

## L. REPORTS

### Congregational Development

The Board of Congregational Development (BOCD) oversees the creation of new faith communities and supports vitality in existing congregations. It works in conjunction with the Greater Northwest Area (GNW) Cabinet, which deploys leaders, and the Innovation Vitality Team (IV Team), which staffs this ministry in the three conferences comprising the GNW Area.

Funding for this work comes from multiple sources—some from apportioned giving but most from legacy funds transferred by the Board of Trustees from the sale of church properties. Much of the investment over the last few years has been in new faith community development. BOCD celebrates the 14 projects currently under its care. You will see a complete listing of projects in the Innovation Vitality report.

In 2023, BOCD piloted a new funding process with Fowler UMC in Spokane, WA. Fowler UMC was in decline. Pastor Rene' Devantier, father to an autistic adult child, began wondering if Fowler might become a congregation intentionally inclusive of persons with disabilities and their families. The congregation was supportive but could not do the work alone.

BOCD provided financial support for project development, including specialized coaching for this ministry. Lynn Swedberg, UMC Deaconess and recognized expert in disabilities ministries, supported Fowler as it conducted a needs assessment, identified community partners, created budgets and metrics. Once viability was established, the Board of Congregational Development invited Fowler UMC to submit a formal proposal, which was funded in January 2024.

Rebranded as New Day Ministry, this project is becoming known in Spokane for centering and serving persons with disabilities and their families. We expect to learn from New Day as it practices equity and inclusion.

The new process, including a viability, proposal, and funding phase, will be analyzed for its use across the GNW Area in 2024 as the funding boards in the Pacific Northwest, Oregon-Idaho, and Alaska Conferences work together on standard policies and practices.

We celebrate the commitment of our planters/innovators to try new things on behalf of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This is hard and taxing work. Please pray for them and your BOCD that we may support them well.

*Kathy Hartgraves, Chair*

## Hispanic/ Latinx Ministry

Welcome to the PNW Hispanic/Latinx 2024 Annual Conference Report, where we celebrate the tangible outcomes of our dedicated ministries and their profound impact on our communities.

### Leadership Development:

We've implemented targeted programs and mentorship initiatives to identify and nurture emerging leaders within the Hispanic/Latinx community. Through training sessions and mentorship opportunities, we've equipped individuals with the skills and confidence to lead authentically and with vision.

### Church Development:

In these efforts, we are embarking on a transformative journey of establishing congregations in new places where diverse populations reside, including marginalized communities, refugees, and immigrants, representing both first and second-generation Spanish speakers. These endeavors are not merely about erecting physical structures but about building vibrant communities of faith that reflect the rich tapestry of our cultural diversity. Through intentional outreach and engagement, we create welcoming spaces where individuals from all walks of life feel valued, accepted, and empowered to explore their spirituality. By offering worship experiences in both Spanish and English, we ensure that everyone can fully participate and connect with the message of love, hope, and inclusion. These services serve as a bridge between cultures, fostering understanding, unity, and mutual respect among our diverse community members. This intentional focus on inclusivity and cultural relevance is shaping the landscape of our beloved PNW Conference and serving as a model for what it means to be an inclusive church in today's world. By actively engaging with marginalized communities and embracing diversity in all its forms, we are expanding the reach of our ministry and embodying the transformative message of Christ's love and acceptance for all. As we journey forward, let us remain steadfast in our commitment to building communities where everyone is welcomed, affirmed, and celebrated for who they are. We are shaping a more compassionate, inclusive, and equitable future for all. Inspired by the compassion and grace of our God, we seek to joyfully embrace and serve with all people.

### Advocacy:

We've taken bold steps to confront systemic injustices and dismantle barriers to equality. Through advocacy campaigns, educational workshops, and partnerships with community organizations, we're actively working to eliminate racism and create a more just society for all. By centering the voices and experiences of marginalized communities, we're driving meaningful change and building a future where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

The PNW Hispanic/Latinx Ministry exemplifies our commitment to the Bishop's M.I.L.E initiative. Our Strategic Plan reflects our commitment to embodying the ethos of the Bishop's M.I.L.E vision. Our plan expresses our dedication to Ministries that Matter, Itineration and Location, Lay Ministry enhancement, and Eliminating Racism. We aim to prioritize

the holistic development and empowerment of our Hispanic/Latinx communities through targeted initiatives and intentional strategies. Ministries that Matter are at the forefront as we identify and address the most pressing needs of our congregations and neighborhoods. Itineration and Location within the context of pastoral leadership involves a strategic and intentional deployment of clergy to serve in areas where their unique gifts and talents can be most effectively utilized to fulfill the church's mission. This process goes beyond simply assigning pastors to congregations based on availability or convenience; instead, it aims to match pastors with mission fields where their skills, experiences, and passions align with the specific needs and opportunities of the community. Lay Ministry enhancement is a cornerstone as we cultivate a culture where every Layperson is empowered to contribute their unique gifts and talents to our shared mission. Eliminating Racism through the Institutional Equity Cohort, which I am actively participating in, and the Congregational Equity Cohort, we are equipping people to confront systemic injustices and build a future rooted in equity, justice, and compassion. As we embark on this journey guided by the Bishop's vision, our Strategic Plan serves as a roadmap for realizing our collective aspirations and building a thriving, inclusive, and vibrant community for all.

### Summary of events/programs/projects

- Hispanic/Latinx Leaders Encounter with the participation of our Bishop Cedrick Bridgeford, Rev. Dr. Lydia Munoz from the National Plan Office, and Jorge Berrios Spanish Version of the Upper Room in Nashville
- Facilitating the process to read the Spanish Version of the Upper Room in the Voice Tacoma Radio Universal
- Board member of CWJFON
- CLM Board meetings
- Coordinating and providing support to our GNW Disaster Response Team.
- Provided Leadership support to District Superintendents, leading the Charge Conferences of Hispanic/Latinx Congregations
- Coordinating and providing support to our Students of the COSS
- Promoting and recruiting participants to be part of "Entre Nos": a National Plan event
- Promote and recruit participants to be part of the GCORR Facing the Future event. Empowering Clergy serving in Cross-Racial and Cross-Cultural Ministries.
- Providing resources to Celebrate the Hispanic Heritage Month
- Producing our Quarterly Newsletter
- Providing support and Leadership for Puget-Sound Missional District in a strategic plan for H/L Ministry in Skagit County
- Providing support and Leadership for Sea-Tac Missional District in a strategic

plan for our Hispanic/Latinx Progressive Church in Sea-Tac Missional District

- Providing leadership and resources to the Crest to Coast Missional District
- Providing support and leadership to our Cabinet with Pastors Consultations with Hispanic/Latinx Pastors
- Providing resources and translations for our BOOM and DBOM
- Coordinating workshops: How to organize the work of the Local Church
- Providing Leadership and Resources for our 2024 Ethnic Clergy Retreat: Retreat, Relax & Renew
- Staff related to the PNW Commission on Ethnic Ministries
- Providing support and help to our churches applying for the RELC Grant. Member of the PNW grant writers group
- Providing Coaching and Mentoring services
- Leading and Coordinating the Production of our Hispanic/Latinx Ministry Video for our 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024 AC
- Participating in the PNW Connectional Table
- Participating in the BOTH/AND & Using A.I. tools in the church event
- Providing support and resources to FAN, “Faith Action Network”
- Providing Leadership and resources to the O/I leaders to develop a Strategic Plan for the Hispanic/Latinx Ministry
- Providing Leadership as the Chairperson of the WJ Hispanic/Latinx Council
- Member of the WJ Interethnic Committee and Board Member of MARCHA and MARCHA West Caucuses
- Providing leadership, resources, and facilitating a new H/L Project in Ontario, OR area
- Providing leadership in the OCM Staff retreat
- Providing leadership and resources to the PNW Board of Congregational Development
- Providing resources and leadership to the O/I CORR
- Providing leadership, translation/interpretation to the IV Team with our Innovators
- Candidates and our H/L Church planters
- Promoting the M.I.L.E vision among the H/L Community (translating and facilitating conversations in our communities)
- Providing cultural interpretation for the PNW Extended Cabinet
- Promoting and leading our Hispanic/Latinx Winter Dinner at El Dios Viviente

- Managing the Social Media page: “We welcome Immigrants-UMC of the Greater Northwest
- Providing Pulpit Supplied preaching in different churches in PNW and Oregon-Idaho
- Participating and promoting: “Dia de los Muertos”, Virtual Vigil for Migrant Death by the Immigration Law and Justice Network

### Aspirations for 2024-2025

- To coordinate workshops about how to embrace Multiculturalism in the local church
- To continue providing leadership formation events for our leaders and communities
- To continue providing coaching, mentoring, and translation services for our connection
- To coordinate an encounter #1 with the National Plan leaders
- To continue offering the Safe Sanctuaries workshop in Spanish
- To coordinate a workshop for children and youth ministries
- To coordinate a Hispanic/Latinx families retreat during the Labor Day Weekend
- To continue sending youth to participate in Spanglish and SLAM Camps
- To finalize the Review of our Strategic Plan with the National Plan Office, Cabinet, and Conference Hispanic/Latinx Committee
- To lead in establishing new Hispanic/Local Churches and Ministries.

We’re determined to participate actively in decision-making processes, ensuring our new churches have better access to available funds.

### Key Learning

- National Plan and conference resources and funds that we are receiving are crucial to continue strengthening the Latinx ministry in our episcopal area
- We need to be better connected to every church planting in the Latinx community
- We need to incorporate more young and young adult leaders into our ministry
- We need to be more proactive in discovering new places for Latinx ministry
- We need more participation of our Latinx community at the conference level
- We need to evaluate the criteria and the process to select and recruit Latinx Pastoral leadership
- We need to continue our efforts to integrate the Latinx from the GNW

I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Members of the Conference Hispanic/Latinx Committee for your exceptional support and collaboration in coordinating the Hispanic/Latinx ministry in the Pacific Northwest Conference. Your dedication and tireless efforts have been instrumental in advancing our mission and fostering a sense of unity and belonging within our communities.

I want to express a special word of thanks to our Chairperson, Aurora Pavon. Aurora, your leadership has been nothing short of remarkable. Your guidance, wisdom, and unwavering commitment have provided a solid foundation for our work. Your ability to navigate challenges gracefully and inspire others with your passion for serving our Hispanic/Latinx communities has been truly inspiring. In every event and initiative, Aurora, you have played a crucial role. Your attention to detail, your willingness to lend a helping hand, and your ability to facilitate the process have been invaluable. Your dedication to ensuring that every member feels heard and valued has driven our success.

I am deeply grateful for the privilege of working alongside such a dedicated and talented group of individuals. Each of you brings a unique perspective and set of skills to our collective efforts, and together, we have achieved remarkable things. Our work is a testament to the power of collaboration and the strength of our community. Thank you, once again, for your support and commitment. It is an honor to serve alongside you, and I look forward to continuing our journey together as we work toward a more inclusive and equitable future for all.

### **Central Washington Justice for our Neighbors** *“An Example of a Ministry that Matters”*

More than 80,000 people in Washington State are estimated to be undocumented. Workers with varied statuses comprise much of the workforce in critical sectors, including agriculture, elder care, and the service industry. For a person with varied status, navigating daily life is complicated by the fear of deportation, separating families, and feeling unable to trust anyone they meet.

- Since 2018, Central Washington Justice for Our Neighbors (CWJFON) has provided meaningful support to the most vulnerable members of our communities by serving low-income immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers in Central and Eastern Washington.
- CWJFON’s mission is to provide free immigration legal services to low-income community members and support pro-immigrant policy change at the local and state levels.
- Our programs include:
  - Pro-bono immigration legal services
  - Legal aid clinics
  - Referrals to other safe, direct service providers such as healthcare, mental health, housing, and more
  - Mutual Aid Fund for workers (active during the pandemic, moved \$250,000)
  - Community Engagement and Organizing
  - Advocacy with state and local governments

CWJFON's legal team directly serves 100 to 200 individuals, families, and unaccompanied minors annually. Our legal aid workshops reach an additional 50 to 100 people annually.

In our five years in operation, we have closed 119 immigration cases and have 232 cases currently open. 95% of cases have been for rural clients, and 100% of cases have been for clients living under 200% of the federal poverty rate. Due to funding limitations, we can only serve a fraction of the 80,000 people in our state who need support.

### **Advocasy**

Keep Washington Working Act and the Courts Open to All Act. We worked with the ACLU and other partners to develop two legislative acts that have since been adopted.

### **Pro-Bono Legal Services**

Our legal team offers support around U-Visas, asylum cases, removal defense, DACA renewals, naturalization support, work permits, legal advice, and counsel. Many of the clients we serve have multiple cases or legal issues, and we offer support for all the client's needs.

We currently have 4 contracted immigration attorneys and 2 paralegals. We are seeking to hire 2 full-time attorneys in-house to expand our services and continue the incredible work we have accomplished to date. To continue to grow, we must keep pay equity in mind and offer competitive compensation to find immigration attorneys willing to relocate to rural Washington to meet the needs of the underserved populations that comprise a large part of our communities.

To provide our services, we rely on individual donations and larger foundational support to stay at our current capacity. Examples of this are \$10,000 annually from one private donor in Seattle (for 3 years: 2024 will be the second year of this donation, \$25,000 from a second private donor in Seattle, \$160,000 from Satterberg Foundation for 2024, \$570,000 over 3 years from Inatai Foundation, we have received our last dispersal of this fund but are in consideration for a renewal.

For us to grow and meet the actual needs of Central and Eastern Washington immigrant populations, we will need to increase our annual budget from \$550,000 to at least \$1 million annually.

The Pacific Northwest Conference of the United Methodist Church has greatly supported CWJFON over the past 6 years. As a ministry of the Methodist Church, we ask that you all consider reaffirming your commitment to us as an organization, to our neighbors, to your congregants, and to your pastors, who are all impacted by our national immigration system. Please use the Advance Special Account #339 Central Washington Justice for our Neighbors.

Using rates for comparable for-profit law firms, we estimate that, since 2018, our clients would have paid \$425,000 in legal costs if they had not received pro-bono services from CWJFON.

### Client Story

Rene was 15 years old and scared. He had fled his home country from gang members who threatened and beat him. His mother said he would be safe in the United States. His uncle, who lived in rural Washington State, had promised her that he would take good care of his nephew. But there was no warm family welcome. Instead, his uncle insisted that Rene owed him a debt that seemed to grow the longer Rene stayed constantly. Within a week, Rene worked in the local agricultural industry 10 hours a day, six days a week. He was not allowed to attend school or to make friendships. He did many of the household chores. And almost all his wages went to his uncle. Rene was worried about his mother and younger siblings. “If I told him I wanted to send money to my mom,” Rene says, “he got angry and said it wasn’t fair.” “Uncle said that if I didn’t behave or do what I was told to do,” says Rene in a quiet voice, “he would report me to Immigration.” When his uncle eventually kicked Rene out of their house, Rene found shelter with a co-worker. He began working part-time at a local restaurant and returned to school.

Rene had just turned 18 and was in removal proceedings when Max Olarsch, staff attorney for CWJFON, first met him in an office provided by the school.

“My first impression was that this was someone who had a lot of [legal] options available to him,” recalls Max. “But Rene was very quiet and reserved. I needed to make as few assumptions as possible, working slowly and carefully, and allow him to proceed at his own pace.”

Max lives in Seattle, and Rene is nearly four hours away. But Max realized that their meetings had to be held face-to-face. He began making the trek through the Cascade Mountains to see his new client regularly, once even getting stuck for hours in a snow-storm.

Max got Rene’s removal proceedings dismissed. He then worked on a way for Rene to stay in his new home. Meanwhile, Rene is receiving psychological evaluations and support from a local organization that helps survivors of labor trafficking. He is slowly learning to face the deep trauma of his adolescence so he can truly begin to build a new life for himself.

“Labor trafficking doesn’t receive the attention sex trafficking does, even though it entails similar kinds of exploitation and manipulation,” says Max. By courageously exposing labor trafficking in rural Washington State, Rene is making his new home a safer and better community.

¡Muchas bendiciones!

**Rev. Cruz Edwin Santos**

*Director of Hispanic/Latinx Ministry, PNW Conference*



## Transitional Ministry Development

### Idaho Falls United Methodist Churches

This year has been unusual for me. I was asked to serve the two Idaho Falls churches, St. Paul's and Trinity UMCs, for one year on an interim basis. For very different reasons, these two churches needed help with a challenging transition year. The bishop and the combined Cabinet were very invested in seeing that the United Methodist ministry continues in this area. The Cabinet committed to sending an extended Cabinet member each month to share their gifts with the Idaho Falls churches. I spent the first two Sundays of every month and the week in between in Idaho Falls providing pastoral leadership, and then the rest of the month providing this same care remotely (I live in Vancouver, WA.). My tenure at the Idaho Falls churches ended early when Rev. Elizabeth McVicker was appointed to serve as their pastor, effective March 1.

This work was very similar to my work with small churches here in the PNW, but only for a longer time. I usually only work with small churches needing help with transitions for one or two weekends, plus follow-up work related to their chosen next steps for ministry. In Idaho Falls, I was able to spend much more time getting to know the people and the circumstances that brought them to their transition point in ministry. I've learned new skills and approaches to helping small churches. I will share these new learnings regarding Bishop's Cedrick's M.I.L.E.

### Idaho Falls United Methodist Church

Most churches of this size (with fewer than 25 people in worship) have about 2-3 years left to experience vital ministry, through which people grow closer to God, and help build the kingdom of God.

Many of these churches will keep their doors open long past the time when they are experiencing vital ministry.

### Ministry that Matters

Both church congregations moved toward an understanding that effective United Methodist ministry in Idaho Falls will require the two congregations to work together. In the past, they saw themselves as separate churches with different missions. They spent much time deepening their relationships and developing a shared vision of United Methodist ministry for the area. We have focused on two areas of ministry: ministry with and for the older congregation members of both churches and ministry that focuses our efforts on the community's needs. For the ministries focused on the community, we hope to build partnerships with other agencies and churches to identify the community's greatest needs and then develop shared ministries that help us build relationships with the people we serve. The areas we are currently expanding are our ministries with the houseless and our ministries related to children in the foster care system.

We are also looking at the future ministries that the Trinity UM church building will allow us to offer to the community. The Trinity UM building is a wonderful "downtown,"

historic, enormous structure that is difficult and expensive to maintain. The congregations are building relationships with other partners to expand and renew the possible ministries in that structure.

I believe ministries that matter build transforming relationships among church members and community members. However, we need to help congregations build skills related to forming those relationships and avoid judging congregation members for not having those skills. This is not an area we have traditionally emphasized in our UM churches, and we need to recognize we are starting from scratch in many situations.

### **Itinerancy and Location**

It is hard for congregations to understand that we do not have enough qualified pastors to fill all our ministry needs. However, I believe the Cabinet and the Board of Ordained Ministry need to be clear that committing to ministry in our Greater NW area means potentially serving in places that are far-flung, rural, or which have a theological and social character different from the usual liberal, urban settings many pastors come from.

### **Lay Leader Enhancement**

Laity at both churches took on new roles and did marvelous work keeping the Idaho Falls churches running smoothly during this interim year. Many folks found gifts for ministry they did not know about!

Both churches need help learning how to recruit new leaders. They need to move from just announcing a job opening to connecting with congregation members, learning about their gifts for ministry, and then connecting those people to the jobs that will allow them to use their gifts.

Because of our circumstances, I encouraged people to consider trying preaching. During my time in Idaho Falls, about eight people gave preaching a try. This lay preaching ministry has been well received, and folks would like to continue it in the future.

### **Eliminating Racism**

This was not an emphasis during the past year. One possible avenue for engagement in this area is developing a partnership with the Museum of Idaho. Their mission statement includes, "One purpose of the Museum of Idaho, as stated in our by-laws, is to increase the understanding of and tolerance of the varied cultures, lifestyles, and belief systems of the people of our region. To fully realize our institution's mission, we must amplify the voices of marginalized groups."

### **Conference Committee on Certified Lay Ministries.**

I am a Conference staff liaison for the Conference Committee on Certified Lay Ministries. This year, we completed work on an operations manual detailing the steps necessary for a person to become a certified lay servant, speaker, minister, or Hispanic Lay Minister. All of this information is on the PNW Conference website. We hosted two classes for certification: Advanced Preaching and Introduction to Ministry: The Basic Course. We

recommend that people seeking certification look for other classes offered by other Annual Conferences or through the BeADisciple.com website. We plan to host a gathering of CLMs at the 2024 Annual Conference. This work is deeply connected to the L of M.I.L.E: Lay leadership Enhancement.

Respectfully submitted,

***Kathy Neary***

*Transitional Ministry Developer*

## Communications Report

The last year was a busy one for our conference communications work in the Office of Connectional Ministries. With the arrival of Bishop Cedrick Bridgeforth, the number of events and activities snapped back to pre-pandemic levels. New practices and commitments to offer online streaming and other hybrid options have increased the difficulty for many of our events, even as they provide accessibility and transparency for those interested in how decisions are made.

During the Spring and into Summer, our tech team dedicated a lot of time to planning for and supporting a series of events welcoming the new bishop and formally ‘installing’ him at a service in Juneau, Alaska. Our team also supported the 2023 Alaska and Pacific Northwest Annual Conference Sessions, ensuring streaming and remote participation for members. It involved much preparation and significant travel while providing opportunities for our staff to grow in their gifts and graces.

Partnering with the episcopal office and communications colleagues, we supported two efforts to digitally introduce the bishop to the expansive Greater Northwest Area (GNW). We hosted several digital meet-and-greets where clergy and lay members could hear from the bishop, lift up the ministries they are engaged in, and ask him questions. We also published a fun series of short videos titled “[Meet Bishop Cedrick](#),” where the bishop answered questions received from people in the pews.

During the Spring, I was honored to attend and digitally caption the celebratory chartering of [Ola Toe Fuataina United Methodist Church](#). In a year where our staff would oversee two online Special Sessions (in May and September) to process a handful of disaffiliation requests, it was a blessing to see this congregation enthusiastically become a chartered United Methodist church.

During the 2023 season of conferencing mentioned above, Bishop Bridgeforth offered the GNW area a framework for approaching our shared ministry called the M.I.L.E (Ministries that Matter, Itinerancy and Location, Lay Ministry Enhancement, and Eliminating Racism). In addition to helping to [pull together the resources and sermons](#) related to the M.I.L.E., I have been using the framework to help prioritize the stories and opportunities we tell and share. Housing ministries and those providing basic shelter for our human siblings have long been a part of much of our church’s DNA, and an emphasis on that in 2023 has inspired new work in this area. In 2024, as we turn toward wellness as a ‘Ministries that Matter’ priority, I’m looking forward to seeing a similar reinvestment in the different dimensions of health. Encouraged by climate care-related legislation passed by members of our 2023 annual conference session, we have already initiated conversations about our ecological health with a small team focused on implementations and next steps.

In 2023, I was invited to serve as the Western Jurisdiction’s Communications Team convener. In this role, I supported the WJ College of Bishops as they navigated the trial of one of their colleagues. I also represent the communicators on the WJ Leadership Team and support the WJ Program and Arrangements Committee as they plan for the next ju-

risdictional conference in Spokane in July. As 2024 begins, the communicators have again turned their eyes toward collaboration during the General and Western Jurisdictional Conferences later this year.

I attended the United Methodist Association of Communicators (UMAC) event in South Carolina in October. The annual event provides opportunities for learning, networking, and celebration of the ministry of communications. It has been valuable to attend, particularly in advance of the General Conference, which was one of several topics of the gathering. During an awards gala, a photo that I had the honor of capturing of Bishop Bridgeforth embracing his husband after his election to the episcopacy received first place in a photography division.

In November, we invited Jason Moore back to lead an online workshop on how churches can utilize an emerging class of A.I. tools to spur creativity and increase productivity. Over 200 clergy and lay folks registered to participate in the training, where Moore worked to educate attendees on how to collaborate with these tools. Participants also discussed some of the ethical implications and potential for misuse.

As part of our GNW Area work toward 'Eliminating Racism' (the 'E' in the M.I.L.E.), I have been participating in an Institutional Equity Cohort. Over six sessions roughly over six months, it is one of three cohorts gathering individuals to deeply explore concepts relating to diversity, inclusion, and equity. It has already provided some helpful ways to understand conflict and how we can improve the ways we work together across differences.

As I write this, we are finalizing the publication of 'Funding Mission and Ministry,' a document that helps congregations understand how far their shared ministry gifts go to make a positive impact in the conference and around the globe. Last published in 2019, the new edition includes more information about conference-level programs, scholarships, and award opportunities.

I finished the 2023 calendar year on personal leave, an appreciated gift after several long years filled with challenging work and the passing of my father, grandfather and mother. I am deeply grateful to fellow staff members who helped to pick up the slack while I was away and for all those who patiently waited for responses to questions that required my input.

The past several years have been difficult for so many. Serving in The United Methodist Church through a pandemic, the malaise of declining membership, and the strife of church conflict have strained many of our leaders. Our focus on wellness this year will also give us openings to care for each other and the space to reassess the systems and expectations that continue to cause harm.

With General, Jurisdictional and Annual Conference Sessions providing opportunities for the Church to set a new course and an election offering those in the U.S. an occasion to do the same, 2024 is ripe with possibilities. What will happen may be beyond our individual control, but we should never lose sight of the ministry opportunities right before us. Most people are invited into discipleship in the local church, and our churches have

more agency, and responsibility, than they sometimes imagine. While we may pray for change at the denominational level, we don't need to wait to be faithful.

A new United Methodist quadrennium is right around the corner. Emerging leaders will come to the proverbial table to offer their insights and vision, helping to shape our ministry for the next four years and beyond. I look forward to partnering with them to share the resources they will develop and “to tell the old, old story of Jesus and his love.”

**Patrick Scriven**

*Director of Communications, PNW Conference*

## Connectional Ministries Associate

The M.I.L.E. has been very helpful in guiding my work this year. While much of my Connectional Ministry's work fell within these areas in previous years, having these clearly defined goals helped me to focus and promote my work.

I have prioritized housing for persons devastated by fires throughout my time with the Inland and Seven Rivers Districts. This work fits into the "M": Ministries that Matter. UMCOR and UMVIM have embraced housing for those in greatest need through their work with the Okanogan Long-Term Recovery Group. In the spring of 2023, we completed the last of 49 homes. Just as that work concluded, the August 2023 fires in Spokane County snapped us into action to deliver 200 hygiene kits to fire survivors at the evacuation shelters and box fan "cleaner air filters" to homes near the affected area. We are assessing how to participate in the Spokane County Long-Term Recovery effort. Kathy Bryson is in touch with the Spokane County Long Term Recovery Group, and we anticipate helping with unmet needs as they emerge. Individual area churches have contributed to the PNW Disaster Advance #352, so funds will be available when needed. The Inland District Choir's Palm Sunday Cantata's offering will support this work.

My work with Lay Servant Ministries relates to the "I": Itineracy and Location, and the "L": Lay Ministry Enhancement. As fewer clergy are available, and many churches have less than full-time clergy or are lay leads, training for the laity is crucial. I invited churches to respond to the bishop's challenge to pray for and train one new leader this year during Charge Conference season. Because there was a significant response to this challenge, I taught the Lay Servant Ministries' Basic Course in the winter with 16 students completing the course, and I will teach the course again in April. This gateway course opens the way into the certification process for Lay Servants, Lay Speakers, and Lay Ministers, as well as a myriad of other courses offered on BeADisciple.com. Our Inland District also sponsored Lay Pastoral Care training for lay persons across the PNW. Moving forward into 2024/25, the opportunity to partner with worship specialist Marcia McFee to offer worship training to our Certified Lay Ministers and Lay Lead congregations will enhance worship leadership in our smaller churches.

The "E": Eliminating Racism was central to my work with SLAM Trips. While plans were made for participation in this native lead youth mission focusing on cultural learning and service on the Yakama reservation before the introduction of the M.I.L.E., the program gained momentum with our emphasis on eliminating racism. In 2023, 60 United Methodist youth, leaders, and chaperones from across the Greater Northwest participated. In 2024, 150 spots have been spoken for in the three weeks sponsored by the GNW Youth Collaborative, with a few other Methodist groups overflowing into regular SLAM Trips weeks. UMVIM has been an amazing partner offering insurance and scholarship support, and The Commissions on Ethnic Ministries helped minority students participate through scholarship assistance. Hispanic Ministries will also be among our scholarship funders in 2024. The scholarship support given to ethnic youth increased the diversity of the 2023 SLAM Trip, making it a truly multi-cultural experience for GNW youth and our native hosts.

I also had the opportunity to travel to Hong Kong with UMVIM WJ coordinator Ronda Cordill to experience the work of UM missionary/deaconess Joy Prim and her partners at the Mission for Migrant Domestic Workers. This ministry, now in its 40th year, serves migrant domestic workers. The mission offers health checks and various trainings to migrant domestic workers regularly and provides emergency shelter and legal services for those who find themselves in difficult situations. While racism is often thought of as an American problem, abuse of human rights throughout the world is often rooted in racism and economic inequity. In Hong Kong, domestic workers from the Philippines, Indonesia, Nepal, and other low-wage countries are at high risk of abuse. Many of our PNW churches support Joy Prim's partnership with this effort, and at the invitation of the Mission for Migrant Workers, UMVIM seeks to partner with their ministry through mission teams and Zoom training in the coming years.

Several of the ministries noted above have taken us beyond the PNW. The Greater Northwest Youth Collaborative SLAM Trip is an example of this. OR-ID, Alaska, and the PNW were all represented on the 2023 trip. This collaboration greatly encouraged youth and their leaders. PNW and OR-ID are represented in 2024, with Murray Crookes from Alaska coming on the leadership team.

Lay Servant Ministries now crosses conference lines as people can cross-register for classes in several Western Jurisdiction conferences. I was grateful for the opportunity to sit in on a Cal-Pac CLM course and an Alaska LMS Basic Course as I prepared to teach. Through COVID, our PNW students depended on OR-ID and Mountain Sky's Basic Course and Spiritual Gifts class. It was a blessing that Be A Disciple's online classes were approved for CLM training. Technology has enabled cross-conference opportunities to be made possible. Now, perhaps we should be more intentional about our collaboration. It would be wise to assess and utilize what each conference is doing well. Rather than duplicating programs at each conference, we could focus on different programs to fill the existing gaps.

The partnership in Hong Kong also takes us far beyond our conference. While we can serve and support the established ministry there, the opportunity to learn is equally important. This program, begun by a Filipina missionary to Hong Kong, was a grassroots movement to respond to a need; you might call it a "ministry that matters." Our American churches and conferences could learn a great deal from their work about opening our eyes to needs, building relationships to address the needs, and their commitment to stand with the people in need for the long term as they have incrementally expanded their services.

The greatest resource needed for the programs I am involved in is consistent scholarships for SLAM Trips. The pool of money UMVIM graciously offered up in our first year to get the program off the ground is nearly exhausted. Similarly, Ethnic and Hispanic Ministries' funding has been cut, so while they are very supportive, the amount they can give is decreasing. Therefore, it is essential that we somehow have funding specifically for SLAM Trip scholarships.

If I continue in this area, I need to know how to avail myself of training opportunities for



Lay Servant Ministries. We also need to have a plan for CLM training (are we going to use BeADisciple.com long term, avail of programs of other conferences, collaborate, or have our own program?). Within PNW, systematic record keeping of Certified Lay Servant and Lay Speakers and a review of the CLM record keeping are needed. The bishop's emphasis on lay leadership enhancement this year has increased the number of persons I advise and teach. My workload has increased considerably to exceed my half-time status.

My key learnings center around focus, collaboration, and persistence. The M.I.L.E. has given us focus. There is renewed excitement about doing important ministry work in churches and conference work. I hope that new leadership on boards will bring us new energy to take what we have learned about technology and partnerships during COVID to new levels of collaboration.

Respectfully submitted,

***Sheila Miranda***

*Assistant for Connectional Ministries*

## Archives and History

The conference year 2023 – 2024 has again been a quiet one for the Pacific Northwest United Methodist Church (PNWUMC) archives. A few inquiries into baptismal and marriage records have been able to be researched. A list of pastors assigned to the now closed McCleary Methodist church, requested by the local historical society, was compiled. Archive material has been donated to/received by the archives through the mail. The commission has not met during the year.

This year, at Annual Conference, the commission will present certificates honoring John A. Brewer, Craig A. Parrish, and Edward D. Purkey for the 50th anniversary of their ordination as Elder in The United Methodist Church; Pharis J. Harvey, Donald D. Larson, Jerry F. Smith, and J. Edsel White for the 60th anniversary of their ordination as Elder in The Methodist Church; Milton D. Wolf for the 60th anniversary of his ordination as Elder in the Evangelical United Brethren; and Walter K. Sauer for the 70th anniversary of his ordination as Elder in the Methodist Church.

The 1996 General Conference of The United Methodist Church separated the order of Deacon from that of Elder, creating a new, fully ordained, full member, and group within the UMC clergy. The following year, at the PNWUMC Annual Conference, Kay C. Barckley and Janet M. Leonard were ordained as Deacon in The United Methodist Church, making 2022 the 25th anniversary of that event. In 1998, R. Scott Duncan, Jr. and Mark A. Haberman were ordained as Deacon in The United Methodist Church, making 2023 the 25th anniversary of that event. The anniversaries of these four were recognized at the PNWUMC Gathering of the Orders in September of 2023. This year, at the Annual Conference, the PNWUMC Commission on Archives and History will present certificates honoring those four Deacons, as well as honoring Kristin A. Ellison-Oslin and Suzanne K. Seaton for the 25th anniversary of their ordination as Deacon in The United Methodist Church.

This year is the One Hundred Fiftieth anniversary of the first Annual Session of Churches and Ministry Settings in Washington, Northern Idaho, and British Columbia. Before 1874 Methodist Episcopal churches in this area were part of the Oregon Conference, and Methodist Episcopal South churches were part of the Northwest Conference, which included Oregon, Montana, all of Idaho, and Eastern Washington. In September of 1874, the Columbia River Conference met for the first time, and it was composed of M. E. churches from Eastern Washington, Northern Idaho, and Northeastern Oregon. The conference headquarters were in The Dalles, Oregon. In 1884, the M. E. churches in Western Washington were split from the Oregon Conference to form the Puget Sound Conference. In 1929 the Pacific Northwest Conference was formed, composed of M. E. churches in Washington, Alaska, and Northern Idaho, with a “Swedish District” comprised of the Swedish M. E. churches in the Puget Sound, Vancouver/Portland, and Spokane areas.

The official records and archives of the Pacific Northwest Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church are located at the conference office in Des Moines, Washington, at The Bridge in Tacoma, Washington, and at Central Church in Richland, Washington.

***Rev. William M. Bryan, Jr.***

*Chair, PNW Commission on Archives and History*

## Camping Board of Stewards

The Camping Board of Stewards (CBS) mission statement is “Forming and renewing spiritual life through gracious hospitality in inspiring places, empowered leadership, effective management and resources, and broad connections.” CBS currently oversees 4 camps in the PNW Conference: Indianola, Lazy F, Ocean Park and Twinlow. We are happy to share some highlights of how we have worked to live into our mission over this past year in hopes that you will feel connected to this mission and ministry.

### Formong and renewing spiritual life

We are excited that guest groups are again feeling comfortable returning to our Camp and Retreat Ministry centers. This past year, we have seen our camper numbers and camp usage grow. God has blessed us as we have worked diligently to provide a great, God-centered, inspired, and motivated camp experience to all, regardless of age. Our camp usage includes church retreats, special interest groups, and personal retreats for pastoral staff, as well as hosting several groups from outside the United Methodist Church.



### Gracious hospitality in inspiring places

This year, Lazy F Camp and Retreat Center received recognition from the Kittitas County Chamber of Commerce and was voted the best Outdoor Recreation/Activity in Kittitas County. We believe all our summer camps are awesome - and it is great to have this recognition for one of them! Our camps continue to serve school-age children who benefit from the approved Outdoor Education for All in Washington State.

This past year, Camp Indianola was blessed to have Pete Simpson continue to help lead us through our Madrona Lodge build and to graciously help us as interim director. We want to thank Pete and his family for all they have done for Camp Indianola and our campers. The lodge is 95% complete. Just some finishing touches to go! As with every church, the lands and buildings in our care need repairs to keep them safe for our campers and guests.

Current projects and considerations include:

- renovation and renaming of the “old dining hall” at Lazy F
- updating the bath houses at Ocean Park and Twinlow
- The Doe-Kag-Wats (the marshy land just north of the campfire pit) has been known to Camp Indianola as a sacred land to the Suquamish Tribe. The tribe continues to show great interest in this land and other land that used to belong to the Suquamish, which has prompted social justice and land reclamation discussions that are likely to continue and deepen over the next year.

**Empowered leadership**

The CBS board is excited to share that after prayerful consideration, we have hired a new director to lead Camp Indianola: Rev. David Collins. David, his wife Romi, and their two daughters join us from New York State. We are excited to see what God has in store for our camp and them!

Some sad news: after 11 years of working with camp ministries in the PNW, our director of camp Twinlow, Kristen (Moonie) Moon, has decided to step away from ministry. We want to thank her and her husband, Trevin, for all the years of hard work and loving care they have shown each of the campers and their families, as well as our camp staff, whom they have served. We wish them the best.

We are thrilled that Greg Clensy and Dave Burfeind continue to serve at Ocean Park and Lazy F, respectively, and that Alan Rogstad continues to support all our camps as the Executive Director.

**Effective management and resources and broad connections**

Our camps are in relatively good financial shape due to careful attention to expenses. CBS continues to actively update our strategic plans for our Camping and Retreat Ministry, and we continue to evaluate and respond to how we can be the best stewards of the camps we are charged to manage.

Our greatest resource is YOU - the people of the United Methodist Conference who uphold Camp and Retreat Ministries by their prayers, presence, gifts, and service. It is not too late! Several camps are still looking for volunteer positions at our summer camps. If you are looking for something to fill your spirit, remind you of the wonder of God's glorious creation, an opportunity to connect with and make a difference in a child's life, or just for a fun change of pace - please get in touch with any one of our camp directors to get connected.

**Rick Sperry**

*Chairperson, Camping Board of Stewards*

## Board of Church and Society

The CBCS met via Zoom on November 16, 2023, and March 28, 2024. Included on the Board are the President of United Women in Faith, Deb Avery, and UWF Social Justice Coordinator, Sara Krum. Deb regularly presents a report to the board regarding their retreats, conferences, and other activities. Their insights, justice activities, and commitments to women's roles in the church are highly impressive and enrich our meetings and activities.

In September, CBCS and the OCM sent board member Rev. Cindy Roberts to an advocacy Training conference put on by the General Board of Church and Society in D. C. The goal of this annual event has been to train Annual Conference board members to have skills in developing advocacy leaders for local churches. Our PNW CBCS has worked diligently with each district to ask each local church to elect and have a social justice advocate reported at their church charge conference. We are pleased with the progress in these efforts, as there are now 80 advocates in our local churches.

Our board has chosen several areas of concern to address in our ministries: peace and justice, racism, and homelessness. A growing emphasis of the board's work has been Climate/Creation Justice. The board submitted a resolution to the 2023 Annual Conference for the 2024 General Conference to request that fossil fuels be added to the list of items for exclusion of investment placed in Paragraph 717 of the Book of Discipline. The CBCS has the privilege of making annual awards to outstanding churches and organizations that exhibit peace and justice programs. We also give awards to individuals who follow the example of Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. as a peacemaker and advocate for racial justice. We are deeply grateful to Rev. David Wright, PNW CBCS Peace & Justice Coordinator, for his time commitment and thorough efforts to oversee this process of making awards. The recipients of those awards are typically announced at the Annual Conference, and we intend to do so again this year.

The CBCS looks forward to the coming quadrennium and the opportunity to pursue the embodiment of our PNW commitments to peace and justice in church and society!

***Jim Davis***

*Vice Chair and Convenor Pro Temp*

## Ethnic Ministries Report

Greetings. In alignment with MILE, the COEM spending budget plays a crucial role in combating racism by funding ministries that empower ethnic-racial leaders, laity, and youth. The MILE strategic plan is comprehensive, and our spending mirrors its pillars. Therefore, I am delighted to present the achievements of the Commission on Ethnic Ministry (COEM) of the Pacific Northwest Conference (PNWC). The COEM has not only successfully supported vital ministries within the Annual Conference but has also created opportunities for the Greater Northwest Area (GNWA) ethnic ministers to foster relationships and establish connections. Here are the impactful projects from the past conference year.

### Christmas Institute 2023

The Christmas Institute (CI) is a thriving conference ministry that brings together Filipino-American and Filipino-Canadian youth and young adults. Once again, the institute gathered in person from December 27 to 30, marking another successful year of faith formation and discernment for ministry and lay leadership among our young adults.



### Pacific Northwest Camp and Retreat Ministries

The Pacific Northwest Camp and Retreat Ministries' mission is "to be sanctuaries of Christian hospitality, renewal, and learning within God's natural world. The camp ministry provides scholarships for ethnic youth in the PNWC. COEM partners with and significantly supports the Camp Ministry.

### Students Learning about Mission (SLAM)

COEM supported youth from the PNWC to attend a mission trip in partnership with Mending Wings last Summer. The summer mission trip was hosted and led by members of Mending Wings, a faith-based native non-profit organization. Through the week-long experience on the reservation, students and adults will learn about Native American history and culture and carry out locally selected service projects benefiting native elders.

### Hispanic Ministry Mt. Vernon UMC

COEM's support for the Hispanic Ministry, led by planter Zulma Tifre, has had a significant impact. The ministry provides essential cleaning supplies and paper toiletries for families in need, a service not covered by SNAP benefits. This crucial support empowers and uplifts hundreds of families.

*Rev. Dr. Troy Lynn Carr*

*Chair, PNW Commission on Ethnic Ministry*

# Christmas Institute Report



# CI-PNW 2023 Annual Report

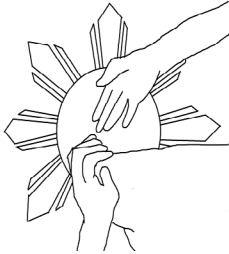


**Christmas Institute Pacific Northwest  
NO MATTER WHAT**

REPORTS



## Program and Agenda



CI-PNW's "No Matter What" theme for 2023 talks about our perseverance to a life that God intends for us. We will do whatever it takes to bring God's kin-dom into the CI community, no matter what.

We all come from different contexts and stages of life. There is a normalized hustle and bustle culture, but all of us have a big heart to want to provide a loving space for each other. We will reflect how we intentionally form our time with one another and actually create a space for ourselves that is safe and loving.

*How are we listening to one another, encouraging one another, and guiding each other to belonging in God's kin-dom?*

We will explore the Biblical story of twin brothers Jacob and Esau from the Book of Genesis – in context of identity, relationship, birthright, conflict, blessing, and reconciliation.

### CI-PNW 2023 HIGHLIGHTS

- **70 total participants**
  - 9 first-time campers
  - 24 returning campers
  - 19 full-time leaders and clergy (deans)
  - 16 additional support staff and clergy
  - 2 future campers (family members)
  - Multiple visitors and guests during the morning/evening worship sessions and MTV Night (talent night)
- **Relevant Activities and Programming**
  - Morning and Evening Worship
  - Age-specific small group breakouts
  - Special Forum: Filipino Identity and Making Room at the Table
  - Meaningful dinner banquet and spiritual act of faith (action, reflection, sharing)
  - Talent night celebration (over 40 guests)
  - Interest/Passion Group workshops: Art, Photography, Filipino Dance, and more!
- **Included 3 individuals from Canada (pastor, new leader, and first-time camper) in hopes to help launch a CI in British Columbia, Canada this 2024.**

CI-PNW was grateful to locate a campsite closer to the greater Seattle-area to host this gathering, eliminating the stress of other locations that would have required further travel and/or crossing mountain passes during the Wintertime. Continued financial support from the Pacific Northwest Conference of The United Methodist Church enabled us to keep registration costs low for all participants and invest more funds to help subsidize the costs of our volunteer leaders and campers in need who otherwise would not be able to participate due to rising operational costs.

**Christmas Institute** is an ethnically relevant ministry supported through PNWUMC designed to nurture our youth and young adults in their spiritual faith and call to ministry, inspiring great leaders throughout our global church and community. CI-PNW is open to ALL who are seeking Jesus Christ, spiritual guidance, acceptance, and fellowship. Our target population includes youth and young adults of immigrant Filipino and Filipino American/Canadian families within The United Methodist Church—to strengthen and support our youth as they become leaders. Campers range from 7th Grade to 2nd year post-high school.

### 2023 DESIGN TEAM

@Angela Chen	+RG Gavino	*Lawrence Paltep	+Bless Soriano
+Noelle Evangelista	+Rachel Navarro	^EJ Ragual	+Nicole Vicente

**CI-PNW Deans 2023:** Pastor Yvonne Agduyeng, Pastor David Valera

+Beacon UMC | \*Blaine Memorial UMC | ^Kent UMC | @N/A





**Theme and Bible Study Overview**

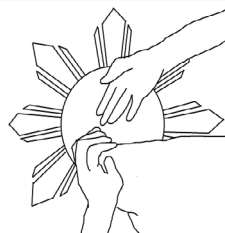
**CI-PNW 2023 THEME: “No Matter What”**

Collaborated work from CI-PNW 2023 leadership, Pastor Erin Day, Nicole Vicente, and Lawrence Paltep

This theme originates from CI-PNW 2023 Design Team’s (DT) discussed perspectives on the youth today. DT shared their experiences with these following questions:

- What are the needs of the youth today?;
- What are the pressures and responsibilities that youth face?; and
- What does CI offer to the youth?

From those questions, DT drew out that they deserve care and love that society or day to day life cannot always provide.



For this year’s theme, we want CI to offer a safe and loving space for youth to be themselves, that they have a community and God to back up their life journey, and that they are encouraged to do the right thing. This year’s theme is “No Matter What,” which talks about our perseverance to a life that God intends for us.

We will explore the Biblical story of twin brothers Jacob and Esau from the Book of Genesis – in context of identity, relationship, birthright, conflict, blessing, and reconciliation.

<p><b>Subtheme #1:</b> <b>God for us, no matter what</b></p> <p>(embracing our own identities and spiritual gifts; reflecting on our own experiences)</p>	<p><b>Subtheme #2:</b> <b>God within us, no matter what</b></p> <p>(nurturing our relationship with God; receiving God’s love and sharing it with others through being welcoming and inclusive throughout our communities)</p>	<p><b>Subtheme #3:</b> <b>Us for us, no matter what</b></p> <p>(building God’s kin-dom/community and putting our faith in action)</p>
<p><b>Focus:</b> Introduction to Jacob and Esau (Genesis 1; Genesis 25:19-34)</p> <p><b>Main Takeaways:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are other people like me.</li> <li>• I am not alone in my experiences.</li> <li>• Control/power is not the kin-dom way.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Focus:</b> Conflict, Reconciliation, and Finding Home (Genesis 28:10-22; Genesis 32:22-32)</p> <p><b>Main Takeaways:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• God meets us and reassures us that our story/identities are important.</li> <li>• God flips our narratives.</li> <li>• We need to seek God in our lives.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Focus:</b> Building God’s kin-dom (Genesis 33:1-4)</p> <p><b>Main Takeaways:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are not meant to journey alone.</li> <li>• Look how far we’ve come together.</li> </ul>



**REPORTS**



	DECEMBER 27TH	DECEMBER 28TH	DECEMBER 29TH	DECEMBER 30TH
	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
7:30 AM		Morning Stretch 7:30-8:00 AM	Morning Stretch 7:30-8:00 AM	
8:00 AM		Breakfast 8:00-9:00 AM	Breakfast 8:00-9:00 AM	Breakfast 8:00-9:00 AM
9:00 AM		Morning Worship 9:15-10:30 AM	Morning Worship 9:15-10:30 AM	CLEAN UP 9:00-9:30 AM Family Groups 9:30-10:00 AM
10:00 AM		Family Groups 10:30-12:00 PM	Family Groups 10:30-12:00 PM	CLOSING SESSION Commitment Service and Holy Communion 10:00-12:00 PM
12:00 PM		LUNCH 12:00-1:00 PM	LUNCH 12:00-1:00 PM	
1:00 PM		No Matter What... REST! 1:00-1:45 PM	No Matter What... REST! 1:00-2:00 PM	
2:00 PM	Required Arrival and Check-in 2:00-3:00 PM	Camp Photos 1:45-2:15 PM Olympic Fest 2:15-3:00 PM	Passion Groups 2:00-3:00 PM	
3:00 PM	OPENING SESSION 3:00-4:00 PM	MTV Practice/Break 3:00-4:00 PM	Special Topics Forum 3:00-4:00 PM	
4:00 PM	Olympic Fest 4:00-4:45 PM	Passion Groups 4:00-5:00 PM	Olympic Fest 4:00-5:00 PM	
5:00 PM	MTV Practice/Break 4:45-5:15 PM Passion Groups 5:15-6:00 PM	Family Groups 5:00-6:00 PM	Family Groups 5:00-6:00 PM	
6:00 PM	Dinner 6:00-7:00 PM	Dinner 6:00-7:00 PM	Break 6:00-6:30 PM FINAL DINNER 6:30-7:30 PM	
7:00 PM	Family Groups 7:00-7:45 PM	Evening Worship and MTV Night 7:00-9:00 PM	Evening Worship and Act of Faith 7:30-9:00 PM	
8:00 PM	Evening Worship 8:00-9:00 PM			
9:00 PM	Faith Families 9:00-9:30 PM Quiet Hours in Cabin 9:30-10:30 PM	Bonfire 9:00-9:30 PM Quiet Hours in Cabin 9:30-10:30 PM	Reflection 9:00-9:30 PM	
10:00 PM				
11:00 PM	Lights Out 11:00 PM	Lights Out 11:00 PM	Let your light shine!	Go in Peace!



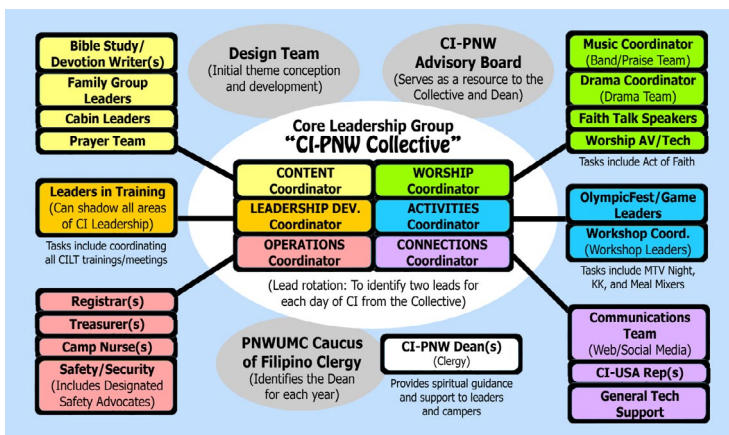


CI-PNW Core Leadership and Organizational Structure



CI-PNW COLLECTIVE + DEANS 2023		
<b>OPERATIONS COORDINATOR</b> Bless Soriano	<b>ACTIVITIES COORDINATOR</b> EJ Ragual	<b>LEADERSHIP DEV. COORD.</b> Nicole Vicente
<b>WORSHIP COORDINATOR</b> Angela Chen	<b>CONNECTIONS COORDINATORS</b> Noelle Evangelista + Rachel Navarro	<b>CONTENT COORDINATOR</b> Lawrence Paltep
<b>CI-PNW DEANS</b> Pastor Yvonne Agduyeng, Pastor David Valera		

REPORTS





## Financial Report

### Assets for CI-PNW 2023

SOURCE OF FUNDS	AMOUNT
Support from GreaterNW/PNWUMC	\$ 7,500.00
Registration Fees collected	\$ 6,720.28
Fundraising/Donations + Leader Contributions	\$ 1,745.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 15,965.28</b>

*In-kind donations for CI-PNW 2023 included various snacks/treats for the campers and leaders, Communion elements, Banquet Dinner decorations, and a post-CI lunch for the leaders.*

### Expenditures for CI-PNW 2023

BUDGET ITEM	COST
Campsite (Lodging and Meals)	\$ 12,216.00
Mid-year Community Gatherings <sup>^</sup>	\$ 200.00
Leadership Development / Trainings (General)	\$ 618.48
General Materials	\$ 2,124.66
Other Operational + Miscellaneous Costs <sup>#</sup>	\$ 805.52
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 15,964.64</b>

*<sup>^</sup>Mid-year Community Gatherings are designed to occur before/after each camp to check-in with our young people and continue to build and strengthen connections throughout the year.*

*<sup>#</sup>Other Operational and Miscellaneous Costs included lunch for the CI-PNW leadership during set-up on Day 1 of camp (not provided by the campsite), rush order charge for the camp t-shirts to arrive on time, camp photos printed and distributed for the entire group before camp dismissal, and the cost to maintain Zoom and our website domains.*

### \*Strategic CI Leadership Development Expenses

<b>AVAILABLE FUNDS (as of 1/6/2024)</b>	<b>\$1,500.00</b>
-----------------------------------------	-------------------

*\*This amount was reserved and designated in 2021 to help subsidize and support additional training costs for CI-PNW Leadership, which could include conference registration fees, guest speaker or general training fees, and potential travel costs to/from a leadership development opportunity. We will report back to the Conference on how these particular funds are used.*



## Planning and Preparations for CI-PNW 2024

### Projected Timeline

(Can be modified as needed)

January - February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wrap-up discussions and evaluation of the previous year</li> <li>• Confirm/book campsite for the upcoming year</li> </ul>
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collective continues monthly conversations / planning</li> <li>• Identify and confirm new and returning members of the Design Team (to begin meeting)</li> </ul>
April - May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership recruitment period (new and returning)</li> <li>• Design Team finalizes theme concept for 2024</li> </ul>
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Onboarding new/returning members of the Collective</li> <li>• Bible Study curriculum based on camp theme is reviewed</li> </ul>
Summertime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership Trainings begin</li> <li>• Theme is further developed into CI materials and programming (Bible study, activities, workshops, speakers)</li> </ul>
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CI Registration opens</li> <li>• More leadership development and training (including background checks and safety awareness trainings)</li> <li>• Reach out to support staff and community partners</li> </ul>
October - November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CI Registration continues</li> <li>• More leadership development and training</li> </ul>
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final preparations are completed</li> <li>• CI camp occurs end of December</li> </ul>



REPORTS

## Board of Laity

This has been a year of reassessment and redirection. The Laity Session at the PNW Annual Conference allowed Bishop Cedrick to lay out the M.I.L.E. expectations. With the assurance of conference support, he encouraged the Board of Laity to provide leadership development for the laity through training and events. He then entered into a Q and A time with participants at the session that became a solid and open conversation between the Laity and the Bishop; off to a great start!

In the last year, the Board of Laity has met via Zoom 4 times to identify how we will provide leadership development and four times with GNW Lay Leaders to expand our training and events to a GNW Area-Wide focus. An in-person event was planned for April 6th in Yakima, which unfortunately collided with a planned military event that consumed all available lodging. The GNW Lay Leaders quickly grabbed that day for a Zoom gathering for the GNW laity and clergy. The focus was on the upcoming General Conference to be held later in April in Charlotte, North Carolina, pulling together a panel of 3 delegates for an open presentation and question and answer time with laity. The outcome was that over 90 attendees who now understand the key issues are up for a vote before this conference. This will be followed on June 1st with a post-General Conference panel presentation on “What is Changing” for United Methodists.

A peek into the future: This fall, there will be another laity gathering, hopefully happening at the same time as the call of the orders. Ideally, we will meet in the same area but in different spaces, coming together only for meals and worship. The hope is to share resources and, to some degree, strengthen the relationship between clergy and laity.

Hopefully, we will be able to present a GNW event for the laity on “Discovering God’s Call for You” in the spring of 2025.

We hope to secure funds in the budget to support learning events and gatherings for the laity. We will request \$50,000 to help with lodging, travel, and program costs.

**Nancy Tam Davis**

*PNW Conference Lay Leader*

## Faith Foundation

### Ministry That Matters

Our ministry is to support the long-term financial health of churches. We do this through a combination of investment management, loans, and planned giving education.

- As of February 28, 2024, The Foundation has over \$90M under management. We saw almost \$5M deployed into ministry from invested funds, and almost \$6.5M deposited by UM institutions into investment accounts. Average annual returns are as follows:

Diversified Moderate 1YR: 11.12% 3YR: 0.68% 5YR: 6.01%

Fossil Free Moderate 1YR: 15.79% 3YR: 4.69% 5YR: 8.06%

- We have partnered with organizations to improve ministries with \$29M in loans over the last 20 years. In 2023, we made our first loan for affordable housing predevelopment.
- In 2023, we processed more than \$612K in stock gifts benefiting our region, and taught 21 planned giving workshops.

### Itineration and Location

The Foundation engages in targeted outreach every time one of our ministry partners receives a new pastor. We give new leaders information so that they can be effective. We also store crucial historical records about donations and endowments forever in support of congregations' institutional memory.

### Lay Ministry and Enhancement

As of February 2024, 100% of the Foundation's staff and board officers are laity. We celebrated the retirement of two longtime, beloved leaders in the summer of 2023: Executive Director Tom Wilson and Board President Robert Ives. Julia Frisbie assumed the Executive role and Dr. LaVerne Lewis was elected as our new Board President.

- One of our core values is continuing learning and improvement. Each of our staff members has a dedicated continuing education budget, and our board has just formed its first-ever Board Development Committee.
- We prioritize wellness. Our team has a strong sense that our work aligns with our values and passions. We make incorporating nature into our lives a top priority. Our team is healthy and prioritizes nutrition and physical activity.

### Eliminating Racism

In 2023 we worked towards pay transparency. Our staff and board are discussing See No Stranger as a part of their efforts to eliminate racism. Our board is also working to develop an equitable grantmaking process that will reduce barriers for historically underrepresented and underserved groups.

### Addressing Your Climate Concerns

Thank you for considering legislation around fossil fuel divestment during Annual Conference 2023. Faith Foundation Northwest has used Wespath's fossil-free funds since 2017, and the Foundation is divesting its own holdings from fossil fuels as of April 2024. This year, we contacted every church at the conference with information about our fossil-free options. We continue offering both Diversified and Fossil Free portfolios so faith communities can invest according to their values. In addition, we're making loans for energy-efficient building upgrades like HVAC systems and solar panels. We calculated our carbon footprint for the first time in 2023, our first step toward a net-zero commitment.

### Statement of Financial Position

	Un-Audited 12/31/23	Audited
	2023	2022
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Cash & Cash Equivalents	2,515,779.93	1,719,705.00
Marketable Securities	84,357,018.13	72,488,895.00
Loans Receivable	1,904,161.51	2,589,851.17
Property Held	124,000.00	124,000.00
Office Furnishings, net of dep	956.25	1,403.83
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>88,901,915.82</b>	<b>76,923,855.00</b>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; NET ASSETS</b>		
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Accounts Payable	1,358.24	1,462.41
Accrued Liabilities	0	14,250.00
Due to Others	79,413,626.00	68,212,631.16
Gift Annuities	476,700.59	472,645.14
Managed Trusts	774,333.64	723,369.29
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>80,666,018.47</b>	<b>69,424,358.00</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
Unrestricted	2,261,351.48	2,118,307.00
Temporarily Restricted	422,850.09	419,950.00
Permanently Restricted	5,551,695.78	4,961,240.00
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>	<b>8,235,897.35</b>	<b>7,499,497.00</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; NET ASSETS</b>	<b>88,901,915.82</b>	<b>76,923,855.00</b>

**Julia Frisbie**, *Executive Director*



## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

As required by the Discipline, the PNW board of trustees provides a report of its “doings” each year. Information on finances and assets can be found in the main financial reports. This account supplements that information, covering the calendar year 2023. The trustees’ work as stewards of conference resources is backed by professional staff: Treasurer Brant Henshaw, Benefits Officer Bruce Galvin, and Chancellor Molly Gabel.

### Property Stewardship

The trustees continued to oversee the legacy properties of closed congregations that have come into conference ownership via the trust clause. Four church buildings are occupied by five United Methodist congregations that contribute significantly to the stewardship of the property. Most importantly, they put the buildings to holy use for their ministries and the welfare of their surrounding communities. One church is rented to a non-UMC congregation, and another is used for a community feeding program. Two are being held pending future use.

Trustees are also responsible for care of the episcopal residence, owned by the Annual Conference and supported by the three conferences in the GNW episcopal area.

### Disaffiliating Congregations

Conference trustees were assigned major responsibility in a temporary disaffiliation process created by the 2016 General Conference. In our conference, district superintendents shepherded the discernment process in each interested congregation. Trustees and staff assisted with research, cost estimates, and the completion of individual agreements. Trustees’ work (began in 2022 and completed in 2023) included:

- Preparing due diligence guidelines for churches considering disaffiliation
- Setting up teams to review disaffiliation paperwork
- Approving disaffiliation agreements and resolutions for 16 churches

The Special Session of the Annual Conference on May 7, 2023, completed the first phase of this work by approving 13 disaffiliations. A second Special Session on November 15, 2023, approved three additional disaffiliations. All 16 churches have honored the commitments made in their agreements.

### Supporting Innovation and Vitality

The PNW Annual Conference’s current practice is to support innovation and vitality with proceeds from selling closed churches. Our conference provides 55% of the funding for this area-wide program, which is requested and administered by the Board of Congregational Development. The trustees do not have a programmatic role.

### New Forums of Faithful Property Stewardship

Last year, we reported some new work encouraging local churches to consider development options for their property, particularly those that might make land available for

low-income housing and other community needs. This work is paused with the advent of Bishop Bridgeforth's M.I.L.E. challenge. "Ministries that Matter" emphasizes housing development, with new staffing and study underway. The November 4, 2023, "Housing God's Beloved" conference provided inspiration, information, and networking to launch this work in the Greater Northwest Area. Once the area-wide strategy is clear, we look forward to finding our place in its implementation.

*Pat Simpson*

*PNW Trustee Chair*

## 2023 PETITION #16 RECOMMENDATION

At the 2023 Session, the Pacific Northwest (PNW) Conference passed PCH Petition #16, which called for representatives of the Board of Ordained Ministry, the Board of Pensions, and the Council on Finance and Administration to examine our annual conference's current practice regarding separation pay for ministers of another denomination (OAD). Specifically, the petition called for this team to explore "when it is a justifiable expense to provide separation pay to ministers of another denomination when a comparable appointment is not available, and should the team recommend the implementation of a separation pay policy, to provide a formula for calculating separation pay."

In our study of the issue of separation pay for ministers of another denomination, we made note of the following:

- It is generally recognized within The United Methodist Church that clergy serves one-year terms (July 1 – June 30) and that their tenure at a particular church or ministry setting is evaluated each year by the bishop and appointive cabinet.
- Commissioned and ordained elders are guaranteed an appointment from the bishop, but a number of pastoral leaders serving local congregations do not have this security of appointment, including licensed local pastors, deacons, ministers from another annual conference, Hispanic lay ministers, certified lay ministers assigned by the district superintendent, and ministers of other denominations.
- While individual churches or ministries may choose to provide severance, there is currently no conference policy regarding separation pay for lay staff or clergy (including ministers of other denominations), and few churches choose to provide severance at the conclusion of a pastoral appointment or assignment. We also do not have a policy regarding separation pay for conference staff.
- In addition to the absence of a conference policy regarding separation pay, Washington State and Idaho exempt churches from participating in state unemployment programs. So, unless a church elects to participate in their state's unemployment program, clergy and lay staff are not typically eligible for unemployment benefits. Few churches elect to do so.
- To be consistent with the values of The United Methodist Church and the PNW Conference, consideration of the issue of separation pay in the local churches and ministries of our conference should include not only the situation of ministers of other denominations but also all those who are employed by our conference, churches, and ministries - including both lay and clergy. While The Book of Discipline does not discuss severance for clergy, it does task the staff-parish relations committee with recommending to church leadership "a provision for adequate health and life insurance, and severance pay for all lay employees." (§ 258.2.g).
- PCH Petition #16 asked us to consider a formula for calculating separation. As part of our deliberation process, we used a scenario of a severance payment equivalent to 2 to 3 months of total compensation. Our task group explored the

potential costs of this formula per clergyperson. The minimum compensation for 2024 is \$49,012 annually or \$4085 a month. Assuming minimum compensation and a severance payment equivalent to 2-3 months, separation pay would cost an estimated \$8170-12,255 per clergyperson not guaranteed or receiving a subsequent appointment. This would be a significant financial burden to many local churches and could significantly impact the ability of the cabinet to provide ordained clergy in some situations.

**Our recommendations are as follows:**

- Staff-parish relations committees should discuss separation pay and consider a policy for their church. We encourage churches to discuss separation pay with lay and clergy employees at the beginning of a new appointment and when hiring staff.
- Washington and Idaho allow churches to participate in their unemployment benefit programs voluntarily. Both states require that you enroll all employees (lay and clergy) when you participate. We encourage churches to explore voluntary participation to benefit their clergy and staff. Churches and ministry settings should inform clergy and staff when appointed or hired regarding their participation (or lack of participation) in their state's unemployment program.
- We recommend that district superintendents include a conversation about separation pay as a part of their consultation with clergy and ministry settings during the appointment process - particularly when appointing or assigning a pastoral leader who does not hold security of appointment.
- When possible, we encourage the cabinet to give clergy without the security of appointment advanced warning when an appointment or assignment may not be available to them, given the lack of unemployment benefits in most of our churches in the PNW Conference.

## GLOBAL MINISTRIES

The mission of the General Board of Global Ministries is to equip and transform people and places for God's mission around the world. Our four mission goals are:

1. Make disciples of Jesus Christ
2. Strengthen, develop, and renew Christian congregations and communities
3. Alleviate human suffering
4. Seek justice, freedom and peace

**The Conference Board of Global Ministries** is a program committee, the Mission 'arm' of our conference. The Board consists of representatives from many areas of activity. Mission helps our churches grow and reach out to others, often in coordination with the other conferences in our Greater NW Episcopal Area. We are the United Methodist Church in action! All programming and spending is done with the question: "How does this educate, enable, and empower the local church to be in mission?"

We are invited to attend the US Mission Partners Consultation in Atlanta on November 28-29, 2023. Approximately 250 mission workers from 5 jurisdictions in the US gathered at Peachtree Road United Methodist Church. They shared their thoughts and experiences in response to many important questions. The event concludes all three primary mission consultations this year, and we look forward to gaining insights from them.

We are still doing missionary itinerations virtually every 1st Thursday of the month.

We had three missionaries itinerating in 2023: Joy Prim, Helen Camarce, and Katherine Parker, who was also the study leader for mission u.

Two missionaries itinerated this year 2024: Jean Claude and Francine Maleka, April 20-May 4, 2024.

Whether you can support through a "covenant relationship," donations for their projects, your prayers and your help support Christ's work worldwide. Thanks again for all you do to connect the church in mission! Global Ministries is grateful, and missionaries are grateful for what you do to ensure they are supported at the highest level and have what they need to continue serving and working in such a difficult time.

### PNW Conference Disaster Response, 2023 Accomplishments - Dana & Kathy Bryson

#### Overview

2023 was a year to build partnerships, capacity, and volunteer opportunities. Virtual meetings evolved into in-person training and in-field volunteer opportunities. The ability to gather and build relief supplies was a welcomed change. These efforts enabled the PNW UMC Disaster Response Mission to support multiple disaster-affected communities throughout the year quickly.

#### Response Coordinator Highlights

- Built relief capacity and volunteer opportunities, expanding the PNW Disaster

Response Regional Relief Supply and Storage network with now ten strategic church-housed temporary or longer-term locations throughout the Conference. Inventory and storage are coordinated by the Conference's Regional Relief Supply Coordinator, Kevin Hamilton. Current inventory includes more than 600 UMCOR and PNW-built cleaning kits, 800 Hygiene kits, numerous school kits, ash sifters, soot sponge kits, and cleaner air kits. 400 PNW-built "Period Packs" were recently assembled and added to this inventory.

- Strengthened the PNW Disaster Response Mission and Washington Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (WaVOAD) relationship with Washington State Emergency Management by accompanying two staff members during two days of briefings from Oregon State ESF6/Mass Care staff on Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake preparedness, tours of Oregon Coast mass care caches and tours/ride-along with Cannon Beach City Emergency Management.
- Built a cooperative effort between the PNWUMC Conference, WaVOAD and Mountain West VOAD (MWVOAD) to host the 2024 MWVOAD Conference April 8-11, 2023 at Kent UMC in Kent, WA. This annual Spring event attracts about 150 disaster preparedness/response participants from 13 Western US states. As the 2024/25 WaVOAD President, Kathy will be actively involved and has already started on preliminary logistics.
- Ten new volunteers were added to the PNW Early Response Team (ERT) ranks during an August ERT Basic training at Mount Vernon First UMC. Steps were also taken to qualify future Basic training as "Continuing Education Credits" (CE) for Conference pastors and people looking for CE opportunities.
- Responded to the California-Pacific Conference Disaster Response Coordinator for mentoring support with FEMA's "Guam Strong" Typhoon Mawar recovery efforts. This is a result of Kathy's involvement in volunteer coordination during 2018/2019 in response to Saipan's Typhoon Yutu.
- Requalified ten California-Pacific Conference ERT members during a four-hour remote ERT Requalification training.
- Participated in multiple discussions and breakout sessions during the November General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM) US Mission Partner Consultation/UMCOR US Disaster Response Conference Disaster Response Coordinator (C-DRC) in-person workshop in Atlanta. Provided input as the GBGM evolves its mission in a changing UMC world. Participated in UMCOR's follow-on C-DRC workshop—the first to be held since 2019.
- Represented the PNW Disaster Response Mission to the Institutional Equity Cohort during this six-month focused initiative through May 2024.



- Supported UMCOR representation to the National Volunteers Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD) Community Preparedness Committee through Kathy's designation as back-up for UMCOR's Liz McDevitt.
- Highlighted the PNW Disaster Response and ERT mission during the April National Leadership Institute Conference in Meridian, Idaho by staffing a vendor table and participating in plenary and breakout sessions.
- Actively engaged in UMCOR's April Cabinet Training for 25 members of the Greater Northwest Episcopal area. As a result, Kathy and Dana are working on a complete revision to the PNW Disaster Response plan including reviews by the Cabinet.
- Provided a recommendation to the Alaska C-DRC for a UMCOR-trained Lead Case Manager as a potential candidate for the September 2022 Typhoon Merbok case management efforts.
- Engaged in several conversations and tours of Riverton Park UMC regarding temporary housing support for asylum seekers. Connected with Rev Jack Amick, UMCOR Director of Global Migration and Special Assignments, through preliminary discussions about grants to support the mission.

### Long Term Recovery Engagement

#### *Whatcom County (2021 Flood Recovery)*

- Oversaw and completed a \$100,000 UMCOR Recovery Grant that started in September 2022 and ended in August 2023 in support of the 631 survivor families from the 2021 November coastal flooding event. The grant funded a full time Reconstruction Project Manager and part-time Volunteer Coordinator to support 293 local and regional volunteers for almost 12,000 hours of volunteer labor for home repair activities.

#### *Okanogan Co (September 2020 Wildfires)*

- Managed a series of UMCOR grants that supported 203 survivor cases in their recovery from the 2020 wildfires in North Central Washington State. This includes rebuilding nine homes lost in the fires.
- UMCOR and the PNW Conference contributed over \$500,000 to relief and recovery for this disaster. The UMC's early involvement and funding enabled immediate case work to support relief efforts and prepare for follow on case management. The remaining funding was used to support survivor needs through the Unmet Needs Roundtable (UNR) and construction efforts for the rebuild. The PNW Conference continues to stay active in the UNR as the last cases are closed.

#### *Spokane County Grays and Oregon Road Wildfires (August 2023)*

- Immediately activated a multi-pronged PNW UMC relief response including the use of an UMCOR \$10,000 Solidarity Grant; coordinated ERT and local church staffing of a relief supply vendor table at the County-managed Disaster Response

Center; participated in multiple community, Washington State and WaVOAD emergency operations meetings; facilitated the use of Covenant UMC as an initial meeting space for the newly forming long term recovery group.

- Began serving survivors' immediate needs through the case management process by representing the PNW UMC Conference funding during weekly meetings of the Unmet Needs Roundtable.

*Other Highlights*

- Maintained and coordinated transport logistics for a fleet of shower and tool trailers in Eastern and Western Washington through a PNW UMC volunteer network.
- Continue to lift the PNWUMC Disaster Response mission among Federal, State and non-governmental partners as Kathy serves her second year as the WaVOAD Vice-President and is on track to be the incoming 2024/2025 President.
- Kathy also continues to serve as the Co-Chair of the PNW Conference Board of Global Ministries.

**Mission u 2023 - Marilyn S. Reid, Dean**

For the second time, Mission u 2023 was held from July 21 to 23, 2023, at Wesley UMC, Yakima, WA. Participants stayed in motels close to the church so they could easily transport themselves to the classes and events that were all at the church.

Our three studies explore the good news and what it means for our lives. Exploring the Lord's prayer as a spiritual practice for social transformation by Riva Tabelisma offers adults a deeper dive into this prayer's meaning. Seek and You shall find: Living in the kingdom by Rachel Monsher teaches youth how to find the kingdom around them, live what they've learned, and share the Good News. We are the kingdom by Kathleen Stone guides children through an exploration of earthly kingdoms in contrast to God's kingdom.

We have 57 adults, 3 youths, and 8 children registered, plus teachers, musicians, and Tech for a total of 80. On Sunday, Bishop Cedrick gave the worship message and officiated the communion with Pastor Shane.

Hands-on mission projects were well attended. Katherine Parker delivered more than 300 Freedom kits for girls to the Philippines and Nepal. Several people braved the hot temperatures to help sort contributions to the Wesley UMC recycling center. Others made sandwiches for the feeding program.

Mission u Teachers 2023:

Adult: Yvonne Agduyeng, Katherine Parker, and Ronda Cordill, also our Safety officer

Youth: Myra Salapang-Duncan and Rudilyn Rush

Children: Sue and Terry Raymond and Kaeloni



## United Women in Faith

*Impact...Influence...Inspire*

Mission u is a cooperative educational event with our PNW conference board of global ministries and PNW United Women in Faith. Mission u 2023 was held in person at Wesley UMC with classes for adults, children, and youth. It was a blessing to have Bishop Cedrick Bridgeforth spend time with us as we were able to “ask the Bishop.” We looked at the description of “Kin-dom” as we focused on our Lord’s Prayer and took part in “hands-on” mission projects for the local Yakima area.

Now we are deep in planning for our 2024 Mission u.... “Welcome Home,” which takes a look at what it means to be the Kin-dom here on earth. Again, we will offer classes, worship, and fellowship for adults, youth, and children, and the dates will be Thursday, July 25-Saturday, July 27, at Wesley UMC in Yakima. Look for registration and scholarship forms at the United Women in Faith ministry table at this annual conference and on the PNW United Women in Faith/UMC websites. Are you aware you can receive certificates for continuing education for the 8 hours of class time by requesting them at registration? We hope to see you there!



United  
Women  
in Faith

It was humbling to be invited to host an informational table at the “Gathering of Orders” and to get the word out about the new inclusive face of United Women in Faith. We appreciated the opportunity to address individual questions about UWF and to hear stories about passionate women in mission in our churches! We had a display about the various social justice issues that would be brought forward by United Women in Faith at the 2020 postponed General Conference. We are intentional about making our voices heard at all levels of our church on behalf of women, children, and youth, just as we have done since 1869.

Each of our five Missional districts planned and carried out their annual gatherings (in-person) during September. In October (20-21), our United Women in Faith conference gathering took place at Olympia First UMC (also in person) with Crest to Coast as the host district. We were inspired by Ainise’ Isama’u, our national president, along with her daughter Polyana, as featured speakers with the theme, “Living Our Mission; Being the Hands and Feet of Christ.” We renewed our commitment to put our words into action to make a difference for women, children, and youth here and worldwide! Districts are renewing their commitment to reaching out to women in churches with and without current units. There is strategizing to plan soul care retreat opportunities and other relevant programs for cluster groups of neighboring churches to engage women who may be interested in today’s work of United Women in Faith. Together, we are stronger!

Our district and conference leadership teams gathered in April at Lazy F for a time of reflecting on our spiritual gifts and how using these gifts may renew and re-energize each of us in our stewardship of giving and outreach into our communities as we spread

the word of what it means to be United Women in Faith. No longer will the mission and vision of United Women in Faith be the “best kept secret.” We received recognition from our national organization for reaching 168 % of our 2023 pledge for mission giving as we continue to commit to the work we have been called for the past 155 years and listen to how we are being called into the future. There is still much work to be done! Our conference is among the highest contributors to the United Women in Faith Legacy Endowment fund. This fund helps to support ongoing leadership development within the organization. Our conference endowment fund was able to share \$4100 in dividend funds for scholarships for women to attend Western Jurisdiction in Anchorage, Alaska (May 9-11). We are thrilled to be able to report that 30 women are attending our Pacific Northwest Conference, and the event promises to be inspiring, impactful, and influential. During our time together, Directors for the United Women in Faith board will be elected to serve for the next quadrennium.

We encourage and invite all clergy and lay women to be open to expanding their awareness of United Women in Faith through the variety of platforms available. If you are not connected, we encourage you to begin receiving the informative quarterly newsletter, “Sharing Line.” Each of our 5 Missional districts also have newsletters to keep members connected. You can find these, and many other resources, on our website: Pacific Northwest United Women in Faith.

Please reach out through our website for ways in which the conference organization of United Women in Faith may support you as you broaden your concept of mission with Women, Children, and Youth!

**Deb Avery,**  
*President, PNW United Women in Faith*

## Innovation and Vitality

### Statement from the Executive Director for Innovation and Vitality

Friends across the Greater Northwest Area – It has been an honor and privilege to work professionally with United Methodists in the Northwest and beyond for the past 25 years, supporting so many efforts to encourage and prepare our ministries to welcome, reach out, and be in ministry with rapidly changing communities. With this report, I am announcing my retirement effective March 31, 2025.

Thank you for the many ways you have shaped and supported me over these years.

I assumed the role of Executive Director for Innovation and Vitality in May 2022. This is the fifth title in my history as staff of the Pacific Northwest (PNW) Conference or Greater Northwest (GNW) Area. I began work in the PNW Conference as Director of Ethnic and Multicultural Ministry Development, a congregational development position focused on supporting and planting ministries among non-dominant culture communities. I quickly understood the need for intercultural competency as our stated desires for diversity did not match the skills to retain diversity. My focus on intercultural work has been a through line amid various title changes - Associate Director of Connectional Ministries for an Inclusive Church (PNW), Director of Leadership Development for an Inclusive Church (PNW), and Director of Innovation for an Inclusive Church (GNW).

The focus on inclusion has a long history. The PNW Conference was the first in the United Methodist connection to fund a position to support non-dominant culture pastors, laity, and congregations in our predominantly white institution. I was not the first to occupy this position; Rev. Edsel Goldson, Rev. Nancy Adachi-Osawa, and Rev. Bob Yamashita preceded me. Their legacy continues today as we address the “E” in M.I.L.E., Eliminating Racism, through our Equity Cohorts. I’ll say more about the cohorts further in the report.

During my tenure, I have tried to address the relational and administrative issues for which the Innovation Vitality Team was criticized. Not all are cared for, and for that, I lament. That said, we have done good work together, and I hope and pray that our efforts in developing vibrant ministries will continue to take new forms and shapes, with new people and ideas that can make our faith practical. John Wesley referred to our faith as ‘practical divinity’<sup>1</sup>; we must strive to embody this term in our congregations and commu-

### Change Theory

(Inclusion) If **WE** - our ministries, leaders and members - become more interculturally competent, then we will learn to welcome, include and partner with diverse neighbors.

(Innovation) If **WE** reach out to our neighbors with more openness to encounter what God is doing there and join or create the spark that comes at the intersection of difference - if we innovate - then

(Multiplication) **WE** will engage more new people, and multiply our impact through new relationships, partnerships, opportunities, and expressions, following the example of Jesus.

nities. I'll highlight the good work underway currently in the pages that follow.

While the term Innovation Vitality may be replaced by different terminology, I hope the Change Theory will live on. The three practices of inclusion, innovation and multiplication are intuitive and intersect nicely with our call to go the M.I.L.E.

By pooling our resources, the three conferences of the GNW Area can do more together than we could do apart. By God's grace, let's move forward as one in our congregations, ministries, and institutions to form an intentionally inclusive church.

With Gratitude,

**Kristina Gonzalez**

*Executive Director for Innovation and Vitality*

## Highlights of 2023

### Equity Cohorts

In November 2023, the Innovation Vitality Team launched [Equity Cohorts](#), a major initiative across the GNW Area to align our diversity and inclusion aspirations with policies and practices. This equity and justice work addresses the "E" in M.I.L.E., Eliminating Racism.

During a 9-to-12-month period, approximately 125 institutional and congregational leaders - lay and clergy - across the GNW Area are engaging in a deep dive into intercultural work, culminating in Action Learning Projects. The Action Learning teams will deconstruct policies and practices that advantage some and disadvantage others and reconstruct these policies and practices through an equity lens. Led by [Beth Zemsky & Associates](#), the work stretches leaders to better understand how diversity and inclusion aspirations become practical. This work will be sustained and expanded overtime with the help of Equity Colleagues in Training, persons who are both participating in and learning to facilitate these processes. With their help, our boards and agencies and congregations will move more fully from 'talking the talk' to 'walking the walk' of equity and justice. You will hear more about this work from participants during annual conferences. Please pray for all who are investing in this work.

### GNW Area Projects

In the pages below, you will find a list of projects active in 2023 in the three conferences comprising the GNW Area. Under the care of the GNW Innovation Vitality Team, the projects are funded by their respective conference boards: Vitality Team (VT) in Alaska; Congregational Development Team (CDT) in Oregon-Idaho; and Board of Congregational Development (BOCD) in Pacific Northwest. While the boards have responsibility

for funding, the GNW Area Cabinet has responsibility for discerning and deploying leaders.

Projects initiated between 2018 and 2022 were funded on a 5-year model that looked like a bell curve, with lesser funding in years 1 and 2, the highest level of funding allocated in Year 3, and declining funding in Years 4 and 5. The model was built on the premise that projects would develop alternative funding streams through social enterprise - a non-profit arm or values-based business - to support the ministry financially. Most projects have had difficulty creating alternative funding streams.

Repenting Church in the Oregon-Idaho Conference, led by Nicholle Ortiz and Forrest Nameniuk, is a promising example that combining social enterprise and faith community development might work in some cases. Nicholle and Forrest are entrepreneurs centered in Christian faith. They relate to plus-sized, theatre, and queer communities in celebratory ways. Businesses Every Sunflower and Fat Magic Clothing are poised to support Repenting Church, an emerging faith community among persons who have been judged and unwelcomed in traditional church settings. However, Repenting Church will be fragile for a time and may need additional support to fully establish. Please keep Nicholle and Forrest in prayer as they continue this amazing work.

Recognizing the need to diversify the funding model, the boards are looking at alternative means for project development, funding, and evaluation. In 2023, the Board of Congregational Development piloted a new process with Fowler UMC/New Day Ministry in Spokane, WA. Fowler UMC was declining due to theological differences within the congregation. Pastor Rene' Devantier, father to an autistic adult child, began wondering if Fowler might become a congregation intentionally inclusive of persons with disabilities and their families. The congregation was supportive but did not have capacity to do the work alone.

The Innovation Vitality Team undergirded the congregation as it explored the viability of the project, providing financial support for coaching and project development. Once viability was established, the Board of Congregational Development requested that Fowler UMC submit a formal proposal, which was funded in January 2024. Rebranded as New Day Ministry, this project has [gained media attention](#) in Spokane, is growing, and has become influential among the handful of ministries in the UMC connection that are centering persons with disabilities in their ministries.

The funding boards will analyze the development and funding process used with Fowler/New Day to determine whether the process might work area-wide, and with the full range of innovation projects from those in new settings to those in existing ministries.

In Alaska, we celebrate the continuing evolution of Every Nation UMC, which has become known as Alaska Native H.O.P.E. (History of Oppression Project of Empowerment). The Alaska Conference has allocated two additional years of funding to this project, representing one path for addressing the legacy of Christian colonization perpetrated on Alaska Natives. Decolonization is a stated value of the Alaska Conference. Pastor Murray Crookes serves part-time as pastor of Alaska Native H.O.P.E. and part-time at Anchor Park UMC.

## L-46 MINISTRY REPORTS

2024 PNWAC

We celebrate the ministries highlighted above and all that are listed in the tables below. Visit these ministries when you have the opportunity. Send a note of encouragement. Invite the planter/innovators to share their work with your congregations. Most of all, keep these leaders and their ministries in prayer. They do their work on behalf of us all.

Project Name	Planter(s)/Innovator(s)	Year Initiated	Project Year*	Funding 2023	Status
<b>Alaska</b>					
Every Nation/Alaska Native H.O.P.E.	Murray Crookes	2018	Yr 5	\$10,614	Continuing with Alaska special funding
<b>Oregon-Idaho</b>					
Great Spirit UMC	Allen Buck	2017	Yr 5+	\$0	Continued in coaching relationship only.
Storydwelling	Erika Spaet	2017	Yr 5+	\$10,000	Continued with ecumenical partnership.
Bold New Season/Wesley UMC	Nicole Berry	2018	Yr 5	\$15,000	Funding completed. Project continues.
Twin Falls UMC	Buddy Gharring	2018	Yr 5	\$37,500	Funding completed. Project continues.
Portland Multicultural HUB-Cultural Soul Project	Daymond Glenn	2019	Yr 4-5	\$185,000	Project continues.
Sunnyside/Groves	Sunia Gibbs	2019	Yr 4-5	\$35,175	Planter withdrew. Community ministry continues under supervision of the Board of Trustees.
Beloved Community PDX	Karen Ward	2019	Yr 4-5	\$65,063	Project closed.
East Portland New Start/Repenting Church	Nicholle Ortiz and Forrest Nameniuk	2019	Yr 4-5	\$93,491	Project continues with support from various sources.
Wakeup Beaverton	Jefferson Chao	2019	Yr 4-5	\$77,946	Project closed. Non-profit WakeUP! Beaverton continues to serve community.
Storyline	Anna Hoesly	2021	Yr 2-3	\$70,000	Continuing. Ecumenical partnership.
Coburg Commons	Brandon Rhodes	2022	Yr 1-2	\$106,000	Continuing.
Central OR Connectional Ministry (grant)	Jill Plant	NA	NA	\$10,000	Continuing.
<b>Total Project Funding O-I</b>				<b>\$705,175</b>	

\*The project year is typically July-June, matching the appointment year. Disbursements are reported on a calendar year; therefore, projects typically span two project years.

Project Name	Planter(s)/Innova- tor(s)	Year Initiated	Project Year*	Funding 2023	Status
<b>Pacific Northwest</b>					
Sunnyside Hispanic	Joel Rodriguez	2017	Yr 5+	\$30,000	Continuing. Delayed due to immigration.
Redeemer UMC	Shelia Marie	2016	Yr 5+	\$27,500	Funding completed. Project impacts continue.
Better Together	Kate Kilroy	2018	Yr 5	\$0	Unexpended funding returned. Planter brought Wesleyan perspective to her community work.
Squamish Fellowship	Norman Feliciano	2018	Yr 5	\$65,000	Continuing as part of First UMC of Canada Multisite (see below).
Tacoma First Multi-cultural HUB	Shalom Agtarap	2019	Yr 4-5	\$101,000	Intentional multicultural HUB using the building as a centerpiece for racial justice in community.
Seattle Creative Communities	Danielle Elliott	2019	Yr 4-5	\$61,546	Planter withdrew due to family needs. Project will impact creative thinking in future.
ACTS On Stage Multicultural HUB	Michelle Lang-Raymond	2020	Yr 3-4+ Pivot	\$192,500	Intentional multicultural HUB centering people of color and people of faith. Prophetic voice through theatre and faith development.
South Park Neighborhood Church	Maria-José (Coté) Soerens/Michelle Lang-Raymond	2020	Yr 3-4	\$97,500	Continuing. Bible study launched.
Yesler Neighborhood New Project	Caleb Encinas Cortés	2020	Yr 3-4	\$104,827	Continuing exploration.
Vashon UMC Vitality Project	Mark Wagner	2021	Yr 2-3+ Pivot	\$74,502	Redevelopment continuing.
First UMC of Canada Multisite Multiplication Project	Norman Feliciano	2022	Yr 2 of 5	\$50,502	Multiplication Project continues to expand.
Valley & Mountain Theologian in Residence	Osagyefo Sekou	2020	Yr 2-3	\$98,500	Continuing.
Valley & Mountain Multiplication	Osagyefo Sekou	2022	Yr 2 of 3	\$388,390	Multiplication Project.
Latinx: Mt. Vernon First UMC	Zulma Tifre	2022	Yr 1-2	\$37,510	Continuing. Planter went from parttime to fulltime status 7/2023.
<b>Total Project Funding PNW</b>				<b>\$1,329,777</b>	

REPORTS

*\*The project year is typically July-June, matching the appointment year. Disbursements are reported on a calendar year; therefore, projects typically span two project years.*

## Outside Institution Reports

### 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 2022-23 entering class was among our most diverse, with 88 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](http://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/](http://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](http://bu.edu/sth/oll).



Boston University School of Theology



- 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*

## Candler School of Theology

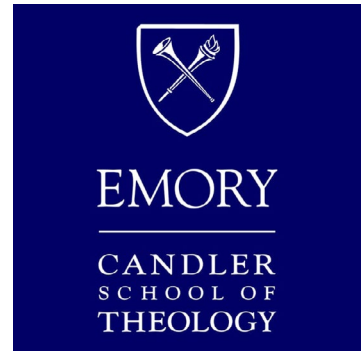
Since 1914, Candler School of Theology at Emory University has educated faithful and creative leaders for the church's ministries throughout the world. An official seminary of The United Methodist Church, Candler holds true to the Wesleyan value of ecumenical openness, enthusiastically welcoming students from more than 40 denominations, with nearly half of Master of Divinity students coming from the Methodist family, including United Methodist, African Methodist Episcopal, African Methodist Episcopal Zion, Christian Methodist Episcopal, Wesleyan, Free Methodist, Church of the Nazarene, and others. Our student body reflects the diversity and breadth of the Christian faithful, with an enrollment of 419 from 12 countries and 38 states, and 44% persons of color. This diversity is a blessing, enriching our life together and providing a "learning laboratory" for ministry in the 21st century—ministry that cultivates community across difference, welcomes all to contribute and belong, and embodies Christ's love in and among us.

Candler offers six degrees (Master of Divinity, Master of Theological Studies, Master of Religion and Public Life, Master of Religious Leadership, Master of Theology, Doctor of Ministry) and ten dual degrees, most of which are available in hybrid or online formats.

Response to our new hybrid-format Master of Divinity, which launched in Fall 2023, has been strong: 65% of 2023's MDiv entering class chose the hybrid model, blending online classes and in-person intensives. Plus, around 20% of MDiv students participate in Candler's Teaching Parish program to earn contextual education credit as they serve as student pastors in local churches. Our proven DMin program—with a near 90% completion rate—is 90% online as well. These flexible options plus Candler's recognized academic excellence and hands-on learning opportunities are opening possibilities for even more people to follow God's call to ministry.

Reducing student debt through generous financial aid is a top priority for Candler. In 2023-2024, we are on track to award \$6.3 million in scholarship support, with 100% of MDiv students receiving aid. All MDiv students who are certified candidates for ordained ministry in the UMC receive full-tuition scholarships, and all MDiv, MTS, MRL, and ThM students receive a scholarship covering at least 50% of tuition. MDiv students also receive financial coaching and complete a financial literacy program to strengthen their budgeting skills and reduce debt. That knowledge will serve them—and the ministries they serve—well into the future.

Candler is growing in exciting directions as it creates avenues to bring high-quality theological education to a wider audience. It is a hub of Christian learning with multiple entry points. Those who aren't seeking an advanced degree can engage in learning through The Candler Foundry, our innovative program to make theological education accessible to the public through short courses, events, and related activities; the United Methodist Course



of Study to educate licensed local pastors; the new Candler Center for Christian Leadership to refine business-related skills of United Methodist leaders; and La Mesa Academy, offering diplomas in pastoral leadership via a two-year hybrid program with courses in Spanish, English, and Korean.

One of the biggest news items of the year for Candler is the announcement that after nearly 18 years, Dean Jan Love will step down from Candler's deanship in the summer of 2024. Through Dean Love's transformational leadership, Candler has expanded to offer three new degrees, five new dual degrees, and more online and hybrid options, including the highly successful hybrid MDiv and DMin degrees. She has increased the diversity of Candler's faculty and student body, continued the school's tradition of world-class scholarship in hiring 75% of the current full-time faculty, and grown the number of endowed professorships. Her efforts have enhanced Candler's ability to fulfill its mission in a rapidly changing environment, and she leaves the school in a strong position. The next dean of Candler is expected to be named by early summer.

Candler depends upon your prayers, partnership, and support. Thank you for the countless ways you advance this essential ministry in the life of our denomination. We invite you to visit us online at [candler.emory.edu](http://candler.emory.edu).

—*Office of Communications*

*Candler School of Theology, Emory University*

## Claremont School of Theology

We remain at the forefront of innovation and creativity in theological education. Our new global Ph.D. program allows students to study in their own country, thus avoiding the “brain drain” that so often robs countries of their best and brightest minds. We send our faculty to teach where they live, enabling a more affordable educational model. We are projecting a new Doctor of Ministry degree that will incorporate innovation and the “Fresh Expressions” movement as a paradigm of what the church might become in the near future. We are also pioneering a new professional doctoral degree concentrating on spirituality and spiritual direction. Students of this program will be steeped in the depths of spirituality and become professional spiritual directors upon graduation.

These highlights stress our new values of “Compassion, Justice, and Belonging. These values will be our North Star and guide and direct all we do now and in the future.

It would be nice if our CST life could end with these highlights, but lived life must embrace sorrows along with joys, setbacks, and failures along with successes, injustices along with righteousness.

Our disappointments and setbacks include a ten-year litigation between the Claremont Colleges and CST over selling our 16.4-acre Claremont property. The civil courts affirmed a historic 1957 agreement that our founders made with the Claremont Colleges over the right of first refusal and an archaic formula that calculates the terms. Neither side could decipher that formula, and the Claremont Colleges insisted on paying only four million dollars for our property, which was conservatively worth ten times that amount. The final arbitration we went through was binding, and the educational market value of the property was between 40-80 million dollars. However, the Arbitrator decided to calculate the formula and came up with a final price of 7.7 million dollars. We were counting on at least double that price to service our debts and allow us a viable future. You can imagine our shock and disappointment over this ruling. The sting of injustice is that the Claremont Colleges are land-banking the property at the lowest cost, whereas our institutional survival is at stake for CST.

Faced with this setback, we could either give up or find the resiliency to pick up the pieces and move forward. It is much like the decision the Disciples faced upon the death and crucifixion of Jesus. They could either give up in despair or put back their shattered faith and wait for the Lord. Thankfully, for us, they chose the latter, and God provided a new beginning in a resurrected Christ and sending of the Holy Spirit in the creation of the church. We often face these watershed decisions and movements in our own lives, and thanks be to God for giving us the faith and hope to model our move forward. God always provides a new beginning for us, and CST is no different.



This does not mean that our challenges end or everything will turn out like roses. As we navigate the light and darkness of our lives, the road is never easy. Yet, God never promised us easy. What we have been promised is that we will never be abandoned. That is true of our individual lives and the institutions that we love.

Be the Hope,

***Grant Hagiya***

*President of Claremont School of Theology*

## 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.

**Edwin David Aponte**

*Dean*

## 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 Nicea (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.

Respectfully Submitted,

**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, GA.

## **L-58 MINISTRY REPORTS**

**2024 PNWAC**

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.

**Rev. Dr. Candace M. Lewis**

*President-Dean*

## Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary

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.

During this past academic year, Garrett also welcomed its largest entering class in over a decade, with 124 new students, and a current enrollment of 314 students representing 37 states and 21 nations from across the globe. We have experienced particular growth in students from the African continent and the Indian subcontinent, adding to an already richly diverse student body. While our denominational diversity also continues to grow, we also proudly welcomed growth in our United Methodist students who constitute more than 50% of our student body.

Of particular importance in the past year has been the partnership we have entered into with Phillips School of Theology of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church (CME). Phillips students are now also fully Garrett students and together we are preparing the next generation of CME leaders in a robust pan-Methodist/Wesleyan context alongside UMC, AME, and AMEZ students. Phillips President, Dr. Paul Brown, is now also affiliated with our faculty, teaching CME History, Doctrine, and Polity, as well as spiritual formation and organizational leadership courses. It is our hope and intention to continue to grow this partnership and foster a truly pan-Methodist/Wesleyan ethos which includes our growing global Methodist partners in Asia, Latin America, and Africa. Additionally, last year, all Garrett degree programs were made truly hybrid so that students can study with us and earn their degrees either on our Evanston campus or in virtual learning spaces around the globe. This has added an amazing breadth of experience and contexts to our classrooms, where we seek to address real-world challenges with gospel inspired solutions or responses.

Garrett's world-class faculty continue developing curricular innovations that are responsive to the church's growing needs, while also contributing a significant body of scholarly work to their respective fields. Our faculty are also at work developing The Garrett Collective, an online platform of theological learning and resources for churches and partner organizations inspired by our faculty's research and/or strategic partnerships. Finally, at this critical juncture in the history of United Methodism, faculty leaders are providing essential guidance to UMC students, while also continuing to envision with hope the next expression of Methodism that is responsive to the Spirit's call for such a time as this.

**Wilma Franco**, *Executive Assistant to the President Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary*

## HIGHER EDUCATION AND MINISTRY

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 leadership 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 worldwide connection.

*Greg Bergquist, General Secretary (GBHEM)*

## Saint Paul School of Theology

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.

We continue to invite Saint Paul students, alums, and friends to join us in a hybrid format, where participants may join in-person or online, allowing everyone to come together as one institution from wherever they are. Saint Paul offers weekly chapel services throughout the academic year featuring students, alums, faculty, and local leaders. In addition, weekly Spiritual Formation allows attendees to engage in spiritual practices led by new Oklahoma Chapel Coordinator Rev. Alanna Ireland '23. Some practices take us outdoors or to other sacred spaces, and others have us connect with community leaders.

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 Hoeft, 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. Members of the Seminary's Executive Leadership Team are now working with faculty and staff to refine the draft scripted by the task force. These efforts will continue over the next few months until we have a document ready for review by the Board of Trustees. 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. Therefore, this effort is critical in defining how we ensure that Saint Paul remains a vital and vigorous Seminary committed to preparing our students for creative and innovative ministry.

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. Serving 31 Conferences, 89 Districts, 116 Full Time and 126 Part-Time Licensed Local Pastors comprised these registrations. Seventy percent of these students are taking more than one course. To help offset student costs, twenty percent of all students received aid from their conference or church. COS School continues to attract a diverse student body. One hundred eighty-eight students ranged in age from 30 to 65, and 62 students ranged in age from 66 to 82. Students self-identified across four racial/ethnic groups. Fifty-two percent were male, and forty-eight percent were female. 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. Utilizing this online format, we reached students in 28 states. We continue to offer online registration completed by the student with the ability to access their student account through Populi as used by our Seminary students. COS also uses the same learning platform, Moodle, as our Seminary students. By implementing the Course of Study School into Populi, these students share the same benefits as the Seminary, allowing them to participate in the Saint Paul experience. They have full access to the Seminary library on campus and online, with several required readings accessible as an eBook. We have invited COS School students to join our Saint Paul School of Theology Weekly Chapel Services and Spiritual Formation gatherings and other Saint Paul events.

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 CO<sub>2</sub>, as well as being able to tell if the classrooms are occupied and how many individuals are in the room. We can also monitor the audio/video quality and network connectivity in each of our classrooms, as well as the connection quality for all remote students attending the class. We are excited about the additional enhancements that will come to our classrooms from Neat and Zoom over this next year.



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***

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

## United Theological Seminary

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.



**UNITED**  
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
OF THE TWIN CITIES

### Bishop 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.

**Dr. Kent Millard**, *President*

*\* Student data represent 2022-2023 headcount enrollment, as of March 1, 2023. Denominational figures represent those who responded.*

## Wesley Theological Seminary

*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 offer 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. <https://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. <https://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. <https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/innovation/>

**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. <https://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. <https://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. <https://www.churchleadership.com/>

**Call us:** (202) 885-8659 or [admissions@wesleyseminary.edu](mailto:admissions@wesleyseminary.edu) and join the Wesley Community online via [facebook.com/wesleyseminary](https://www.facebook.com/wesleyseminary), on Instagram @wesleyseminary, on Twitter @WesTheoSem, or sign up for our electronic newsletter.

### The Rev. Dr. David McAllister-Wilson

*President, Wesley Theological Seminary*



**WESLEY**  
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