new way. This provides regular opportunities to build relationships and offer socio-emotional and spiritual support. Approximately 1,700 loads of laundry have been washed here over the course of a year. Local churches have been extremely generous in donating laundry detergent as well, which is one more way that students experience the people of God exuding God's preventive grace and impacting their lives in tangible ways.

The Wesley Center is an inclusive community of students who gather to support one another through life, and it is growing quickly. We know that God is present and working in the lives of our students and we will continue creating spaces where that is cultivated and celebrated! The Paris Wesley Center cares for Paris Junior College students, through seeking to meet their holistic needs, so that they can be fully equipped to become the strong community leaders our world desperately needs. For more information, visit www.pariswesleycenter.org/ac24 or contact Michelle Stubbs-Wood at director@pariswesleycenter.org.

Wesley at SMU is a ministry for all college-aged students to become deeply devoted followers of Christ. Our regular programming consists of a large group worship service, bible study, men's and women's groups, covenant groups, and Sunday morning worship. Lead by the youngest team at HPUMC (ages 19-27 years old), the Wesley staff has the privilege to model the belief that God is working within and utilizing the next generation to help lead young adults into a relationship with Christ – the empowerment and mission Wesley House encourages college students to embrace. This past year has been marked by transition and transformation. We have witnessed God move in the hearts of college students in truly remarkable ways!

We kicked off the school year with our annual house party - an event geared towards inviting new students to our community. Through this event alone, we met more than 20 unique students who became plugged in and invested within Wesley for their first semester. The fall semester was filled with spiritual formations events such as bible studies, worship nights, and opportunities to receive communion. The fall semester also included a ton of fun! We attended a lot of sporting events to cheer on our fellow Mustangs, had outdoor picnics, and spent hours in fellowship each week. We also hosted our first annual alumni worship event during SMU Homecoming Weekend which showcased how the bond built within this community far outlasts the years of undergrad. Seeing these graduates living fruitful and faithful lives beyond their college ministry experience was amazing. The fall was also our first time launching a year-round student internship which provided five undergrad students with a paid opportunity to serve their peers and grow in their ministry experience.

This spring, we focused on community and service and engagement in ways we hadn't before. We took our students to mix up their Sunday church routine and worshipped at The Table, a church in south Dallas centered around fellowship and faith formation especially supporting individuals experiencing homelessness. This worship experience was incredible in a million ways and became a place our students longed to return to. We also volunteered at Austin Street Center to provide dinner for our neighbors lodging there. Our students volunteered at various locations around Dallas for the HPUMC Churchwide serving day working on projects from trash clean-up to building a house with Carpenters for Christ. This spring we held our first ever Ash Wednesday Worship Night which created a space for students to reflect and repent, while preparing their hearts for the good news of Easter Sunday.

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

Synergy Wesley Foundation (UTD/Dallas College/Collin College) - The Synergy Wesley Foundation provides supportive space for college students to build authentic relationships and community, grow in faith through worship and discussion, discover their gifts, discern their vocational call, develop as Christian leaders, and serve alongside their neighbors to transform the world. Our programming includes weekly worship, Bible study, retreats, praise band, volunteering, fellowship events at the center of campus, free weekly meals, and leadership development programs. Over the past year we served in ministry with more than 200 college students, with 55 students involved at a deep and consistent level across multiple campuses. Thanks to a generous grant from Texas Methodist Foundation for free therapy and spiritual direction for students, we provided 193 individual sessions for students to meet with licensed therapists and trained spiritual directors during the past year. We expanded this work to include therapists and spiritual director-led group work, including a powerful three-day Spring Retreat at the Prothro Center focused on discerning vocational call.

Last year, Texas legislators passed Senate Bill 17 (SB17), which went into effect on January 1, 2024, and effectively banned all Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) programs at Texas public colleges and universities. This resulted in the closing of the multicultural center, gender center, and other DEI offices on campus, and limited or eliminated access to resources for vulnerable students on the margins. In our commitment to our baptismal vows, Synergy Wesley accepts the freedom and power God gives us to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in all forms; and in accordance with our UMC Social Principles, we are called to work toward societies in which each person's value is recognized, maintained, and strengthened. As a nonprofit UMC entity separate from the university and outside the

scope of SB17 legislation, we have been working to fill in the new DEI gaps. We are partnering with student groups on campus to facilitate, support, and fund DEI programs, we are hosting DEI meetings for students in our storefront space adjacent to the UTD campus, and we are working to ensure that vital DEI programs remain intact to the best of our ability, in order to promote the retention, success, and well-being of all students.

We are so thankful for our partner churches and organizations over the past year: Arapaho UMC, FUMC Richardson, Chapel Hill UMC, Cochran Chapel UMC, Holy Covenant UMC, Aldersgate UMC, Christ UMC Plano, General Board of Discipleship, Black Tie Dinner, and Texas Methodist Foundation. We would love to include your church in this list next year! To partner with Synergy Wesley Foundation, you can contact our campus minister at Brittany@SynergyWesley.org or visit SynergyWesley.org or @SynergyWesley on social media. We would love to work with you to reach and grow a rising generation of young Christian leaders for the transformation of the world!

The Wesleyan Campus Ministry at Texas A & M Commerce also known as (*The Wesley @ TAMUC*) is a ministry where all students are welcomed and invited to grow within a community of believers whose desire is to share the love of God in Christ to all people.

Our Mission is to create an environment where the students of Texas A&M Commerce are welcomed, fully known, aware of God’s unending Love for them, brought into salvation and the Body of Christ while being equipped to serve within this community of believers, in order to go out and transform the world to reflect God’s kingdom.

Our vision at the Wesley Campus Ministry is to see all students at Texas A&M Commerce Believe, Become, Belong and Be more in Christ.

Goals: Our Mission and Vision in Action for All students on campus:

- To know and believe that they are welcomed to be in this place, space, and community of believers.
- To know that “The Wesley” is a safe haven, to rest, eat, and be, a place where they can come as there are, open up and share in order to be known fully.
- To become aware of God’s unending love for them and be aware that God knows all, sees all, and understand all things and still loves us ALL and wants to be in fellowship with us.
- To become saved in faith by grace through Jesus Christ our Lord.
- To belong to the body of Christ through Salvation.
- To belong to this community of believers, by joining “The Wesley”!
- To be more in Christ, studying the Word, Worship, fellowship and being equipped through, the Holy Spirit, discipleship, and service within this ministry, finding your why and growing in your purpose in a safe place.
- To finally be more by being sent out upon graduation, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit to transform the world to reflect God’s Kingdom.

Since the arrival of our new pastor Rev. Christina Hardy on February 2023, God has truly graced us with growth and success. We have enlarged our territory, by growing from a roster of 30 plus students to over 185 since November of 2023. We hit the ground running in June and July from recruiting events to much needed repairs and policies and procedures. Our growth was largely in part to A&M Commerce summer and fall ROAR weekly events, where “*The Wesley @ TAMUC*” was present, tabling and loving on all the incoming freshmen. Pastor Christina made sure that we were constantly in pursuit of the one, which meant that no one would be left out or overlooked. We brought the light of Christ and so many students were blessed and so excited to be a part of all things Wesley. We went from about 25 to 30 in Worship to averaging over 50 students in worship, to servicing 70 plus within the week. While our momentum has improved greatly with new events like Painting with a Purpose, lunch bible studies, and attending courses with new leadership at SMU, and all while reaching new believers for Christ, and discipleship, we had to recruit and develop new leaders. For in the fall 2023, during all of this growth, all of our senior leadership graduated, including our entire worship team and three interns. While we were sad to see them go, we sent them off with such a blessing and are excited for all that God will do within their lives. They left with much grace knowing that the Wesley will always be there home. Henceforth, we are now a grassroots ministry full of freshman and transfer sophomores that are on fire for God and eager to grow and learn.

Pastor Christina has been on a preaching tour to bring awareness to the needs of *The Wesley TAMUC*. Through networking and donations, much needed furniture in the Wesley has been updated, which gave us a warm and inviting new look. From the gracious donations she acquired, we put on a three-day garage sale and raised money

and support from this event. Afterwards we hit the ground running with our new student leadership development and discipleship through empowerment and transparency in our one-on-one meetings and group spiritual formation that began in the fall. In December, after fall semester programming and sending off our dear seniors and students for the holiday break, we began a much-needed ceiling replacement project on December 15. However, our proposed ten-day construction project has now turned into an over one-hundred-day event including a general contractor and crew and we have been met with unforeseen additional repairs and updates. Pastor Christina made lemonade out of all of this creating a sermon series titled “under construction.” We are well underway and seeing the glory and grace of God within it all and are now needing community help to us finish strong.

Why Your Support Matters

Your support of the *Wesleyan Campus Ministry TAMUC* is essential for us to continue our mission and expand our reach. By contributing to The Wesley, you are helping us provide to students:

- Weekly meals & worship every Wednesday night. Discipleship resources for things like daily prayer, mentorship, and bible study.
- Leadership development and scholarship opportunities.
- Spring/Fall Retreats that build community and future mission trips that allow our students to walk out their faithful.
- Round the clock pastoral care.
- Supplemental resources and aid for students requiring mental health care.
- Operations for our building to be open and a safe place for our students to find sanctuary and rest in-between work study, on and off campus employment, and classes. Our Wesley is a place to grab a snack, pray, and be in the presence of God and Fellowship.

All of this and much, much more is all funded through generous supporters like you that deeply care about young people, the future of the church, and the generations of Jesus followers to come.

How You Can Help

This year we are talking a leap of Faith and making the BIG ASK! We are knee deep in our much-needed ceiling replacement project and we need your help in reaching our goal of \$28,537. Please consider donating to our cause! You can follow all things Wesley and see step by step details of this construction project on our social media pages listed below.

To make your donation, please visit our Church giving Site: <https://wcm.churchcenter.com/giving>. Your generosity will help us continue to provide the resources, mentorship, and community support that young adults need as they pursue faith and impact on their community.

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

Dream Big in Faith with us and donate to our Campaign for the completion of our ceiling replacement project so that we can have a safe and healthy place to Worship! For more information or to offer support please feel free to contact Rev. Christina Hardy at revcwhardy@outlook.com.

Please Follow Us On Social Media:

https://www.tiktok.com/@thewesleytamuc?_t=8kDoaAfJPw6&_r=1

Tiktok: Wesley Campus Ministry TAMU-C

<https://x.com/WesleyTAMUC?t=r4Nw3kbAfGwidiAsdSa1g6A&s=09>

Twitter/X : WesleyTAMUC

<https://www.instagram.com/wesleytamuc?igsh=Mmc1ZzAxMzc2Y2ox>

Instagram: WesleyTamuc

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100090663969862&mibextid=kFxxJD>

Facebook 1: Real Wesley at Tamuc

<https://www.facebook.com/tamucwesley?mibextid=kFxxJD>

Facebook 2: The Wesley at Tamuc

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/wesleytamuc/?ref=share>

Facebook group Wesley @Tamuc

Website: <https://manesync.tamuc.edu/WCM/>

Ways to Give:

Church center WCM <https://wcm.churchcenter.com/giving>

Donate to our 30 for \$30k campaign: <https://wcm.churchcenter.com/giving/to/30-for-30-campaign-Payment>
(eservicepayments.com)

TAMU-Commerce Wesleyan:

Send Checks: Wesleyan Campus Ministry- TAMUC
1504 Lee Street, Commerce, TX 75428

The Wichita Falls Wesley (MSU/Mount Vernon College) continued to serve the students of Midwestern State University (MSU TX) and Vernon College in the Northwest District this year.

This school year the Wesley of WF continued to serve 40-50 unique students from across the campus of MSU TX and began discussing potential opportunities for growth and outreach to Vernon college. With our director Julia Puac-Romero completing her second year as the director, we were also able to graduate the final round of Wesley students from the generation that Rev. Marcus Jones raised into faithful Jesus followers. We have served students through our weekly Thursday free lunch, Wednesday night Bible study, monthly craft nights, movie and discussion nights, partnerships with the Pride Student group of MSU TX and the Catholic Campus Ministry. This Spring we launched a men's bible study under the direction of our newest male engagement intern and have re-launched a 2nd version of the Wesley Free Lunch Podcast.

This year, we interacted more intentionally with the nursing school program at MSU TX and have begun getting a small crowd of members of the MSU TX football team. We continued to serve students Monday Morning coffee breakfast which continued to allow us to provide pastoral care, interact with students, and provide a small moment of nourishment. Our focus theme this year has been "Explore Jesus" which has allowed our director to provide a bible study centered around not only the lessons from Jesus but those who were disciples and followers of Jesus. This theme allowed explorations and discussions around baptism, the women in the life of Jesus, and a reflection on the call stories of certain disciples.

We were awarded the Hesta Stuart grant which allowed us to operate on a successful general budget and continued to receive various support from individuals and Sunday school classes. It is through this generosity that we were able to complete furnishing our now completely renovated dedicated space, send one student to Exploration, and send four students to the U.M. Army Mission Trip. On the topic of our dedicated space, the Wesley moved into the second floor of University United Methodist Church with a completely renovated space which many students found a place of comfort to "hang out" and check in amongst themselves.

The Wesley is currently preparing for our first Golf Tournament fundraiser set for September 13 at the Weeks Champions Golf course and is looking for participants, teams, and sponsors. Our hope is to raise enough funds to help us continue to do the great ministry that is happening at the ever-growing Wichita Falls Wesley Foundation.

For more information about our ministry communities, discipleship model, and ways to support our ministry, email campusministry@wfwesley.org and follow us on Instagram @wesleyofwf.

2024 - 2025 IMPORTANT DATES

- Summer Camp @ Bridgeport and SEEK Camp @ Prothro & Bridgeport – June – July
- Advanced Leadership Coaching Launch – July – August
- Lay Servant Ministries Laity Day – August 10, 2024 – Aldersgate UMC, Carrollton
- Camp Bible (3rd – 5th grade students) – Bridgeport Camp – September 21-22, 2024
- Clergy Retreat – September 27 – Abilene
- Confirmation Camp – October 4-6, 2024
- Candidacy Summit – October 2024
- A Time for Children & Youth Fall Retreat – October 22-23, 2024 – Prothro Center
- Bishop's Rally (5th - 7th grade & Confirmation students)
- Clergy Covenant Day – January 2025
- Laity Training Day – February 2025
- MidWinter Retreats January and February 2025
- ONE Worship Event (Middle and High School Youth) – April 2025

2024 Board of Ordained Ministry Calendar

August	DCOM interviews for candidates seeking commissioning
August 2	Deadline for provisional Deacons and Elders to apply for 2024 ordination
August 20	Candidate Meet and Greet with the BOM (Conf. Office)
September 19	BOM Fall Meeting, 10 am-Noon (Christ UMC Plano)
October 4	Deadline for districts to submit candidates for commissioning
October 11	Ordination paperwork deadline, 5 pm
November 17-19	Ordination Interviews (Prothro)

United Women in Faith (UWFaith)



United
Women
in Faith

As the Conference organization of United Women in Faith (UWFaith), we believe love in action can change the world. Our beliefs bring us together, and our spirituality pushes us to do more to advocate for and support ministry with the oppressed and dispossessed, with special attention to the needs of women, children, and youth; to build a supportive community among women; and to foster spiritual growth, mission education, and Christian social involvement. As United Women in Faith, we welcome all women of faith to join with us – no church membership requirements.

The 2023 calendar year budget for North Texas Conference United Women in Faith totaled \$110,000, but we exceeded our expectations and raised enough to allow us to send \$171,622 directly to undesignated mission giving, supplemental giving, and our 2022 and 2023 mission projects that impact lives locally, regionally, nationally, and globally. About \$16,000 funded educational programming, leadership development, and costs for administration and membership.

For 2023 we chose the following two Conference Mission Projects, which, along with donations, encouraged awareness and study of these two missions and the issues of the people they serve:

- **Good Neighbor Settlement House in Brownsville, Texas**, serves both homeless families in the area and hundreds of migrants a day. UWFaith members collected items such as hygiene kits, crayons and coloring books, and snacks to share with those in need there. Cash contributions of \$1,119 paid for items on their Amazon Wish List and also for renting and driving a trailer to deliver all the donated items to Brownsville.

- **Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) groups** in the North Texas area advocate to reduce the abuse and suffering of indigenous women and bring justice to those who have been victimized. UWFaith members made financial contributions of \$4,308 to support these groups' important efforts.

Additionally, strong support has continued through 2024 for our 2022 international Mission Project, the Jerri Savuto Rescue Center in rural Kenya, which serves girls escaping FGM (female genital mutilation) and early marriage. The girls are attending school and thriving. After moving into the newly built 44-bed shelter at Christmas 2023, there are now 48 living at the center and 12 more are attending secondary school. Funds continue to be sent to NTC UWF from friends of Bill and Jerri Savuto and UWFaith members. Donations in 2023 totaled \$58,134 and \$32,331 has been sent to us and on to the shelter as of 5/1/2024. These funds will be used to build a security fence, pay school fees, and provide general monthly support for the girls.

Highlights of the past year included:

- **Installation of Sally Vonner, North Texas Conference member, as the General Secretary/CEO of United Women in Faith (July 2023).** We were honored that Sally chose to have her installation here in her home conference. It was a big celebration and beautiful service with Bishop Saenz officiating, as well as the UWFaith Board President and Board members, the media, and other attendees joining us from across the country. A reception afterwards was hosted by UWFaith of North Texas.
- **Mission u: “Living the Good News: Reflecting God’s Love” (July 2023).** We more than doubled the number of women that experienced Mission u compared to last year, with a sold-out 24-hour retreat and two full virtual classes featuring young clergywomen leading the study based on the Lord’s Prayer.
- **Annual Meetings for Metro, North Central, and East Districts (September 2023).** Each District welcomed Finda Quiwa, a UWF Regional Missionary currently serving in Liberia with an Economic Empowerment Initiative. She spoke about UWF’s international mission work and its impact on lives of women and their families. Funds and items were collected for our two Conference mission projects along with financial support for Finda.
- **Annual Meeting for NTC UWFaith (October 2023).** We celebrated all we had done in the past year and the 50th Anniversary of coming together racially as United Methodist Women in the North Texas Conference. Our new Bishop, Ruben Saenz, Jr., was introduced and led us in worship. Brittany K. Barnett, author and founder of Girls Embracing Mothers (GEM), spoke. GEM is an area nonprofit empowering women in prison and their daughters to break the cycle of incarceration to lead successful lives. We had a lovely lunch, meaningful worship and music, and learned from local mission displays. New officers were elected and installed.
- **Officer Training (January 2024).** We once again conducted sequential virtual trainings. Participation was high, including some officers joining us from other conferences.
- **Texas UWFaith Legislative Event in Austin (January 2024).** UWFaith from across Texas partnered with Texas Impact to present this event for all women of faith to learn about current public policy issues and advocate for justice for all Texas women, children, and youth. The North Texas Conference had the largest number of participants this year, with more than 50 in-person or virtual. Advocacy for all women, children, and youth is important and continues even in a legislature off-year.
- **Racial Justice Symposium: “Disparities in Maternal Health” event (February 2024).** At this in-person and live streamed event, three speakers focused on explaining the reality of the significant disparities in maternal and infant mortality rates for women of color in Texas and how we can be a force for change. Attendees challenged themselves to do something to make a difference and will be sent a reminder of their commitment this summer.
- **Soul Care Retreat: “Be Transformers of the World” (April 2024).** This intergenerational event at a garden conference center was a Day Apart for spiritual nourishment and joy with worship, art, meditation, poetry, and connecting with the sisterhood.

The core of our organization is members who nurture each other, volunteer, and donate. Each local UWFaith group has inspiring and educational programming, mission activities, and a budget that financially supports missions, including, but not limited to, their Pledge to Mission sent to District, Conference, and National UWFaith. The local impact of their efforts and generosity is beyond measure!

UWFaith is fundamentally a connectional ministry. We encourage women and groups to inspire each other with their ideas. Our website is kept current with a calendar full of information about special local events, as well as District and Conference programming, advocacy links, our Annual Mission Project details, programming suggestions, resources, training, and more. Our weekly newsletter promotes UWFaith and mission events, inspires advocacy, provides programming ideas, and shares stories of love in action transforming the world. You can join our newsletter list and learn more about us at www.UWFNorthTexas.org.

Wendy Campbell, President, NTC United Women in Faith (UWFaith) wjpc.UWF@gmail.com

CENTER FOR MISSIONAL OUTREACH

Overview

In the past year, a compelling vision for the unified conference has emerged: we are followers of Jesus seeking the loving, just, and free world God imagines for all people. This vision compels us to turn outward, face the ways in which our world is broken and remains hard-hearted, unjust, and oppressive, and be engaged in our communities in ways that **close the gap** between what is and what God desires.

The mission or fundamental purpose of the Center for Missional Outreach (CMO) is to help local churches address this “gap” and **be in ministry with their neighbors, particularly the poor and marginalized**. The CMO does not pursue this mission on its own but rather aims to be a resource to local churches by investing in and supporting their faithful and creative work and by facilitating connections and collaborations for greater missional impact.

In the past year, the CMO has focused on the following areas of ministry:

- Completing the long-term recovery efforts in Jacksboro in partnership with UMCOR, local leadership, ecumenical partners, and NTC churches;
- Continuing to encourage the shift in the culture of local churches toward “ministry with” through our Ministry With grants program;
- Helping local churches lay a solid foundation for the work of anti-racism by facilitating Together We Dine experiences;
- Equipping local churches to address the mental health crisis in our communities and providing leadership for the Blue Christmas initiative to maximize the impact of our collective efforts;
- Planting seeds in rural communities for long-term poverty alleviation work through a partnership with Cultiv8 Community; and
- Introducing the art of “neighboring” in local churches through Good Neighbor Experiment cohorts.
- Supporting the whole person health of clergy through a new grant-funded faith community nurse.

The “gaps” can seem overwhelming, but we continue to be inspired by the faithfulness of local churches and the ways that the world God imagines is breaking through. The mission is possible by the grace of God, under the leadership of Jesus Christ, and through the power of the Holy Spirit!

Jacksboro

The almost two-year long response to the Jacksboro tornado is now completed! The final project was the rebuilding of five clients’ homes from scratch, in partnership with the Mennonite Disaster Service. MDS provided amazing volunteers from their MDS-Hope team of Amish young adults from Missouri/Iowa. The Salvation Army, Catholic Charities of Fort Worth, and Jack County provided funding, together with our UMCOR/“Close to Home” funds, to get the work done.

The response over the time of the recovery effort from UM churches who sent volunteer teams has been so encouraging to see. This truly was an effort of the entire annual conference in helping our neighbors! Of course, UMCOR continues to provide gold-standard support in training of local long-term recovery committees, case management systems, and financing through grants for this work. The civic leadership of Jack County and the City of Jacksboro has expressed clearly that this recovery would not have been possible without this joint effort.

Jacksboro First UMC was intimately and constantly involved all the way to the end: they provided (free!) accommodation for our office staff within their campus, supported volunteer teams that came to assist, and contributed significant finances to support their neighbors' recovery.

We never know when the next disaster will occur or what type or scope it might be, but this recent effort in Jacksboro has shown our conference is both willing and able to respond as required.

The future for our new unified conference demands we lay a firm foundation for an ongoing and effective disaster response ministry. One thing has become clear: just training ERTs and waiting for a disaster to happen is not a productive use of our resources. We need both to root this work as an ongoing ministry of the local church and to provide opportunities to serve outside of actual disasters. This year, we will train churches interested in this work how to help communities prepare for and mitigate against disasters and to seek to understand what it is that creates community resiliency.

There is a real need for all this work – and it is a significant and meaningful contribution for local churches to make to its community. It deals with the systemic issues that limit a community's response as well as provides resources, cooperation, and skills at the local level to strengthen communities before, during, and after a disaster. There is lots to be excited about for churches wanting to make an ongoing contribution to building stronger communities!

To learn more about how to partner with the conference to develop your local church's disaster response ministry, go to: <https://ntcumc.org/disaster-response>

Ministry With

Since 2019, the CMO has awarded \$687,082 to local churches and related ministries through our Ministry With grants program. In the most recent fall cycle (2023), we awarded \$108,015 for 17 different ministry initiatives across the conference. Thirty-five percent (35%) of the grants went to rural churches, and three projects specifically serve BIPOC communities.

Many of these projects address critical challenges that neighbors experience in our mission fields, such as food insecurity, lack of quality and affordable childcare, and lack of access to mental health support. We are inspired by United Methodists who are connecting with their local communities and acting as powerful forces for creativity, compassion, and justice.

- **Aley Cares Toiletry Supplies:** Aley UMC (\$7,500) provides basic personal hygiene items and shares useful information from knowledgeable community partners. Providing toiletry items alleviates neighbors' anxiety about personal appearance and hygiene. Furthermore, the neighbors and partners have opportunities to exchange information on services provided and services needed.
- **Cooke County Christmas Store:** Whaley UMC (\$7,500), alongside neighboring churches, launched a Christmas Store to stand in the gap and assist families facing economic hardship due to unemployment or underemployment. The Christmas Store ensures their dignity by allowing them to choose what their children and families need for the holidays. Working with many community organizations, the Christmas Store initiative is the first partnership endeavor with hopes of growing and thriving together, offering other resources and tools using asset-based community development.
- **DEI Programming Dallas College:** Synergy Wesley (\$10,000) provides DEI-oriented programming, such as guest speakers, cultural events, and community meals at Dallas College, to support and be in ministry with a diverse array of students.
- **English Conversation Class:** First UMC Allen (\$10,000) hosts classes for new immigrants to practice English, where people from all walks of life can come together, learn from one another and foster connections, understanding, and unity across diverse cultures and faiths.
- **Feeding Friends and Families:** First UMC McKinney (\$7,000) expanded their existing mobile food pantry ministry by establishing a permanent location in the church building and making the pantry more readily accessible to neighbors.
- **Good Neighbor Experiment:** Ector UMC (\$1,000) connects with immediate neighbors around the church's physical location to get to know them, come alongside them in a spirit of friendship and mutuality, identify ways to uplift their gifts and talents and make broader connections throughout the community to meet potential needs in Ector together.

- **Highland Hills Dinner Church:** Highland Hills (up to \$7,500) hosts dinner church with community members who reside in food deserts, including those experiencing food insecurity and homelessness. Through dinner church, Highland Hills members worship alongside them in a spirit of mutuality and seek to host various creative events, such as Poetry Night, Music and Song Night, Dance Night, etc.
- **Life Together:** Life Center UMC (Up to \$8,000) hosts an after-school program with community partners, such as the local school district and ACE Program (nonprofit organizations leasing office space), to intentionally build relationships with community members.
- **Meals for Little Arch Families:** First UMC Paris (\$1,000) serves a monthly meal for staff and families of the church's preschool as a way to create long-term and intentional relationships with neighbors.
- **One Plus One Dallas/National African American Family Involvement Day:** First UMC Dallas (up to \$7,500) catalyzes ongoing parent engagement programs by hosting National African American Family Involvement Day with PK-12 students in the Madison High School feeder pattern, alongside many community partners, including the City Council, School Board members and community liaisons.
- **Orchard and Garden:** First UMC Sachse (Up to \$8,000) created a gathering space of orchards and gardens for community members to grow food and enjoy nature, service and fellowship, in partnership with Grow North Texas.
- **Power Packs:** Grace Chapel (Up to \$7,500) expanded the existing community-driven weekend food ministry for children in Denton and Aubrey ISD schools by serving additional campuses rated as Title I schools and building long-term relationships with community members.
- **Summer Lunch Program:** Grace Avenue UMC (\$7,500) supports the children and families of the Preston on the Lake community by providing food boxes, books and Little Library kits.
- **Tom Bean After School Program:** Tom Bean UMC (\$5,000) serves as a site for the Tom Bean ISD's after-school program, meeting a communicated need for many working families facing a dire need for childcare.
- **Urban Camp:** First UMC Dallas (Up to \$5,000) provides scholarships for underserved children participating in Urban Camp at First UMC Dallas. Urban Camp provides quality and affordable childcare for children from kindergarten through 6th grade during the summer and school year.
- **Wellspring Mental Health Video Shorts:** First UMC Plano (Up to \$3,375) will produce six two- to five-minute videos that will enhance mental health by providing information and specific content on topics including trauma therapy (EMDR), resiliency, play therapy, grief therapy, anxiety, depression, and relationship issues.
- **You Are Not Alone:** First UMC Winnsboro (\$4,640) addresses mental health challenges among teenagers in the community by hosting a parent awareness event and a professional development program with community partners such as the City of Winnsboro Police, Christus Mother Frances Hospital, Northeast Texas Children's Advocacy Center and the Winnsboro ISD School Board.

Ministry With grants are currently available in two ways:

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

Ministry With grants serve as a catalyst, helping local churches in the North Texas Conference turn their "Ministry With" dreams into reality. Grants support both new initiatives and existing ministries that can be revitalized with fresh creativity and innovation. Applications are evaluated based on how well they align with the core values of "Ministry With":

- **Long-term relationships:** Build long-term relationships with and among neighbors and be in a community with them as opposed to making short-term, one-time contact.
- **Mutuality:** Engage in a spirit of mutuality and deep listening, eager to understand and recognize neighbors' gifts, dreams, skills, etc. and assuming that we have things to learn and gain from neighbors.
- **Strength-based:** Partnering with neighbors and honoring their often-undervalued talents, dreams, and connections without doing what they can do for themselves.
- **Systems over symptoms:** Address the systems that perpetuate suffering, including racial inequity, rather than only deal with the symptoms.
- **Collaborative:** Leverage the gifts and relationships of local community partners.

For more information about Ministry With grants, please visit <https://ntcumc.org/ministry-with-grant>

Anti-Racism - Dines

The CMO believes that all people are created with sacred worth and are bearers of the image of God. This core conviction compels us to help local churches lay a solid foundation for the work of anti-racism in ways that fit their contexts.

In the past year, the CMO has continued our collaboration with Project Unity. Project Unity has created a model for facilitating candid and respectful conversations about race around dinner tables called Together We Dine. The vision for this collaboration is to bring Together We Dine to churches across the NTC. Eleven UM churches continue to nurture and deepen cross-racial relationships with sister congregations that were sparked by Together We Dine in years past. In addition, we celebrate a second successful Youth Together We Dine in October 2023 and a fresh Together We Dine partnership involving KA:LL Community, Greenland Hills UMC, and Holy Covenant UMC.

If you are interested in exploring hosting Together We Dine at your church, go to: <https://ntcumc.org/together-we-dine>

Mental Health - Blue Christmas

The mental health crisis in our country, highlighted by the COVID pandemic, continues to manifest in our congregations and communities. United Methodists have a great opportunity to meet people at this tender place of need and participate in the healing work of Christ.

In December 2023, the North and Central Texas Conferences joined together to come alongside local churches through the Blue Christmas Initiative. For years, many congregations have been leading “Services of Hope” or “Blue Christmas” services to offer care and healing to people who are grieving, lonely, depressed, or simply feeling overwhelmed during the holiday season. Rather than asking congregations to add something new during Advent, the conference gathered and shared resources to maximize the collective impact of these special services.

With the help of a Mental Health Task Force and conference staff, an online hub of mental health resources was launched - OfferHopeNow.com. This website presented a list and interactive map of United Methodist churches in the North and Central Texas Conference areas offering these special worship services. In addition, visitors to the site could explore a curated list of mental health resources available to people in the region. Worship resources for congregations interested in refining or offering a Blue Christmas service for the first time were provided as well.

Approaching these Blue Christmas services as a connectional effort, as opposed to individual efforts by local churches, opened up new opportunities for media coverage and helped expand our United Methodist witness. In December 2023, the OfferHopeNow.com website saw nearly 1,400 visits from more than 925 unique visitors. Proactive media pitching generated 12 pieces of coverage, including print and online articles in the *Dallas Morning News* and a broadcast segment on the CBS affiliate in Wichita Falls. Combined media coverage saw a total of more than 569,000 impressions, reaching well beyond our own walls.

Rural

The CMO believes that many rural congregations are positioned to build relationships in their communities that can fight rural poverty in creative ways. To plant seeds and equip clergy and laity for long-term and deep poverty alleviation work, the CMO is partnering with a non-profit started by Rev. Rob Spencer called Cultiv8 Community. Rev. Spencer is currently engaging with and providing support for NTC clergy and congregations throughout the East and Northwest Districts as well as in the northern parts of Denton and Collin Counties, and in September of 2023 he sponsored an immersion experience for Northwest District clergy to help them better understand what it is like to live in poverty. For more information, contact Rev. Rob Spencer at rob@cultiv8community.org.

GNE

In partnership with Rev. Jessica Wright, former CMO Associate Director, the CMO continues to introduce the art of “neighboring” in local churches through presentations, leadership trainings, and Good Neighbor Experiment cohorts.

In January 2024, the “Judges” cohort launched and included Ector UMC and Whaley UMC. In July, the “Ruth” cohort is scheduled to begin with five NTC churches from three different districts showing keen interest. If your congregation is interested in learning more about a Good Neighbor Experiment cohort, contact Rev. Jessica Wright at revjessicawright@gmail.com.

Faith Community Nurse

The CMO is excited to announce that Anna Lee has joined the CMO team as a faith community nurse who will engage with NTC clergy and walk with them to improve their whole person health.

In the summer of 2023, Wespath Benefits and Investments (Wespath) released results of the 2023 Clergy Well-Being Survey. This survey has been tracking survey responses from United Methodist clergy since 2012. “Even though we saw some areas of well-being improve in 2023 after very dismal results in 2021, the overall 10-year lookback tells us that clergy well-being, which was a problem a decade ago, is an even bigger problem today. We see that clergy struggle with well-being compared to their secular counterparts, in no small part due to the often unrealistic demands placed on clergy from multiple directions,” says Kelly Wittich, Director of Health and Well-Being at Wespath.

The well-being of United Methodist clergy has declined significantly over the last 10 years. A few examples of concerning data include the ongoing rise of body mass index greater than 30 (49% of respondents), the incidence of diagnosed diabetes or pre-diabetes (28% of respondents), and the incidence of diagnosed hypertension or pre-hypertension (34% of respondents). Similarly, measurements in both the social and emotional wellness are trending downward. Work-related stress and financial stress are increasing with related wellness decreasing.

The well-being of clergy affects the entire connection, including the families, congregations, and communities they serve. When clergy are significantly stressed and/or unhealthy in multiple dimensions of life, their ability to fulfill their calling is diminished. Additionally, leading their congregations and communities into practices of wellness and paths toward flourishing is unrealistic at best.

To address this glaring need, the CMO and the Faith Community Nursing Program at Methodist Health System applied for and received a grant from the Golden Cross Division Board to fund a faith community nurse. This faith community nurse will aim to build strong, consistent, trusting relationships with clergy which will result in an increased awareness and practice of healthy habits and choices, skilled healthcare navigation strategies, fewer barriers to care, a stronger sense of agency, and increased advocacy. Healthier clergy and families build healthier churches and communities.

Board of Church and Society

The North Texas Conference Board of Church and Society continues to be in conversation with the General Board of Church and Society working to create resources to better equip local congregations in the work of justice. Board members Rev. Phil Dieke and Jenny Bates went to a gathering in Washington D.C. to participate in a training, engage in legislative visits, and take part in the early release of “[Building Power Together: A Toolkit for Advocates in Leadership](#),” a resource that equips individuals, and congregations, to use their power to create (or take part in) a movement, not a moment, of justice.

The NTC board played a role as a conversation partner in the creation of this resource with the GBCS, while working to expand the way we engage a community organizing format in the North Texas Conference. Under the leadership of Rev. Andy Lewis, listening sessions were held with clergy and lay people from each district to best determine how we can “build power together.” A decision was made to strengthen the partnership we have with Texas Impact, who will help us facilitate this ongoing engagement.

Through this partnership with Texas Impact we co-hosted a “North Texas Faith Votes” event, a multi-faith gathering that brought in more than 110 people to hear from elected officials and receive voter training in this ever critical voting year. Subsequently, NTC members are now on the steering committee for the newly formed North Texas Faith Votes team. Creating effective opportunities for civic engagement is the key priority for this team.

Financially we continue to give grants through our Peace with Justice initiative. If you'd like to apply for a Peace with Justice grant you can do so on [the Conference website](#). We also decided to support the ongoing work of Project Unity by making a financial donation, continuing to support their work to racial justice, and acting as participants and facilitators for their "Together We..." programs.

If your congregation is seeking to engage (or further engage) in justice work in your community and beyond, reach out to Rev. Phil Dieke (phildieke@gmail.com) to discuss the role Church and Society can play in your community. Be sure to check out the [Revised Social Principles](#) as well.

Board of Global Ministries

The core of our work as the Board of Global Ministries of the North Texas Conference is to be connectional. Our goal is to be connectional with missions of The United Methodist Church, its people, and congregations as we partner with others engaged in God's global work.

In this transitional year, our primary focus is to support the Center for Missional Outreach in mission initiatives such as:

- United Methodist Missionaries
- Global Health
- Disaster Response and Recovery
- Foundation Experiences for Young Adults

In 2023, churches, individuals, and organizations across the North Texas Conference gave \$408,445.93 to support a variety of missions and missionaries through the General Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church. The missionaries supported by conference churches include:

Patrick Booth, a member at First UMC, Lewisville, working with victims of human trafficking in Cambodia;
Mary Escobar, who belongs to the Tyler Street church, directing a daycare center in Paraguay;
Elizabeth and David McCormick, mission advocates in the South Central Jurisdiction;
Edmund Makowa, an education department coordinator in east Congo;
Willie Berman, serving as a border mission coordinator in Mexico;
Jane Kies, teaching English at Africa University;
Maria de Lourdes Ramirez Meneses, ministering in the Evangelical Methodist Church of Guatemala;
Finda Quiwa, coordinator of Global Justice Volunteers and youth and young adult programs in Sierra Leone, and **Fernando Matsimbe**, planting churches in Tanzania.

Gifts to The Advance totaled more than \$47,000 and supported projects as diverse as Heifer International and Stove Builders of Guatemala; Lydia Patterson Institute and the Red Bird Mission; hospitals and orphanages in Africa; Encounter with Christ in Latin America and the Caribbean; and scholarships at all educational levels, to name but a few. One hundred percent of all monies given to projects through The Advance go to the designated beneficiary.

Every local church is encouraged to consider entering into a covenant relationship with a missionary. Through a Covenant Relationship, churches can provide specific support for one of the 200-plus Global Ministries missionaries serving in more than 60 countries. Covenant relationships offer opportunities for you and the missionary to support one another through prayer and worship, to journey in mission together through your presence and service, and to bear witness to and share God's mighty works in mission. Churches that are covenant partners supply financial gifts and a relationship that helps provide for the salary and benefits of the missionary they support.

If you are interested in more information about Global Ministries, please find our table in the Exhibition Hall, or e-mail Rev. Janet Cavalier (Janet.cavalier@gmail.com).

Disability Ministry Committee

There is much to be excited about for the Disability Ministry Committee of the North Texas Conference as we head into the possibilities around this new era of The United Methodist Church in Texas. Even as this report is being written, members of our committee are starting to reach out to leaders within each of the merging conferences to determine how our people can best serve the needs of persons with disabilities within the new and emerging conference structure. Additionally, our committee is excited to partner with The Julian Way — a disability empowerment and education non-profit founded by Rev. Justin Hancock and his wife, Dr. Lisa Hancock — to participate in the work of the Engaging and Inclusive Worship Research Grant. Our work within this grant will consist of conversations between the committee, clergy, and lay leaders within the North Texas Conference to inform, educate, and empower around accessible and inclusive worship for people of all embodiments. Our goal is not only to share information but also to learn from participants about what is already being done in churches across the conference so that we might encourage one another towards a more complete expression of the kingdom of God. Details will follow in the coming weeks as the committee determines the best forum for hosting these conversations.

Finally, we also endorse the efforts of Lovers Lane United Methodist Church and Walnut Hill United Methodist Church, through their Deaf Ministry and the United Methodist Committee on Deaf and Hard of Hearing Ministries (a unit GBGM) in raising \$625,000 for the construction of the Yatosha School of the Deaf in Sengerema, Tanzania.

Yatosha is the Deaf Ministry of the Tanzania Annual Conference and has identified a need for a residential School for the Deaf in the Lake Victoria region that will serve up to 300 primary aged children. The plan is to recruit 100 UM churches (twenty from each of the five USA jurisdictions) to pledge \$6,000 each over a four-year period commencing in 2024. Lovers Lane UMC is pledging a lead gift of \$25,000. To donate to the project, gifts may be sent to the Advance Special for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Ministries with a memo “Yatosha Deaf School” at <https://umcmiissions.org/advance-project/982562/> or by check to The Advance, 458 Ponce De Leon Ave., NE, Atlanta, GA 30308. When donating please notify Rev. Tom Hudspeth at thudspeth@llumc.org in order to track your gift.

We believe firmly that disciples of Christ come in many bodies, shapes, and sizes. We know with fervent and sincere faith that God is leading North Texas United Methodists into a grand, new adventure. May we together create pathways for all persons to find their place in this adventure. In Christ’s name, Amen.

CORE LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Core Leadership Team (CLT) oversees the implementation of the decisions of the annual conference, working in collaboration with the four centers: the Center for Leadership Development, the Center for Church Development, the Center for Missional Outreach, and the Center for Connectional Resources. The Core Leadership Team aims to provide accountability and advocacy for the work of the conference. It also functions as the body with authority to make decisions between annual conference sessions as permitted by the *Book of Discipline* (BOD).

This year, most of the CLT’s work focused on conference unification. On November 11, 2023, the CLT gathered with leaders of similar groups from the Central and Northwest Texas Conferences and was among the first to receive and provide feedback on the vision and plan for conference unification. Bishop Saenz shared the vision and missional priorities for the unified conference. The CLT heard presentations from the two consultants who were engaged to assess and prepare the three conferences for potential unification. Rev. Don Boren (NWTC), Rev. Dr. Clifton Howard (CTC), and Rev. Andy Lewis presented a sketch of the conference staffing structure and the roadmap of steps and decision-points between November 2023 and conference unification on January 1, 2025. After lunch, the CLT engaged in small group discussions about what they had heard and offered real-time feedback. The day concluded with holy communion.

On January 16, 2024, the CLT met with the CORE Team of the CTC to consider a motion to provisionally approve a new conference and staffing structure organized around the six missional priorities and authorize the bishop, joint cabinet, and personnel committee to fill positions for the new structure, effective immediately. The CLT exercised its authority to make decisions between sessions of annual conference and approved the motion.

The CLT is convened by Bishop Saenz and in 2023-2024 included:

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

CENTER FOR CONNECTIONAL RESOURCES (CCR)

Board of Trustees

A. Fidelity Bond for Annual Conference Office

With the changes to the Comprehensive Insurance program, the North Texas Conference will continue to provide a \$1,000,000 Employee Dishonesty (Crime) Bond for the employees and volunteers responsible for all aspects of finances at the district and annual conference levels.

B. Electric Aggregation Program

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

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

C. Conference Wide Property & Liability Insurance Program

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

Commission on Archives and History

With the incoming chair, a dedicated commission continued carrying the mantle of chronicling our journey; chanting our mantra of telling our story; and presenting our history of the North Texas Conference.

In its training mission, the Commission partnered with the United Women in Faith and the North Texas Conference offering a session for historians and archivists during Laity Training Day. Additionally, the Commission is planning a more comprehensive 2024-2025 tri-conference wide training for local church historians and archivists.

The Commission actively participated in the Black Methodist Church history book project initiated by Black Methodist for Church Renewal (BMCR) of the North Texas Conference.

As the Texas United Methodist Historical Society did not hold an annual meeting post March 2023, the Commission offered to partner and host the Walter Vernon essay contest winner at the Archives and Commission luncheon during the 2024 North Texas Annual Conference. The Walter Vernon essay contest ad hoc committee selected Andrew Phillips' student essay, 'Drive On Then': John Henry Hamblen and the Evangelical Methodist Church in Abilene, Texas as the winner of the 2024 Walter Vernon prize.

The Commission is presenting three applications from local United Methodist churches and pending resolutions from the North Texas Conference to the General Commission on Archives and History (GCAH), seeking designations as United Methodist Church Historic Sites. Local churches applying to the General Commission for the historic site designation include: First Dallas United Methodist Church, Saint Paul United Methodist Church, Dallas, and Warren Chapel United Methodist Church, Terrell.

The Conference Archives located at the Southern Methodist University (SMU) Bridwell Library is operational with archivist Lillie Jenkins Walker who continues the work of answering questions, assisting researchers, as well as documenting the business and collecting the records of the annual conference. Additionally, the archive receives materials from closed and disaffiliated churches. The records of the disaffiliating churches that have been received are being processed for availability for research at the Conference Archives. Historian Frances Long continues her work as archivist emerita. The Conference Archives also participated in the Virtual Circuit Riders Project, a preliminary project that it is hoped will help to digitize the holdings of United Methodist Archives and provide researchers, historians, history-makers, and history-seekers with greater access to records than ever before. This project is being spear-headed by the General Commission on Archives and History and will eventually connect all United Methodist archives online.

The Commission actively encourages and motivates local church historians and archivists through electronic communications, personal appearances at church anniversaries, and/or training sessions in the hopes of developing a pipeline of long-term support in documenting and preserving local church history.

Greta McKelvey, NTC Commission on Archives and History, Chair
Lillie Jenkins Walker, NTC Archivist

Council on Finance and Administration

The North Texas Conference recorded a payout of 84.9% of our total apportionments for 2023. The apportionments received were approximately 7% lower than the average normally received by the conference over the last ten years.

The total paid for apportionments was \$9,756,145 and the total paid for all benevolent causes beyond the apportionment was an additional \$625,942.

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

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

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

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

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

END-OF-YEAR 2023 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

1. The 2023 apportionment payout was 84.9%.
2. The total operating reserves held by the conference treasurer at the beginning and end of 2023 were \$6,411,681 and \$6,563,746 respectively. Although the apportionments received were down from the prior years, the conference was able to curtail spending to preserve the operating reserves.
3. The conference treasury held \$10,294,560 in the operating account and \$6,730,862 in reserves at the Texas Methodist Foundation. In addition, \$453,831 is held at Wespath for the Metro District parsonage, \$541,634 for the North Central parsonage, \$155,650 for the Episcopal Parsonage, and an additional \$41,677,669 in deposits at Wespath for the Board of Pension and Health Benefits. The reserves held by the Board of Pension and Health Benefits are designated to provide the funding for accrued retiree medical and pension benefits as well as an operating reserve for the direct billing function for the current year health insurance, pensions, and CPP (Comprehensive Protection Plan).
4. Statement of Financial Activities –
 - a. Investment returns rebounded in 2023.
 - b. Revenue from services provided reduced due to the change in the mandatory insurance program in March 2023.
 - c. Changes in net assets with donor restrictions increased significantly due to the UMCOR Disaster Recovery efforts and a grant from the Lily Foundation related to the work of the Center for Church Development.
5. Statement of Financial Position –
 - a. Investment returns play a significant part in the increase of total assets and net assets.
 - b. Accounts payable were higher in 2023 due to the timing of a few large payments made after the first of the year.
 - c. The negative net asset for conference managed reserves relates to the net loss on camping activities.
6. The 2023 financial reports may be found in the Conference Reports of this Journal.

LOOKING FORWARD

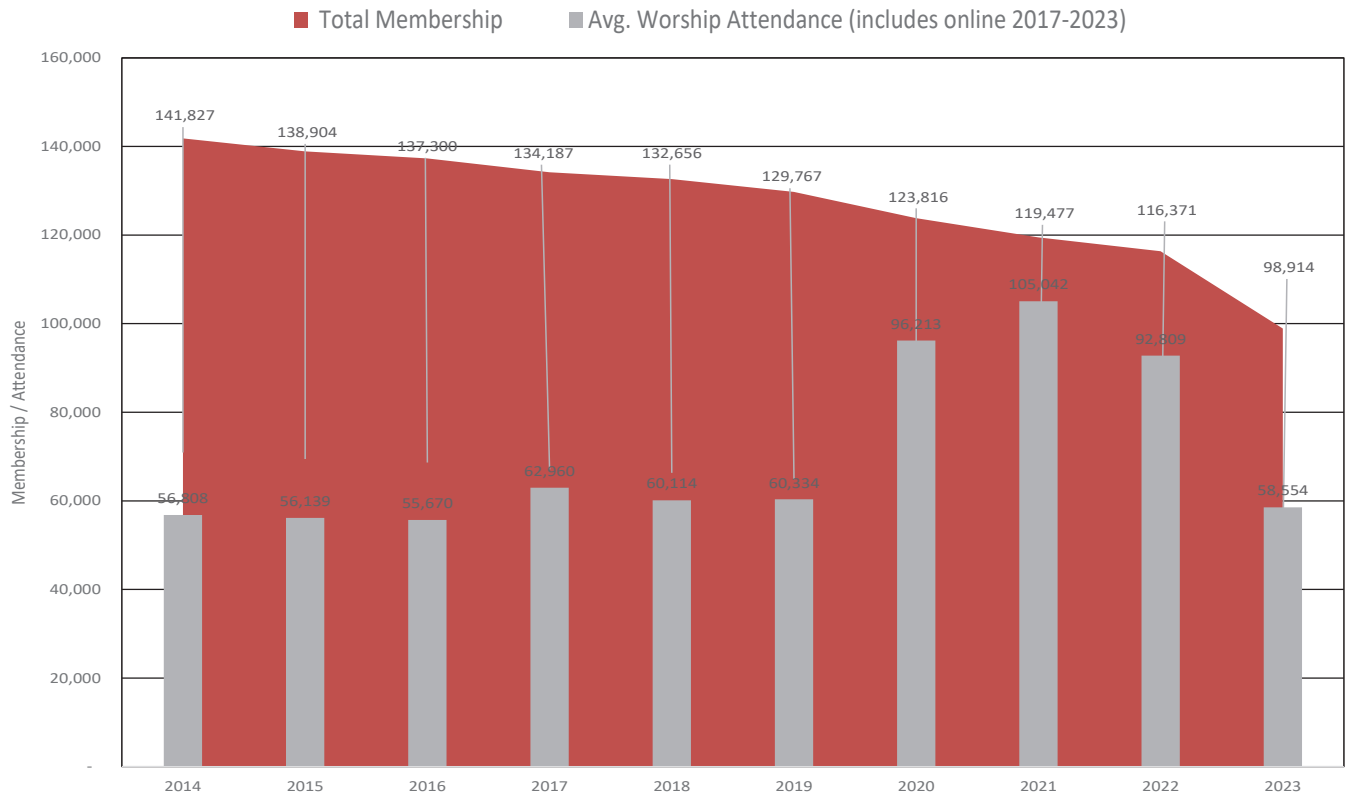
Overall, the conference remains in a very strong financial position. The conference carries a relatively low level of debt in relationship to its assets. The conference currently maintains a little over six months of reserves. A best practice for NFP organizations is to carry 3-6 months of operating reserves. The pensions remain fully funded on a funding basis. Our board chairs, conference directors, and staff members have worked very hard the past few years to streamline tasks, share personnel and resources. The North Texas Conference is in a good position as it is moving towards unification. More details regarding next steps for the 2025 budget can be found in the Unification Plan.

Report of Conference Statistician

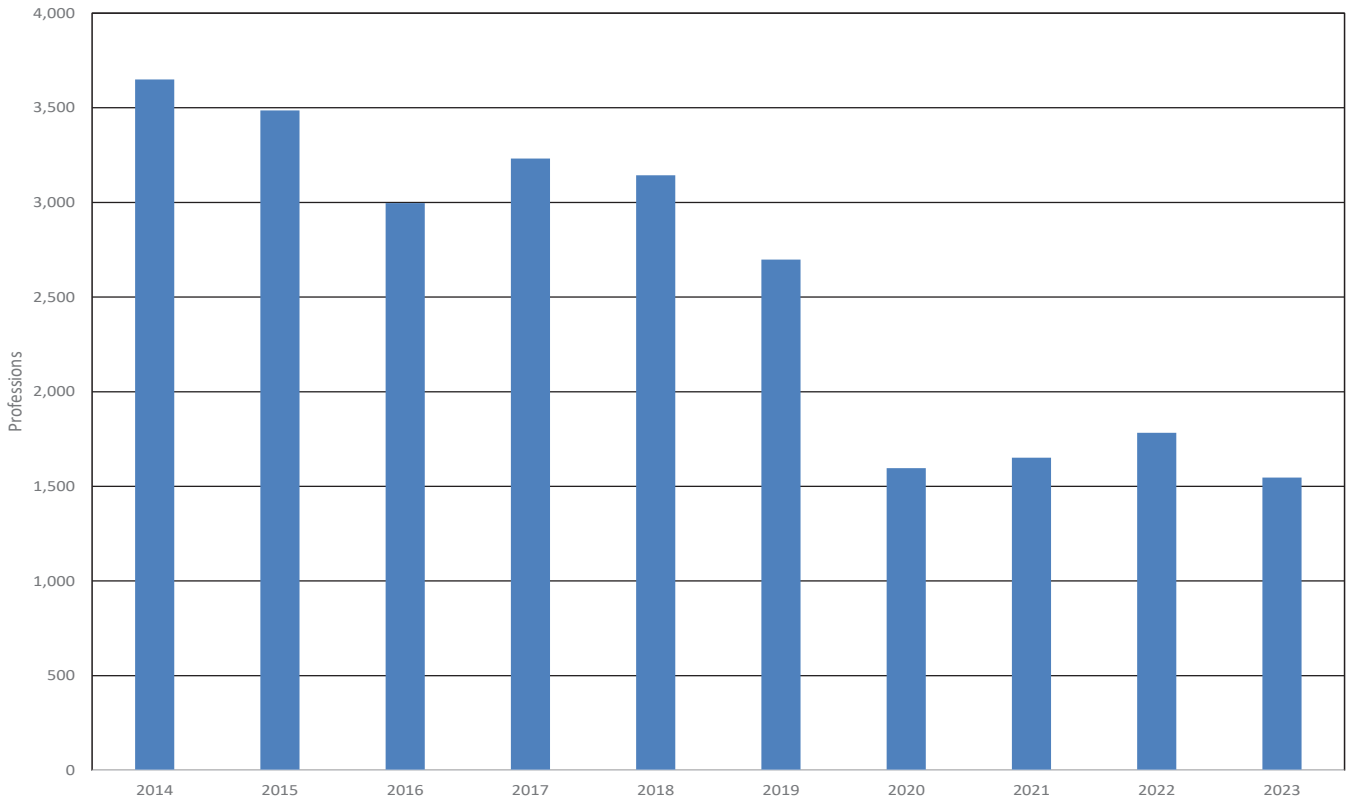
2023 STATISTICS AT-A-GLANCE

Total Membership	98,914
Average Attendance	27,261
Average Attendance Online	31,293
Sunday School Attendance	12,561
Assets (Property and Liquid)	\$1,404,403,909
Debt	\$101,475,205
Programs/Operations	\$34,771,518
Clergy Costs	\$25,837,704
Staff Costs	\$40,090,746
Churches (reporting stats)	274
1000+ Churches (Membership)	20
999-500 Churches (Membership)	15
499-250 Churches (Membership)	28
249-0 Churches (Membership)	211
<i>includes 66 closed and disaffiliated churches</i>	

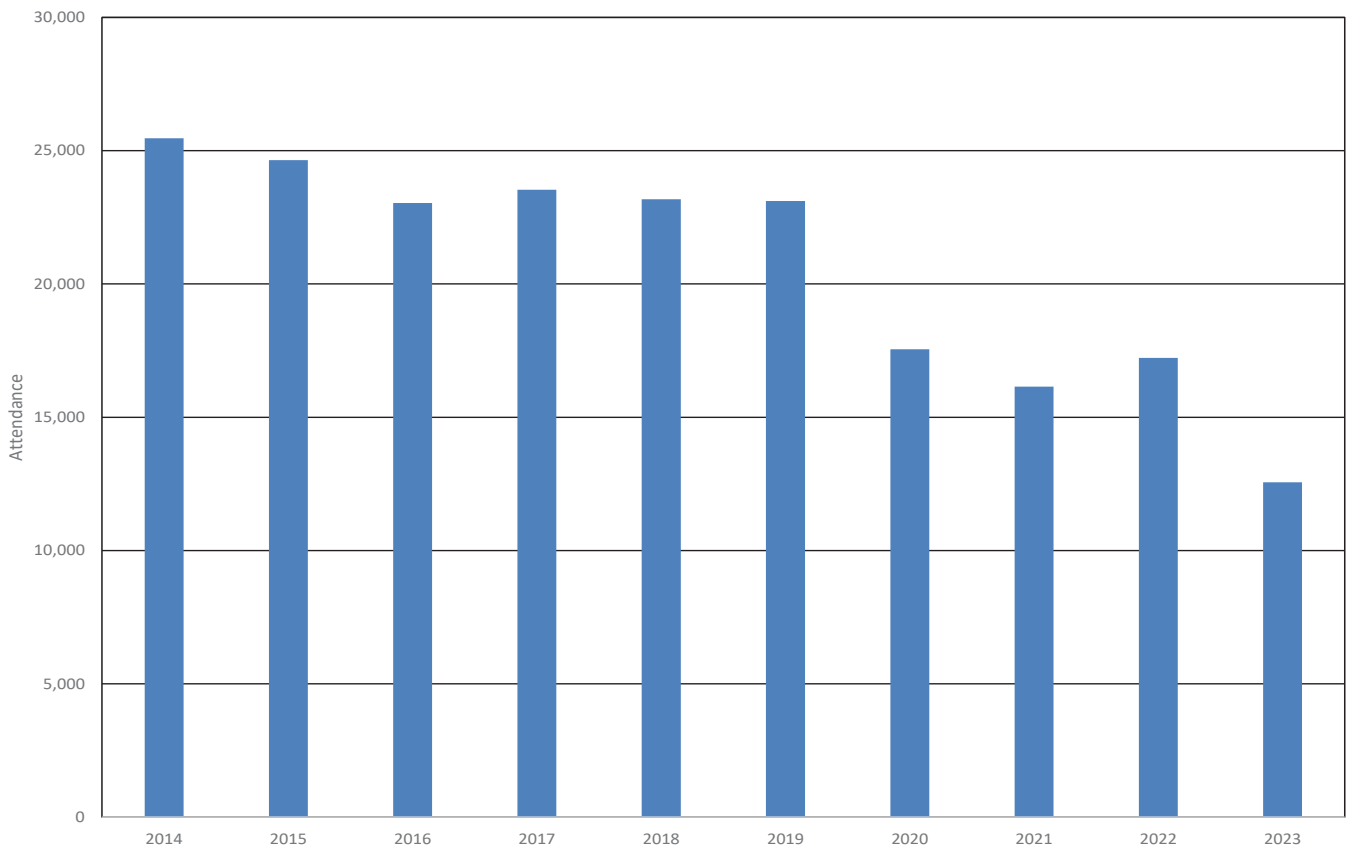
Total Conference Membership & Average Worship Attendance



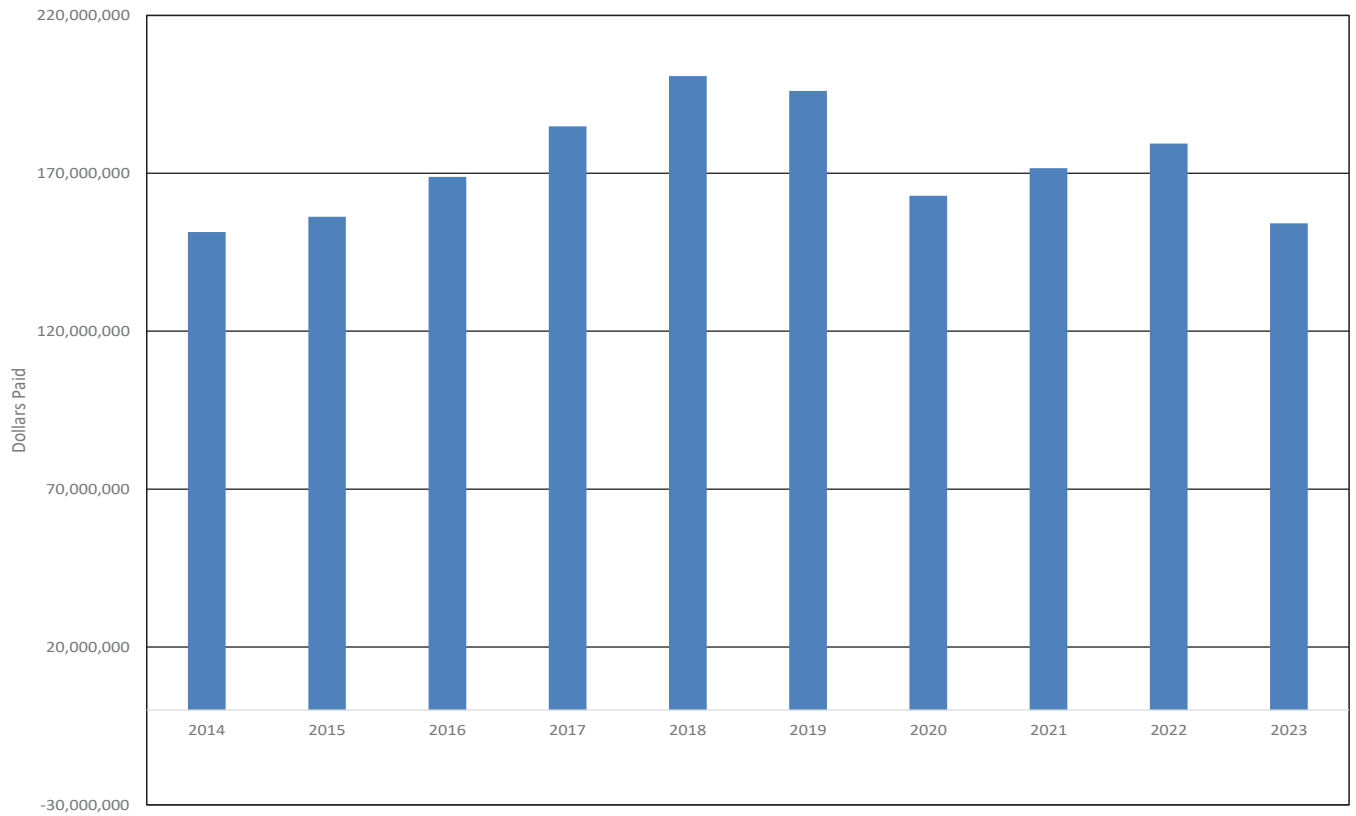
Professions of Faith



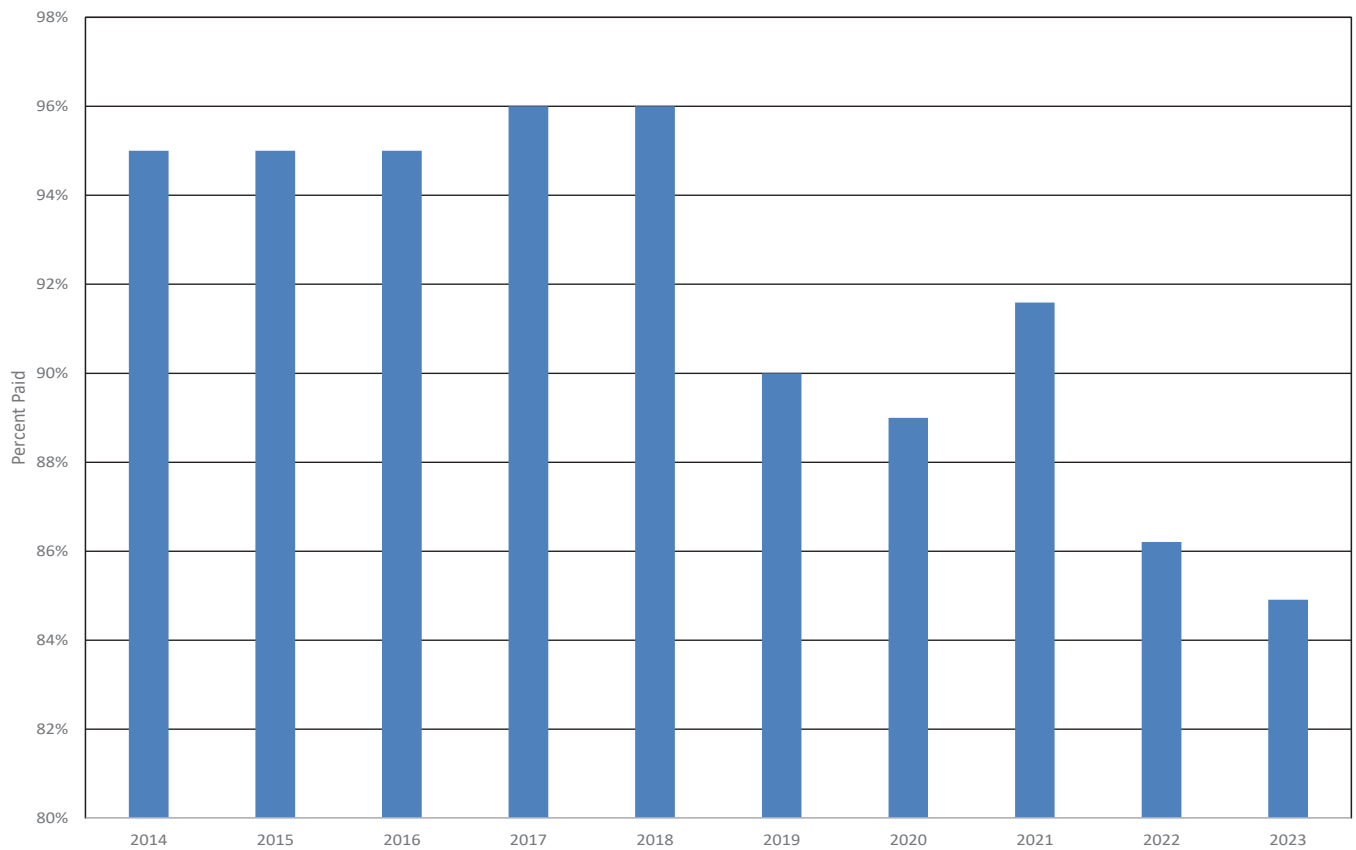
Sunday School Attendance



Grand Total Paid



Apportionment Percentage



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

REMITTANCES

	2021	2022	2023
	RECEIPTS	RECEIPTS	RECEIPTS
APPORTIONMENTS			
World Service	1,168,885	1,075,688	1,049,423
Ministerial Education	394,795	363,317	407,997
Black College Fund	157,480	144,924	141,386
Africa University Fund	35,244	32,434	31,642
Interdenominational Cooperation Fund	30,876	28,414	27,720
General Administration Fund	138,795	127,729	124,610
Episcopal Fund	582,067	582,067	582,067
Lydia Patterson Institute	64,639	59,485	58,033
Jurisdictional Administration Fund	39,830	36,654	35,759
Leadership Development	1,647,738	1,520,415	1,830,432
Center for Church Development	1,062,876	979,223	760,541
Center for Missional Outreach	651,625	599,670	521,911
Center for Connectional Resources	1,271,288	1,182,249	1,109,596
Area and Conference Administration	533,942	491,370	470,615
Conference Benefits	1,533,200	1,561,242	1,587,730
District Superintendents Fund	606,480	606,480	615,691
District Administration Fund	<u>618,803</u>	<u>600,917</u>	<u>626,299</u>
TOTAL APPORTIONMENTS	10,538,562	9,992,279	9,981,452

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

REMITTANCES

	2021 RECEIPTS	2022 RECEIPTS	2023 RECEIPTS
TARGETED CAUSES			
Second Mile Apportionment Fund	23,068	3,798	35,666
GENERAL ADVANCE SPECIALS			
UMCOR			
UMCOR Undesignated Gifts	50,350	46,205	41,592
UMCOR Relief Supplies	0	0	100
UMCOR Domestic Disaster Response	45,840	59,982	58,342
UMCOR International Disaster Response	29,824	338,409	95,091
UMCOR Global Health	11,694	0	200
UMCOR Missionaries Around the World	0	0	0
UMCOR Sustainable Development	<u>1,100</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total UMCOR	138,809	444,597	195,325
WORLD MISSIONS			
Regional Africa	8,300	5,000	4,600
Cambodia	0	5,000	5,117
Cameroon	0	0	0
Congo	100	850	0
Europe	0	0	0
Heifer International Fill the Ark	145	0	0
Russia	0	0	0
Poland	0	0	0
Latin America and the Caribbean	8,236	105,712	5,085
Vietnam	0	0	0
Global Migration	0	0	0
Evangelism & Church Revitalization	0	0	2,000
Haiti Advance Project	<u>1,830</u>	<u>5,329</u>	<u>3,076</u>
Total World Missions	18,611	121,891	19,878
TOTAL GENERAL ADVANCE SPECIALS	157,420	566,487	215,203
OTHER ADVANCE SPECIALS			
Africa University Special Gifts	500	300	0
Black College Fund	<u>500</u>	<u>300</u>	<u>0</u>
Total Other Advance Specials	1,000	600	0
YOUTH SERVICE FUND	0	0	0

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

REMITTANCES

	2021 RECEIPTS	2022 RECEIPTS	2023 RECEIPTS
GENERAL CONFERENCE OFFERINGS			
UMCOR Sunday (One Great Hour)	11,401	13,822	13,601
World Communion	6,357	6,275	7,235
UM Student Day	420	605	1,279
Human Relations Day	250	463	923
Peace With Justice	1,126	848	2,447
Native American Ministries	<u>140</u>	<u>802</u>	<u>3,103</u>
TOTAL GENERAL CONFERENCE OFFERINGS	19,694	22,815	28,588
OTHER CONFERENCE BENEVOLENCES	330,440	115,135	346,485
TOTAL NON-APPORTIONED FUNDS	531,622	705,037	1,318,145
TOTAL APPORTIONED FUNDS	10,538,562	9,992,279	9,775,244
TOTAL ALL CAUSES	11,070,184	10,697,316	11,093,389

North Texas Conference of The United Methodist Church
Statement of Financial Position (Unaudited)
December 31, 2023

	2023	2022
Assets		
Current Assets		
Cash - Conference	\$ 10,294,560	\$ 8,042,139
Accounts Receivable	2,688,833	2,356,891
Prepaid Expenses	11,637	265,340
Investments	49,518,528	44,205,504
Total Current Assets	62,513,558	54,869,874
Other Assets		
Note receivable	392,678	96,995
Fixed assets, net of depreciation	4,952,387	4,554,434
Land and Bldgs held for resale	13,261,045	10,156,363
Investments	2,254,138	2,044,860
Total Other Assets	20,860,248	16,852,652
Total Assets	83,373,806	71,722,526
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
Current portion of notes payable	200,113	196,546
Current portion of deferred obligations	480,195	
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	2,297,788	1,219,181
Current year postretirement benefits obligation	405,344	347,917
Total Current Liabilities	3,383,440	1,763,644
Non-current Liabilities		
Notes payable, non-current portion	8,502,101	6,718,649
Deferred obligations	459,224	459,224
Long term postretirement benefits obligation	6,762,968	6,398,923
Total Non-current Liabilities	15,724,293	13,576,796
Total Liabilities	19,107,733	15,340,440
Net Assets		
Net Assets Without Donor Restriction		
Operating Reserves	6,563,749	6,145,590
Board Designated Reserves	48,583,234	42,915,432
BOD Designated Reserves	647,723	641,470
Real and Personal Property Reserves	4,723,644	3,366,299
Conference Managed Reserves	(181,929)	212,449
Total Net Assets Without Donor Restriction	60,336,421	53,281,240
Net Assets With Donor Restrictions		
Temporarily Restricted	3,106,641	2,286,778
Permanently Restricted	823,012	814,068
Total Net Assets With Donor Restrictions	3,929,653	3,100,846
Total Net Assets	64,266,074	56,382,086
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$ 83,373,807	\$ 71,722,526

**North Texas Conference of The United Methodist Church
Statement of Financial Activities (Unaudited)
For the Year Ended December 31, 2023**

	2023	2022
Changes in net assets without donor restrictions		
Revenues		
Revenues without donor restrictions		
Apportionment receipts	\$9,775,244	\$9,994,379
Unrestricted donations and grants	\$88,490	\$85,470
Disaffiliation revenues	\$1,413,839	-
Program & Event Fees	\$1,750,416	\$1,612,587
Investment income (loss)	\$5,151,193	(\$7,017,581)
Services (health, pension, property)	\$18,211,407	\$22,799,979
Other	\$885,756	\$1,276,802
Receipts of legacy church facilities	\$4,078,590	\$394,581
Total Revenues without donor restrictions	<u>\$41,354,935</u>	<u>\$29,146,217</u>
Total Revenues	<u>\$41,354,935</u>	<u>\$29,146,217</u>
Expenses		
Staff	\$3,308,048	\$3,108,983
Employee benefits	\$7,574,457	\$9,671,944
Travel & meetings	\$286,337	\$236,477
Professional & contract	\$808,960	\$547,659
Supplies	\$10,479,204	\$15,167,987
Training & Continuing Education	\$838,867	\$484,163
Grants/benevolence	\$3,090,416	\$2,443,337
Facilities & occupancy	\$571,796	\$537,569
Property insurance	\$8,186,531	\$5,127,670
Depreciation	\$357,208	\$314,496
Total Expenses	<u>\$35,501,826</u>	<u>\$37,640,285</u>
Other changes		
Change in postretirement benefits obligation	(\$254,257)	\$2,780,410
Total Other changes	<u>(\$254,257)</u>	<u>\$2,780,410</u>
Total Changes in net assets without donor restrictions	<u>\$5,598,853</u>	<u>(\$5,713,658)</u>
Changes in net assets with donor restrictions		
Contributions for programs	\$2,012,045	\$573,559
Investment return, net	\$273,088	(\$391,063)
Total Changes in net assets with donor restrictions	<u>\$2,285,133</u>	<u>\$182,496</u>
Change in total net assets	<u>\$7,883,986</u>	<u>(\$5,531,162)</u>
Net assets at beginning of year	<u>\$56,382,086</u>	<u>61,913,248</u>
Net assets at end of year	<u>\$ 64,266,072</u>	<u>\$ 56,382,086</u>

**North Texas Conference of The United Methodist Church
Statement of Functional Expenses (Unaudited)
For the Year Ended December 31, 2023**

<u>Natural Classification</u>	<u>Programs</u>						<u>Support</u>	
	<u>Program</u>	<u>Missions</u>	<u>Supervisory</u>	<u>Services</u>	<u>Subsidiaries</u>	<u>Programs subtotal</u>	<u>General & Admin</u>	<u>Total</u>
Staff	\$ 561,268	\$ 530,079	\$ 470,410	\$ 243,908	\$ 537,311	\$ 2,342,975	\$ 965,073	\$ 3,308,048
Employee Benefits	197,885	93,691	69,236	6,885,278	151,335	7,397,425	177,032	7,574,457
Travel & Meetings	123,294	16,702	71,830	7,113	17,551	236,490	49,847	286,337
Facility Occupancy	95,283	-	58	39,610	113,514	248,464	560,496	808,960
Property Insurance	13,039	-	-	10,420,879	35,508	10,469,425	9,779	10,479,204
Professional Fees & Contract	541,999	30,258	-	46,481	1,961	620,699	218,168	838,867
Supplies	1,220,268	394,132	4,473	716,860	594,459	2,930,193	160,224	3,090,416
Training & Continuing Education	548,607	11,852	-	-	11,247	571,706	90	571,796
Grants/Benevolence	3,958,058	3,490,854	-	370,654	75,933	7,895,498	291,034	8,186,531
Depreciation	64,742	-	-	-	184,459	249,202	108,007	357,208
Total Expenses	\$ 7,324,442	\$ 4,567,567	\$ 616,007	\$ 18,730,781	\$ 1,723,279	\$ 32,962,077	\$ 2,539,749	\$ 35,501,826

North Texas Conference of The United Methodist Church
Designated Fund Summary - Condensed (Unaudited)
December 31, 2023

	<u>Opening Balance</u>	<u>YTD Receipts</u>	<u>YTD Disbursements</u>	<u>YTD Transfers & Adjustments</u>	<u>Ending Balance</u>
Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions					
Operating Reserves					
Center for Church Development	\$1,989,492	\$928,654	\$757,817	\$5,000	\$2,155,329
Center for Leadership Development	\$461,094	\$1,383,113	\$1,611,990	\$18,862	\$213,354
Center for Missional Outreach	\$664,335	\$565,125	\$521,911	\$0	\$707,550
Center for Connectional Resources	\$1,822,674	\$2,613,804	\$2,107,187	\$126,125	\$2,203,166
Episcopal NTC Area Funds	\$261,839	\$53,928	\$84,481	\$0	\$231,286
Communications Office Operations	\$275,362	\$385,433	\$387,369	\$0	\$273,426
District Superintendent Fund Operations	\$358,755	\$617,689	\$648,714	\$0	\$327,731
East District	\$135,572	\$169,756	\$183,293	\$0	\$122,034
Metro District	\$94,631	\$197,906	\$298,664	(\$21,517)	\$15,390
North Central District	\$56,966	\$170,104	\$174,400	\$0	\$52,670
Northwest District	\$290,961	\$119,814	\$133,470	\$15,495	\$261,810
Total Operating Reserves	\$6,411,681	\$7,205,326	\$6,909,295	\$143,965	\$6,563,747
Board Designated Reserves					
Center for Leadership Development	\$268,037	\$83,438	\$21,055	\$132,276	\$198,144
Center for Missional Outreach	\$78,509	\$0	\$67,174	\$0	\$11,335
Center for Connectional Resources	\$360,379	\$67,256	\$76,471	\$0	\$351,165
Episcopal Reserves	\$363	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$363
DS Reserves	\$25,561	\$6,000	\$0	\$0	\$31,561
Conference Benefits - Health Insurance	\$2,189,218	\$9,055,787	\$7,414,599	\$0	\$3,830,405
Conference Benefits - Scholarships	\$227,169	\$0	\$547	\$0	\$226,622
Retiree Benefits Reserves	\$29,049,337	\$4,881,252	\$523,639	\$0	\$33,406,950
New Church Start Reserves	\$4,104,027	\$310,000	\$468,849	\$0	\$3,945,178
New Church Starts - East District	\$58,810	\$0	\$58,810	\$0	\$0
New Church Starts - North Central District	\$146,984	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$146,984
Legacy Property Held for Sale	\$3,730,869	\$2,769,294	\$3,234,502	(\$5,000)	\$3,270,661
District Reserves	\$442,016	\$176,374	\$61	\$21,517	\$596,812
Property Insurance Reserves	\$2,228,448	\$10,744,930	\$10,412,026	\$0	\$2,561,353
Camping Reserves	\$5,707	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$5,707
Total Board Designated Reserves	\$42,915,432	\$28,094,331	\$22,277,731	\$148,793	\$48,583,239
BOD Designated Reserves					
MEF Reserves	\$258,927	\$136,955	\$142,162	\$0	\$253,720
GCFA Episcopal Office Reserves	\$4,024	\$78,490	\$67,031	\$0	\$15,484
Urban Ministries Reserves	\$378,519	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$378,519
Total BOD Designated Reserves	\$641,470	\$215,445	\$209,193	\$0	\$647,723
Fixed Assets Reserves					
Conference Office	\$269,563	\$3,951,205	\$2,631,075	(\$126,125)	\$1,715,819
Parsonages	\$1,867,402	\$2,368,112	\$2,321,446	(\$15,495)	\$1,929,563
Camps	\$1,229,334	\$0	\$151,073	\$0	\$1,078,261
Total Fixed Assets Reserves	\$3,366,299	\$6,319,318	\$5,103,593	(\$141,620)	\$4,723,644

	<u>Opening Balance</u>	<u>YTD Receipts</u>	<u>YTD Disbursements</u>	<u>YTD Transfers & Adjustments</u>	<u>Ending Balance</u>
NTC Associated Entities - Held in Trust					
NTC Clergy & Lay Organizations	\$46,287	\$6,283	\$8,016	\$0	\$44,554
Wesley Foundations	\$166,937	(\$87,116)	\$170,793	(\$151,138)	\$60,166
Camping Reserves	(\$266,868)	\$1,521,916	\$1,541,699	\$0	(\$286,651)
Total NTC Associated Entities - Held in Trust	(\$53,644)	\$1,441,082	\$1,720,508	(\$151,138)	(\$181,931)
Total Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions	\$53,281,239	\$43,275,503	\$36,220,320	\$0	\$60,336,421
Net Assets With Donor Restrictions					
Donor Designated Reserves					
Seek Scholarship Reserves	\$18,595	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$18,595
A Time for Children	\$9,050	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$9,050
North Texas Disaster Relief Reserves	\$418,293	\$615,481	\$1,027,144	\$0	\$6,630
CMO Reserves	\$59,010	\$146,564	\$204,903	\$0	\$671
Seminary Assistance Reserves	\$150,000	\$0	\$150,000	\$0	\$0
Communications Reserves	\$1,795	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,795
Perkins Funds for Retiree Assistance	\$1,216,006	\$264,144	\$63,810	\$0	\$1,416,339
Johnny Irish NW District Reserves	\$35,662	\$0	\$2,832	\$0	\$32,831
Bridgeport Playground Reserves	\$7,149	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$7,149
CUT Trust Reserves	\$268,441	\$0	\$644	\$0	\$267,797
Superannuate Required Reserves	\$89,338	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$89,338
Nannie Bean Earnings	\$13,438	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$13,438
CCD Donor Restricted Grant	\$0	\$1,250,000	\$6,994	\$0	\$1,243,006
Total Donor Designated Reserves	\$2,286,778	\$2,276,189	\$1,456,326	\$0	\$3,106,641
Permanently Restricted Endowment Corpus					
CMO Nannie Findlay Bean Trust	\$64,068	\$8,944	\$0	\$0	\$73,012
Reserves-Perkins Fund	\$750,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$750,000
Total Permanently Restricted Endowment Corpus	\$814,068	\$8,944	\$0	\$0	\$823,012
Total Net Assets With Donor Restrictions	\$3,100,846	\$2,285,133	\$1,456,326	\$0	\$3,929,653
Total Net Asset	\$56,382,085	\$45,560,636	\$37,676,647	\$0	\$64,266,074

2024 NTC CONNECTIONAL REPORTS

BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY (BUSTH)



Boston University School of Theology

Your partnership, prayers, and support are a cherished gift as BUSTH seeks to serve the church and the world! In a year like 2023, BUSTH's commitments to equip transformational leaders for peace and justice are all the more necessary and significant. We are hopeful and vigilant in our continued partnership with you.

NEWS

- **Students:** Our academic year 2023-24 entering class was among our most diverse, with 86 new students enrolling, 34% of whom are international students.
- **Faculty:** In September we welcomed visiting [faculty member](#) David Anderson Hooker, Visiting Associate Professor of Religion and Conflict Transformation. Two new faculty searches are underway—an Assistant Professor of Religion and Society and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Professor of Religion and Black Studies.
- **Expanding Online Programming:** BUSTH's first fully online master's degree—the Master of Religion and Public Leadership (MARPL)—continues to expand after welcoming its first students in fall 2022. MARPL seeks students who wish to be prepared for leadership roles that creatively engage the challenges of public life. Learn more at bu.edu/sth/marpl.
- **Faculty Research:** Associate Dean Cristian De La Rosa received a Lilly Parenting Grant for \$1.25 million. Our faculty members published more than 75 books, scholarly articles, op-eds, and book reviews during 2023. Many were interviewed by media publications for their work on academics and activism, fat liberation, caring for creation, responding to congregational trauma, and the spread of Christianity in Africa. Selected stories can be found at bu.edu/sth/research/faculty-research/.
- **Scholarships:** We continue to offer free tuition to UMC-registered candidates for ordained ministry and leadership fellowships that support students in ethnic, gender, and sexuality studies. New funds include the Research & Teaching Fund and Affirmation & Empowerment Fund. We have newly endowed funds for DEI, Theology & the Arts, and Doctor of Ministry.
- **Accreditation and Curriculum:** BUSTH received a renewed full and unqualified listing by the University Senate of the United Methodist Church. BUSTH is concluding a curriculum review for the MDiv and MTS programs which will launch in fall 2024.
- **Online Lifelong Learning:** BUSTH offers online courses for professional and spiritual enrichment of religious leaders. Recent offerings include “Sustaining Spirits while Empires Crumble” and “Preaching Mark with Different Voices.” To learn more, visit bu.edu/sth/oll.
- **Development:** Recent accomplishments include endowing the Faith and Ecological Justice Fund, and new funding for student scholarships and academic programs.

COMMITMENT TO JUSTICE and COMPASSION:

- BUSTH's Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion offers webinars on timely inclusion efforts, such as “[Increasing Participation of Students of Underrepresented Backgrounds](#).”
- This year's [Lowell Lecture](#) topics explore the role and responses of theological education for the challenges of today with lectures from Rev. Dr. Ted Smith (fall) and Dr. Keri Day (spring).
- Work continues to improve accessibility, sustainability, and responsible investing as written in our 2030 Strategic Plan. BUSTH is the first certified Green School at BU and is active in the Green Seminary Initiative.

With faith and gratitude, G. Sujin Pak, Dean

CC YOUNG Senior Living *Serving Seniors since 1922*

Greetings to our friends at the United Methodist Conference! The past year has been a busy one - filled with gratitude and reflection.

As we reflect, it becomes clear how much our CC Young campus has transformed throughout the past 17 years beginning in 2007 with the addition of The Point, followed in 2011 by The Overlook, Central Park in 2014, The Pavilion in 2015, and in 2020, the award-winning Vista. It is hard to believe that as recently as 2010, one of our original Blanton Gardens buildings (“B”) was still standing!

Through all the growth and transition, we have not wavered from our commitment to enhancing the quality of life for all we serve while also fostering a reputation for stellar care and commitment to excellence for serving our residents, families, staff, and the community at large.

Our efforts have been noticed!

- 2024 The Point – Awarded Excellence in Innovation Award by LeadingAge Texas
- 2024 CC Young Private Care Provider-Employer of Choice by Best of Home Care
- 2024 *D Magazine* Award Excellence in Nursing Award featuring Demetria King
- The Vista - National awards and acknowledgements:
 - 2020 Senior Housing News – Skilled Nursing/Post Acute Category
 - 2020 EFA Design Showcase – Finalist
 - 2020 Aurora – Best Service Enriched Senior Center
 - 2020 Gold Nugget Award of Merit
 - 2019 AIA Design for Aging Review – Special Recognition
 - 2016 EFA Design Showcase – Unbuilt Published Project

With these recognitions and our 100+ years of existence, CC Young is firmly established as an expert in the field of senior living. The campus’ current census is at record highs in virtually all levels of service. As of this writing, our Independent Living residences are full and have a wait list of 47. Similarly, Skilled Nursing and Memory Support are 100 percent full also with wait lists. And in 2023, Point membership reached a record high at 188. Currently, the focus is on Assisted Living in both The Hillside and Vista. Knowing Assisted Living is often need driven, we have found that marketing efforts are more successful when intimate and personal. As such, this year we are focusing on meeting with area churches and civic groups to educate about the options in senior living and answer questions. If you belong to a Sunday School group, Circle, or other civic organization and would like a presentation on “Senior Living 101,” please contact Abby Brown at abrown@ccyoung.org and we will be happy to accommodate you!

Another component of our CC Young strategic and master plan is to build a fourth Independent Living residence to meet the market’s demand and bolster all service levels as our residents move through the continuum of care. The Terraces will have 140 residences and offer stunning views of White Rock Lake. Conversations are commencing again soon to revisit feasibility and timeline.

Our strategic and master plan for the next few years is to raise awareness and availability of our Home Healthcare, Private Care, and Hospice services for individuals beyond the CC Young campus and grow these lines of care. Doing so assures that CC Young is serving the community outside our walls in the 13 North Texas counties in which we are licensed.

Without a doubt, The Vista and other accolades have reinforced our commitment to excellence in serving older adults. Our theme for residents and staff this year is “Go for the Gold” and reach for whole person wellness in body, mind, and spirit! With this mindset, we will also continue to sprinkle in a little joy along the way.

We invite you to visit if you have not been on campus in the last few years!

About CC Young Senior Living

For more than 100 years, CC Young has been serving senior adults. The community is nestled in the heart of East Dallas on a lush 20-acre campus across from White Rock Lake. CC Young is a forward-thinking, nonprofit Continuing Care Retirement Community with a long history of excellence. Known for stellar services, CC Young holds a 5-Star overall Quality Rating from the Centers of Medicare Services in skilled nursing care, home health and hospice. CC Young provides opportunities for Independent Living, Assisted Living, Memory Support, Long-Term Care, Respite Care, Short-Term Rehabilitation, Aquatics and Outpatient Therapy and Hospice General Inpatient services. The Community Services Program offers Home Healthcare, Hospice and Palliative Care, as well as Private Duty Care on- and off-campus. Its services are licensed in 13 counties throughout North Texas. The Vista's opening in 2020 launched a new era of healthcare for residents and surrounding community members. Coming later, The Terraces will be the newest Independent Living residence featuring views of White Rock Lake. In addition, The Point & Pavilion, located in the heart of the campus, offers creative, educational, recreational, fitness and spiritual opportunities for residents and the public. To schedule a tour or learn more, call 214-258-4000 or visit www.ccyoung.org.

DREW UNIVERSITY THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL

Drew University Theological School educates and mentors pastors, preachers, deacons, activists, teachers, thought leaders, and change agents for ministry and service in the church and society. Drew Theological School is diverse in theology, vocations, age, as well as racial, ethnic, national, and international identities. Many Drew students are just beginning their ministry, while others come to graduate theological education with prior ministry experience. The latter reflects a growing trend among all theological schools in the United States and Canada. Drew holds in-person classes in Madison, New Jersey, several classes meet exclusively online, while other meet in hybrid fashion, i.e., partially online, partially in-person. This is also the case with chapel worship which originates in Seminary Hall, but also is live streamed so that students around the world participate. Drew Theological School is a global seminary with a global student population serving the worldwide church.

In Fall 2023 Drew Theological School welcomed 104 new students in all degree programs, with total student enrollment (by head count) growing from 364 students in Fall 2021 to 407 in Fall 2023 semester. Enrollment of international students at Drew increased from 120 students in Fall 2021 to 169 students in Fall 2023. This number includes students who are studying full-time in the U.S.A. on a student Visa, students who are studying online from their home country, and students in the South Korean Cohort of the Doctor of Ministry program.

Drew's interdisciplinary degree programs provide real-world apprenticeships, promotes adaptive leadership skills, and encourages innovation through team-taught core courses as well as a variety of electives that integrate theological disciplines and faith practices. The Drew faculty's shared values are infused across all aspects of the teaching and learning: 1) a commitment to anti-racism; 2) gender and sexual-identity equality; 3) eco-sustainability and environmental justice; and 4) interfaith understanding and cooperation. Drew Theological School has an increase in United Methodist students, additionally, Drew has many United Methodist Global Fellows pursuing further education for ministry. UMC graduates are serving in conferences across the United States, and especially within our nearby regional United Methodist conferences of Greater New Jersey, Eastern Pennsylvania, and New York Annual Conference. For more information, go to drew.edu/theological-school/.

Rev. Edwin David Aponte, PhD, ThD (honorary) Dean and Professor of Religion & Culture

DUKE DIVINITY SCHOOL

Duke Divinity School can attest to the work of God’s Spirit to usher us into a season of hope and continued faithfulness to the mission and calling to serve the church, academy, and the world. In 2023, the Duke University president and provost appointed Dean Edgardo Colón-Emeric for a full five-year term.

In the next three years, we will celebrate a number of centennial milestones: Duke University and The Duke Endowment (2024), the 17th centennial of the Council of Nicaea (2025), and Duke Divinity School (2026). As a foretaste of those occasions to reflect and celebrate, we have had two important milestone celebrations in 2023. The Office of Black Church Studies (OBCS) commemorated its 50th anniversary. The Rev. Dr. Cynthia Hale (D’79) received Duke University’s Distinguished Alumni Award in recognition of her outstanding contributions in ministry and service. The Hispanic House of Studies (HHS) celebrated its quinceañera (15th anniversary). HHS was created by the Divinity School, with support from The Duke Endowment, to support the formation of ministers to Hispanic/Latinx congregations and communities in the North Carolina and Western North Carolina Annual Conferences and beyond. These efforts extend throughout our academic and ministerial programs. For instance, we now offer the “Rediscovering the Heart of Methodism” course in Spanish on Divinity+.

This fall, we welcomed 215 entering students from 35 different states and 16 other countries. The Master of Divinity program gained 104 new students, with 54 residential students and 50 in the hybrid program. The Master of Arts in Christian Practice enrolled 13 new students; the Doctor of Ministry, 22; Master of Theology, 11; Master of Theological Studies, 29; the Doctor of Theology welcomed five new students to campus, and five special students enrolled. The Certificate in Theology and Health Care welcomed 11 residential students to campus and 15 in the hybrid program. Across all degree programs at the Divinity School, 31 percent of the incoming class identified as a race or ethnicity other than white.

Duke Divinity School continues to invest in pathways to support Methodist leadership and pastoral formation. Divinity+ launched the Church Administration series focused on developing practical skills for church leaders. More than 1,000 learners have enrolled in the first two courses, “Theology and Time Management” and “Strategic Management.” We inaugurated the Certificate in Chaplaincy, designed to prepare students to provide spiritual care in a variety of settings such as hospitals, hospice, prisons, higher education, and the military. The certificate can be earned as part of the residential M.Div., Th.M., and M.T.S. degree programs.

The school has also welcomed new leaders who bring their gifts to the work of advancing the mission to serve Christ and the church. The Office of Black Church Studies is led by the Rev. Dr. Eric Lewis Williams (D’05), assistant professor of theology and Black Church Studies; and the Anglican Episcopal House of Studies has named the Very Rev. Timothy Kimbrough (D’83), Jack and Barbara Bovender Professor of the Practice of Anglican Studies. Key members who have joined our staff team include Anita Lumpkin, executive director of enrollment management; and the Rev. Sarah Belles, a Duke Divinity alumna and ordained elder in full connection with the Western North Carolina Annual Conference, as the director of student life.

With gratitude to funding from the Lilly Endowment, the Divinity School has launched the Transformative Preaching Lab to prepare creative, culturally competent preachers who can reach audiences in effective and engaging ways. It will expand preaching training for students in the hybrid M.Div. program with new courses and preaching laboratories and new capacities to explore and engage digital tools for community worship and preaching. The Transformative Preaching Lab also provides new opportunities for formation in trauma-informed preaching and preaching in immigrant communities.

The Theology, Medicine, and Culture initiative has launched the Mental Health Track for Christian mental health practitioners as part of its Certificate in Theology and Health Care. This hybrid certificate program offers spiritual and theological formation for mental health clinicians in a range of disciplines. The research and programming from

Duke Divinity initiatives, including Theology, Medicine, and Culture; Duke Initiatives in Theology and the Arts; Leadership Education at Duke Divinity; and Thriving Rural Communities, continue to provide numerous opportunities to bear witness to God's creativity, compassion, and care for communities and congregations.

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

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

GAMMON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Gammon Theological Seminary is the Interdenominational Theological Center's United Methodist constituent member in Atlanta, Georgia. The Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC) is a Christian Africentric ecumenical consortium of seminaries and fellowships that educate students to commit to practicing justice and peace through a liberating and transforming spirituality to become leaders in the church and local/global communities. Gammon was founded in 1883, bearing the name of the Rev. Elijah H. Gammon, a generous clergyman, businessman, and philanthropist. Rev. Elijah H. Gammon invested and endowed the founding of Gammon Seminary in partnership with Bishop Henry Warren and the Freedman's Aid Society. Gammon has educated Black Clergy for almost 140 years, with graduates serving every level of the church, including Bishops, Superintendents, General church leaders, Conference staff, and Clergy in every jurisdiction. Gammon/ITC offers the following degree programs: the Master of Divinity, the Master of Arts in Religion and Education, and the Doctor of Ministry. The support given to The United Methodist Ministerial Education Fund by United Methodist Conferences continues to enable Gammon students to be grounded in the Wesleyan tradition of theological education.

Our 17th President/Dean, Rev. Dr. Candace M Lewis, and the Gammon staff team continue to lead innovatively in chartering a "Brand New Day" for Gammon's recruitment, retention, research and resources, fund development, and scholarship endowments in her first two years of service.

Our new initiatives and celebrations this year, 2023 – 2024, at Gammon, include:

- In May 2023, Gammon held our 1st Annual Student Scholarship Fundraiser Golf Tournament, receiving \$70,000 in donations to assist students with their tuition, which also helped Gammon build more relationships and partnerships.
- In June 2023, The Rev. Walter H. McKelvey Endowed Scholarship Fund was launched by Dr. Loretta F. McKelvey (wife of the late Rev. McKelvey) and Dr. Walter Kimbrough with a \$50,000.00 matching gift in partnership with the South Carolina United Methodist Foundation.
- In June 2023, The Florida Conference raised and donated over \$ 60,000.00 to the Rev. Geraldine McClellan Endowed Scholarship Fund, which is now fully endowed by the Florida United Methodist Foundation.
- In July 2023 and December 2023, Gammon hosted the Ebony Exploration Event for 75 young adults under 35, increasing participation and forming strategic partnerships with external organizations to enhance the program's reach and impact.
- In December 2023, we celebrated our 140th Founders Day Event/Pastors and Leaders Conference, with over two hundred persons attending workshops (in person and virtual) and our Scholarship Gala Dinner, hosted at IMPACT Church in Atlanta, Georgia.

The greatest challenge facing Gammon Seminary is the rising cost of theological education and the significant debt our students incur as they answer their call to full-time ministry. Therefore, Gammon is committed to raising a million dollars in the next two years to offer full-tuition scholarships to students called and committed to full-time ministry in the United Methodist Church. We are grateful to this Annual Conference for your support of theological

education and your commitment to ensuring pastoral leadership is theologically trained to lead us forward in the Wesleyan tradition.

Learn more at gammon-itc.org/.

Respectfully submitted, Rev. Dr. Candace M. Lewis, President-Dean

GENERAL BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION & MINISTRY THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Nurturing Leaders. Changing Lives.

The General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM) embraces the ministry of learning and leadership formation in the Wesleyan and United Methodist tradition, stewarding the intellectual life and educational mission of the UMC. Our mission is to bring people together to discern, learn, and lead for the Church and the Academy, creating a world where everyone is living fully into God's call on their lives.

GBHEM programs – like Course of Study, Exploration, Journey Towards Ordained Ministry (JTOM) and Passage UMC – support the development of transformative leadership in The United Methodist Church. We remain committed to building and sustaining collaborative cross conference networks that foster collegiality and guide credentialing for licensed and ordained ministry.

Alleviating student debt through financial support remains a priority for GBHEM. The GBHEM Office of Scholarships awarded over \$3.9 million in scholarships to 2,100 students in 2023. Scholarships were awarded to students all over the world including 54 annual conferences and two central conferences. In addition, GBHEM stewarded the distribution of roughly \$20,000,000 in grants and scholarships to United Methodist ministries. Because of your generous support, each year approximately \$10 million is apportioned for the 11 historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) related to the church through The Black College Fund. The funds are utilized for enhancing capital improvements, providing scholarships to students in need, and providing resources for faculty, staff, and students.

GBHEM also supports the next generation of critical thinkers and leaders through the University Senate peer-review and evaluation process for church-related educational institutions. The UMC is related to 107 educational institutions across North America, the largest cohort of protestant educational institutions in the USA. Similarly, 52 educational institutions representing 25 countries formed the Africa Senate for Methodist Education (ASME) this past year providing culturally appropriate standards for the evaluation of Methodist education throughout the African continent.

Among its various activities, GBHEM is also responsible for two initiatives approved by General Conference: The Methodist Global Education Fund for Leadership Development (MGEFLD), which includes the Grants and Scholarships Program (GRASP); and the Central Conference Theological Education Fund (CCTEF). The CCTEF advances theological education in all central conferences by strengthening theological institutions, creating networks among these schools, and increasing access to theological education.

Since 2008, GBHEM has established 11 regional Leadership, Education and Development Hubs (LEAD Hubs) around the world. Each LEAD Hub is a part of the agency's strategic plan to connect with The United Methodist Church worldwide through collaboration with Pan-Methodist and Ecumenical leaders in Africa, Asia Pacific, Europe, and Eurasia, Latin American and the Caribbean, and North America.

For the past two years, GBHEM and the General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM) have been moving toward greater collaboration and strategic alignment, attending each other's consultations, and bringing together program ministry staff in the areas of scholarships, granting, regional work, shared services, theological reflection, and lead-

ership formation and training. Last October, the board of directors announced that my colleague and friend, Roland Fernandes, would become general secretary of both agencies when I retire in June of 2024.

We celebrate our partnership with your Annual Conference and thank you for nurturing and supporting United Methodist lay and clergy leaders throughout the UMC world-wide connection.

Learn more at gbhem.org/.

Respectfully Submitted: Rev. Greg Bergquist, General Secretary (GBHEM)

LYDIA PATTERSON INSTITUTE (LPI)



It is with great pleasure and gratitude that I present to you this report from Lydia Patterson Institute (LPI). As we reflect on the past year, I am thrilled to share with you the progress and achievements we have accomplished together. Through your dedication and generosity, we continue with our ministry and overcome challenges, propelling us closer to our vision of providing quality education to all.

In this report, I will provide you with an overview of our recent accomplishments and challenges we have faced. As we reflect on the past year, we are excited to share the strides we've made at LPI in enhancing our work areas. In the realm of academics, we have dedicated resources and attention to enriching our curriculum, fostering innovative teaching methodologies, and promoting a culture of lifelong learning among our students. Through initiatives such as teacher professional development programs and curriculum enhancements, we are ensuring that our students receive a well-rounded education that prepares them for career and college. Ensuring the safety and functionality of our facilities is a top priority at LPI. Over the past year, we have focused on enhancing our maintenance and security protocols, conducting regular inspections, and investing in necessary repairs and upgrades to create a safe and conducive learning environment for our students and staff.

We recognize the importance of providing comprehensive support services to address the diverse needs of our students. From counseling and nutritional support to extracurricular activities, we are committed to fostering the holistic development and well-being of every student in our school. Sound financial management is essential to the sustainability and growth of our organization. This past year we have implemented robust financial controls, and streamlined budgeting processes. We believe transparency and accountability are paramount in maintaining the trust and confidence you have placed in us, and we are committed to keeping you informed every step of the way. Our development efforts have been focused on expanding our reach, forging strategic partnerships, and engaging with our supporters to garner the resources needed to further our mission. We are working to generate targeted fundraising campaigns, donor stewardship initiatives, and community outreach efforts.

We are strengthening our foundation and positioning ourselves for continued growth and impact. As we look ahead to the future, we remain committed to excellence in all areas of our work. We will continue to strive for academic excellence, maintain our facilities to the highest standards, expand our support services, uphold fiscal responsibility, and cultivate meaningful partnerships that advance our mission.

Lydia Patterson Institute's mission is to empower students in a Christian setting with the tools and resources they need to succeed academically, linguistically, and socially. LPI provides educational opportunities to underprivileged students facing the challenge of scarcity and inequality. Located on the border between two countries, our school serves as a beacon of hope for students from low-income families, guiding them through middle and high school with a Christian ministry. Despite the obstacles they encounter, our students have demonstrated unparalleled resilience and determination, graduating from our program with flying colors. Education is a powerful tool for social

mobility and empowers students to reach their full potential and make a positive impact on the world around them. By providing assistance to underprivileged students, we are not only changing the trajectory of their lives but also lifting up their families and strengthening our society as a whole.

LPI offers a comprehensive range of educational programs and services tailored to meet the unique needs of our students. Our curriculum focuses on language acquisition, academic enrichment, and socio-emotional development. Currently, we serve 240 students, with a demographic profile reflecting the cultural and linguistic diversity of our community. The impact of LPI on the lives of our students is significant and transformative. Through our programs, students not only improve their academic performance but also gain confidence, leadership skills, and a sense of belonging. Testimonials from students and families attest to the positive influence of the school on their lives. Academic data demonstrates steady progress in language proficiency and academic achievement among our students. Just like in the case of Fernando one of our top students. This is Fernando's story:

“In the outskirts of Ciudad Juarez, a city plagued by violence and hardship, a young boy named Fernando, lives with his mother and sister in a one room home tucked away in the shadows of the city's challenges.

As the first light of dawn peeked over the horizon, Fernando stirred from his makeshift bed, the remnants of a sleepless night still etched on his tired face. The city outside remains shrouded in darkness, save for the distant glow of streetlights that flickered like stars in the night sky.

With a heavy heart and a sense of determination, Fernando rises from his bed at 5:00am and prepares for the day ahead. The air is thick with tension, a palpable reminder of the violence and uncertainty that looms over Ciudad Juarez like a dark cloud. Despite the risks and challenges that surround him, Fernando remains steadfast in his commitment to education. Each day, before the sun has even begun its ascent, he embarks on a two-hour trek through the city's labyrinthine streets to reach LPI that had become his beacon of hope.

The journey is fraught with danger – the threat of violence lurking around every corner, the oppressive environment bearing down on him like a weight. But Fernando presses on, his steps fueled by determination and a belief in a better tomorrow.

At LPI, Fernando finds not only sanctuary but also purpose. Here, amidst the chaos of the outside world, he dedicates himself to his studies and to serving others through a Christian atmosphere and service aimed at uplifting his school.

After a long day of classes and service after school, Fernando once again embarks on the treacherous journey home. The sun is starting to make its way onto the horizon, soon casting the city into darkness once more. But Fernando's spirit remains undimmed, and his resolve unshaken by the challenges he faces.

As he walks the familiar path home, Fernando carries with him the hope of a brighter future – for himself, for his family, and for his community. For in the face of adversity, he has found at LPI, strength, resilience, and a sense of purpose that would carry him through even the darkest of nights.”

In this report, I am thrilled to share with you the incredible impact your generosity has had on LPI and the lives of our students, students such as Fernando. We have worked diligently to enhance our curriculum and develop a more robust career and college readiness program. To equip our students with the skills, knowledge, and resources they need to succeed in both academic and professional settings, empowering them to pursue their goals, including careers in the Methodist clergy. Presently, we provide more than 70 half and full scholarships to attend our institute. In addition, we subsidize 33% of tuition for 100% of our student body. One hundred percent of our seniors successfully graduate from our rigorous middle and high school curriculum, and 100% apply and are accepted to different colleges and universities. With the invaluable assistance of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM), we have been able to provide much-needed full scholarships to our students, enabling them to

pursue higher education in different Methodist colleges and universities without the burden of financial hardship. These scholarships not only alleviate the financial burden on our students and their families but also open doors to opportunities that would otherwise be out of reach. This is an incredible milestone for our students, many of whom come from families where higher education is not the norm. This achievement underscores the effectiveness of our programs in providing the necessary support and resources to help our students succeed academically. These outcomes demonstrate the transformative impact of LPI in empowering underserved youth to pursue their dreams and break the cycle of poverty.

The impact of LPI extends far beyond the classroom. LPI plays a pivotal role in lifting students and their families out of poverty while fostering a Christian environment grounded in our five core principles: faith, social justice, community, respect, and integrity. By providing a holistic education that integrates these principles into every aspect of school life, we empower our students to grow spiritually, academically, and emotionally. Furthermore, our efforts extend beyond the classroom, positively impacting the entire community by promoting social justice, fostering a sense of belonging, and instilling values of respect and integrity.

These achievements are a testament to the hard work and determination of our students, as well as the unwavering support they receive from our dedicated staff and community. However, our work is far from over. As we celebrate our achievements and look towards the future, we must also acknowledge the ongoing challenges and need for support. Limited resources and socio-economic disparities continue to impact our ability to accomplish many things. Our beloved school, standing proud for over a century, faces daunting challenges: asbestos contamination in 90% of our premises, no gym/athletics equipment, no reliable transportation, and obsolete lighting in the entire school.

For generations, our school has been a beacon of hope and learning in our community. Its halls echo with the laughter and dreams of countless students who have passed through its doors. However, as with many historic buildings, the passage of time has revealed a hidden danger lurking within our walls. Asbestos, once heralded as a miracle material for its fire-resistant properties, now poses a grave risk to the health and well-being of our students, teachers, and staff. Asbestos fibers, when disturbed, can become airborne and are known to cause serious respiratory illnesses including lung cancer and mesothelioma.

The presence of asbestos in our school premises is not just a matter of inconvenience; it is a dire threat to the health and safety of all who inhabit our school. Asbestos removal is a complex and costly endeavor, requiring specialized expertise and stringent safety protocols. However, the longer we delay action, the greater the risk to our community. Despite its dangers, asbestos remains present in many older school buildings, including ours, presenting a significant risk to the health and well-being of all who frequent these premises. As stewards of education and advocates for the safety of our students and staff, it is our responsibility to address this issue with urgency and diligence. Removing asbestos from our school premises is a complex and costly undertaking. It requires specialized expertise, rigorous safety protocols, and significant financial resources. As a nonprofit organization, we operate on a limited budget, and the cost of asbestos abatement far exceeds our current means.

While we strive to provide a well-rounded education to our students, we are facing challenges in adequately supporting our athletic programs due to limited resources. Athletics play a crucial role in the holistic development of our students. Participation in sports promotes physical fitness, teamwork, discipline, and leadership skills. It fosters a sense of camaraderie and school spirit while instilling important values such as perseverance, determination, and sportsmanship. Despite the undeniable benefits of athletics, we are facing significant challenges in providing adequate support and equipment for our sports teams. Many of our students come from low-income families and cannot afford to purchase their own sports gear. Additionally, currently we don't have athletic equipment.

Unfortunately, our school is facing significant challenges with our existing lighting system. All fixtures are outdated and in need of replacement leading to frequent maintenance issues. Moreover, our current lighting setup is energy inefficient resulting in unnecessarily high electricity bills. Effective lighting is essential to creating a conducive learning environment. Proper lighting improves visibility, enhances concentration, and reduces eye strain, ultimately

contributing to better academic performance and overall well-being. Additionally, adequate lighting is crucial for ensuring the safety and security of our school premises.

In addition, our school is facing a significant challenge in providing adequate transportation for activities and out-of-town events. Safe transportation is essential to ensuring that all students have equal access to education. Transportation barriers can prevent us from attending and accessing extracurricular activities and enrichment programs. To address this issue, we urgently need to acquire vans to transport our students safely and efficiently. Providing safe transportation for our students means investing in their future and empowering them to reach their full potential.

As we continue to face financial challenges in meeting the growing demand for our services and maintaining our facilities, we urge you to consider the profound impact your support can have on the lives of these deserving students. With your support, we can make a tangible difference in the lives of our students by providing a safe space and a well-rounded education that nurtures the body, mind, and spirit of our students. Every contribution, no matter how small, brings us one step closer to creating a safe and healthy learning environment for all. Whether it's through monetary donations by check, E-giving and credit card donations on our website at lpi-elpaso.org/ and through our Advance # 531523 (see umcmmission.org/advance-project/531523/); in-kind contributions of sports equipment; or volunteering your time and expertise, every contribution matters. I implore you to join us in addressing these urgent challenges.

Together, we can make a difference in the lives of these students and their families, providing them with the support and opportunities they need to thrive academically, spiritually, and socially. Your generosity has the power to transform dreams into reality, aspirations into achievements, and obstacles into opportunities.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this report on the status of Lydia Patterson Institute (LPI). With your continued support, we can continue to empower futures and transform lives through education.

Peace and Blessings, Carla Cardoza, President, Lydia Patterson Institute, info@lpi-elpaso.org

McMURRY UNIVERSITY *Religious & Spiritual Life (RSL)*

Rev. Ricky Harrison is thrilled to be back at McMurry University, after nearly ten years away, serving as the University Chaplain and Director of Religious & Spiritual Life (RSL) since August 2023. Nearly a year into his role, Rev. Harrison is bringing a new spirit to campus with the support of Rev. Dr. Russell Miller, who serves as assistant director.

During his first year back on campus, chapel attendance has increased to more than 80 students each week – more than 20% increase over last year. He has introduced new Bible studies and RSL events. Student engagement has increased with 23 RSL student volunteers. He has continued to expand mission services by taking 26 students back to Florida in December and he will be taking a group of 18 to Spain in May. Rev. Harrison has continued his outreach to conference churches providing guest sermons and looks forward to returning to North Texas Conference churches to share his ministry.

Before returning to McMurry, for six years Rev. Harrison served in full-time congregational ministry in Wise County, Texas. His service in United Methodist communities across Wise County has included church planting, missional outreach, community development, and traditional pulpit ministry. He shared that he's incredibly excited to be back in Abilene with the McMurry community. McMurry was one of the places that enabled him to hear God's call most clearly on his life, and he hopes to offer that same gift of grace to new generations of young people.

McMurry mission services and trips, locally and away, are proof of God's presence and that McMurry is leaning into the core values of *Christian faith as the foundation of life* and *Service as the measure of life*. In December, 26 McMurry students along with Revs. Harrison and Miller and Volleyball Coach and Assistant Athletic Director Cammie Petree returned for a second year to serve terminally ill children and their families at Give Kids the World Village in Florida. Rev. Harrison noted students developed a strong sense of fulfillment and purpose as they contributed to the well-being of children and families facing challenging circumstances. Knowing that they are making a positive impact on the lives of those in need can be deeply satisfying. In addition to personal fulfillment, the McMurry volunteers gain a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by these families, while fostering a sense of community engagement and social responsibility. McMurry's RSL team looks forward to continuing to serve this philanthropic organization each year. The trip was made possible by the generosity of a donor who covered all costs. Each student paid \$100 to show their commitment to the purpose of the trip.

Revs. Harrison and Miller will be leading another spiritual journey in May. They are taking 18 students to traverse the El Camino de Santiago, also known as the Way of Saint James, representing the network of pilgrim routes that lead to the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in northwest Spain. Pilgrims from various parts of the world have walked these trails for centuries, seeking the tomb of St. James the Greater, one of the apostles of Jesus Christ, said to be buried in the cathedral. The goal of the RSL trip is to nurture spiritual growth while offering McMurry students physical challenge, and cultural experiences and adventures.

As Rev. Harrison looks forward to the upcoming year, his hope is that RSL on campus will continue to grow as a ministry owned by students. He currently has 20 members of the chapel band, and he looks forward to adding to this talented group. "I'm excited to get to know the gifts, graces, and passions of McMurry students," said Rev. Harrison and then equip and empower them to lead our ministry together. My job as a campus minister is the same as any pastor, 'to equip the saints for the work of ministry' (Ephesians 4:12)."

In addition to the exciting things happening with McMurry's student, the University is celebrating the continued legacy of McMurry graduates returning to serve the United Methodist Church. Kristen Glover '10 and Colin Craft '21 are being Commissioned as Elders at North Texas Conference this year.

Learn more at mcm.edu/student-success-support/religious-spiritual-life/.

METHODIST CHILDREN'S HOME (MCH)

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

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

We are now in our 134th year of ministry. Here are some highlights of the past year:

- **We launched our new strategic plan, Imagine 2028**, to guide MCH growth and innovation for the next five years.
- **We opened a new MCH Family Outreach office** in the Permian Basin to serve Midland, Odessa, and surrounding areas through family preservation services and community-based programs.
- **We completed the Building Hope capital campaign** on the Waco campus, which began in 2015, and opened the Stone and Harris Homes.

- **We launched and expanded free professional counseling services** in two MCH Family Outreach locations.
- **We announced plans for a new vision at the MCH Boys Ranch** to provide for young men with more complex specialized needs and began renovations to have this new program operational in 2024.
- **We expanded our efforts through the Together We Flourish initiative** by investing in other like-minded organizations.
- **We grew our community collaborations**, especially in the Outdoor Education and Recreation program, with several groups joining for day-long team-building exercises and activities. Other community collaboration highlights include annual high school career events where students gained knowledge about life after graduation from high school.
- **We once again received the highest ratings** from Charity Navigator and Candid (formerly Guidestar).
- **Construction began on the Waco campus** of the Embry Vocational Building which will expand vocational opportunities for young people served through our charter school.
- **Family Outreach staff presented services to various communities** throughout our service area of Texas and New Mexico through fairs, school events and partnering agencies.
- **The MCH Bulldogs boys' track and field team** took home the Texas Christian Athletic Fellowship Men's State Championship Title, a first in school history. The MCH Bulldogs fought hard in their fourth run for a state football championship but ultimately fell to Victory Christian Academy.
- **We expanded our horsemanship program opportunities** at the MCH Boys Ranch. Students learn how to care for their horses and further bond through fellowship with other youth.
- **As a TBRI (Trust Based Relational Intervention) Ambassador Organization**, MCH staff continued to train other like-minded groups across the nation in TBRI.

Our achievements in the past and those yet to come are directly related to the many individuals and congregations throughout our service area, including the North Texas Annual Conference, who support our work and ministry through financial gifts, prayers, advocacy and service on the Board of Directors. As the North Texas Conference prepares to join a newly-created conference with the Northwest Texas and Central Texas Conferences, we give special thanks for the special place you have held in our history across many generations, and we look forward to a continued partnership with you for years to come.

Learn more at www.mch.org/.

Thank you for supporting our vision to empower all we serve to experience life to the fullest,

Trey Oakley, President and CEO

PERKINS SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY

Perkins celebrates our vital connections with the North Texas Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church.

- Forty-four (44) students affiliated with the North Texas Annual Conference are enrolled at Perkins: 22 Master of Divinity students, 7 Doctor of Ministry students, 6 Master of Arts in Ministry students, 5 Master of Theological Studies students, 2 Master of Sacred Music students, 1 Master of Theology student and 1 non-major student.
- During the 2023-24 academic year, 9 students from the North Texas Annual Conference received funding from the PACE (Perkins Annual Conference Endowment) grant, with the average overall financial aid award per student totaling \$3,010.
- Eighteen (18) Perkins students from the North Texas Annual Conference currently are taking part in internships.

Enrollment Update

Enrollment at Perkins for the 2023-24 academic year totaled 293 students. The Houston-Galveston Extension Program, in its sixth year of providing a combination of online and residential classes leading to the M.Div. and M.A.M. degrees, totaled 87 students during the 2023-24 academic year.

Institutional Highlights

- The SMU Board of Trustees voted at its December 2023 meeting to authorize Perkins School of Theology to offer a new hybrid format for its Master of Divinity and Master of Arts in Ministry degrees. The new modality, open to those enrolling in Fall 2024, is designed to accommodate students from across the country, providing them with the flexibility to join the Perkins community while minimizing the need for extensive on-campus presence. The program combines a majority of online coursework with occasional immersive experiences. The Board of Trustees also approved new curriculum requirements for four of Perkins' degree programs: the Master of Divinity, Master of Arts in Ministry, Master of Theological Studies and Master of Sacred Music.
- Dr. Elizabeth G. Loba, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, has convened a committee – chaired by Dr. Peter Moore – to search for the next dean of Perkins School of Theology. The committee includes members of SMU's Board of Trustees; the Perkins Executive Board; faculty, staff and students from Perkins; and key university stakeholders who interface with the school.
- Christina Rhodes, who has served a variety of roles in development and enrollment management at SMU since 2017, has been appointed Assistant Dean of Enrollment Management at Perkins. As Assistant Dean, Rhodes will play a pivotal role in crafting a vision for Perkins' recruitment, admissions, and scholarship aid.
- Dr. Frederick Aquino joined the Perkins faculty as Professor of Systematic Theology in August 2023. He is a noted scholar and theologian who previously served on the faculty of Abilene Christian University since 1998. Dr. Aquino received his Ph.D. in Religious Studies from SMU in 2000.
- Dr. Elias Lopez was named director of the Perkins Doctor of Ministry program in June 2023. He is a 2018 graduate of the Perkins D.Min. program and earned his Master of Divinity from Perkins in 2010. Dr. Lopez also is director of the Perkins Intern Program.
- The Rev. Dr. Thomas J. Pace III (M.Div. '82) and Rev. Dr. Clayton Oliphint (M.Div. '88, D.Min. '96) were selected as recipients of the 2023 Perkins Distinguished Alumnus/a Award. The award recognizes Perkins graduates who have demonstrated effectiveness and integrity in service to the church, continuing support for the goals of Perkins and Southern Methodist University, outstanding service to the community and exemplary character. Dr. Pace has served as Senior Pastor at St. Luke's UMC in Houston since 2006, and Dr. Oliphint has served as Senior Pastor at First UMC Richardson since 2001. They were honored at a banquet on the SMU campus on Nov. 13.
- Eleven congregations – including First UMC Rowlett and Market Street UMC from the North Texas Annual Conference – were selected for the third and final cohort of the Lilly Endowment-funded Testimony HQ initiative to develop thriving congregations through the practice of testimony as community engagement. These congregations were selected from applications submitted from churches within a 350-mile radius of Dallas. The cohort congregations will each receive up to \$5,000 in grant funding to support their Testimony HQ work from January through December 2024.
- More than 3,500 people visited Bridwell Library in April 2023 to view the Codex Sassoon, one of the most important and influential works of global religious and cultural history. More than one thousand years old, the codex is the earliest and most complete Hebrew Bible. Carbon-dating indicates it was created in the 10th century, but the book spent most of its existence out of the public eye. Viewers of the exhibit were also invited to attend Codex Fest – a series of lectures, music and other events and activities on the Perkins campus organized by Bridwell staff and others.
- The Office of the Provost recognized Dr. James Lee, Associate Professor of the History of Early Christianity, as a recipient of this year's Provost Research Fellowship – a \$15,000 cash award – designed to provide research support to SMU's outstanding scholars during the current academic year.
- The installation of the Caren and Vin Prothro new chancel organ in Perkins Chapel – a project that has been ongoing over the last two years – has been completed by the Orloff Company of Needham, Mass. This extraordinary instrument was built in 1927 by E.M. Skinner, the country's premiere organ builder at the time,

and its color palette is absolutely unique in this area. The organ is doubly significant because of its pristine condition (never altered in 100 years) and first-rate restoration. Its original home was Fourth Presbyterian Church, Manhattan NYC.

- We are saddened to announce the death of the Rev. Dr. Charles Aaron, co-director of the Perkins Intern Program, who passed away unexpectedly on November 29. Dr. Aaron received his Master of Divinity from Perkins in 1985. He began serving as an adjunct professor at Perkins in 2002 before joining the staff full-time in 2017.

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

Learn more at www.smu.edu/perkins.

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

PROVIDENCE PLACE

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

The year of 2024 marks 129 years of service; all possible because of your loyal and faithful support from individual donors and United Methodist Churches throughout the North Texas Conference. Every day, we have the wonderful opportunity to see God's hand in our ministries as the lives of women, children, and families are transformed.

Providence Place experienced many transitions within the past year. The Board of Directors made a bittersweet decision to eliminate residential services and sell the property located at 6487 Whitby Road. The decision was made due to trends within the residential services community and the growing cost of those services. The agency relocated to 326 Sterling Browning Road in February 2024. The move also allowed us to innovate how services are provided.

Providence Place is redefining how services are provided to victims of crime and trauma survivors. Providence Place strives to develop programs that are culturally competent and have transformational community impact; redefining how clients receive service will, without doubt, generate immeasurable impact. Providence Place provides Trauma Informed comprehensive services to survivors of complex trauma and victims of crime including but not limited to intimate partner violence, sexual assault, child abuse and professionals of other non-profits.

The relationship between Providence Place and the North Texas Conference, along with individual churches, has been lifechanging in so many ways. Together, we have helped young women facing unplanned pregnancies, provided a home for countless young adults, offered hope and restoration for survivors of complex trauma, and created loving homes for children in foster care. What makes our programs unique is our ability to serve women, children, and families using a trauma informed care model. This commitment to women and families started with our founder, Madame Volino, when she first sought help from Travis Park Methodist Church in San Antonio and changed her life from a brothel owner to a sanctuary for women and young children in need.

Without a doubt, churches and their congregants have played a significant role in the success of Providence Place for 128 years; something we will never forget. I encourage you to call to arrange a speaker for your congregation or church group, and request offering materials for an annual church offering. We couldn't continue these ministries without you and we would love to come and share the stories of Providence Place! If we could be a resource to you, contact our Mission Advancement Team at (210) 696-2410 or at mission.advancement@provplace.org. Also, please visit our website at www.provplace.org to learn more about these special ministries and to hear first-hand stories from those we have served.

Respectfully, Dr. Judith Bell, President and CEO

SAINT PAUL SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY *Where Theology Meets Life*



Educating tomorrow's leaders by offering on-campus, online, and hybrid learning courses at a FLEXible schedule, Saint Paul School of Theology is a seminary serving a diverse community committed to the formation of people for innovative, creative ministry through rigorous academic life. Grounded in the academic study of faith and ministry, theology is practiced in a traditional classroom and remote spaces. Our contextual curriculum features Ministry Collaboration Groups, Practicums, Spiritual Formation Retreats, and Seminars. Students learn from dedicated faculty, experienced pastors, and community leaders about best ministry practices, leaving our graduates with the tools and first-hand experience necessary to meet the needs of a changing world.

At the core of our mission at Saint Paul is the formation of people for innovative, creative ministry through rigorous academic life. In 2024, we are launching two exciting new programs to revitalize current pastors and preachers and prepare seminary students for music ministry. First, with the help of Lilly Endowment's Compelling Preaching grant and the leadership of Dr. Casey Sigmon, Assistant Professor of Preaching and Worship and Director of Contextual Education and Pause/Play Center for Preachers, Saint Paul School of Theology is creating a Center that addresses the risk of losing heart and prophetic imagination as a preacher in this divided world. The Pause/Play Center for Preachers' mission is in its name: to hold space for busy preachers to pause and play their way into a renewal of their vocation as preachers of the Good News. Second, for Fall 2024, as part of our Master of Arts in Christian Ministry (MACM) degree program, we will launch a first-of-its-kind specialization in Modern Worship Music. Saint Paul will partner with the United Methodist Church of the Resurrection and their COR Worship Collective to prepare students to write, produce, and perform modern worship music. Students will integrate a worship leaders' skills with their study of theology, the bible, history, and worship in a diverse, inclusive, and spiritually enriching environment. Lastly, we recently completed the (Theo)Logic Studio on our Oklahoma Campus. The Studio serves as a dedicated space for creating, recording, and editing digital media resources tailored to the ministries of students, staff, faculty, and alums, encompassing content development ranging from podcasts and video resources to digital graphics.

For the 2023-2024 academic year, we brought 41 new, faithful theologians from across the world to our learning community. International students from South Korea, Belgium, and Mexico added to the global learning environment on both campuses and online. Twenty-seven percent of incoming students identified as a race or ethnicity other than white, and 53 percent identified as female.

Saint Paul staff and faculty continue contributing to the academy, church, and society. The faculty of Saint Paul School of Theology maintains high standards of scholarship, research, publication, and engagement. Over the past year, their many activities and publications have been so numerous that space permits only sharing selected highlights:

- **Dr. Israel Kamudzandu**, Lindsey P. Pherigo Associate Professor of New Testament Studies and Biblical Interpretation, published *Translation as Incarnation: The Bible in the Twenty-First Century Global South* and was the featured guest speaker of our January forum.
- **Dr. Joshua Bartholomew**, Assistant Professor of Ethics, Church, and Society, published *Black Theology and The Black Panthers*.
- **Dr. Elaine Robinson**, Professor of Methodist Studies and Christian Theology, published *Leading with Love: Spiritual Disciplines For Practical Leadership*.
- **Rabbi Michael Zedek**, Rabbi-in-Residence, published *Taking Miracles Seriously: A Journey to Everyday Spirituality* and hosted a forum with Dr. Jeanne Hoef, Associate Professor of Pastoral Theology and Pastoral Care, and Franklin and Louise Cole Associate Professor in Town and Country Ministries, on The War in Israel and Traumatized Communities.
- **Dr. Mike Graves**, Professor Emeritus of William K. McElvaney of Preaching and Worship, published *Jesus' Vision for Your One Wild and Precious Life (on Things Like Poverty, Hunger, Polarization, Inclusion, and More)*.

The 2023-2024 Fiscal Year brought a change in leadership to the Seminary. Rev. Neil Blair '80 retired as President on December 31, 2023, and President Jay Simmons, formerly Vice President of Institutional Advancement, took the helm at the start of 2024. In addition, Saint Paul Board of Trustees Chair Dr. Amy Hogan stepped down as Board Chair, with Ms. Sharon Cleaver assuming the position until the end of June 2024. Our current strategic plan is set to conclude within the coming year. Consequently, the Board of Trustees formed a task force several months ago to prepare the next iteration of our strategic plan. While we are still too early in this effort to comment on any specific initiatives, the plan ultimately endorsed by the Board will guide all our efforts for the next several years.

For the 2023-2024 fiscal year, Saint Paul Course of Study (COS) School educated 250 individual students, including 79 new students, with approximately 600 registrations and offering 46 classes. Many COS School students serve more than one church, many rural, with a few dozen students serving three or more churches. We helped 23 students finish the 20-course program this year, issuing them certificates of completion. With approval from GBHEM, the school has continued its course offerings in both asynchronous and synchronous online formats.

Saint Paul is a financially healthy Seminary. We operate with a balanced budget, no debt, and an endowment that is 9-10 times the size of our annual expenses. Sustainability has been our focus over the past six years, and we have achieved our goal. Investments in our future bring exciting new opportunities for our students, staff, and faculty. As always, we continue to be grateful for donations from the community that provide technology, scholarships, and evolving academic programs to students. Our significant technological investments have allowed us to maintain a hybrid educational delivery model, providing a flexible working arrangement for our students.

We are continuing to enhance our partnership with Zoom and Neat. We now have Neat Bars & Neat Boards in all our classrooms. In addition, during this last year, we implemented a Neat Board in Harris Chapel on our Oklahoma Campus. We also have Neat Boards in multiple common areas to encourage ad-hoc use of the technology for breakout groups and other miscellaneous meetings between our two campuses and our remote students. One of the best features of this technology is its ability to receive automatic real-time over-the-air feature upgrades. Zoom & Neat continue enhancing our learning environment by rolling out new enhancements, including enhanced whiteboarding, noise cancellation, and AI features. Our Neat equipment continuously monitors several environmental factors within our classrooms: air quality, temperature, humidity, VOC, and CO2, as well as being able to tell if the classrooms are occupied and how many individuals are in the room.

Saint Paul School of Theology is blessed to be your partner in ministry and help those seeking to discover more and answer the call. Your advocacy for the Seminary and generous financial support have been vital in realizing our accomplishments. Many thanks for the innumerable ways you have helped Saint Paul. Your prayers and actions on behalf of the Seminary are a blessing to all of us.

Jay K. Simmons, President www.spst.edu/

SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY

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

Students, faculty, and staff

SMU continues to attract academically excellent and diverse students. The Class of 2027 comprises 1,592 new first-year and 283 new transfer students. For the 2023-24 academic year, 7,115 undergraduates and 4,727 graduate students make up the total student population of nearly 12,000, representing all 50 states and 87 countries. 56% of them are from other states, 41% are Texans and 3% are international students. Once they graduate, they will become Mustangs for life, joining 136,000 alumni worldwide and 61,000 in DFW.

SMU's annual economic impact on the Dallas metro area exceeds \$7 billion. Our faculty members, graduate students, and even undergraduates conduct research that enhances our region and world. The White House and U.S. Department of Commerce have selected SMU to lead a federally funded initiative for economic development in the semiconductor supply chain. The Texoma Semiconductor Hub is the only one of its kind in Texas among 31 hubs nationwide.

Comprehensive capital campaign and research funding

SMU's collective vision for the future of the University and Dallas is propelled by the University's comprehensive campaign: SMU Ignited: Boldly Shaping Tomorrow. As of March 2024, donors have contributed over \$1.288 billion to date toward this multiyear \$1.5 billion goal to attract and support outstanding students and faculty, explore new fields and cutting-edge technologies, and positively impact Dallas and the world beyond.

Strengthening SMU's position as an institution of academic and athletic distinction is the upcoming transition into the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC), where SMU athletic teams will compete against some of the country's most academically focused colleges and universities. The heightened prestige and visibility from participating in the ACC will also bolster the University's academic priority of becoming a Research One (R1) institution in the Carnegie Classification system.

For 2023, SMU reported \$59.7 million in research expenditure which included external funding for domestic and global research. Current funding agencies include the National Science Foundation, National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Department of Energy, National Institute of Justice, Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT), Google, and Toyota USA Foundation.

Rankings

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

- **Top 20% best national universities** by U.S. News & World Report (2024). Also, first among Dallas-area universities, a Best Value School, one of the Best Colleges for Veterans, and a Top Performer on Social Mobility among national universities by USNWR (2024).
- **Among the nation's best institutions for undergraduate education** in The Princeton Review's "Best 389 Colleges" and its "2024 Best Southwest Colleges."
- **Top 5% best nationwide colleges** (68 out of 2,238) by College Factual (2024). Also, top 1% of the U.S. best liberal arts/sciences and humanities schools for students pursuing a bachelor's degree and among the highest-paid graduates across a range of fields.
- **"Higher research activity"** as classified by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

- **Perkins Chapel at No. 10** on the list of the nation’s most beautiful college churches and chapels by College Rank.

Perkins School of Theology

The SMU Board of Trustees has authorized Perkins School of Theology to offer a new hybrid format for its Master of Divinity and Master of Arts in Ministry degrees. Starting this fall, the new modality will ensure that Perkins continues to deliver the outstanding personal graduate education that is their hallmark and allow additional flexibility for students who may not reside in Dallas.

As Bishop Michael McKee serves as dean of the Perkins School ad interim, a committee has been convened to search for the school’s next dean. The committee includes members of SMU’s Board of Trustees; the Perkins Executive Board; faculty, staff, and students from Perkins; and key University stakeholders.

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

Learn more at www.smu.edu/ and www.smu.edu/perkins

Warm regards, R. Gerald Turner, President, SMU

SOUTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

Texas’ First Institution of Higher Learning

Southwestern University continues to rank among the best liberal arts institutions in the nation. In 2023, *U.S. News & World Report’s* Best Colleges rankings ranked the University 89th among national liberal arts colleges and second among national undergraduate liberal arts colleges in Texas. Southwestern also ranked 124th nationally and second in Texas in the social mobility category which measures how well schools graduated students who received federal Pell Grants. Recently, the *New York Times Magazine’s* College-Access Index has named SU the leading university in Texas for economic diversity among its students. Our commitment to preparing students for successful careers is also evident, as The Princeton Review ranks us first in Texas and 5th in the nation for Best Career Services.

Southwestern had a record 6,585 applicants competing for a spot, an increase of 18.5% over last year. The University ultimately welcomed 403 first-year students for a total enrollment of 1,459 in fall 2023. The acceptance rate fell to 39%, and Southwestern also met its academic and diversity goals, with more than 25% of incoming students identifying as Hispanic for the fourth year in a row.

Our world-class faculty of scholar-teachers celebrated a number of accomplishments in 2023. Naomi Reed (anthropology) co-hosted an eight-episode The Texas Newsroom podcast *Sugar Land*, which explores the narrative surrounding the Sugar Land 95 and the local school district’s plan to construct a school atop the gravesite. Michael Cooper (music) published the first monograph on Margaret Bonds and her music titled “Margaret Bonds: The Montgomery Variations and Du Bois Credo,” the book was published by Cambridge University Press as part of the New Cambridge Music Handbooks series. Fumiko Futamura (mathematics) authored a successful grant proposal for the Japan Foundation’s Japan-America Society Capacity Building Grant Program, securing \$26,625 to support Japan-America Society of Greater Austin’s programs and staff, which provide Japanese classes, cultural programming, and events in the Austin area.

Our students received several honors and recognitions. In a remarkable feat of academic excellence, 100% of the 16 2023 medical and dental school applicants have been accepted. Thirty-five students were inducted into Southwestern’s chapter of the Phi Beta Kappa honor society. Two students were awarded scholarships from the Texas United Methodist College Association, and one student received the Benjamin Gilman International Scholarship.

Two recent graduates were selected as 2023 Fulbright Award winners.

In athletics, the Pirate football team joined the Southern Athletic Association (SAA) in fall 2023, and all 20 men's and women's varsity sports will be making the conference change beginning in the 2025-2026 season. Southwestern finished second for the SCAC President's Trophy. The Pirates garnered 96 all-conference selections, including 56 first-team selections, 19 second-team selections, and 15 honorable mention selections, as well as two SCAC Coach of the Year awards. The Pirates also earned three All-America honors in 2023 and five All-Region selections. Finally, Men's Golf earned an NCAA Tournament bid.

In 2023, Southwestern hosted the Roy and Margaret Shilling Lecture featuring keynote speaker Kevin Young, a respected scholar and current *New Yorker* magazine poetry editor. The University held the third annual SUnity Day, a cross-campus event focused on unifying our community and hosted Ainsley Carry, the University of British Columbia's vice president for students, who gave the keynote address "Disputed Memorials on Campus: How Universities Respond." More than 195 students, mentored by 50 faculty and staff, led panels, presented posters, gave performances, and set up exhibitions during the 24th annual Research and Creative Works Symposium.

Ratification of Trustees

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

The following name is submitted to the North Texas Conference for re-election: Ms. Laura K. Hinson, nominated by the Board of Trustees for re-election to a three-year term concluding 2027.

Conclusion

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

Learn more at www.southwestern.edu/.

Respectfully yours, Laura E. Skandera Trombley, President

TEXAS METHODIST FOUNDATION (TMF)



Texas Methodist Foundation is deeply grateful for the opportunity to serve congregations, ministries, communities, and church leaders across Texas and New Mexico. In 2023, TMF honored David McCaskill's retirement after 24 years of service as Senior Vice President of Loans and Investment Services and welcomed Chris Miller to the foundation as Vice President of Lending. TMF invests all its resources to strengthen the church's mission in partnership with investors, philanthropists, borrowers, and leaders, creating a cycle of generosity. TMF deeply appreciates its partnership with the North Texas Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, serving its congregations and leaders toward bringing about the loving world God Imagines. We appreciate the opportunity to report the ways we served Methodists this past year.

2023 Year in Review

Within the North Texas Annual Conference

- Loans to churches in the North Texas Annual Conference totaled \$74.1 million at the end of 2023.
- Churches and agencies, not including individuals, within the North Texas Annual Conference had \$28.5 million invested in the TMF Loan Fund.

Throughout Texas and New Mexico

- As of December 31, 2023, total assets under management by TMF were \$684.8 million.
- TMF Loan Fund investments ended the year at \$315.6 million, and the loan portfolio was \$284.1 million.
- TMF's philanthropic impact totaled \$10.4 million in 2023:
 - TMF received \$4.6M in new charitable gifts which supports churches and nonprofits across Texas & New Mexico as well as TMF's Grants and Learning & Innovation Ministries
 - TMF's Grants ministry distributed \$1.5M to 76 churches and nonprofits in Texas and New Mexico, serving over 316,000 individuals.
 - In addition to our Grants ministry, TMF distributed \$4.28M from donor directed endowments and donor-advised funds to support churches and nonprofits.
- TMF's Leadership Ministry was renamed Learning & Innovation (L&I) to reflect how it supports and emboldens leaders across the Methodist ecosystem, creating space for new learning and inspiring innovation, serving over 500 leaders in 20 groups and 40 Learning & Innovation events.

TMF Board Members

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

- Rev. Katherine Glaze Lyle, Clergy, final 3-year term serving through 2027

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

- Dr. Andrew Stoker, Clergy, currently serving through Annual Conference 2024
- Dr. Will Green, Layperson, currently serving through 2025
- Rev. Richie Butler, Clergy, currently serving through 2026
- Mr. Kelvin Walker, Layperson, currently serving through 2026
- Ms. Julie Yarbrough, Layperson, currently serving through 2026

Learn more at tmf-fdn.org/.

Rev. Lisa Greenwood, President & CEO

TEXAS UNITED METHODIST COLLEGE ASSOCIATION

The Texas United Methodist College Association exists to advocate for our Texas Methodist college students attending one of the six United Methodist institutions of higher learning in Texas. Gifts received from our Annual Conference partners are passed along to deserving students through the Texas Methodist Scholarship Program. During the 2023-24 academic year, we awarded \$72,500 in scholarship support through this program to students at Huston-Tillotson University, McMurry University, Southern Methodist University, Southwestern University, Texas Wesleyan University, and Wiley College. These scholarships are given based on financial need and oftentimes make the difference in a student attending college and persisting to graduation. The importance of these specific scholarships cannot be overstated, especially given the impact on **access** and **affordability** for those who receive these funds.

The students receiving support through the Texas Methodist Scholarship Program represent a wide range of vocational interests. Attending United Methodist institutions, they have the opportunity to develop their faith and find a career path leading to a life of service and contribution to the greater good. It is our hope that in supporting our

Methodist students at our own institutions they will contribute to the growth of the Church, whether that be as an ordained minister, in another church-related role, or as active laity. By encouraging their exploration of faith, we know that some will enter the ministry – whether that be a direct path out of college to seminary or as second-career ministers, which is increasingly the norm.

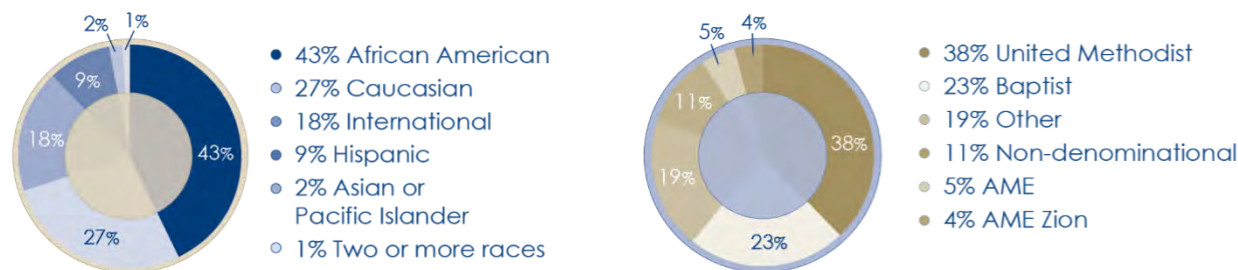
I must also report that due to the declining nature of our funding model, the TUMCA board will consider a logical path forward for our organization. Although funding for United Methodist students is an important part of our model, we must also face the reality that there may be a better option to provide funding for our students. It is my intent to continue conversations with our conference representatives to ensure the best and most informed decision is made.

On behalf of the Texas Methodist Scholarship recipients, we would like to express our appreciation to the North Texas Conference for your support of this important program. To learn more about the Texas Methodist Scholarship Program, the impact on students, and the Texas United Methodist College Association, please visit www.tumca.net.

Gratefully, Michael Hutchison, President, TUMCA

UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY Dayton, Ohio

For more than 150 years, United Theological Seminary has prepared men and women to serve as faithful and fruitful Christian leaders who make disciples of Jesus Christ. In the 2022-2023 academic year, the seminary served 547 students, representing 36 states, 20 countries, and 43 denominations, with 38% of students identifying as United Methodist. United in Christ, the student body is a multi-ethnic, multi-racial community that is 43% African American, 27% White, 18% international, 9% Hispanic, and 2% Asian or Pacific Islander.* During the 2022-2023 academic year, 120 graduates completed their programs.



Houses of Study

United's academic programs include seven Houses of Study for denominational, church renewal, and/or language- and culture-based ministry, including online Spanish and Korean houses of study. These houses of study have enrolled over 120 new master's students in the United States and around the world.

Bruce Ough Innovation Center

In 2023, the Bishop Bruce Ough Innovation Center, directed by Rev. Sue Nilson Kibbey, engaged more than 5,000 participants through 64 resourcing events and activities. The Center partnered with the Black Methodists for Church Renewal Laity Advocacy Committee to conduct the 2023 Laity Leadership Institution. The Center also launched a *Dynamite Prayer* movement, based on the guidebook *Dynamite Prayer: A 28 Day Experiment* (Invite Resources, 2022) by Rev. Kibbey and Rev. Dr. Rosario Picardo. Multiple United Methodist conferences and more than 90 congregations across denominations committed to be part of a Dynamite Prayer Wave and received resourcing on the practice of "breakthrough prayer."

New Faces at United

Over the past year, the seminary welcomed several new members to the United community. Bishop James Swanson, most recently bishop of the Mississippi Conference of The United Methodist Church, was installed as United Methodist Bishop-in-Residence. Dr. Pauline Paris Buisch and Rev. Dr. Xavier L. Johnson joined the faculty as Assistant Professor of Old Testament and Assistant Professor of Preaching and Black Church Studies, respectively, and Dr. Eliseo Mejia came on board as the Academic Oversight Officer for the Hispanic House of Study.

Reducing Student Debt

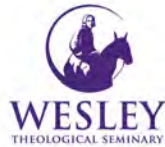
Finances shouldn't stand in the way of a seminary education. That's why United has launched the Fresh Wind: Where the Spirit Takes Flight campaign to add \$10 million to the scholarship endowment, which will dramatically increase the seminary's capacity to provide scholarships to students for many years to come. As of January 2024, the seminary was more than 70% toward the \$10 million goal.

Learn more at united.edu/.

Kent Millard, President

** Student data represent unduplicated headcount enrollment for the 2022-2023 academic year. Demographic figures represent those who responded.*

WESLEY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY (WTS)



The mission of Wesley Theological Seminary (WTS) is to equip persons for Christian ministry and leadership in the church and the world, to advance theological scholarship, and to model a prophetic voice in the public square.

Despite the challenges posed by the global landscape, WTS continues to flourish, driven by our commitment to excellence in theological education and community engagement.

Master of Divinity, Master of Arts, Master of Theological Studies Degrees: We offer pathways to meet the needs of a variety of students. Whether traditional, brick and mortar, in-person study or a flexible, online, hybrid model (Wesley FlexMA), WTS is committed to curating space for theological reflection, academic inquiry, and practical application. www.wesleyseminary.edu/study/

Doctor of Ministry Degree: WTS is a leader in DMin education offering specialized tracks of study for scholars going into parish ministry, global missions, or military chaplaincy. www.wesleyseminary.edu/doctorofministry/program/

Wesley Innovation Hub: WTS received a \$1.2M grant from the Lilly Endowment and will embark on groundbreaking initiatives that harness the power of technology, entrepreneurship, and interdisciplinary collaboration. www.wesleyseminary.edu/wesley-innovation-hub/

Center for Public Theology: WTS received a generous grant from the Trinity Wall Street Foundation to launch “The Public Theology Fellows Program,” an innovative initiative to bridge gaps between faith communities and political action. www.wesleyseminary.edu/ice/programs/public-theology/

Community Engagement Institute: WTS received a generous grant from City Seminary in NYC for the innovative, immersive study and praxis of urban ministry. www.wesleyseminary.edu/ice/about-us/overview-2/

The Henry Luce III Center for the Arts and Religion: WTS is thrilled to share two new exhibits, *Sacred Ground*, which focused on the intersection of community-engaged art and spirituality; and *Paradise Lost*, a captivating exhibition highlighting transcultural, multicultural, and interreligious narratives. www.luceartsandreligion.org/

Lewis Center for Church Leadership: The Lewis Center conducts leading edge research for the local church. WTS is pleased to report a growing demand for transformative leadership training within religious communities. www.churchleadership.com/

Call us: (202) 885-8659 **Email us:** admissions@wesleyseminary.edu. **Follow us:** Facebook/IG: [@WesleySeminary](https://www.facebook.com/WesleySeminary) and LinkedIn: [@WesleyTheologicalSeminary](https://www.linkedin.com/company/WesleyTheologicalSeminary)

Rev. Dr. David McAllister-Wilson, President

WESLEY-RANKIN COMMUNITY CENTER

In collaboration with our West Dallas neighbors, Wesley-Rankin Community Center identifies and bridges gaps in education, health, and skills development by providing multigenerational programs that empower families to access their full potential.

The Why Behind Our Mission

Systems are difficult- but not impossible- to break. West Dallas families face deeply rooted systemic issues such as the lack of affordable housing, health care, and access to a quality education. Through Wesley-Rankin's mission, families gain the choice and opportunity needed to rise above neighborhood statistics.

- According to 2022-23 Dallas ISD data, 21% of Pinkston High School students are college ready in English and only 7% are prepared in math. 38% of 3rd graders at Lorenzo de Zavala, the local elementary school, are reading at grade level.
- In the zip code of 75212, 30% of residents are without healthcare coverage.
- According to census data, the average median income is \$47,000 with an employment rate of 56.5%.
- Despite little change in income, the median property value has increased by 78% in 5 years.

Our 2023 Impact: A Multigenerational Response

Afterschool provides children and youth enrichment activities, homework support, dinner, clubs, and access to individual and group counseling. In 2023, Afterschool served 103 students. 33 of those students participated in a water safety program before summer began and we partnered with Dallas Afterschool for training, data analysis, and quality control.

GoH GoH Girls (Girls of Hope, Girls of Honor) holistically aids in the development of 4th-12th grade girls by providing a safe place to discuss female related issues and instilling lessons around the four cornerstones of leadership, service, responsibility, and sisterhood. Each semester the girls study a building block of social emotional health (as identified by the Greater Good Science Center at the University of California, Berkley). In 2023, after nearly two years of fundraising, several girls traveled to New York City to explore a new city. **Tri-B Scouts** is a 4th-12th grade program designed to parallel the GoH GoH Girls program but for young men. New to scouting, participants raised over \$1,000 in popcorn sales last year and all troop members officially ranked as Scouts in 2023.

Scholars, in collaboration with the June Shelton School, provides tutoring for students with diagnosed or suspected learning differences. Using Sequential English Education (SEE) curriculum, students learn reading and writing using tools that align with how they best learn. Scholars continues to be onsite at Wesley-Rankin and at St. Mary of Carmel School. In 2023, the Literacy Program staff translated all our educational resources to Spanish, improving access to important tools for our families and created a referral and case management process for supplementary services and for families needing guidance in the learning difference diagnosis process. 53 students were served by Scholars in 2023.

Wesley-Rankin Aspiring Professionals (WRAP) is a pre-apprenticeship program for high school students, addressing gaps in workplace readiness and low living wages using a 4-part approach: technical instruction, soft skill coaching, financial support and literacy, and parent education. Technical training partners include Dallas College and Brass Tacks Collective. In 2023, WRAP expanded our summer internship offerings for 11 students and crafted a tailored financial literacy curriculum for participants and their families.

B3X (Beakers, Base Ten, and the Beat) is an energizing summer enrichment camp that provides expansive, hands-on learning experiences to reinforce core learning in science, math, art, and reading. Campers attend field trips and have breakfast, lunch and snacks provided daily. In 2023, middle school focused on human rights education, exploring identity, otherness, and character development. 6th grade students built friendships with our older adults via once/week character development lessons together, and high school students obtained their driver's permits and practiced swimming skills.

The Adult Academy creates a community of parents/guardians through education in courses such as English as a Second Language (ESL), health and nutrition, leadership development, and socio-emotional development of children. In 2023, WRCC expanded the course schedule, offering weekends and evening opportunities. From Spring to Fall 2023, the number of participants in the Adult Academy doubled. To meet new needs in housing support, WRCC assisted 102 families in the West and South Dallas neighborhoods with property tax appeals and homestead exemptions.

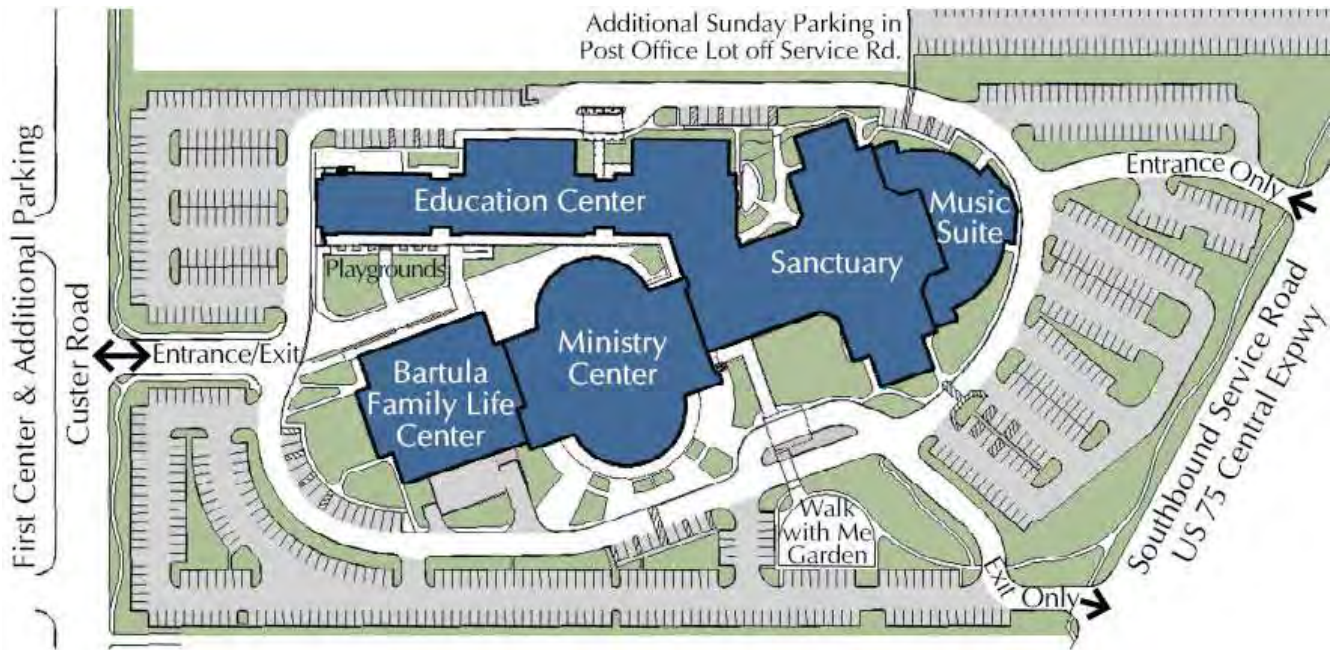
The Leadership Council, composed of neighborhood parents, ensures student/family needs are being addressed in local schools and West Dallas. The Council serves as a compass to Wesley-Rankin, providing voice to potential programs and their components.

Casa Feliz, our older adult program creates social networks, improves strength and balance, maintains cognitive health, improves nutrition, and manages chronic diseases. Breakfast and lunch are served daily with an awareness of dietary needs. Twice a week exercise classes along with a vibrant schedule of activities like dance, art, and music contribute to active lifestyles. We also visit homebound older adults to reduce isolation of those who are unable to physically attend the Center. In 2023, we served more older adults than ever, with an average daily attendance of 45 and over 70 participants enrolled. Between June and December 2023, 225 visits to homebound older adults took place, offering weekly self-care supplies, nutrition support, and enrichment resources.

Learn more at wesleyrankin.org/.

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH RICHARDSON

PARKING AND BUILDINGS



Parking lots surround the church's campus, as shown on the map.

Handicapped accessible and walking impaired parking spaces are near the buildings.
Guest parking is adjacent to the Walk with Me Garden.

Additional parking:

Across Custer Road, to the west side of campus (shuttle service provided)

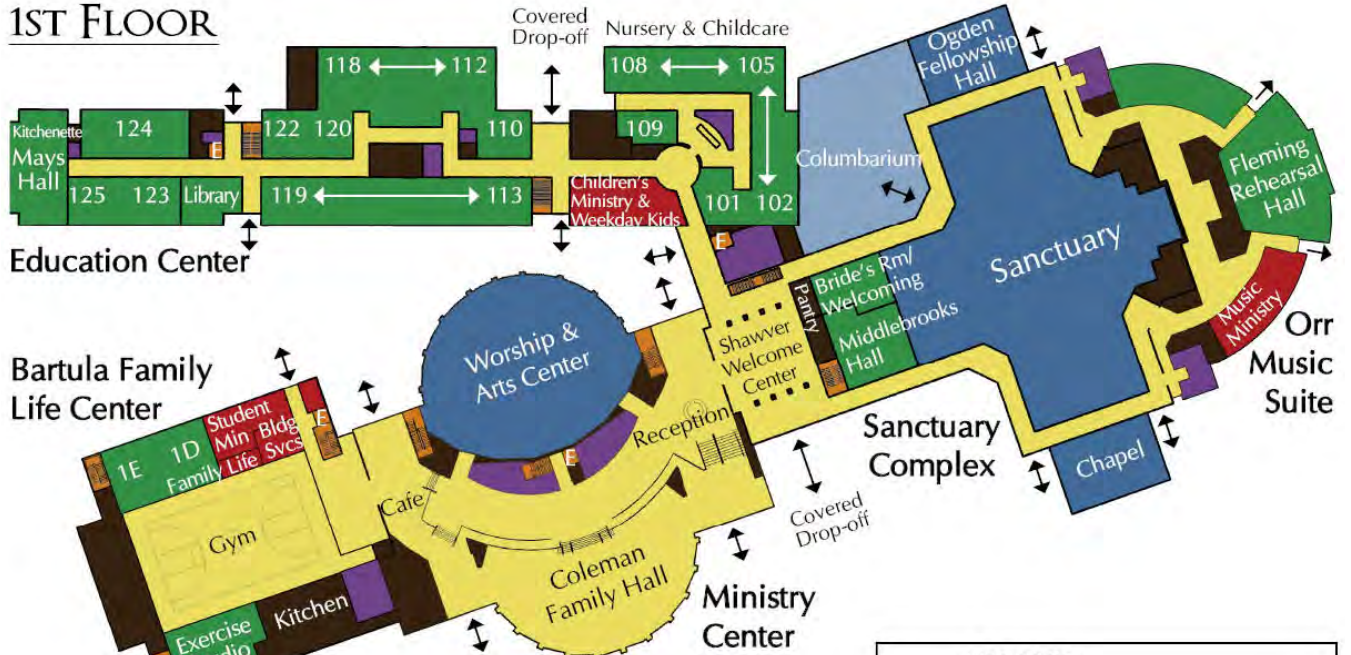
South of campus in the retail lot (Sundays only)

North of campus in the post office lot (Sunday mornings only)

Covered drop-offs are at the north side of the Education Center and the south side of the Sanctuary Complex.

https://www.fumcr.com/campus_site-plan

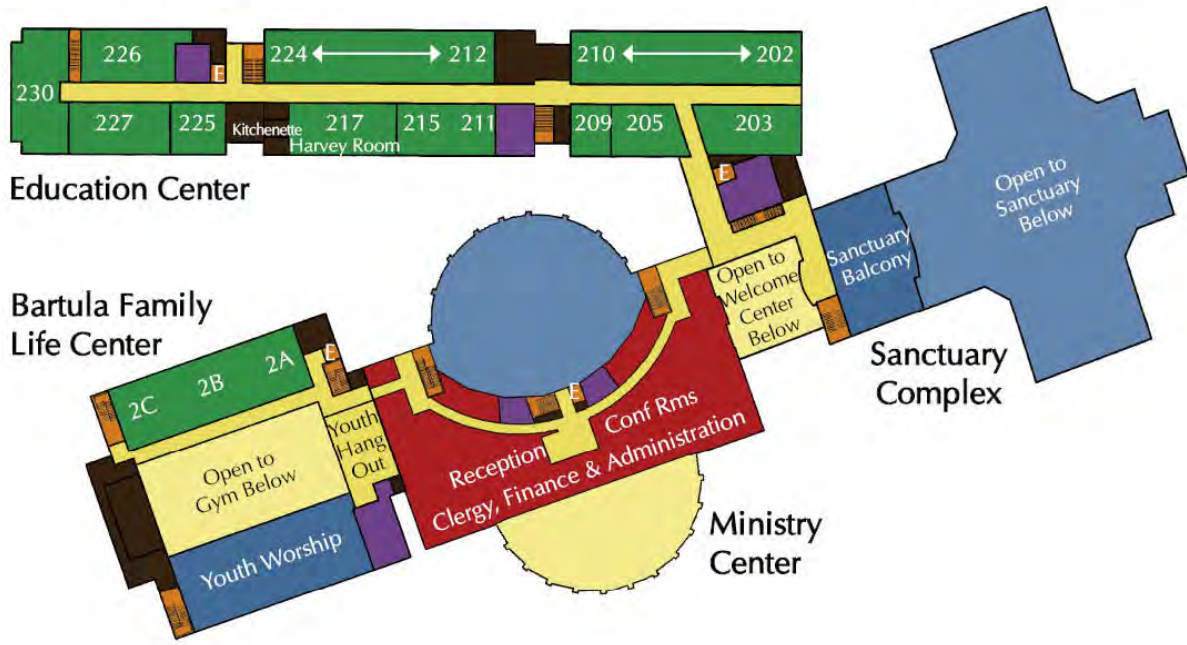
1ST FLOOR



LEGEND

- Entrances & Common Areas
- Worship Areas
- Classrooms
- Offices
- Restrooms
- Stairs & Elevators

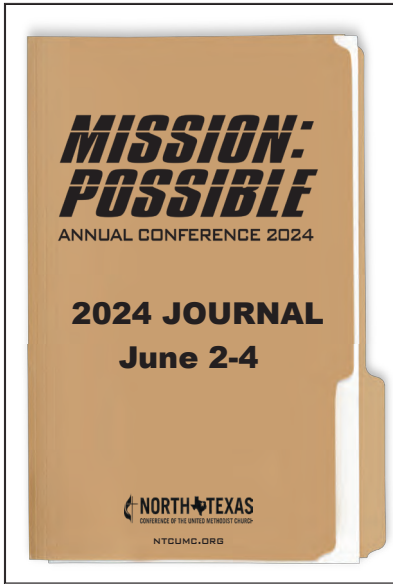
2ND FLOOR



https://www.fumcr.com/campus_floor-plans

2024 NORTH TEXAS CONFERENCE JOURNAL

ORDER FORM



The conference *Journal* will be available on the conference website, www.ntcumc.org/ac2024, in September in FULL COLOR in the 8 ½ x 11 size.

**If you wish to have a full bound copy of the 2024 NORTH TEXAS CONFERENCE JOURNAL, it will be available for purchase at \$50 each to those who pre-order and pre-pay for their copies and will only be printed in BLACK AND WHITE, no color, 8 ½ x 11 size.

If you do not need a printed copy of the entire *Journal*, but would like a bound copy of the 2024 CONFERENCE PERSONNEL DIRECTORY (consisting of the clergy directory, the lay member directory, the appointment pages, and the roster of conference agencies) will also be available for purchase at \$15 each to those who pre-order and pre-pay for their copies.

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

_____ # of printed black and white 2024 North Texas Conference Journal(s) at \$50 each

_____ # of printed black and white 2024 North Texas Conference Directory(s) at \$15 each

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Please make your check payable to “North Texas Conference” and write “2024 Journal” in the memo line. Mail your order to North Texas Conference Journal Order, P.O. Box 866128, Plano, TX 75086-6128 **BY AUGUST 1, 2024.**

****[Online ordering will be available at www.ntcumc.org/ac2024 through August 1.](http://www.ntcumc.org/ac2024)**

If you have questions, please contact Shirley Miller at miller@ntcumc.org or 972-526-5008.

North Texas
Conference



United
Women
in Faith

Mission u 2024



The Kin-dom is Among You Drawing Closer to God and One Another

Jesus told his followers the kin-dom was among them (Luke 17:21). At Mission u 2024, explore what this means and how living in close proximity to the kin-dom is like making a home with God. Participants are invited to develop practices for building healthy, welcoming communities as a result of being anchored in the abiding love of God. Together we'll examine Scripture and join in worship, fellowship, and action.

Retreat at UT-Dallas Fri. am - Sat. 5 pm , July 19 & 20

Evening Virtual Tues & Thurs @ 7 pm, dates TBD

Lunchtime Virtual Weekly @ noon, day & dates TBD



Rev. Christina Harvey
Retreat Study Leader



Rev. Danielle Kim
Retreat Study Leader



Rev. Gracie Millard
Retreat Study Leader



Rev. Rosedanny Ortiz
Retreat Worship Leader



Rev. Shandon Klein
Virtual Study Leader

More information & registration:
UWFNorthTexas.org/missionu

Study book \$15 at our AC ministry table or uwfaithresources.org/

