



**2023**

# Book of Recommendations and Reports

June 4-6, 2023 Tifton, GA

The 159th Session of the  
South Georgia Annual Conference

# The 2023 Book of Recommendations and Reports

## Table of Contents

<b>Section 1 – Preparing for Annual Conference.....</b>	<b>4</b>
1. Agenda .....	5
2. Bishop Graves’ Welcome Letter .....	8
3. Conference Secretary’s Letter .....	9
4. How to Make a Motion and Parliamentary Procedures .....	11
5. Information for Conference Members and Visitors.....	13
6. UGA Tifton Campus Conference Center Directions and Alternate Routes.....	15
7. Special Offering Information.....	16
8. Mission Outreach Emphasis/AC Emails & Additional Information.....	17
9. HealthFlex and Wellness Information .....	18
<b>Section 2 – Resolutions .....</b>	<b>20</b>
1. The South Georgia Conference of the United Methodist Church Evangelism and Church Planting Initiative .....	21
<b>Section 3 – Recommendations.....</b>	<b>22</b>
1. Conference Board of Trustees .....	23
2. Commission on Equitable Compensation.....	26
a. Statement of Purpose, Policies, and Procedures .....	26
b. Minimum Salary.....	28
c. Equitable Compensation Churches.....	29
d. List of Churches with Unpaid Benefits Bills Greater than 180 Days .....	29
e. Equitable Compensation Supplementing Beyond Minimum Salaries .....	30
f. Conference Arrearage Policy.....	30
3. Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits.....	33
a. Pre-1982 Pensions and Benefits .....	33
b. Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) .....	33
c. Personal Investment Plan (PIP).....	34
d. The Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP).....	35
e. Health Insurance Program (Healthflex).....	35
f. Wellness Initiative .....	37
g. South Georgia Annual Conference Clergy Mental Health .....	38
h. Funding Plan for Retiree Health Care Benefits .....	38
i. Accumulating Debt for Clergy Benefits .....	39
j. 2024 Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan .....	40
k. Resolution on Rental/Housing Allowances for Retired or Disabled Clergy for 2024 .....	40
4. Council on Finance and Administration .....	41
a. Comparison Report.....	41
b. Report of Receipts and Disbursements.....	43
c. Budget Factors and Special Offerings .....	47
d. Pensions and Health Benefits Cost.....	50
e. Recommendations Regarding Cabinet .....	50
f. Budget for 2024.....	51
5. Resolution for Closing Local Churches.....	54
a. Resolution for the Closing of Goloid UMC .....	54
b. Resolution for the Closing of Harmony UMC.....	55
c. Resolution for the Closing of Norman Park UMC .....	55
d. Resoultion for the Closing of Sharon UMC .....	56
e. Resolution for the Closing of Vincent UMC .....	57
6. Standing Rules Changes .....	58
a. Conference Committee on Standing Rules.....	58
b. Provide for Virtual Conference .....	58
c. Committee on Memoirs.....	58
d. Committee on Courtesies and Introductions.....	59
e. Quadrennial Boards/Committees/Commissions/Etc. ....	59
f. Fund for Special Relief.....	59
g. Commission on Equitable Compensation.....	59

h. Council on Finance and Administration .....	60
i. Archives .....	60
j. Appendix A: Policy on Church Professional Sexual Misconduct .....	60

**Section 4 – Consent Calendar .....** **63**

*Reports are in alphabetical order*

1. Africa University .....	64
2. Archives and History/Arthur J. Moore Museum .....	64
3. Board of Laity.....	65
a. United Methodist Men.....	67
b. United Women in Faith (United Methodist Women) .....	68
4. Board of Ordained Ministry.....	69
a. Overview of the 2022-2023 Year .....	69
b. Ministerial Education Fund .....	70
5. Communications .....	72
6. Conference Center .....	73
7. Conference Personnel Committee .....	73
8. Congregational Development .....	74
9. Discipleship Ministries .....	75
a. Overview of Connectional Ministries.....	75
b. Outreach .....	80
i. “Three Star Church” Challenge.....	81
ii. Carruth Mission Awards .....	82
iii. Advance Specials .....	82
iv. Advance Special Guidelines.....	85
v. Covenant Relationship Program.....	85
c. Witness .....	87
i. General Evangelists Approval.....	87
ii. Fully Connectional Churches .....	88
iii. Witness Awards.....	91
iv. Evangelistically Fruitful Congregations.....	92
10. Epworth By The Sea.....	94
11. Georgia Pastors’ School .....	95
12. Georgia United Methodist Foundation, Inc. ....	95
13. Higher Education and Collegiate Ministry .....	95
a. General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.....	95
b. Schools of Theology.....	96
i. Boston University School of Theology .....	96
ii. Candler School of Theology.....	97
iii. Drew University Theological School .....	98
iv. Duke Divinity School (English and Spanish).....	99
v. Gammon Theological Seminary.....	102
vi. Saint Paul School of Theology .....	103
vii. United Theological Seminary.....	105
viii. Wesley Theological Seminary.....	106
ix. UMCommission on Higher Education and Ministry.....	107
14. Hinton Rural Life Center .....	109
15. Lake Junaluska Assembly, Inc. ....	110
16. Magnolia Manor .....	111
17. Methodist Home for Children and Youth.....	113
a. The Foundation of the Methodist Home.....	117
18. Open Door Community House, Inc. ....	118
19. Professional Administrators of the United Methodist Connectional Structure.....	119
20. St. Joseph’s/Candler .....	120
21. United Methodist Connectional Federal Credit Union .....	122
22. Vashti Center, Inc. ....	124
23. Wesley Community Centers of Savannah, Inc. ....	125
24. Wesley Glen Ministries .....	126

# RESOLUTIONS

*The South Georgia Conference  
of The United Methodist Church*

---

**2023 Annual Conference Session**

---



**June 4-6, 2023  
Tifton, Georgia**

1                   **RESOLUTION 1 – Resolution On The South Georgia Conference of the**  
2                   **United Methodist Church Evangelism and Church Planting Initiative**

3  
4       Whereas the South Georgia Conference of the United Methodist Church has and continues to suffer grief from  
5       disaffiliations.

6  
7       Whereas disaffiliations have created splintered congregations where South Georgia United Methodists are  
8       seeking local United Methodist churches for worship and in many areas, none are available.

9  
10       Whereas Jesus commissions His disciples to “go and make” disciples in the world and the scriptures tell the  
11       stories of the Apostles planting new churches.

12  
13       Whereas since the days of John Wesley, Methodists have always been dedicated to discipleship and the witness  
14       of Jesus Christ through establishing new churches.

15  
16       Whereas the South Georgia Conference of the United Methodist Church has a long history of witnessing for  
17       Christ through church plants.

18  
19       Whereas Bishop Graves has established a priority for the South Georgia Conference of the United Methodist  
20       Church to plant new churches.

21  
22       Now, therefore be it resolved that the South Georgia Conference of the United Methodist Church commit itself  
23       to evangelism and church planting in areas where disaffiliations have occurred and in new areas of the South  
24       Georgia Conference of the United Methodist Church.

25  
26       Be it further resolved that as the South Georgia Conference of the United Methodist Church is comprised of  
27       diverse constituents and communities, new church plants must also connect to and reflect the communities and  
28       demographics they are ministering to with the witness of Jesus Christ. New church plants must be connectional  
29       in spirit and practice, adhere to Wesleyan theology, and committed to the Doctrine and Discipline of the United  
30       Methodist Church.

31  
32       Rev. Mike Bankston           Rev. Dr. Jonathan Smith           Evelyn Tatum           Jenny H. Bankston  
33       Rev. Dr. Ben Gosden           Rev. Mark Miller           Karen Moore O’Conner   Sarah Inzetta  
34       Rev. Matt Stout                Rev. Greg Harrison           Beth Earlywine.       John Inzetta  
35       Rev. Alaina Harrison        Rev Garry Griffin           Harold Powers       Brian Powers  
36       Rev. Leigh Ann Raynor       Rev. Albert Williams III       Raymond Dotson       Michelle Powers  
37       Rev. Jerry Hudson            Rev. Rick Mitchell           Judy Dotson           J Knapp III

# RECOMMENDATIONS

*The South Georgia Conference  
of The United Methodist Church*

---

**2023 Annual Conference Session**

---



**June 4-6, 2023  
Tifton, Georgia**

1 **RECOMMENDATION 1 - Conference Board of Trustees**

2  
3 2022 ANNUAL REPORT FOR  
4 THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF  
5 THE SOUTH GEORGIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF  
6 THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, INC.

7 March 02, 2023

8  
9 In addition to our two standing meetings, your Conference Trustees held numerous called meetings and email  
10 consultations throughout the year as they sought to faithfully and effectively serve the Annual Conference. Our  
11 report will cover the expected property and investment details, but we begin by answering the most frequently  
12 asked question for 2022. “Are the Trustees going to change our minds with regard to our resolution to provide an  
13 extension of time for churches to depart the Methodist Church under paragraph 2549.3 after December 31, 2023?”  
14 No! Your Conference Trustees remain committed to our previous position, so that churches will not feel forced to  
15 make this important decision based on possibilities. We believe that better decisions can be made when more  
16 complete information is available. It remains our desire to allow decisions to be made based on facts rather than  
17 fear. Our resolution can be found in the Journal from 2022 reflecting the approval of the Annual Conference of  
18 our intentions.

19  
20 REAL PROPERTY

21 Title to the seven James A. and Virginia Willingham Wood Homes in Epworth Acres on St. Simons Island is  
22 held by the Trustees.

23  
24 Title to the two Office of Connectional Ministries parsonages in Epworth Acres is held by the Trustees. These  
25 properties are maintained by the Trustees with money in the Office of Connectional Ministries Maintenance  
26 Fund which is invested at the Georgia United Methodist Foundation.

27  
28 The Trustees believe that the amount held in the OCM Maintenance Fund will be sufficient to take care of all  
29 future expenses related to the parsonages and the OCM office building.

30  
31 Five homes for retired ministers at Magnolia Manor in Americus are governed by a joint between the Trustees of  
32 the South Georgia Conference and the Trustees of Magnolia Manor.

33  
34 Title to the Episcopal Residence at 522 Waverly Park Drive; Macon, Georgia, is held by the Conference  
35 Trustees.

36  
37 MAINTENANCE AND INSURANCE OF REAL PROPERTY

38 Maintenance and Insurance for the OFFICE OF CONNECTIONAL MINISTRIES PARSONAGES and OFFICE  
39 is paid by the Trustees with funds from the OCM Maintenance Fund which at the end of 2022 totaled \$456,236.  
40 Expenditures during 2022 totaled \$162,000.

41  
42 In the early part of 2022 a major long overdue renovation of the OCM building was undertaken. The improved  
43 and updated space has been well received by all, particularly our camping staff.

44  
45 Maintenance and Insurance for the JAMES A. AND VIRGINIA WILLINGHAM WOOD HOMES is paid by the  
46 Trustees with funds generated by payments made by residents of the homes and income from investments,  
47 restricted for that purpose. Expenditures during 2022 totaled \$222,552.35.

48  
49 Maintenance and Insurance for the RETIRED MINISTERS’ HOMES AT MAGNOLIA MANOR, AMERICUS  
50 is paid by Magnolia Manor from funds remitted by the residents of the three homes.

51  
52 Maintenance, Insurance and Mortgage payments for the EPISCOPAL RESIDENCE are overseen by the  
53 Episcopal Residence Committee. Funds for this purpose are provided by the General Council on Finance and  
54 Administration and the South Georgia Annual Conference. The Conference Treasurer administers these funds.  
55 The total expenditures for maintenance and insurance during 2022 was \$23,952.63.

FUNDS ADMINISTERED BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

All Funds invested in accordance with the Social Principles.

1. THE TOOLE FUND – Income from an original gift of \$1,000.00 by Mrs. C. L. Toole in memory of Dr. Toole was designated by the donor to be paid annually to the Conference Board of Missions. As of December 31, 2022, the Fund had an inventory value of \$5,900.94. Income for 2022 of \$134.20 has been paid to the South Georgia Committee on Missions.
2. THE FUND OF SPECIAL RELIEF – This Fund originated in 1830 to be used for ministers of the Conference as the name indicates. Stipulation has been made that three-fourths of the annual income be distributed by the Trustees to the Conference Committee charged with administering the Fund and the remaining one-fourth be added to the corpus of the Fund. Inventory Value of this Fund as of December 31, 2022 \$152,635.30. Total income for 2022 was \$3,471.18. \$2,603.39 (75%) was paid to the Treasurer of the Fund of Special Relief, and \$867.79 (25%) was added to the corpus of the fund.
3. MELTON CHILDREN’S HOME FUND – This Fund was created by the estate of Eddie Clark Melton through the Georgia Railroad Bank and Trust Company of Augusta, Georgia, in January 1985. On December 31, 2022, the corpus of this Fund was \$15,565.30. Income for 2022 was \$353.98 and has been paid to the Methodist Home for Children and Youth.
4. CATCHINGS ESTATE TRUST FUND – This Fund was created under the will of Julia Cone Catchings, dated June 1, 1906. The corpus of the Fund is “to be held by the Conference Trustees for, and the income therefrom applied to the relief of such infirm, dependent and friendless persons as may in their judgment, be worthy and deserving of aid.” Under these terms, distribution of the annual income has been made to five causes in 2022. The corpus of the fund as of December 31, 2022, was \$70,143.45. Checks in the amount of \$319.04 each have been made payable to the following Conference causes and institutions:
  - Golden Cross Fund – Conference Treasurer
  - Magnolia Manor
  - The Methodist Home
  - Necessities – Conference Board of Pensions
  - Fund for Special Relief
5. COVINGTON CAMPING SCHOLARSHIP FUND – This trust fund was established in 2002 through a bequest from the estate of Zlypha B. Covington of Thomasville, Georgia, in memory of her parents, John Nathaniel Bowman and Annie Renfroe Bowman and is to be used for camping scholarships. The initial corpus of this Fund was \$11,640.00. The annual income is forwarded to the South Georgia Conference Office of Connectional Ministries to be used for deserving children and youth who participate in the camping program at Epworth By The Sea. The value of the Fund on December 31, 2022, was \$20,573.82. Income of \$467.88 was paid to the Office of Connectional Ministries.
6. COWART FUND – The Annual Conference received an undesignated bequest from the Estate of Mrs. Wilma Cowart of Effingham County. The 2007 Annual Conference passed a resolution designating this fund for:
  1. New Congregational Development
  2. Legal Expenses
  3. Assistance for persons leaving the ministry
  4. Discontinued or abandoned property, and
  5. Future capital needs of the Annual Conference.These designations remain in effect unless changed by future action of the Annual Conference.
7. HARNSBERGER FUND – The Annual Conference received an undesignated bequest from the estate of Mr. and Mrs. Clyde Harnsberger of Macon. This fund is governed by the same 2007 resolution as the Cowart Fund.
8. BIRCHALL FUND – The Annual Conference received an undesignated bequest from the estate of Mrs. Eloise Birchall of Macon. The 2013 Annual Conference designated \$100,000.00 of this amount to be added to the capital projects needs of the Annual Conference with the remainder to be held as a contingency until designated for future uses.



1 9. MAJOR GIFTS FUND – In order to account for the Cowart, Harnsberger and Birchall gifts according  
 2 to the expense categories established by the Annual Conference, the Trustees have consolidated the  
 3 accounting for these gifts under the Major Gifts designation. As of December 31, 2021, the balance  
 4 remaining in the designated categories was as follows:

	Balance as of	Percentage of
	12/31/2022	Fund
5 New Congregational Development	\$0.00	0.0 %
6 Legal Expenses	\$81,534.28	8.1 %
7 Assistance for persons leaving the ministry	\$39,066.76	3.9 %
8 Discontinued or abandoned properties	\$29,338.97	2.9 %
9 Future capital needs	\$730,401.92	72.5 %
10 Contingency	<u>\$126,888.76</u>	<u>12.6%</u>
11	\$1,007,230.69	100.00%

12  
 13  
 14  
 15 10. WOOD HOMES FUND – This fund has accumulated from gifts, grants, rents, fees, etc., from the seven  
 16 James A. and Virginia Willingham Wood homes at Epworth Acres on St. Simons Island. It is used to  
 17 maintain these homes. Balance in the Wood Homes account at Morgan Stanley and checking account as  
 18 of December 31, 2022, totaled \$1,077,441.87.

19  
 20 11. OFFICES OF CONNECTIONAL MINISTRIES (“OCM”) PARSONAGES FUND – This is the fund  
 21 discussed above which was created from the proceeds of the sale of two of the Office of Connectional  
 22 Ministries Parsonages and the amount remaining in the Parsonage Reserve Fund which had been held  
 23 by the Annual Conference. The balance in this fund on December 31, 2022, was \$456,236.06.

24  
 25 12. EPISCOPAL RESIDENCE RESERVE FUND – If the entire budget item for the maintenance and  
 26 insurance of the Episcopal Residence is not spent in a given year, the unused funds are placed in the  
 27 reserve fund. Expenses vary from year to year, so this practice provides a cushion against major  
 28 expenses which may exceed the budget in a given year. The balance in this fund on December 31, 2022,  
 29 was \$172,027.02.

30  
 31 13. TRUSTEES’ EXPENSE FUND - This fund comes from the Conference budget and is used for  
 32 accounting, financial, travel, and internal business of the Board of Trustees of the South Georgia  
 33 Conference of the United Methodist Church, Inc. Expenditures from the fund in 2022 totaled \$4,533.66.

34  
 35 LEGAL TITLE

36 The correct legal name of the Board of Trustees corporation is The Board of Trustees of the South Georgia  
 37 Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, Inc.

38  
 39 All gifts, grants, and bequests should be designated accordingly. Any gifts or bequests of real property should be  
 40 in fee simple, and title should be vested in the above-named corporation.

41  
 42 Respectfully presented,  
 43 Rev. Dr. Jimmy R. Asbell, Jr. President

44  
 45 BOARD MEMBERSHIP

46 Trustees (Directors) of the Corporation classed according to The Discipline with ( ) noting year of first election.

47 2022 –Julia Magda (16), Cecil Haywood (20)

48 2023 - Amy Fletcher (20), Beverly Copeland (20), Jimmy R. Asbell, Jr. (20)

49 2024- Tommy Mason (13), John Brooks (21)

50 2025- Kee Evans (22), Cathy Tucker (22), Glenn Martin (15)

51 Officers of the Corporation:

52 Rev. Dr. Jimmy R. Asbell, Jr., President

53 Tommy Mason, Vice President

54 Amy Fletcher, Treasurer

55 Glenn Martin, Secretary

56  
 57 Ex-officio members are:

58 Cater C. Thompson, Conference Chancellor

59 Suzanne Jones, Director of Administrative Services, Conference Treasurer, Conference Statistician

# RECOMMENDATION 2 – Commission on Equitable Compensation

## REPORT #1

### Statement of Purpose, Policies, and Procedures

#### I. PURPOSE:

In keeping with the duties and responsibilities set forth in *The Book of Discipline, 2016*, the Commission on Equitable Compensation of the South Georgia Conference understands its purpose as follows:

- A. To affirm the basic and traditional United Methodist principle that each pastoral charge is responsible for setting and paying the salary(ies) of its minister(s).
- B. To develop a plan of adequate ministerial support of those who have committed their lives to the itineracy.
- C. To establish a minimum standard schedule for ministerial support in the Conference.
- D. To encourage pastoral charges to provide adequate salary support to which their pastor is entitled.
- E. To administer a system of assisting those charges which are unable to provide that minimum standard through a supplement which is paid monthly to the church/charge treasurer.
- F. To recommend to the Annual Conference for their approval that Equitable Compensation funds be used to supplement base compensation beyond the minimum base compensation schedule when the Commission feels that the mission and ministry of the annual conference will be served best by so doing. (§625.6 *The Book of Discipline, 2016*)

#### II. POLICIES REGARDING ADMINISTRATION OF MINIMUM SALARY SUPPLEMENT: (§625.9 *The Book of Discipline, 2016*)

##### A. QUALIFYING REQUIREMENTS FOR CHURCHES/CHARGES:

1. The Fall Charge Conference sets the pastor's total compensation (including salary and accountable reimbursable expenses) for the ensuing year. In consultation with the District Superintendent, the Charge Conference shall examine this salary in the light of the minimum standard set by the Annual Conference. If the salary set by the Charge Conference is below the minimum standard for the pastor, the Charge Conference shall request the District Superintendent to file for a minimum salary supplement. This application should be signed by the pastor and two lay persons from each charge.
2. Each church/charge which applies for minimum salary supplement is **required** to conduct an approved financial stewardship program. **The pastor shall see that each church/charge fulfills this expectation.**
3. Other than new church starts, any local church or charge requesting equitable compensation which has additional paid staff other than the pastor must document in writing with their request the specific need for additional staff.
4. Each church/charge shall furnish a parsonage or housing allowance for the pastor and family in keeping with guidelines established by the Annual Conference.
5. The maximum supplement from the Commission on Equitable Compensation should not exceed 50% of the pastor's salary, except in special situations approved by the District Superintendent and this committee.
6. No local church or charge shall receive minimum salary supplements for more than five consecutive years, except in special consideration approved by this committee.
7. It is the responsibility of every charge receiving equitable compensation funds to report these funds on the pastor's W-2 for the year.
8. Equitable Compensation support is only available to churches which are part of the South Georgia Conference. Churches which disaffiliate are not eligible to receive funds. Payment will end the month the Annual Conference votes to approve a church's disaffiliation.

##### B. QUALIFYING REQUIREMENTS FOR PASTORS:

1. The minimum salary supplement shall apply only to pastors serving full-time (with the exception of full conference members serving less than full-time, in keeping with §342.2, *The Book of Discipline, 2016*): Full Conference Members, Associate Members, Probationary Members, Provisional Members, and Local Pastors. Retired Supply Pastors shall qualify up to the amount established by the Annual Conference.

- 1 2. If at any time a change of status of the pastor occurs which would affect his/her minimum salary  
2 payments (i.e., loss of a dependent, marriage, birth of a child, salary change, change in conference  
3 relationship, change in appointment, etc.), it is the responsibility of the pastor to notify the District  
4 Superintendent. The District Superintendent shall then notify the Commission and the Conference  
5 Treasurer.
- 6 3. Definition of “dependent” shall be any person in the pastor’s family who is considered a dependent  
7 on the pastor’s income tax returns.
- 8 4. Special cases will be considered when the District Superintendent presents a request. If an  
9 appointment does not normally qualify for minimum salary supplement and the District  
10 Superintendent feels it is warranted (mission situations, specialized ministries, etc.), the case will  
11 be considered and an appropriate amount decided upon by the Commission.  
12

### 13 III. EQUITABLE SALARY SUPPORT FOR NEW CHURCH STARTS:

- 14 A. The Commission on Equitable Compensation currently provides a maximum of \$50,000.00 for new  
15 church starts, to be used over a period of five years. Distribution over the five-year period will be at the  
16 discretion of the Director of Congregational Development and the District Superintendent, in  
17 consultation with the local leadership. We recognize that perhaps as much as half of the total could be  
18 used in the first year. This supplement is contingent upon the annual evaluation and recommendation of  
19 the Director of Congregational Development and the District Superintendent. As the processes of new  
20 church starts and the Office of Congregational Development change, we are reviewing how our funds  
21 can be used effectively to assist new church starts.  
22

23 It would be expected:

- 24 1. That any new church should become self-supporting in regards to salary within five years.
- 25 2. That all new churches would be served by a full-time pastor with several years of pastoral  
26 experience and possibly some specialized training, and therefore might have a salary above normal  
27 minimum salary level for their conference status.
- 28 3. That pastors and local leaders would be required to file the same annual application forms as other  
29 applicants for supplements from the Commission on Equitable Compensation.
- 30 4. That new church starts would not receive supplement from the Commission on Equitable  
31 Compensation during the second five-year period, except in unusual circumstances, as requested by  
32 the Cabinet on an annual basis.  
33

### 34 IV. PROCEDURES FOR APPLICATION AND DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS:

- 35 A. The Pastor and District Superintendent are responsible for filing all requests for minimum salary  
36 supplements for the charges in his/her district and for notifying the Treasurer and Chair of the  
37 Commission of any changes during the year.
- 38 B. In August, the Administrative Services Office will send application forms to each District  
39 Superintendent. After the salaries for the ensuing year have been set by the Charge Conferences, the  
40 District Superintendent will supply application forms to be completed to the appropriate persons of each  
41 charge. Completed forms shall then be returned to the District Superintendent for his/her approval. The  
42 District Superintendent will then forward all applications to the Conference Treasurer and Commission  
43 Chair, no later than December 1. No checks will be issued until applications have been processed by the  
44 Commission on Equitable Compensation. The Commission shall return incomplete applications.  
45
- 46 C. Each application should include:
  - 47 1. Completed forms including appropriate signatures.
  - 48 2. Copies of the requested budgets for the two years shown on the form;\*
  - 49 3. Copy of actual income and expenses for the current year.\*
  - 50 4. Indication of what financial stewardship program the charge is using, and the results of that  
51 program.  
52 \*Applications from a charge or a church on a charge must include budgets and financial reports for  
53 each church on the charge.
- 54 D. Prior to conducting the Fall Charge Conference, the District Superintendent shall notify the officials of  
55 each charge that they are encouraged to set the next year’s salary above the minimum to which their  
56 pastor is entitled. If the salary is set below the minimum salary standard, the District Superintendent  
57 shall inform the charge that they should file an application for minimum salary supplement to be paid to  
58 their pastor by the Annual Conference.

- 1 E. The District Superintendent or Commission on Equitable Compensation may require that a church or  
 2 charge enter into negotiated agreements as a condition of receiving Equitable Compensation. Such  
 3 agreements generally include a plan for coming off Equitable Compensation within five years, and may  
 4 include other benchmarks for attendance and funding.
- 5 F. The Conference Treasurer is responsible for the disbursement of funds on a monthly basis. The funds  
 6 will be deposited directly to the bank account of church (or charge) receiving the supplement prior to  
 7 the first day of the month for that month. No paper checks shall be issued.
- 8 G. The Conference Treasurer and the District Superintendent shall inform each other of any changes that  
 9 occur within the district of which he/she may not otherwise be aware.
- 10 H. The Commission realizes that errors can be made. In the event of error, either overpaid or underpaid,  
 11 funds should be returned immediately to the Conference Treasurer for correction. The pastor shares the  
 12 responsibility with the Commission in seeing that the payments are correct.

13  
 14 **REPORT #2**  
 15 **Minimum Salary Scale for January – December 2024**  
 16

17 The Commission on Equitable Compensation is recommending no increase for 2024 in minimum salary. We  
 18 have struggled to balance the needs of our clergy for appropriate wages with the ability of our churches to pay  
 19 the rising costs of clergy, both salary and pension and rising insurance costs. Congregations are very concerned  
 20 about funding for present ministries. Minimum salary has risen more than 20% since 2010. More and more of  
 21 our churches cannot afford a full-time pastor. Cost of benefits is a major factor.

22 We hope that every church will consider a raise, or at least a bonus, for their pastor in 2024, particularly with  
 23 rising inflation. We recommend that minimum salary amounts be as follows:  
 24

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>
Full Conference Members	\$48,489	\$48,489
Probationary and Associate Members	43,539	43,539
Full-time Local Pastors	40,814	40,814
 ADDITIONAL BENEFITS:		
Spouse (or first dependent, if not married)	700	700
First dependent, if married (second, if not married)	600	600
Each additional dependent	500	500

25 We call your attention to the legislation of the 2016 General Conference which affects Equitable Compensation  
 26 payments to Full Conference Members serving “less than full-time” (§342.2 "Support for Ministers Appointed to  
 27 Pastoral Charges Who Render Less than Full-Time Service. Each pastor who is in good standing and who is  
 28 appointed by the Bishop for less than full-time service under the provision of §338.2 shall have a claim upon the  
 29 Conference Equitable Salary Fund in one-quarter increments according to the guidelines established by the  
 30 Annual Conference Commission on Equitable Compensation.”)

31 We also call attention to ¶1506.14 which states “Pension and benefit contributions are the responsibility of the  
 32 salary paying unit of a participant in the Clergy Retirement Security Program and the Comprehensive Protection  
 33 Plan...” (*The Book of Discipline, 2016*). This legislation makes the Commission on Equitable Compensation  
 34 responsible for paying its share of the minister’s pension and benefits.  
 35  
 36  
 37

38 In order to maintain the proposed minimum salary scale, the Commission on Equitable Compensation has a  
 39 budget request of \$189,300 for the year 2024. The amount requested is a zero increase over 2023 and reflects the  
 40 ongoing need to restore funding for new church starts. It is evident that our churches have worked very hard to  
 41 financially support their pastors. It is also clear that our Bishop and Cabinet have kept in mind the conference  
 42 relationship of our pastors and the fiscal capability of local churches in the appointment making process. We  
 43 commend the churches, the Bishop and the Cabinet for their strong efforts in this area.

<u>2023 Budget Requests</u>	
Salary Support	\$100,000
New Church Starts	37,500
Appointment Grants	10,000
CRSP, CPP Benefits	16,000

HealthFlex Benefits	25,000
Committee Expenses	<u>800</u>
TOTAL	\$189,300

This budget request is based on the following assumptions:

1. That churches paying minimum salary and below will raise salaries by at least the amount that the minimum standard is raised.
2. That the District Superintendents will continue to work closely with each charge paying the minimum scale or less to ensure that at least a raise of the amount proposed in the standard will be adopted by each charge.
3. That the responsibility of the pastor's salary rests with the local church. Each church shall work to ensure and maintain adequate salary support.
4. That a strong minimum salary program will have a ripple effect throughout the churches paying above the minimum; thus, the Conference will be providing a standard by which all churches may be guided in setting an equitable salary for pastors in 2024.

The Commission reminds the Annual Conference of the work of the Clergy Workload Task Force in 1998. This task force report, which was approved by the Annual Conference, pointed out that a minimum number of members to sustain a full-time work load and be able to provide support for a full-time pastor was 150 members, with 100 in average worship attendance. This is a very delicate and sensitive area of concern. All of us want our churches to provide full services. At the same time, other churches feel they have been called upon to support pastors at smaller, neighboring churches to a level which challenges the ministry of their own congregation. **The purpose of Equitable Compensation is not to delay decisions churches need to make about their own size, activity, and ability to financially support a full-time pastor.** We believe those discussions best occur within the local church, as the members look realistically at their own situation to determine if they should call upon funds from the offering plates of sister congregations.

We wish to commend all the District Superintendents, Local Church Committees on Pastor/Parish Relations, Committees on Finance, Administrative Boards, and others who have worked diligently over the past years to help many churches to sustain salary levels in keeping with our covenant in The United Methodist Church.

#### REPORT #3A

##### List of Churches Receiving Equitable Compensation Salary Funds in 2022

Districts	Churches	Total
Coastal	Asbury	\$ 9,864.00
Coastal	Encounter (Effingham)	18,750.00
Coastal	Grace (Brunswick)	12,000.00
Coastal	Speedwell	18,134.00
Northeast	Daisy	2,845.00
Northeast	Hagan	2,235.00
Northwest	Ellaville	3,529.98
South Central	Bemiss	4,333.33
South Central	Harper's Chapel	8,888.00
	Total	<u><u>\$80,579.28</u></u>

#### REPORT #3B

##### List of Churches with Unpaid Benefits Bills Whose Balance is Greater Than 180 Days Payment as of December 31, 2022

##### These Churches Eliminated Their Debt in 2022

District	Church	<u>12/31/2021</u>	<u>12/31/2022</u>
South Central	Waresboro	6,389.45	0.00
Northeast	Oak Park	4,678.02	0.00

**These Churches' Debt Was Reduced in 2022**

<u>District</u>	<u>Church</u>	<u>12/31/2021</u>	<u>12/31/2022</u>
Coastal	Canaan Community	42,326.48	37,326.23
Coastal	Grace (Brunswick)	2,776.39	397.77
Coastal	Greater Trinity	6,897.12	1,732.12
Coastal	Pinkney Chapel	15,633.98	10,368.98
North Central	Howard Chapel	47,127.36	39,831.99
North Central	Joycliff	79,051.77	72,186.77
Northeast	Horse Creek	14,397.64	9,897.66
Northeast	LifeSpring	8,770.18	6,654.12
South Central	Harper's Chapel	61,326.96	49,067.37
North Central	Piney Mount	36,358.45	31,940.71
Northeast	Brannen Chapel	36,749.62	28,244.26

**These Churches' Debt Remained the Same**

<u>District</u>	<u>Church</u>	<u>12/31/2021</u>	<u>12/31/2022</u>
Coastal	Mosaic	65,056.12	65,056.12
Northeast	St Andrews (Horse Creek Charge)	17,912.63	17,912.63
South Central	Mary's Chapel	(61.52)	429.66
Northwest	Midway (Columbus)	4,495.12	4,495.12

**These Churches' Debt Increased in 2022**

<u>District</u>	<u>Church</u>	<u>12/31/2021</u>	<u>12/31/2022</u>
Northwest	South Columbus	87,338.19	97,822.03
Northwest	Sylvania	0.00	3,053.05
South Central	Sweetwater	1,949.50	2,596.43

**Total balances over 180 days due                    539,173.46                    479,013.02**

**REPORT #4**

**Equitable Compensation Funds Being Used  
to Supplement Salaries Beyond Minimum Salary**

*The Book of Discipline, 2016 ¶625.6* provides that an annual conference can approve the use of Equitable Compensation Funds to supplement the base compensation beyond the minimum base compensation schedule upon the recommendation of the Equitable Compensation Commission when the Commission feels the use of such funds is in the best interest of the mission and ministry of the annual conference.

In 2022, such funding was provided to Ellaville UMC and Speedwell UMC.

**REPORT #5**

**Conference Arrearage Policy**

**Background:**

Recognizing that the South Georgia Conference has experienced, for several years, an alarming amount of arrearages owed to our active pastors, the Equitable Compensation Committee submits this policy as an effort to protect both our clergy and the annual conference. Since direct billing of pension was initiated in 2006 (insurance has been direct billed for more than 25 years), there have been more than \$1 million in shortfalls when local churches did not meet the compensation owed to pastors (typically unpaid health insurance premiums

1 or the church's share in pension costs). When a local church does not meet its obligations, the other local  
2 churches in the conference must pay the bill through the apportionment system.  
3 In 2012, the General Conference invited conference equitable compensation committees to develop an arrearage  
4 policy for the protection of clergy and the annual conference when a church or charge is unable to pay the full  
5 compensation due to a pastor, whether cash salary, housing, health insurance, or pension obligations.  
6

7 The policy below outlines our proposal to the South Georgia Annual Conference to adopt a policy which  
8 includes:

- 9 - A process for notification when compensation is in arrears
- 10 - Courses of action when an arrearage occurs
- 11 - A statute of limitations for claims against the Annual Conference
- 12 - Provisions for reporting the churches whose arrearages have required disbursement from conference  
13 funds to compensate pastors

14  
15 It is our hope that this policy can both 'bring into the light' some issues of financial concern as well as set our  
16 conference on a course to rectify a growing problem of arrearages.  
17

### 18 **Introduction**

19 ¶624.2. in *The Book of Discipline (2016)* allows for each annual conference to establish an arrearage policy to  
20 deal with the situations that arise or that have arisen in the past. ¶625.2.d entitled *Equitable Compensation*, also  
21 references the conference arrearage policy. Below is ¶624.1 where it states:

22 ¶624. *Payment Obligation – 1. Each church or charge has an obligation to pay the base compensation, the*  
23 *benefits adopted by the annual conference, and other ministerial support (including housing) adopted by the*  
24 *charge conference, to its pastor(s). If it becomes apparent that a church or charge will be unable to so*  
25 *provide the base compensation, support, and benefits adopted by the charge conference, the church or*  
26 *charge SPRC chair, finance chair, or treasurer, shall immediately notify, both in writing and verbally, the*  
27 *pastor, district superintendent and congregation. This communication shall indicate all avenues explored to*  
28 *meet the base compensation, support, and benefits, including requesting consideration for a short-term*  
29 *emergency subsidy grant from the Equitable Compensation Fund (¶625.7). If it becomes necessary to*  
30 *reduce a pastor's compensation, it shall occur at the end of the conference appointment year.*  
31

32 **The 2018 session of the South Georgia Annual Conference adopted the following Arrearage Policy in**  
33 **accordance with ¶¶624.2. and 625.2d of *The Book of Discipline (2016)*.**  
34

- 35 1. Local church treasurers receive a monthly statement on pension and insurance obligations. Beginning in  
36 January 2018, quarterly statements will be sent to all pastors and S/PPRC chairs to identify all pension and  
37 insurance obligations that are due. When the local church treasurer becomes aware that the church will be  
38 unable to provide to the pastor full payment of a regularly scheduled payroll or housing allowance  
39 installment, or to remit to the Conference Treasurer full payment for regular direct billed benefit payments  
40 such as pension and health care, the church treasurer shall immediately notify both verbally (within 24  
41 hours) and in writing/via email (within 3 days) the Pastor, the Lay Leader, and the Chairs of S/PPRC,  
42 Finance, Trustees, and the Administrative/Church Council of the impending arrearage. Upon receipt of such  
43 notice, the Chair of S/PPRC and/or the Pastor shall immediately (within 3 days) notify the District  
44 Superintendent of the impending arrearage. It is the pastor's responsibility to keep copies of all such written  
45 notifications, and to provide additional written confirmation to the District Superintendent when an  
46 arrearage has taken place. Failure to document salary or benefit arrearages may result in a loss of  
47 compensation and/or forfeiture of pension and benefits.  
48
- 49 2. Upon receipt of notice of a pending arrearage, the Chair of S/PPRC shall immediately (within 24 hours) call  
50 a meeting of the Pastor, Lay Leader, and Chairs of Finance, Trustees, and the Administrative/Church  
51 Council to discuss the financial situation and seek remedies to prevent an arrearage from occurring.  
52

53 Such remedies might include:

- 54
- 55 a. Drawing from invested funds, including short-term borrowing from designated funds,
- 56 b. An emergency appeal for special giving from the congregation,
- 57 c. Other sources

1 According to *The Book of Discipline (2016)* ¶624, such remedies cannot include a reduction in the Pastor’s  
2 compensation until the beginning of the next Conference year.

- 3  
4 3. If, after consultation among the Lay Leader and Chairs of S/PPRC, Finance, Trustees, and the  
5 Administrative/Church Council, it becomes apparent that the church may be facing a long-term financial  
6 crisis, the Chair of S/PPRC shall notify in writing the Pastor and District Superintendent that:
- 7 a. A temporary Equitable Compensation Subsidy Grant may be necessary to maintain compensation for  
8 the remainder of the Conference year, or  
9 b. A change in pastoral compensation or appointment may be necessary at the beginning of the following  
10 Conference year.
- 11  
12 4. If the local church becomes delinquent in the pastor’s cash compensation plus housing (i.e. more than 30  
13 days delinquent), the District Superintendent shall notify the Commission on Equitable Compensation,  
14 which on its own initiative may do any or all of the following, but not limited to:
- 15 a. Meeting with the local church and pastor to seek resolution of the issue.  
16 b. Developing with the local church a payment plan so that the pastor receives full payment of  
17 compensation by the end of the conference year.
- 18  
19  
20 5. If a local church becomes delinquent in the payment of the pastor’s direct billed pension and benefits (i.e.  
21 more than 30 days delinquent), the Conference Treasurer shall notify the District Superintendent, and the  
22 Commission on Equitable Compensation. The local church shall submit a payment plan to the Conference  
23 Benefits Officer, including the District Superintendent and the Committee on Equitable Compensation. The  
24 plan submitted must ensure that the Conference receives full payment of pension and health benefits by the  
25 end of the conference year.
- 26  
27 6. It is the responsibility of the pastor to provide evidence of an arrearage by providing documentation such as:  
28 Treasurer’s Reports, Charge Conference reports of adopted salary and compensation, check stubs, W-2  
29 forms. A note accompanying such documentation shall be signed by the Pastor, S/PPRC Chair, Trustee  
30 Chair, Treasurer, and Administrative/Church Council Chair.
- 31  
32 7. The statute of limitations for filing a claim for funds from the Annual Conference (i.e. notification to the  
33 District Superintendent of the arrearage) for any salary arrearage is one year from the date of the initial  
34 arrearage. Once an appointment ends the Pastor no longer has claim on the local church for compensation  
35 funds (¶342.4).
- 36  
37 8. An Administrative Complaint may be filed against a pastor who fails to report an arrearage according to the  
38 time lines established in this policy.
- 39  
40 9. Churches which are in arrears to the Annual Conference with respect to benefits payments will be reported  
41 in the Annual Conference Journal as “churches receiving equitable compensation.” These specific churches  
42 will be reported based on the following methodology:
- 43 a. Benefits balances “greater than 180 days” at the end of the current year to the end of the previous year.  
44 b. Any church whose “greater than 180 days balance” increased based on item (1) will be reported as a  
45 “church receiving equitable compensation.”  
46 c. Continuing our conference’s practice, funding for such churches will be provided via the “Benefits  
47 Underpayment” line item in the conference budget until exhausted. Additional funds will be paid out of  
48 conference reserves. These payments shall be considered as payments on behalf of the local church, and  
49 the conference retains the right to have these payments reimbursed by the local church.  
50  
51

52 Respectfully submitted,  
53 Mrs. Suzanne Jones, Dir. of Administrative Services



1 **RECOMMENDATION 3 – Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits**

2  
3 Caring for the pension and health needs of those who have and are faithfully serving the church continues to be  
4 the mission of the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits and of Wespeth.

5  
6 The task of our Conference Board of Pensions and our Administrative Services Office is to fully implement these  
7 caring ideals of our annual conference. In order to put these ideals into practice, the following practices and policies  
8 are adopted:

9  
10 1) The Administrative Services Office will bill churches/agencies directly for the cost of the following plans (if  
11 their minister is a participant):

- 12
  - Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) for full time & ¾-time ministers
  - United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP) for ½-time and ¼-time ministers
  - Health insurance (HealthFlex) for active ministers serving full-time

13  
14  
15  
16 2) The Conference will continue to bear, on the decimal apportionment system, the financial responsibility for the  
17 following:

- 18
  - Pension liability for the Pre-82 Pension Plan (mainly PSR increases)
  - the Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP)
  - the health insurance program (HealthFlex) for ministers on disability
  - Post-retirement medical funding for Pre-65 retired ministers

19  
20  
21 Agencies which do not receive apportionments will be billed directly for the CPP related to any clergy  
22 staff appointed to that agency.

23  
24  
25 3) Wespeth will bill churches/agencies directly for the minister’s personal contribution to the United Methodist  
26 Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP).

27  
28 The Denominational Average Compensation (DAC) for 2024 will be \$78,292. The Conference Average  
29 Compensation (CAC) for 2024 will be \$88,752. These figures are based on salary plus 25% for housing.

30  
31 **REPORT #1**  
32 **PRE-1982 PENSIONS AND BENEFITS**  
33 **(FORMERLY CONFERENCE CLAIMANTS)**  
34

35 Since 1982, ministerial pensions have been funded each year by the church or agency which a minister serves. PRE-  
36 1982 PENSIONS is the term used to describe the funding of pensions for those ministers, both active and retired,  
37 who have years of service credit prior to 1982. The South Georgia Conference met its obligation to fund the Pre-  
38 ’82 Pension in 2019. Actuaries tell us we are never “fully funded”, as funding depends on investment performance  
39 and mortality, among other items. Nonetheless, we expect only modest payments on this account in coming years.  
40

41 Pre-’82 pensions are provided at a Past Service Rate (PSR). Essentially, you multiply the number of years served  
42 by the PSR to arrive at an annual pension. Beginning in 2014, any increase in the past service rate for Pre-82 pension  
43 benefits must be fully funded in advance of the increase. For service rendered prior to January 1, 1982, *the following*  
44 *rates are anticipated for 2024:*

45

Retired Full Members, Associate Members and Local Pastors	<b><i>\$815.00 per service year</i></b>
Widows or Widowers of Participants	<b><i>\$571.00 per service year</i></b>

46 These rates are an increase of 2% from the current PSR of \$799.00. We are pleased to report that our level of  
47 payment into the Pre-’82 plan should enable us to have annual increases of 2%, without the need to apportion those  
48 increases.  
49

50  
51 **REPORT #2**  
52 **THE CLERGY RETIREMENT SECURITY PROGRAM (CRSP)**  
53

54 **Employer contribution for 3/4- and Full-Time ministers**

55  
56 The 2004 General Conference adopted a new pension plan for ministers called the Clergy Retirement Security  
57 Program (CRSP), which offers a unique two component benefit design that began on Jan. 1, 2007. The core  
58 program, which is provided to all eligible clergy (including deacons), consists of separate defined benefit and  
59 defined contribution plans. These components, which combined with Social Security and personal savings, are

1 designed to replace 75% - 100% of income at retirement, assuming participants are contributing to Social Security  
2 and have saved some funds personally (either through the United Methodist Personal Investment Plan, also known  
3 as UMPIP, or other savings).

- 4 • A “defined benefit retirement plan” promises a specific dollar amount at retirement regardless of market  
5 conditions or investment performance. At the beginning of CRSP, the Defined Benefit portion of CRSP was  
6 a benefit equal to 1.25% of the Denominational Average Compensation (DAC) at the time of retirement  
7 multiplied by the number of years of credited service in the plan. Changes to the plan made at the 2012 General  
8 Conference have set the benefit equal to 1.0% of the DAC beginning January 1, 2014. The prior CRSP benefit  
9 formula will remain effective for all covered service prior to January 1, 2014.
- 10 • A “defined contribution retirement plan” promises that a defined amount of money will go into an active clergy  
11 person’s account annually. The Defined Contribution portion of CRSP had a benefit equal to 3% of the  
12 minister’s “Pension Plan Compensation” each year through December 2013. The “Pension Plan  
13 Compensation” for each minister is the taxable salary plus non-taxable contributions to a 403 (b) plan and a  
14 section 125 cafeteria plan plus 25% of the above for housing. If a parsonage is not provided, the actual amount  
15 the minister receives for housing will be included. Beginning January 1, 2014, the Defined Contribution  
16 contributed by the Church is now 2% of the “Pension Plan Compensation” with an additional 1% matching  
17 contribution if the minister contributes at least 1% to UMPIP. Ministers contributing at 1% to UMPIP will  
18 have church contributions to the Defined Contribution Plan equal to 3%. Those opting not to participate will  
19 receive church contributions equal to 2%.

20  
21 ***We recommend that the minister’s pension be billed to their local church/agency as follows:***

- 22  
23 1. Beginning January 1, 2015, the defined benefit portion of CRSP (CRSP DB) will be assessed to churches  
24 based on a specific percentage of the clergy’s “Pension Plan Compensation”. The actual percentage to be used  
25 will be calculated by the conference after consultation with the actuaries at Wespath. Churches will then be  
26 charged for their share of the CRSP DB based on their current appointment status and salary information.  
27 Changes to appointments and salaries midyear will be reflected in the billing at the time of the change.
- 28  
29 2. Each church having a participating clergy will be assessed 3% of their clergy’s “Pension Plan Compensation,”  
30 which will go directly into their clergy’s designated account at Wespath to fund the defined contribution  
31 portion of CRSP based on the decision of the minister to participate in the minimum contribution requirements  
32 for matching funds; and
- 33  
34 3. The amounts calculated for the two parts of CRSP will be billed to the church or salary-paying unit.

35  
36 Pastors and/or Church Treasurers who experience any billing problems are asked to contact the Conference  
37 Administrative Services Office.

38  
39 **Employer contribution for ½-time and ¼-time ministers**

40  
41 The 2013 Annual Conference approved that the benefits for ministers serving ½-time or ¼-time appointments  
42 will be provided by the United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (a defined contribution plan). These benefits  
43 are described in Report # 3 under United Methodist Personal Investment Plan.

44  
45 **EXTENSION MINISTRY APPOINTMENTS**

46  
47 Under the CRSP pension plan, church-related institutions and agencies can sign an agreement with Wespath to offer  
48 the United Methodist Personal Investment Plan for the employers’ portion of the minister’s pension, or they can  
49 sign an agreement with the Conference Board of Pensions and Health Benefits (CBOPHB) in order to allow their  
50 active ministers to participate in the Clergy Retirement Security Program. Church-related institutions and agencies  
51 which choose to enroll their active ministers in CRSP through the South Georgia Conference will be responsible  
52 for the costs associated with their minister’s participation in the plan. Church-related institutions and agencies are  
53 also encouraged to enroll their active ministers in the Comprehensive Protection Plan. Ministers appointed to  
54 extension ministries are reminded that when their compensation changes, they need to notify Wespath and the  
55 Administrative Services Office in order for their pension contributions to be calculated properly.

56  
57 **REPORT #3**  
58 **UNITED METHODIST PERSONAL INVESTMENT PLAN (UMPIP)**

59  
60 **Employer contribution for ¼- and ½-time ministers**

61  
62 As of January 1, 2014, ministers serving less than 75% appointments are no longer eligible to participate in the

1 CRSP, and will be enrolled in UMPIP as their primary pension plan. Churches will be billed 14% of the minister's  
2 pension plan compensation (salary + housing, see Report #2) which would be directly deposited in the minister's  
3 account subject to the minister's personal participation of a 1% match. Those choosing not to participate would only  
4 receive 13% in their UMPIP account. Churches will be billed by the Administrative Services Office for the church's  
5 cost of the minister's participation in UMPIP. (Wespath will direct bill the churches for the minister's personal  
6 pension contribution.)  
7

8 **Minister's Personal Pension Contribution:**  
9

10 Beginning in January 2007, the Personal Investment Plan was modified, and the new name is United Methodist  
11 Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP). Ministers covered by the Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) are  
12 urged to pay a minimum of 3% of their salaries into their United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP)  
13 accounts with Wespath. UMPIP contributions can be tax deferred ("Before Tax Contribution") or tax paid ("After  
14 Tax Contribution") based on an agreement with the church prior to the beginning of the year. An additional option  
15 is to have contributions invested in a Roth account. Wespath will continue to send bills directly to churches and  
16 church-related institutions and agencies for their minister's contributions into UMPIP. Contributions to UMPIP over  
17 the minimum 1% matching contribution will continue to be encouraged of all ministers as an important part of their  
18 retirement planning.  
19

20 **Auto-Enroll Program:**  
21

22 Your Board of Pensions has been concerned for some time over the number of pastors who do not contribute to  
23 their own retirement through UMPIP. We believe many of the pastors who do not contribute fail to do so simply  
24 because they never completed the necessary paperwork. We began auto-enrolling clergy in the UMPIP program  
25 beginning in the fall of 2017 for 2018 compensation. Auto-enrollment will assume a 1% contribution. Clergy are  
26 able to opt out of enrollment, so we will not force those who intentionally have not enrolled. Very few clergy do  
27 opt out. We will continue to auto-enroll clergy in this plan. Auto-enrollment will bless many of our clergy by  
28 enabling them to provide for their retirement.  
29

30 **REPORT #4**  
31 **THE COMPREHENSIVE PROTECTION PLAN (CPP)**  
32

33 In 2024, the Contribution Rate for CPP shall be 3% of the Active Participant's Plan Compensation for the year, not  
34 to exceed twice the Denominational Average Compensation (DAC). Plan Compensation for the Comprehensive  
35 Protection Plan is the same as it is for the Clergy Retirement Security Program, which is defined in Report #2.  
36 Based on this rate and the DAC, the maximum contribution for each full-time minister will be \$4,698 for 2024. The  
37 South Georgia Conference pays for CPP through the apportionments. So, the amount each church pays for the  
38 Comprehensive Protection Plan will not usually be equal to the actual cost of CPP for their minister(s).  
39

40 ***It is recommended that funding for the Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP) be as follows:***  
41

- 42 (1) CPP will be apportioned to the charges based upon the same "decimal" which is used for the other  
43 apportionments.
- 44 (2) Each local church treasurer is urged to make a monthly payment of the CPP apportionment to the  
45 Administrative Services Office with their other apportionments.
- 46 (3) Participating agencies will be directly billed 3% of plan compensation for any clergy appointed to the  
47 agency.
- 48 (4) The Director of Administrative Services shall remit payments on a monthly basis to Wespath on behalf  
49 of all pastors covered by the Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP).  
50

51 **REPORT #5**  
52 **HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM**  
53 **(HEALTHFLEX)**  
54

55 In 2024, the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits will continue to offer a health benefit program.  
56 Health insurance is not mandated by the General Conference, but we wish to provide these benefits as long as they  
57 are affordable. In a group policy, the cost of premiums is directly related to prior claims experience. Our group is  
58 relatively small and older, which usually leads to higher claims, and thus higher costs. The premium increase in  
59 2024 (6.7%) is lower than in 2023 (9.7%) due to an improved claims experience. Participation in the Conference  
60 health insurance program (HealthFlex) is mandatory for persons in the following categories who are under full  
61 time appointment:

1. To the Local Church:
  - A. Members of the South Georgia Annual Conference appointed to full-time service who are:
    - a - an elder in full connection (*2016 Discipline*, ¶338.1);
    - b - an associate member (*2016 Discipline*, ¶321.3);
    - c - a provisional member on the elder track (*2016 Discipline*, ¶326);
  - B. A full-time local pastor who is under episcopal appointment to a charge located in the South Georgia Annual Conference (*2016 Discipline* ¶318.1);
  - C. An ordained elder or ordained clergy from other annual conferences or other Methodist denominations appointed to a local church within the South Georgia Annual Conference (*2016 Discipline*, ¶346.1); or,
  - D. A clergy member from another denomination under episcopal appointment to a local church within the South Georgia Conference as defined by the *2016 Discipline*, ¶346.2.
2. To an Extension Ministry:
 

An ordained elder, an associate member, or a probationary member (other than a missionary) appointed beyond the local church within the connectional structure to a unit of the South Georgia Annual Conference (*2016 Discipline*, ¶344.1(a)(1)) with pension responsibility by the Annual Conference. This includes members who are serving as district superintendents, connectional ministries directors and staff, congregational development officers, assistant to the bishop, conference treasurer, director of ministerial services and other appointments with salaries funded by the Annual Conference.

#### ACTIVE MINISTERS

1. All ministers covered under the mandatory participation rules will have 100% of the cost of their premium billed directly to the local churches they are serving.
2. The cost of health insurance for participants on incapacity leave and receiving disability benefits from the Comprehensive Protection Plan who are in a mandatory participation category will be paid by the Conference through the apportionments.
3. Salary-paying units of Extension Ministers (including Conference Evangelists) must pay the full cost of the premiums in order for them to participate in the health insurance program (HealthFlex).

#### HEALTHFLEX PREMIUMS FOR 2024

The premium for the “default” plan (CDHP C2000) is \$1081/month in 2023; in 2024, the premium will increase to \$1,153/month. This 6.7% increase (\$72/m) is related to higher claims in 2022. Our lower “claims experience” in 2017, 2018, and 2019 helped keep our premiums in line, but 2020, 2021 and 2022 were not good. **In our continuing effort to help local churches, the Conference Board of Pensions will pay \$118.50 per month towards the premium of the clergyperson. The amount billed to local churches is expected to be \$1034.50/month.** We are using rebate funds from “good claims experience” years to offset these premium increases. While these funds will not last indefinitely, they do now provide some immediate assistance. These rebates came from premiums paid by churches and from premiums paid by pastoral families. **In addition, the Board of Pensions offered a rebate on HealthFlex to clergy families for the very first time in 2023. In 2024, clergy with “single plus one” coverage will receive \$157.50/month in premium rebates, while clergy with “family” coverage will receive \$258.50/month in premium rebates. These amounts, combined with the subsidy to churches, will provide some small premium relief to clergy with this coverage.** While these rebates are likely not sustainable more than a year or two, the Board believes we can provide it in 2023 and again in 2024, and may be able to consider it in 2025. At the same time, we are compelled to note that clergy participation in wellness programs offer our best option for increased clergy health and lower premiums. For more information on our wellness programs, download the brochure at <https://www.wespath.org/assets/1/7/5663.pdf>, or visit Virgin Pulse through your Benefits Access account.

Our claims experience in 2022 was 95.7% overall (meaning for every dollar we paid in premiums, the insurance paid out \$0.96 in claims). In 2021, claims were \$1.21 for every dollar in premiums. These high claims not only result in increased premiums; they make it unlikely any other insurance carrier will bid for our business. We are faced with paying high premiums or not offering insurance coverage.

1 Our clergy population is older than the average insured group. As long as our conference wishes to provide health  
2 insurance for pastors in a group plan, we will struggle with these costs. Our carrier, HealthFlex, does provide  
3 numerous wellness benefits and incentives to live healthier, as well as coaching and other assistance to those  
4 wishing to get healthier. These could produce better health in our clergy, which would benefit the clergy as well  
5 as lower our claims. Our participation in these wellness incentives is low. Pastors must overcome their resistance  
6 to participation in their own wellness if we are to continue providing health insurance.

## 7 8 **MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION**

### 9 10 **USING THE HEALTHFLEX EXCHANGE:**

11 Beginning in 2011, our “active plan” (for participants under age 65) was changed to a Consumer Driven Health  
12 Plan (CDHP), a type of health insurance plan that allows the participant to use a health reimbursement account  
13 (HRA) to pay certain health care expenses directly, while a high-deductible health plan protects them from  
14 catastrophic medical expenses. This model resulted in significant savings for the conference and delayed premium  
15 increases for 3 years. The Conference Board of Pensions monitored the type of plans available and their costs and  
16 decided to participate in the private HealthFlex Exchange in 2017.

17  
18 Participating in the Exchange allows participants to choose from several health plans instead of only one. Each  
19 plan has its own deductibles, coverages, and costs. In addition, the Exchange provides dental and expanded vision  
20 coverage. Participants are more likely to find a plan which suits their particular needs.

21  
22 *We will continue to participate in the HealthFlex Exchange in 2024.*

23  
24 **SOUTH GEORGIA CONFERENCE WEBSITE:** [www.sgaumc.org](http://www.sgaumc.org)

25 The Administrative Services section of the Conference website includes many useful forms and articles regarding  
26 pension, health insurance, flexible spending accounts, and related matters. In addition, the Housing Allowance  
27 Resolution for Retired or Disabled Ministers is available on the website.

## 28 29 **REPORT #6** 30 **WELLNESS INITIATIVE FOR SOUTH GEORGIA**

31  
32 The Conference Board of Pensions continues to embrace better health and “wellness” for our ministers and laity.  
33 Because of the increasing cost of health care and the increasing number of our participants with chronic illnesses,  
34 the Board of Pensions realizes that by emphasizing “wellness” and working to improve the health of our clergy we  
35 will not only improve the ability of clergy to be in ministry but should, in the long term, have an effect on the  
36 rising costs of insurance. To say this differently, the key to lowering premiums for our health insurance is to  
37 increase the health and well-being of our clergy.

38  
39 We encourage ministers to become more responsible for their health-related behaviors. Virgin Pulse is included in  
40 each of the health plans, with varying rewards based on participant behavior. Information on enrolling in Virgin  
41 Pulse can be obtained on the South Georgia Conference website or by contacting the Administrative Services  
42 Office at 478-738-0048.

43  
44 HealthFlex is further encouraging active participants to be more responsible for their health. We expect to continue  
45 the requirement that all participants in the active HealthFlex plan must take the Health Check (formerly HQ Health  
46 Quotient) by August 31, 2023 to avoid increased 2024 individual deductibles. If a participant's spouse is covered  
47 under the active plan, both the participant and the spouse must separately take the Health Check by August 31,  
48 2023, to avoid an increased 2024 deductible for the spouse/family. Health Check is accessed through the Virgin  
49 Pulse app or website.

50  
51 We encourage all ministers to have a “wellness” exam annually. Guidelines related to “wellness” exam by age  
52 groups are on the South Georgia Conference website, [www.sgaumc.org](http://www.sgaumc.org).

53  
54 The annual “Blueprint for Wellness” (BFW) offered by our insurer not only provides a needed service, but also  
55 has a cash incentive for active participants! Participants can have the BFW done at Annual Conference, at a Quest  
56 lab nearby (please schedule this through your Wespath Benefits Access portal online), or have a blood -check kit  
57 mailed to their home. In many cases, this free bloodwork will replace the bloodwork your doctor orders, at no cost  
58 to the participant. Contact the Administrative Services office for more information.

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50  
51  
52  
53  
54  
55

**REPORT #7**  
**SOUTH GEORGIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE**  
**CLERGY MENTAL HEALTH**

5 Within the South Georgia Conference and out of the work of the Conference Board of Pensions and Health Care  
6 a “Clergy Mental Health Task Force” has formed to begin developing resources and programs to support clergy  
7 in their mental health. We seek to help clergy in South Georgia maintain a sense of spiritual, mental, and  
8 emotional health so we can accomplish the vision for the South Georgia Conference which is: “God envisions  
9 faithful, fruitful and bold congregations and ministries passionately growing mature disciples of Jesus Christ  
10 who are living vessels of the Holy Spirit’s desire and miraculous power to redeem every soul and circumstance.”  
11 As clergy in the South Georgia Conference foster their own mental health, they will lead congregations toward  
12 increased spiritual growth and mental health as well. This healthy culture within the South Georgia Conference  
13 will lead toward healthy spiritual growth in congregants and people who are making disciples of Jesus Christ for  
14 the transformation of the world.

16 As the task force moves forward, four areas have been identified as essential in establishing this clergy mental  
17 health initiative. First, the task force would like to fully fund a Part-Time Staff Position - This person will be  
18 responsible for resourcing clergy with mental health materials and matching clergy with licensed counselors and  
19 spiritual directors, as needed. This person will also oversee the grant implementation and facilitate hands-on  
20 programs and activities. Second, a Clergy Respite Retreat - The clergy respite retreat at Epworth by the Sea  
21 would be a 3-day event for clergy to gather and learn mental health coping strategies in an environment that  
22 includes expert coaching, recreation - alone and with others, as well as optional on-site counseling and coaching  
23 available throughout the retreat. We propose this spiritual renewal retreat be offered twice during the next three  
24 years with an estimate of 200 clergy per retreat. Our desire for this retreat is to offer it at no cost to the  
25 participant. Next, a Spiritual Formation for Clergy Self-Care Retreat - Two one day retreats for up to thirty (30)  
26 South Georgia Conference clergy per retreat at Wesley Gardens Retreat Center in Savannah Georgia. The retreat  
27 will focus on the traditional disciplines of Sabbath, solitude, silence, and prayer as resources for both healing and  
28 protecting clergy from ministry stress, spiritual burnout, and compassion fatigue. Finally, Scholarships for  
29 Spiritual Directors or Coaches - We will be encouraging clergy to take advantage of mental health professionals  
30 who can guide them in responding to their unique context. In order to make this affordable and accessible for all  
31 clergy, this money would be used for scholarships to make care and coaching more affordable.

33 So far, the Task Force has held their first spiritual formation clergy self-care retreat at Wesley Gardens Retreat  
34 Center. This day retreat, held on May 18th, hosted clergy and focus largely on self-care and spiritual formation  
35 around the topic of anxiety. The second spiritual formation clergy self-care retreat will be held this Fall at Dooly  
36 Campground in Vienna. The possibility of a third retreat in the Fall will also be considered based on the number  
37 of interested clergy. The Task Force has also helped expand the sexual ethics training to include surveys on  
38 wellness and wellness exercises for attending clergy.

40 The Clergy Mental Health Task Force has voted to add a recommendation to the CBOP report at AC that we no  
41 longer publicly publish clergy salaries annually as a stand-alone report on the conference website. These salaries  
42 can be made available through the district and conference administrative offices as well as the conference  
43 statistical tables. But we are changing a policy on a motion made in 1984 stating we would publicly publish them  
44 annually separate from the annual statistical tables. The Task Force’s recommendation was voted approved by  
45 the Board of Pensions and Health care. Per the CBOP report, we recommend to discontinue this policy as an  
46 annual conference since the information is always available in the conference statistical tables report.

48 Finally, the Clergy Mental Health Task Force encourages all clergy to take advantage of the Well Being  
49 Programs included in our Health Flex insurance plan, particularly the Employee Assistance Program which  
50 provides up to eight free counseling sessions per concern, per year.

52  
53  
54  
55

**REPORT #8**  
**SOUTH GEORGIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE**  
**FUNDING PLAN FOR RETIREE HEALTH CARE BENEFITS**

56 RETIRED MINISTERS MEDICAL

57 Since January 1, 2013, we have used the services of Via (formerly One Exchange) to provide supplemental  
58 insurance policies to ministers retired from the South Georgia Conference and their spouses who are eligible for  
59 Medicare. Health Reimbursement Accounts (HRAs) are established with Via (formerly One Exchange) to help

1 cover the cost of the insurance based on previous participation in HealthFlex and years of service in the South  
2 Georgia Conference.

3  
4 **Beginning July 1, 2016, the rates will be:**

5 20 years of service/participation in South Georgia plan	- \$2,520 annually
6 10-19 years of service/participation in South Georgia plan	- \$1,890 annually
7 less than 10 years of service/participation	- no contribution

8  
9 These amounts are subject to change. From time to time, we survey our retirees concerning the actual cost of their  
10 supplemental insurance. This information is used as one of the determining factors of the rates.

11  
12 In 2022, the South Georgia Conference established a Funding Reserve Trust for Post-Retirement Clergy Benefit  
13 Plans. Ministers and South Georgia Conference lay staff currently in the retiree healthcare plan, active ministers  
14 and South Georgia Conference lay staff 55 or over on July 1, 2022 that will be able to earn at least the minimum  
15 benefit before their retirement are included in the trust. This Trust has assumed responsibility for funding retiree  
16 healthcare for these pastors over 65 and South Georgia Conference lay staff in retirement. The 2024 rate will be  
17 determined by the new South Georgia Conference Funding Reserve Trust Board of Trustees.

18  
19 The trust was fully funded with \$22,770,580 that the conference had set previously set aside for retiree healthcare  
20 and benefits. Distributions to participants will be provided through an HRA through Via Benefits or another  
21 approved Clergy Benefit Plan. Retirees will not notice any difference in how their funding is received.

22  
23 Retirees under 65, who are eligible for funding but are still on the active health plan, will be paid through the Post-  
24 Retirement medical apportionment until the time they are eligible for Medicare and HRA funding.

25  
26 The Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits will continue developing a new plan for Retiree  
27 healthcare for clergy and lay staff who were not included in Funding Reserve Trust for Post-Retirement Clergy  
28 Benefit Plans.

29  
30 **REPORT #9**  
31 **ACCUMULATING DEBT FOR CLERGY BENEFITS**  
32

33 Your Conference Board of Pensions continues to be concerned about the accumulated clergy benefits debt. We  
34 have direct-billed the pastor's pension to local churches/agencies since 1982, and the pastor's health insurance  
35 since 2003. As we have shared in recent years, we have churches which have not paid, and are not paying, the  
36 health insurance and pension for their pastor(s). These benefits are part of the pastor's compensation and are an  
37 obligation of the local church. When they are not paid, other churches in the Annual Conference must step in and  
38 make the payments, or the pastor will lose his/her insurance and/or pension. There is a fallacy in thinking that "the  
39 Conference" will pay these benefits – in reality, whenever the Conference pays a bill, it does so with funds from  
40 local churches. In a very real sense, this debt of clergy benefits is not owed to the Conference but to the other  
41 churches in the Conference.

42  
43 In this report, we state again our long-standing practice, and ask that our pastors, churches, and all officers and  
44 members of the South Georgia Annual Conference acknowledge:

- 45 • The cost of a pastor's pension is part of his/her annual compensation, and is the responsibility of the local  
46 church/charge to which he/she is appointed;
- 47 • The cost of a pastor's health insurance is part of his/her annual compensation, and is the responsibility of the  
48 local church/charge to which he/she is appointed;
- 49 • Responsibility for paying pension and insurance expenses incurred during a pastor's appointment does not  
50 end with the pastor being appointed to a new charge/church. The liability remains, is a responsibility of the  
51 local church, and must be paid;
- 52 • Our Standing Rules provide that if a church closes, any pension/insurance debt remaining shall be paid using  
53 proceeds from the sale of church property;
- 54 • Any funds withheld from a pastor's pay in order to pay personal insurance or personal pension contributions  
55 on behalf of that pastor must be remitted monthly, and cannot, in any circumstance, be held by the local  
56 church.

57 Debt on unpaid benefits was \$585,789 at the end of 2022 (a decrease of \$86,901 from end of 2021, or 13%). When  
58 we first raised this issue, accumulated debt was \$1.1 million. Almost half of the unpaid benefits debt has been  
59 settled since 2016. We applaud those church and organizations which have paid down or paid off their debt. This

1 level of indebtedness, though reduced, remains unsustainable. It is improper for churches to fail to pay their  
2 pastor's benefits. Churches cannot just walk away from this obligation. It is inappropriate to shove the bill off on  
3 other churches. The Conference has asked our Bishop and Cabinet to make full payment of clergy benefits a matter  
4 of pastoral appointment, and to consider payment of benefits on the same level as payment of salary in determining  
5 whom to appoint to a local church. We ask pastors and church leaders to look at their benefits bills and pay any  
6 accrued debt as a matter of both obligation and faithfulness.

7  
8 **REPORT #10 – 2024 COMPREHENSIVE BENEFIT FUNDING PLAN SUMMARY**  
9 **SOUTH GEORGIA CONFERENCE**

10  
11 The 2024 Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan was not completed and approved in time for inclusion in this  
12 publication.

13 **REPORT #11**

14 **RESOLUTION RELATING TO RENTAL/HOUSING ALLOWANCES FOR RETIRED OR DISABLED**  
15 **CLERGY PERSONS OF THE SOUTH GEORGIA CONFERENCE FOR 2024**

16  
17 The South Georgia Conference (the "Conference") adopts the following resolutions relating to rental/housing  
18 allowance for active, retired, terminated or disabled clergypersons of the Conference.

19  
20 **WHEREAS**, the religious denomination known as The United Methodist Church (the "Church"), of which this  
21 Conference is a part, has in the past functioned and continues to function through ministers of the gospel  
22 (within the meaning of Internal Revenue Code section 107) who were or are duly ordained, commissioned,  
23 or licensed ministers of the Church ("Clergypersons");

24  
25 **WHEREAS**, the practice of the Church and of this Conference was and is to provide active Clergypersons with a  
26 parsonage or a rental/ housing allowance as part of the gross compensation;

27  
28 **WHEREAS**, pensions or other amounts paid to active, retired, terminated, and disabled Clergypersons are  
29 considered to be deferred compensation and are paid to said active, retired, terminated, and disabled  
30 Clergypersons in consideration of previous, active service; and

31  
32 **WHEREAS**, the Internal Revenue Service has recognized the Conference (or its predecessors) as the appropriate  
33 organization to designate a rental/housing allowance for Clergypersons who are or were members of this  
34 Conference and are eligible to receive such deferred compensation;

35  
36 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:**

37  
38 **THAT** an amount equal to 100% of the pension or disability payments received from plans authorized under *The*  
39 *Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church* (the "*Discipline*"), which includes all such payments  
40 from Wespath (the pension agency of The United Methodist Church) during calendar year 2023 to each  
41 active, retired, terminated or disabled Clergyperson who is or was a member of the Conference, or its  
42 predecessors, be and hereby is designated as a rental/housing allowance for each Clergyperson; and

43  
44 **THAT** the pension or disability payments to which this rental/housing allowance applies will be any pension or  
45 disability payments from plans, annuities, or funds authorized under the *Discipline*, including such payments from  
46 Wespath and from a commercial annuity company that provides an annuity arising from benefits accrued under a  
47 Wespath plan, annuity, or fund authorized under the *Discipline*, that result from any service a Clergyperson  
48 rendered to this Conference or that an active, a retired, terminated or a disabled Clergyperson of this Conference  
49 rendered to any local church, annual conference of the Church, general agency of the Church, other institution of  
50 the Church, former denomination that is now a part of the Church, or any other employer that employed the  
51 Clergyperson to perform services related to the ministry of the Church, or its predecessors, and that elected to  
52 make contributions to, or accrue a benefit under, such a plan, annuity, or fund for such active, retired, terminated  
53 or disabled Clergyperson's pension or disability as part of his or her gross compensation.



**NOTE:** The rental/housing allowance that may be excluded from a Clergy person's gross income in any year for federal income tax purposes is limited under the Internal Revenue Code section 107(2) and regulations there under to the lesser of: (1) the amount of the rental/housing allowance designated by the Clergy person's employer or other appropriate body of the Church (such as this Conference in the foregoing resolutions) for such year; (2) the amount actually expended by the Clergy person to rent or provide a home (plus other qualifying expenses) in such a year; or (3) the fair rental value of the home, including furnishings and appurtenances (such as a garage), plus the cost of utilities in such year. Retiring clergy may want to consider spanning major purchases such as a home over several years to take best advantage of this exclusion.

Submitted by:  
 Dr. Ben C. Martin, Chair, Conference Board of Pensions  
 Eleanor J. Dickson, Conference Benefits Officer

## RECOMMENDATION 4 – Council on Finance and Administration

### REPORT #1

The Council on Finance and Administration appreciates the generosity of South Georgia United Methodists! Despite the continued stresses throughout 2022, our churches worked to maintain a focus on ministry and mission. This report shows but a portion of the ways our churches have extended themselves financially to be instruments of grace.

**In 2022, payment of apportionments increased to 91.0%, above the 2021 rate of 85.3%.** The South Georgia Annual Conference gave a total of \$19,084,145 in all funds sent through the Conference Treasurer in the calendar year 2022, an increase of \$495,209 overall compared with 2021. Most of the increase is in benefits payments but receipts for apportionments also showed an increase. We are grateful to the churches of the South Georgia Conference for their partnership.

#### 2022 SUMMARY OF FUNDS RECEIVED

	2021	2022
Received on Apportionments	7,564,164	7,636,716
Received on District Apportionment or Advance Specials	2,138,140	2,213,234
Received From Benefits Billings and Other Funds	<u>8,886,632</u>	<u>9,234,195</u>
Total Receipts	<u>\$18,588,936</u>	<u>\$19,084,145</u>

#### COMPARISON REPORT AS OF DECEMBER 2021

APPORTIONMENTS	2021 BUDGET	2021 RECEIPTS	%	2022 BUDGET	2022 RECEIPTS	%
Conference Benevolence	1,076,506	957,651	89%	909,906	846,288	93%
Congregational Development	310,673	266,329	86%	304,763	277,756	91%
Clergy Support	1,724,379	1,529,237	89%	1,665,257	1,549,402	93%
Pre-1982 Pensions	0	1,720	0%	0	358	0%
CPP (Post-1982)	725,000	654,445	90%	725,000	662,341	91%
Post-Retirement Medical	120,000	122,676	102%	120,000	113,138	94%
Health Flex (Disability)	150,000	139,856	93%	130,000	120,468	93%
Administrative Expense	1,309,514	1,151,986	88%	1,270,978	1,152,176	91%
SEJ Mission and Ministry Fund	20,713	18,243	88%	20,713	19,596	95%
GA Wesley Min. & UM Colleges	723,201	612,460	85%	723,201	661,889	92%
SGA Episcopal Office	297,569	267,140	90%	245,971	227,807	93%
SGA Episcopal Residence	30,000	27,486	92%	30,000	27,836	93%
World Service	1,179,877	892,503	76%	1,166,215	1,005,264	86%
Africa Univ. Fund	38,394	37,900	99%	37,950	33,047	87%
Black College Fund	170,775	133,738	78%	168,798	146,080	87%

**COMPARISON REPORT AS OF DECEMBER 2021**

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>APPORTIONMENTS</b>	<b>BUDGET</b>	<b>RECEIPTS</b>	<b>PAID</b>	<b>BUDGET</b>	<b>RECEIPTS</b>	<b>PAID</b>
Gen Admin. Fund	145,301	110,050	76%	143,618	124,617	87%
Gen. Episcopal Fund	473,764	335,376	71%	404,538	345,117	85%
Inter-Denominational Co-op Fd.	5,108	4,365	85%	5,049	4,430	88%
Ministerial Ed. Fund	369,540	301,003	81%	365,261	319,106	87%
<b>Received on</b>						
<b>Apportionments</b>	<u>\$8,870,314</u>	<u>\$7,564,165</u>	<u>85%</u>	<u>\$8,437,218</u>	<u>\$7,636,716</u>	<u>91%</u>
2022 Increase (Decrease) from 2021					\$ 72,551.00	
% of TOTAL RECEIPTS ON APPORTIONED ITEMS:						
2021	<u>85.3%</u>					
2022	<u>91.0%</u>					
INCREASE (DECREASE)	5.20%					

**NON-APPORTIONED FUNDS**

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>
District Apportionments (except for missions - Lane 6)	1,395,299	1,363,002
General (*) and Annual Conference (**) Special Offerings:		
Human Relations Day*	274	410
UMCOR Sunday*	5,982	18,258
Native American Awareness*	580	234
Magnolia Manor Sunday**	3,412	7,372
Peace with Justice Sunday*	729	851
Wesley Glen Day**	3,607	10,356
Golden Cross Day**	2,181	913
Christian Education Sunday**	370	315
Methodist Children's Home Day**	32,656	14,196
World Communion Sunday*	1,412	371
Vashti Day**	3,297	6,152
Wesleyan College Day**	1,055	430
United Methodist Student Day*	1,134	587
UM Global Aids Fund Day	450	300
Six Lane Advance Specials:		
Africa Church Growth - Lane 1	10,914	5,124
World Hunger Specials - Lane 2	18,098	7,656
Mission Personnel - Lane 3	27,866	24,066
Mission Projects - Lane 4	53,374	47,371
UMCOR - Lane 5	175,125	331,524
Conference/ District Specials - Lane 6	285,513	272,412
South Georgia's Plus Lane	99,204	74,509
Designated Funds (no advance special credit)	<u>15,607</u>	<u>26,825</u>
Total District Apportionments, Special Sundays & Advance Specials	<u>\$2,138,140</u>	<u>\$2,213,234</u>
Other Funds Received:		
Health Flex Non-Apportioned Receipts	3,095,396	2,822,994
Clergy Retirement Security Plan	2,576,421	2,581,968
Miscellaneous Receipts on Budget Items	84,821	104,519
Net Investment Earnings	42,649	(820,768)
Connectional Ministries (Camps, Events, and other items)	597,034	382,296
Pension Funds (including Pitts Funds)	1,462,995	205,858

Bequests	0	35,136
Other Designated Receipts (Including Pass Through Items)	<u>1,027,316</u>	<u>3,922,191</u>
Total Other Funds Received	<u>\$8,886,632</u>	<u>\$9,234,195</u>

**APPORTIONMENTS & PERCENTAGE PAID BY DISTRICT**

Coastal	Rev. David Thompson	1,679,184	89.3%
North Central	Rev. Craig Hutto	1,628,289	94.7%
Northeast	Rev. Stephen Grantham	993,213	99.3%
Northwest	Rev. Steve Patton	1,098,402	73.6%
South Central	Rev. Paula Lewis	1,030,407	93.5%
Southwest	Rev. Doreen Smalls	<u>1,206,864</u>	96.7%
Total		<u>\$7,636,359</u>	

1 We applaud the churches of the Southwest District for their leadership in giving. We honor the churches of the  
2 Northeast District for their increase in apportionment payments!

3  
4  
5 **REPORT #2**  
6 **REPORT OF RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS**  
7

8 In keeping with Standing Rule 6.1.1, we provide a report of receipts and disbursements. Our report summarizes  
9 each line of the Conference budget for 2022. The 2022 Budget amounts shown on the “Receipts on  
10 Apportionments” lines reflect the amount apportioned to churches for 2022. Since all of the non-budgeted funds  
11 that we receive are designated and most of them are disbursed the following month, we have summarized them in  
12 groups. Some designated receipts are not disbursed until this office is authorized to do so by the committee or  
13 organization involved. If you are interested in more details, copies of the audited financial statements of the South  
14 Georgia Conference are available on the conference website, [www.sgaumc.org](http://www.sgaumc.org), under “Administrative Services”  
15 then “Financial Statements.” The budgets of various conference offices are also posted on the conference website.  
16

**2022 Summary of Budget Receipts & Disbursements**

		<b>2022</b>	<b>December</b>	
		<b>Budget</b>	<b>31, 2022</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Type A: Items Paid Based On Expenses</b>				
<b>Conference Benevolences</b>				
Connectional Ministries	Receipts on Apportionments	453,465	450,967	99.45%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	453,465	307,710	67.86%
Arthur J. Moore	Receipts on Apportionments	119,302	110,961	93.01%
Museum	Miscellaneous Receipts		2,639	
	Disbursements	119,302	127,902	107.21%
Board Of Laity	Receipts on Apportionments	4,000	3,720	93.00%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	4,000	773	19.33%
Hispanic/Latino Affairs	Receipts on Apportionments	301,736	280,639	93.01%
	Miscellaneous Receipts		1,278	
	Disbursements	301,736	288,614	95.65%
<b>Total</b>	Receipts on Apportionments	878,503	846,287	96.33%
<b>Conference</b>	Miscellaneous Receipts		3,917	
<b>Benevolences</b>	Disbursements	878,503	724,999	82.53%

## 2022 Summary of Budget Receipts & Disbursements

		2022 Budget	December 31, 2022 Year to Date	Percentage
<b>Congregational Development</b>				
New Congregational Development	Receipts on Apportionments	284,597	277,756	97.60%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	284,597	189,678	66.65%
<b>Clergy Support</b>				
District Superintendents' Expense	Receipts on Apportionments	1,087,058	1,011,430	93.04%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	1,087,058	1,048,863	96.49%
Pre-1982 Pensions & Benefits	Receipts on Apportionments	0	358	0.00%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	0	0.00	0.00%
Conference Board Of Pensions	Receipts on Apportionments	51,511	47,927	93.04%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	51,511	39,173	76.05%
Comprehensive Protection Plan	Receipts on Apportionments	725,000	662,341	91.36%
	Miscellaneous Receipts		75,718	
	Disbursements	725,000	591,286	81.56%
Health Flex - Disability	Receipts on Apportionments	130,000	120,468	92.67%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	130,000	81,304	62.54%
Post-Retirement Medical	Receipts on Apportionments	120,000	113,138	94.28%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	120,000	113,138	94.28%
Benefits Underpayment	Receipts on Apportionments	90,000	83,739	93.04%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	90,000	83739	93.04%
Equitable Compensation	Receipts on Apportionments	176,800	164,500	93.04%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	176,800	109,368	61.86%
Pastoral Counseling Service	Receipts on Apportionments	199,588	185,702	93.04%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	199,588	4,042	2.03%
Conf. Bd. of Ordained Ministry	Receipts on Apportionments	60,300	56,105	93.04%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	60,300	16,424	27.24%
<b>Total Clergy Support</b>	Receipts on Apportionments	2,640,257	2,445,707	92.63%
	Miscellaneous Receipts		75,718	
	Disbursements	2,640,257	2,087,355	79.06%

### Administration

## 2022 Summary of Budget Receipts & Disbursements

		<b>2022 Budget</b>	<b>December 31, 2022 Year to Date</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Conf. Council on Finance & Admin.	Receipts on Apportionments	1,961	1,778	90.67%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	1,961	248	12.65%
Human Resources/ Personnel	Receipts on Apportionments	29,126	26,403	90.65%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	29,126	25,036	85.96%
Administrative Services	Receipts on Apportionments	742,965	673,518	90.65%
	Miscellaneous Receipts		225	
	Disbursements	742,965	684,384	51.74%
Communications Office	Receipts on Apportionments	229,195	168,979	73.73%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	229,195	204,853	89.38%
Annual Conference Expenses	Receipts on Apportionments	102,520	92,937	90.65%
	Miscellaneous Receipts		24,660	
	Disbursements	102,520	108,073	105.42%
Retired Ministers - per diem	Receipts on Apportionments	17,000	15,411	90.65%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	17,000	10,985	64.62%
At-Large Lay Delegates - per diem	Receipts on Apportionments	26,000	23,570	90.65%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	26,000	31,265	120.25%
Conference Secretary & Journal	Receipts on Apportionments	23,630	16,184	68.49%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	23,630	19,332	81.81%
Committee on Memoirs	Receipts on Apportionments	1,200	1,088	74.18%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	1,200	1,215	101.25%
Conference Trustees	Receipts on Apportionments	5,350	4,850	90.65%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	5,350	4,534	84.73%
Workers Compensation Insurance	Receipts on Apportionments	12,000	10,878	90.65%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	12,000	10,047	83.73%
Strategic Initiative Team	Receipts on Apportionments	3,000	2,720	90.67%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	3,000	152	5.07%
Leadership Forum	Receipts on Apportionments	2,500	2,266	90.64%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	2,500	382	15.28%

**2022 Summary of Budget Receipts & Disbursements**

		<b>2022 Budget</b>	<b>December 31, 2022 Year to Date</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Gen & SEJ Delegate Expense	Receipts on Apportionments	8,000	7,252	90.65%
	Miscellaneous Receipts Disbursements	8,000	2,821	35.26%
Nominations	Receipts on Apportionments	900	816	90.67%
	Miscellaneous Receipts Disbursements	900	0	0.00%
Episcopal Committee	Receipts on Apportionments	1,200	1,088	90.67%
	Miscellaneous Receipts Disbursements	1,200	0	0.00%
Contingency Funds	Receipts on Apportionments	50,000	45,326	90.65%
	Miscellaneous Receipts Disbursements	50,000	1,276,241	255.25%
Legal Fees	Receipts on Apportionments	93,000	57,111	90.65%
	Miscellaneous Receipts Disbursements	93,000	57,011	90.65%
<b>Total Administration</b>	Receipts on Apportionments	1,319,547	1,152,176	87.32%
	Miscellaneous Receipts Disbursements	1,319,547	24,885 2,456,145	186.14%
<b>SEJ Mission and Ministry</b>	Receipts on Apportionments	20,713	19,596	94.61%
	Miscellaneous Receipts Disbursements	20,713	17,220	83.14%
<b>Totals For Type A Items</b>	Receipts on Apportionments	5,143,617	4,741,522	92.18%
	Miscellaneous Receipts Disbursements	5,143,617	104,520 5,475,397	106.45%
<b>Type B Items Based on Money Received</b>				
Georgia Wesley Min. & UM Colleges	Receipts on Apportionments	723,201	661,889	84.69%
	Miscellaneous Receipts Disbursements	723,201	661,889	84.69%
Episcopal – S. Ga Office Expense	Receipts on Apportionments	245,971	227,807	89.77%
	Miscellaneous Receipts Disbursements	245,971	227,807	89.77%
Episcopal – S. Ga Residence Expense	Receipts on Apportionments	30,000	27,836	91.62%
	Miscellaneous Receipts Disbursements	30,000	27,836	91.62%
World Service	Receipts on Apportionments	1,166,215	1,005,264	75.64%
	Miscellaneous Receipts Disbursements	1,166,215	1,005,264	75.64%

## 2022 Summary of Budget Receipts & Disbursements

		2022 Budget	December 31, 2022 Year to Date	Percentage
Africa University Fund	Receipts on Apportionments	37,950	33,047	98.71%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	37,950	33,047	98.71%
Black College Fund	Receipts on Apportionments	168,798	146,080	78.31%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	168,798	146,080	78.31%
Episcopal General Church Apportionment	Receipts on Apportionments	404,538	345,117	70.79%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	404,538	345,117	70.79%
General Administration Fund	Receipts on Apportionments	143,618	124,617	75.74%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	143,618	124,617	75.74%
Interdenominational Cooperation Fund	Receipts on Apportionments	5,049	4,430	85.45%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	5,049	4,430	85.45%
Ministerial Education Fund	Receipts on Apportionments	365,261	319,106	81.45%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	365,261	319,106	81.45%
<b>Totals For Type B Items</b>	Receipts on Apportionments	3,290,601	2,895,195	79.28%
	Miscellaneous Receipts			
	Disbursements	3,290,601	2,895,195	79.28%
<b>2022 Totals On The Decimal</b>	Receipts on Apportionments	8,434,218	7,636,717	90.54%
	Miscellaneous Receipts		104,520	
	Disbursements	8,434,218	8,370,592	99.25%

### REPORT #3 BUDGET FACTORS and SPECIAL OFFERINGS

We make the following recommendations:

1. We recommend that the 2024 apportionments assigned to each local church in the Conference be determined by the following formula:

A. FINANCIAL FACTOR - 65%

The figures for 2021 and 2022 of the total expenditures of each local church as reported in the annual statistical table (filed with GCFA), minus the following items:

- amounts paid on apportionments,
- the amounts paid on principal and interest on indebtedness, loans, mortgages, etc.,
- the amount paid for building and improvements (not including loans and mortgages),
- other benevolences paid by the local church,
- excess "catch-up" payments on overdue benefits bills,
- and the amounts paid on General and Conference Advance Specials.

The adjusted total of the expenditures for each local church shall be divided by the adjusted total expenditures of all local churches in the Conference for the years 2021 and 2022 (omitting the same respective items) to find the percentage of total expenditures by the local church. This percentage figure will then be multiplied by .65 to furnish the financial factor.

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40

B. MEMBERSHIP FACTOR - 35%

The membership of each local church at the end of 2021 and 2022 as reported in the annual statistical table (filed with GCFA) shall be divided by the total membership of the Conference at the end of those same years to find the percentage of total membership in the local church for each of these years. This percentage figure will then be multiplied by .35 to furnish the membership factor.

C. FINAL DETERMINATION

The membership factor and financial factor for each year are added together. The factors for the two years are averaged to arrive at the percentage to be used in figuring the church's share of each apportionment for 2024.

2. Apportionment Determinations for New Church Starts:

A. We recommend adding grants from Congregational Development (CD) or district funds (not including Equitable Compensation Supplements) to the list of deducted items prior to calculating Conference apportionments.

B. We recommend that new church starts begin paying apportionments in the January following the date of official constitution.

C. We recommend that 100% of the Conference budget be apportioned to the existing churches prior to calculating any new church that is in a phase-in period.

D. Churches will be phased in over a 3-year period: one-third in the first year, two-thirds in the second year, and their full share in the third year.

3. We recommend the apportionment figures be provided to local churches in the following manner:

- As soon as possible after Annual Conference, the Administrative Services Office will calculate the "preliminary apportionments" for each local church based on the statistical reports turned in by the local churches the preceding January. These "preliminary apportionments" will be mailed to pastors and treasurers of the local churches.

- Upon receipt of the "preliminary apportionments" pastors and treasurers should examine their apportioned amounts carefully. If the church believes an error on its statistical report has resulted in incorrect apportionments, it must report any corrections to the statistical report to the Administrative Services Office by the date set by that office, printed on the "preliminary apportionments" sheet.

- If any statistical reports have been corrected, the Administrative Services Office will re-calculate the apportionments for the entire Annual Conference. These "final apportionments" will be mailed to pastors and churches before the end of August.

- After the final apportionments are prepared, no further corrections will be made to the statistics or conference apportionments until the following year.

4. We recommend that the following special days be observed in 2024 with an offering as called for by *The Book of Discipline* and/or by the Annual Conference:

Human Relations Day	January 14 *
Vashti Day	February 4 **
Andrew College Sunday	February 11 **
Volunteers in Mission Awareness Sunday	February 18 **
UMCOR Sunday	March 10 *
Native American Awareness	April 14 *
Magnolia Manor Sunday	May 12 **
Peace With Justice	May 26 *
Wesley Glen Day	June 16 **
Golden Cross Sunday	August 18 **
Methodist Children's Home	September 15 **
World Communion Day	October 6 *
Wesleyan College Day	November 10 **
United Methodist Student Day	November 24 *

\* General Church Offerings

\*\* Annual Conference Special Offerings (churches may observe on another day if it fits their schedule).



1 5. For 2024 we recommend the travel rate of .45 cents per mile for each Board, Commission, Committee, and  
2 Council of the Conference, for automobile travel required in Conference work. We recommend conference  
3 staff be reimbursed at the IRS rate, since their miles are a job requirement. We note IRS rules that mileage for  
4 charitable purposes may be reimbursed at .14 per mile tax free in 2023, and any reimbursement above that  
5 amount is taxable income for the recipient.

6  
7 6. ¶258.4(b) *The Book of Discipline, 2016* and the South Georgia Standing Rules and Structure, Section 6.1.7,  
8 mandate fidelity bond coverage for local church treasurers. The Council reminds all local churches of the  
9 importance of having adequate fidelity bond coverage for treasurers and others handling church funds. Due  
10 to the prevalence of coverages available to church through comprehensive insurance plans, the Conference no  
11 longer provides any bonding for local church treasurers.

12  
13 We request that the following officials be bonded in the indicated amount, that the respective board or agency  
14 pay the bond, and that these bonds be held in the Administrative Services Office.  
15

Director of Administrative Services	\$1,000,000.00
Staff of Administrative Services Office	\$1,000,000.00
Treasurer, Conference Trustees	\$25,000.00

16  
17 7. Unless approved through the budget and expense approval process, no financial liability shall be made upon  
18 the annual conference without the express authorization of the Council on Finance and Administration and  
19 the Annual Conference. The Conference Treasurer/Director of Administrative Services is authorized to sign  
20 any contract on behalf of the Annual Conference not otherwise authorized by the currently effective Book of  
21 Discipline of The United Methodist Church or the Standing Rules of the conference. The Council on  
22 Finance and Administration may designate other persons to sign contracts with financial implications on  
23 behalf of the conference for specific purposes or amounts. All ordinary business contracts shall be reviewed  
24 and signed by the Conference Treasurer/Director of Administrative Services.  
25

26 8. In compliance with ¶617.2 of *The Book of Discipline, 2016*, we ask each agency receiving financial support  
27 from Conference Benevolences, or from any authorized conference-wide appeal, to make a complete report  
28 of all receipts and disbursements for the fiscal year ending in 2022. A certified public accountant is to audit  
29 the books of all agencies, except those whose receipts and expenditures are handled by the Administrative  
30 Services Office on a voucher basis, and a copy of the audit is to be filed with the Administrative Services  
31 Office.  
32

33 9. We commend the promotional emphasis given to the observance of World Service Sunday in the Church  
34 School and request that funds raised in this observance be so designated and sent to the Administrative  
35 Services Office.  
36

37 10. We call attention to these actions of the Annual Conference relating to expenses of the Annual Conference  
38 session:

- 39 • Standing Rules 3.4.1 & 3.4.2 stipulate that the Administrative Board/Council of each church and the  
40 boards of other conference groups shall pay the expense of their lay and clergy delegates to the Annual  
41 Conference sessions.
- 42 • The 2011 Annual Conference (volume 1, page 572) approved a registration fee beginning with the 2012  
43 Annual Conference of \$20 for all lay and clergy members (excluding retired clergy unless the retired  
44 clergy are serving an appointment in retirement). The original motion has no exception for virtual annual  
45 conference sessions.
- 46 • We recommend that the amount of \$65 per day of attendance at Annual Conference be paid to retired  
47 clerical members not serving an appointment who sign for their attendance at Annual Conference and  
48 apply for this benefit. This will comply with Standing Rule 3.4.1 which states: “retired clergy members  
49 and/or clergy on incapacity leave who do not serve appointments and who attend are to receive assistance  
50 with their expenses from the Annual Conference, provided by the Council on Finance and  
51 Administration.” Retirees who are under appointment shall have their expenses paid by the local church,  
52 in the same manner as active clergy.
- 53 • We recommend that the amount of \$65 per day of attendance at Annual Conference be paid to at-large  
54 lay members of the Conference (who are determined by each district to equalize lay membership with  
55 clergy membership) who sign for their attendance at Annual Conference and apply for this benefit. (See  
56 Standing Rule 3.4.2.)  
57

58 11. We call attention to Standing Rule 6.1.7, which reads as follows: “Every Charge **shall** provide Worker’s  
59 Compensation Insurance Coverage for their minister and **all other staff members.**”

- 1  
2 12. We call attention to ¶614.5 of *The Book of Discipline, 2016*, which stipulates that special conference-wide  
3 appeals for funds shall have the approval of the Annual Conference upon the recommendation of the Council  
4 on Finance and Administration, except in case of an extreme emergency when such approval may be given  
5 by a two-thirds vote of the District Superintendents and of the Council, acting jointly.  
6  
7 13. We recommend that once approved by the Annual Conference, all budgets are fixed for the ensuing year.  
8 Exceptions to this policy may be granted by the Council on Finance and Administration with the proper  
9 documents to justify the request in keeping with ¶¶613.8 & 9 of *The Book of Discipline, 2016*.  
10  
11 14. Balances from Undesignated and Unrestricted Funds: Balances from undesignated and unrestricted funds  
12 (excluding funds under the management or control of the Board of Trustees or the Board of Pension and  
13 Health Benefits) may be disbursed on the authorization of the Council on Finance and Administration, or by  
14 vote of the Annual Conference, and shall be administered by the Conference Treasurer. The Executive  
15 Committee of the Council on Finance and Administration is empowered to act in the case of an emergency.  
16 Undesignated and unrestricted funds disbursed between sessions of the Annual Conference shall be reported  
17 at the next Annual Conference session.  
18

19 **REPORT #4**  
20 **PENSIONS AND HEALTH BENEFITS COST**  
21

22 We are grateful that the amount of unpaid benefits debt has dropped from \$1.1 million in 2016 to \$585,789 at the  
23 end of 2022. We remain concerned about the amount of debt owed by churches to the Annual Conference for  
24 unpaid health insurance and pension benefits for their pastor. Effectively, those churches not paying their full  
25 benefit costs have borrowed \$585,789 from the other churches in the annual conference. We appreciate the efforts  
26 of the Board of Pensions to collect on this debt. We thank the Cabinet for adjusting appointments to a level which  
27 churches can financially support. More of our churches are catching up with unpaid benefits payments, but many  
28 of those with benefit debt have failed to address it. We respectfully ask churches with benefits debt to pay their  
29 bills. (See the report of the Commission on Equitable Compensation for a list of churches)  
30

31 **REPORT #5**  
32 **RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE CABINET**  
33

34 Salaries for District Superintendents and for the Director of Connectional Ministries are determined by a formula  
35 so that the salaries paid by local churches set the salary of District Superintendents. When we had nine districts,  
36 the formula averaged the 27 highest salaries of churches across the conference at the beginning of the preceding  
37 year (three per district). The 2014 Conference voted to consolidate to six districts. The 2016 Conference voted to  
38 move to the top 18 church salaries (three each for six districts) using this schedule: 2016 – 27 churches, 2017 – 24  
39 churches, 2018 – 21 churches, 2019 – 18 churches. For 2024, the salaries of these positions will be \$121,789,  
40 based on the average salary of the 18 highest local church salaries at the beginning of 2023. Note that while this  
41 formula ties DS salaries to local church salaries, it always lags those salaries by one year.  
42

43 The Council recommends that for 2024 the amount of \$15,000 be set aside for each District Superintendent (\$7,500  
44 by district) to cover all accountable reimbursements. This will include travel, continuing education expenses, and  
45 any other business-related out-of-pocket expenses. Each District Superintendent will be able to draw from this  
46 fund only by voucher of actual miles traveled and/or specific expenses. We recommend that \$15,000 be budgeted  
47 for Cabinet meeting expenses in 2024. These funds are only drawn on by voucher of actual miles traveled and/or  
48 specific expenses.  
49

50 Housing for Superintendents is the responsibility of each District. We commend the Districts for maintaining  
51 District Parsonage Funds (for District Parsonage Indebtedness and Maintenance) and a District Operational and  
52 Program Fund. We remind the District leadership that the moving expenses and annual conference attendance  
53 expenses of the District Superintendents are paid by the District to which they are appointed.  
54

55 The money to pay the salaries, accountable reimbursement expenses, and Cabinet meeting expenses for the District  
56 Superintendents is included in the Clergy Support section of the budget as District Superintendents' Expense.  
57 Clergy Support is paid from receipts on the apportionment assigned to the churches of the Conference and is a  
58 priority claim.

1 Such part of the salary that the Cabinet, Director and Associate Directors of Connectional Ministries, Director of  
2 Administrative Services, Director of Congregational Development, Director of Ministerial Services, Chaplains  
3 and other clergy employees of the Conference pay to cover the actual cost of those utilities and other housing-  
4 related expenses necessary to operate and maintain the respective parsonages, or their residence if a parsonage is  
5 not provided, is hereby designated as a housing expense. Housing and Utility Resolutions will be prepared by the  
6 various clergy employees of the Conference and copies maintained by the Director of Administrative Services.

7  
8 **REPORT #6**  
9 **BUDGET FOR 2024**

10  
11 The Council on Finance and Administration (CF&A), in keeping with ¶614, *The Book of Discipline, 2016*, presents  
12 the following budgets of anticipated income and proposed expenses for all funds to be apportioned to churches or  
13 charges. The Budget has been reorganized into two types of budget items:  
14

- 15 Type A - This group includes the various budget items which are paid based on vouchers (or when the  
16 expense is incurred) and Southeastern Jurisdiction apportionments.  
17 Type B - This group includes items in the budget which are paid out based on the apportionments  
18 collected. This group includes the budget for Georgia Wesley Ministries & UM Colleges, the  
19 Episcopal Office, and the General Church apportionments. The total collected each month is  
20 paid out to the agency or office.  
21

22 The Council expresses appreciation to the various conference committees and conference offices which have  
23 worked with the Council to keep our expenses reasonable and in keeping with our revenues. Churches have called  
24 on us to be prudent in our spending, and we are thankful for the cooperation we have received in this effort. **Since**  
25 **2010, the Conference budget has decreased more than 56%, nearly \$7.0 million.** The Council is grateful that  
26 apportionments retain broad support among the majority of churches in South Georgia. **424 of 552 churches paid**  
27 **100% or more of their askings in 2022.**  
28

29 We recognize that concern over the direction of the national and international church may impact apportionment  
30 payments. We are concerned with churches that believe withholding local askings somehow “sends a message” to  
31 the general church. Because most of our apportionments are for local and regional ministries, the ones hurt by such  
32 withholding are our retired pastors and widows, our disabled pastors, our active clergy, and those ministries in  
33 South Georgia which we fund (such as our summer camps and college campus ministries).  
34

35 At the end of 2022, our undesignated reserves totaled \$5,879,232 (unaudited figure), down by \$1.4 million at the  
36 end of 2021. Much of these reserves are in the form of unrealized market gains, not in actual cash. The value of  
37 these reserves will move up and down depending on market conditions. Our normal target for undesignated  
38 reserves is three month’s expenses for the Annual Conference (approx. \$2.6 million). As we face ongoing  
39 economic uncertainty plus continuing issues with the pandemic, rising inflation, and the general uncertainty of the  
40 future of The United Methodist Church, maintaining these reserves seems prudent.  
41

42 The CF&A recommends a 2024 budget to be apportioned which is a decrease from the 2023 budget of 29.1 percent.  
43 **The amount to be apportioned to local churches for 2024 will be \$5,472,651.**

**PROJECTED RECEIPTS FOR 2024**

SOURCE OF RECEIPTS:	PROJECTED RECEIPTS:	NOTE #:
1. Apportionments based on 90 % collections of Type A & B items	\$4,925,386	1
2. Income from Registration Fees	21,000	2
3. Investment Income	25,000	3
4. Miscellaneous Receipts	<u>85,000</u>	
TOTAL PROJECTED RECEIPTS	\$ 5,056,386	

		2023 Approved Amended Budget	2024 Projected Budget	Note #:
	<b><i>Type A: Paid Based on Expenses</i></b>			
1	<b>I. Conference Benevolences</b>			
2	Connectional Ministries	450,995	391,258	
3	Hispanic/Latino Affairs	314,987	293,941	
4	Arthur J. Moore Museum & Archives/History	139,738	136,773	
5	Board of Laity	4,000	1,000	
6	<b>Total Conference Benevolences</b>	<b>909,720</b>	<b>882,972</b>	
7				
8	<b>II. Congregational Development</b>			
9	Congregational Development	146,126	146,126	
10	<b>Total Congregational Development</b>	<b>146,126</b>	<b>146,126</b>	
11				
12	<b>III. Clergy Support</b>			
13	District Superintendents' Expenses	1,098,996	1,098,996	
14	Conference Board Of Pensions	46,650	46,000	
15	Comprehensive Protection Plan	641,045	369,000	
16	HealthFlex - Clergy on Disability	110,000	110,000	
17	Post-retirement Healthcare	11,000	11,000	4
18	Benefits Underpayment	90,000	90,000	
19	Equitable Compensation	189,300	189,300	
20	Pastoral Counseling Service	10,000	10,000	5
21	Conference Board of Ordained Ministry	35,675	20,675	
22	Special S. Ga. Episcopal Funds			
23	<b>Total Clergy Support</b>	<b>2,232,666</b>	<b>1,377,930</b>	
24				
25	<b>IV. Administration</b>			
26	Conference Council on Finance & Admin.	3,050	1,000	
27	Human Resources/Personnel	28,956	24,395	
28	Administrative Services Office	729,373	681,539	
29	Communications Office	236,468	224,914	
30	<u>Other Conference Administrative Areas</u>			
31	1. Annual Conference Session Expenses:			
32	Annual Conference Program & Arrangements	123,770	104,300	
33	Retired Ministers - per diem	18,000	12,000	
34	At-Large Lay Delegates - per diem	26,000	0	
35	2. Conference Secretary & Journal	24,413	24,963	
36	3. Committee on Memoirs	1,200	1,200	
37	4. Conference Trustees	5,350	4,850	
38	5. Worker's Compensation Insurance	12,000	12,000	
39	6. Leadership Forum	3,000	1,000	
40	7. Strategic Initiative Team	3,000	500	
41	9. General and SEJ Delegate Expense	6,000	6,000	
42	10. Committee on Nominations	900	0	
43	Episcopal Committee	1,200	500	
44	Legal Fees	45,000	45,000	6
45	Contingency Funds	27,000	0	
46	<b>Total Administration</b>	<b>1,294,680</b>	<b>1,144,161</b>	
47				
48	<b>V. SEJ Mission and Ministry</b>	<b>17,220</b>	<b>17,220</b>	
49				

50	<b><u>Type A Totals: Paid Based on Expenses</u></b>	<b>4,600,412</b>	<b>3,508,409</b>	
	<b><u>Type B: Paid Based Funds Received</u></b>	<b>2023 Approved Amended Budget</b>	<b>2024 Projected Budget</b>	<b>Note #:</b>
52	GA Wesley Ministries & UM Colleges	723,201	550,000	
53	Episcopal – S. Ga Office Expense	216,369	228,867	
54	Episcopal – S. Ga Area Residence Expense	20,000	20,000	
56	<i>General Church Apportionments</i>			7
57	1. World Service Fund	1,066,125	599,494	
58	2. Africa University Fund	34,693	18,076	
59	3. Black College Fund	154,311	80,768	
60	4. Episcopal - General Church Apportionment	428,089	177,535	
61	5. General Administration Fund	131,292	71,185	
62	6. Interdenominational Cooperation Fund	4,616	15,836	
63	7. Ministerial Education Fund	333,913	202,482	
64	<b><u>Type B Totals: Paid Based on Funds Received</u></b>	<b>3,112,609</b>	<b>1,964,242</b>	
65				
66	<b>Total Conference Budget</b>	<b>7,713,021</b>	<b>5,472,651</b>	<b>-2,240,370</b>
67	Projected deficit if collect 90%/spend 100% of Type A and Type B items	-674,977	-547,265	
68	Projected deficit if collect 90%/spend 100% of Type A items/spend 90% of Type B items	-411,729	-350,841	8

**Budget Notes:**

- 1- The CF&A has projected that our collections on apportionments will be 90% which is the same collection target and actual as 2022.
- 2- The registration fee income is calculated based on a registration fee of \$20.
- 3- The CF&A will use our investment income and reserves to help cover any shortfall in receipts.
- 4- The Annual Conference voted in 2022 to establish the Retiree Healthcare Funding Trust. This reduced this apportionment to a small amount needed for retirees under the age of 65 who are not eligible for the retiree healthcare plan.
- 5- The Conference Pastoral Counselor is on medical leave, and this office will not be filled. The budget has been reduced accordingly.
- 6- The past 4 years we have put the collected but unspent legal fees apportionment into a designated reserve. Building up this reserve allows us to lower the annual apportionment while still being prepared for an expensive legal issue.
- 7- CFA recommends payment of general church apportionments in these amounts during this period of uncertainty caused by the inability of the General Conference to meet and adopt a budget.
- 8- If we collect 90% and spend 100%, there will be a deficit. Because we prepare our budgets so far in advance, almost every year some items included in the projected budget may not be spent. In addition, Type B items are not paid at 100%; they are paid at the rate collected, so they do not add to any deficit. If our budget expenditures exceed our rates of collection on the budget, then investment earnings, the contingency fund, and perhaps some conference reserves will have to be used in order to pay all of our obligations. It is possible that the 2024 budget may be adjusted ad interim based on the results of 2023 disaffiliations.

Submitted by,  
Dr Shane Green, Chair  
Suzanne Jones, Conf. Treasurer, Dir. of Administrative Services

1                   **RECOMMENDATION 5 – Resolution for Closing Local Churches**

2  
3       Whereas, Goloid United Methodist Church, in the Northeast District of the South Georgia Annual Conference,  
4       has a long and proud history; and

5  
6       Whereas, Harmony United Methodist Church, in the Northeast District of the South Georgia Annual Conference,  
7       has had a long and proud history; and

8  
9       Whereas, Norman Park United Methodist Church, in the Southwest District of South Georgia Annual  
10       Conference, has had a long and proud history; and

11  
12       Whereas, Sharon United Methodist Church, on the Georgetown Circuit in the Northwest District of the South  
13       Georgia Annual Conference, has had a long and proud history; and

14  
15       Whereas, Vincent United Methodist Church in the Southwest District of the South Georgia Annual Conference,  
16       has had a long and proud history; and

17  
18       Whereas, a Charge Conference of each of these churches has taken appropriate action to provide for the  
19       discontinuance of the church and where the membership and title to all real and personal, tangible and intangible  
20       property of the local church shall be transferred; and

21       Whereas, consent to discontinue has been granted by the Presiding Bishop, a majority of the District  
22       Superintendents and the appropriate District Board of Church Location and Building;

23  
24       Now, Therefore Be It Resolved, that the South Georgia Annual Conference meeting in Tifton, Georgia on June  
25       5, 2023, does hereby celebrate the ministries of these congregations through the years by giving all glory to God,

26  
27       Be It Further Resolved, that the members of the South Georgia Annual Conference concur with the decision of  
28       these churches to discontinue with an affirmative vote.

29  
30       Rev. Paula Lewis  
31       Dean of the Cabinet  
32       June 5, 2023

33  
34                   **A RESOLUTION OF GOLOID UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF THE NORTHEAST DISTRICT**  
35                   **OF THE SOUTH GEORGIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

36  
37       WHEREAS, the Goloid United Methodist Church, located in Screven County, has had a long and proud history;  
38       and

39  
40       WHEREAS, after prayerful consideration and deliberation, the remaining members of the Goloid United  
41       Methodist Church determined it to be in the best interest of Goloid UMC that it no longer hold services and that  
42       provisions be made for the transfer of the church’s property;

43  
44       NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the members of Goloid United Methodist Church as follows:

- 45
- 46           1.   Goloid United Methodist Church shall hold its last official service on November 18, 2022.
  - 47
  - 48           2.   Those members remaining on the church membership roll as of November 18, 2022, shall be transferred  
49           to such other congregation as each member requests.
  - 50
  - 51           3.   All records and official papers of the church shall be transferred to the Arthur J. Moore Methodist  
52           Museum at St. Simons Island, Georgia.
  - 53
  - 54           4.   Any remaining funds of the church shall be first used to pay any outstanding pension and health insurance  
55           obligations of Goloid UMC, and any remaining funds shall be distributed according to Annual Conference  
56           policy with respect to the assets of closed churches.

1 5. In accordance with paragraph 2549.3 of The Book of Discipline, the remaining property of Goloid UMC  
2 shall be conveyed to the Annual Conference Trustees.

3  
4 ADOPTED by the members of Goloid United Methodist Church as of November 18, 2022.

5  
6 Approved by:

7  
8 Rev. Stephen Grantham, Superintendent, Northeast District  
9 South Georgia Annual Conference

10  
11 Rev. Betty Jean Sturdivant  
12 Pastor, Goloid United Methodist Church

13  
14 **A RESOLUTION OF HARMONY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF THE NORTHEAST**  
15 **DISTRICT OF THE SOUTH GEORGIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

16  
17 WHEREAS, the Harmony United Methodist Church, located in Screven County, has had a long and proud  
18 history; and

19 WHEREAS, after prayerful consideration and deliberation, the remaining members of the Harmony United  
20 Methodist Church determined it to be in the best interest of Harmony UMC that it no longer hold services and  
21 that provisions be made for the transfer of the church's property;

22  
23 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the members of Harmony United Methodist Church as follows:

- 24  
25 2. Harmony United Methodist Church shall hold its last official service on June 18, 2023.  
26  
27 2. Those members remaining on the church membership roll as of June 18, 2023, shall be transferred to  
28 such other congregation as each member requests.  
29  
30 3. All records and official papers of the church shall be transferred to the Arthur J. Moore Methodist  
31 Museum at St. Simons Island, Georgia.  
32  
33 4. Any remaining funds of the church shall be first used to pay any outstanding pension and health insurance  
34 obligations of Harmony UMC, and any remaining funds shall be distributed according to Annual  
35 Conference policy with respect to the assets of closed churches.  
36  
37 5. In accordance with paragraph 2549.3 of The Book of Discipline, the remaining property of Harmony  
38 UMC shall be conveyed to the Annual Conference Trustees.

39  
40 ADOPTED by the members of Harmony United Methodist Church as of June 18, 2023.

41  
42 Approved by:

43  
44 Rev. Stephen Grantham, Superintendent, Northeast District  
45 South Georgia Annual Conference

46  
47 Rev. Carroll Gay  
48 Pastor, Harmony United Methodist Church

49  
50 **A RESOLUTION OF NORMAN PARK UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF THE SOUTHWEST**  
51 **DISTRICT OF THE SOUTH GEORGIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

52  
53 WHEREAS, the Norman Park United Methodist Church, located in Colquitt County, has had a long and proud  
54 history; and

1 WHEREAS, after prayerful consideration and deliberation, the remaining members of the Norman Park United  
2 Methodist Church determined it to be in the best interest of Norman Park UMC that it no longer hold services  
3 and that provisions be made for the transfer of the church's property;  
4

5 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the members of Norman Park United Methodist Church as  
6 follows:  
7

- 8 3. Norman Park United Methodist Church shall hold its last official service on May 7, 2023.
- 9
- 10 2. Those members remaining on the church membership roll as of May 7, 2023, shall be transferred to such  
11 other congregation as each member requests.  
12
- 13 3. All records and official papers of the church shall be transferred to the Arthur J. Moore Methodist  
14 Museum at St. Simons Island, Georgia.  
15
- 16 4. Any remaining funds of the church shall be first used to pay any outstanding pension and health insurance  
17 obligations of Norman Park UMC, and any remaining funds shall be distributed according to Annual  
18 Conference policy with respect to the assets of closed churches.  
19
- 20 5. In accordance with paragraph 2549.3 of The Book of Discipline, the remaining property of Norman Park  
21 UMC shall be conveyed to the Annual Conference Trustees.  
22

23 ADOPTED by the members of Norman Park United Methodist Church as of May 7, 2023.

24 Approved by:

25  
26  
27 Rev. Doreen Smalls, Superintendent, Southwest District  
28 South Georgia Annual Conference  
29

30 Lessie Lewis  
31 Pastor, Norman Park United Methodist Church  
32

33 **A RESOLUTION FOR THE CLOSING OF SHARON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH IN THE**  
34 **NORTHWEST DISTRICT OF THE SOUTH GEORGIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE**  
35

- 36 **Whereas,** Sharon UMC located in Randolph County in the Northwest District of the South  
37 Georgia Annual Conference, has had a long and proud history; and  
38
- 39 **Whereas,** in 2023 Sharon UMC ceased holding services; and  
40
- 41 **Whereas,** no action has been taken to provide for closure of Sharon UMC; and  
42
- 43 **Whereas,** the district superintendent has recommended, and the presiding bishop and cabinet  
44 and the trustees of the Northwest District Union of the United Methodist Church, Inc.,  
45 which acts as the district board of church location and building for the Northwest  
46 District, have consented to closing Sharon UMC; and  
47
- 48 **Whereas,** it is now appropriate and necessary that the Annual Conference take formal action to  
49 close Sharon UMC and to make provision for the transfer of its property, all as  
50 provided in the 2016 *Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church* ("*The*  
51 *Discipline*");  
52

53 Now, Therefore, Be it Resolved by the members of the South Georgia Annual Conference session being  
54 held in Tifton, Georgia as follows:  
55

- 56 1. Sharon United Methodist Church shall be officially closed as of June 5, 2023.
- 57
- 58 2. Any remaining funds of the church shall be first used to pay any outstanding pension and  
59 health insurance obligations of Sharon UMC.



- 1 3. All records and official papers of the church shall be transferred to the  
2 Arthur J. Moore Methodist Museum at St. Simons Island, Georgia.  
3  
4 4. In as much as at the time services were discontinued at Sharon, no provisions were made  
5 concerning the disposition of its remaining personal and real property, such property shall  
6 immediately vest in the annual conference board of trustees pursuant to ¶ 2549.2 of *The*  
7 *Discipline* and the annual conference trustees shall assume control of its real, personal, and  
8 intangible.  
9

10 Adopted this 5 day of June, 2023, by the members of the South Georgia Annual Conference.

11 Bishop David Graves  
12 Presiding Bishop

13 Rev. Paula Lewis  
14 Dean of the Cabinet

15  
16  
17  
18 **A RESOLUTION OF VINCENT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF THE SOUTHWEST DISTRICT**  
19 **OF THE SOUTH GEORGIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE**  
20

21 WHEREAS, the Vincent United Methodist Church, located in Clay County, has had a long and proud history;  
22 and  
23

24 WHEREAS, after prayerful consideration and deliberation, the remaining members of the Vincent United  
25 Methodist Church determined it to be in the best interest of Vincent UMC that it no longer hold services and that  
26 provisions be made for the transfer of the church's property;  
27

28 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the members of Vincent United Methodist Church as follows:  
29

- 30 1. Vincent United Methodist Church shall hold its last official service on May 7, 2023.  
31  
32 2. Those members remaining on the church membership roll as of May 7, 2023, shall be transferred to such  
33 other congregation as each member requests.  
34  
35 3. All records and official papers of the church shall be transferred to the Arthur J. Moore Methodist  
36 Museum at St. Simons Island, Georgia.  
37  
38 4. Any remaining funds of the church shall be first used to pay any outstanding pension and health insurance  
39 obligations of Vincent UMC, and any remaining funds shall be distributed according to Annual Conference  
40 policy with respect to the assets of closed churches.  
41  
42 5. In accordance with paragraph 2549.3 of The Book of Discipline, the remaining property of Vincent UMC  
43 shall be conveyed to the Annual Conference Trustees.  
44

45 ADOPTED by the members of Vincent United Methodist Church as of May 7, 2023.

46 Approved by:

47  
48 Rev. Doreen Smalls, Superintendent, Southwest District  
49 South Georgia Annual Conference  
50

1 **RECOMMENDATION 6 – Standing Rules Changes**

2 **Annual Conference, June 2023**

3  
4 New language is in ***bold and italics***. Proposed removals are in ~~strike through~~. A rationale for each proposed  
5 change is found at the end of each recommendation.

6  
7 **RECOMMENDATION 6A - CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON STANDING RULES**

8 **2.3 CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON STANDING RULES**

9 *There shall be a Conference Committee on Standing Rules, composed of the conference secretary, the*  
10 *director of connectional ministries, the conference treasurer, the Journal editor, a representative from the*  
11 *appointive cabinet, and three at-large members, which will include the chairperson. The committee shall be*  
12 *nominated by the Nominations Committee, shall include both lay and clergy, and shall be elected by the*  
13 *Annual Conference.*

14 *Rationale: The Conference currently does not have a standing committee on the Conference Standing Rules and*  
15 *the creation of one is recommended.*

16  
17 **RECOMMENDATION 6B - PROVIDE FOR A VIRTUAL CONFERENCE**

18  
19 **3.1.8 PROVIDE FOR A VIRTUAL CONFERENCE**

20  
21 Under circumstances ~~deemed necessary necessitated by emergency conditions involving public health~~  
22 ~~or safety~~ the Bishop, the Cabinet, and the Conference Officers\* listed in Standing Rule 2.1—2.5 may  
23 elect, in their sole discretion, and subject to such guidelines and procedures as they may adopt, to hold  
24 the South Georgia Annual Conference by means of remote communication in lieu of holding a physical  
25 meeting provided that they establish procedures to enable verified delegates not physically present  
26 to:.....

27  
28 *Rationale: This allows for virtual conference sessions to take place for reasons, to include time and cost*  
29 *savings measures.*

30  
31 **RECOMMENDATION 6C - COMMITTEE ON MEMOIRS**

32  
33 **3.3.6 COMMITTEE ON MEMOIRS**

34  
35 There shall be a Committee on Memoirs, composed of nine persons, nominated by the Conference Nominations  
36 Committee and elected by the Annual Conference. The Committee shall work as a sub-committee of the  
37 Committee on Conference Worship in relationship to the Memorial Service for deceased clergy ***who have died***  
38 ***while in relationship to the South Georgia Annual Conference*** and ***United Methodist*** clergy spouses. The  
39 Memoirs Chair or designee will serve as an ex-officio member of the Committee on Conference Worship. The  
40 Committee shall provide a Memoir for each deceased clergy ***person who has died while in relationship to the***  
41 ***South Georgia Annual Conference*** and ***United Methodist*** clergy spouse to be printed in the *Conference*  
42 *Journal*. The Committee on Memoirs is accountable to the Committee on Conference Worship.

43  
44 *RATIONALE: Clarification of who is guaranteed inclusion in the Conference Memoirs and Memorial Service.*  
45 *The previous definition of “deceased clergy” is excessively functionally broad and offers no boundaries of either*  
46 *inclusion or exclusion. The above changes to include the term “die(d) while in relationship to the South Georgia*  
47 *Annual Conference” are inclusive and respectful of the variety of ways both ordained and unordained persons*  
48 *can serve in ministerial office. These changes are also exclusive of those who (through voluntary or involuntary*  
49 *means) no longer have a relationship with the South Georgia Annual Conference at the time of their deaths. The*  
50 *language “die(d) while in relationship to the South Georgia Annual Conference” also brings the Standing Rules*  
51 *into agreement with the longstanding practices, and current written guidelines, of the Committee on Memoirs.*  
52 *These changes have come via submission from Rev. Christopher M. Shoemaker, Chair of the Conference*  
53 *Committee on Memoirs.*

1                    **RECOMMENDATION 6D - COMMITTEE ON COURTESIES AND INTRODUCTIONS**

2  
3 ~~3.3.4~~ **COMMITTEE ON COURTESIES AND INTRODUCTIONS**

4        ~~There shall be a Committee on Courtesies and Introductions composed of five persons nominated by the~~  
5        ~~Conference Committee on Nominations and elected by the Annual Conference. Duties shall include the~~  
6        ~~presentation of special guests to the Conference, special matters of privilege, and such complimentary~~  
7        ~~resolutions as occasion may demand. The Committee on Courtesies and Introductions is accountable to~~  
8        ~~the Annual Conference Session Program Committee.~~

9  
10        *RATIONALE: Incorporate the duties of the committee on courtesies and introductions into the Local*  
11        *Arrangements Committee and subsequently dissolve the Committee on Courtesies and Introductions.*

12  
13                    **RECOMMENDATION 6E -**  
14                    **QUADRENNIAL BOARDS/COMMITTEES/COMMISSIONS/ ETC.**

15  
16 5.1.1 QUADRENNIAL BOARDS/COMMITTEES/COMMISSIONS/ ETC.

17  
18        .....No person shall be eligible for membership on the same Committee more than eight years out of 12  
19        unless elected as Executive Officer (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, or Treasurer) *or as the Book of Discipline*  
20        *allows*, in which case the person may serve out the Quadrennium. All Committees of the South Georgia  
21        Conference with lay representation will comply with ¶603.4.

22  
23        *Rationale: In some cases the Book of Discipline allows for terms longer than the SGA Conference Standing*  
24        *Rules. In such cases where the supervising committee has the ability to make adjustments or exceptions we*  
25        *recommend that flexibility be allowed.*

26  
27                    **RECOMMENDATION 6F - FUND FOR SPECIAL RELIEF**

28  
29 5.5.7 FUND FOR SPECIAL RELIEF

30        The purpose of the Fund for Special Relief (“The Fund”) shall be to provide supplementary financial  
31        assistance in times of crisis to clergy and/or their survivors of the South Georgia Annual Conference.  
32        “The Fund” shall be administered by ~~nine~~ **six (6)** Trustees who shall be nominated by the *Conference*  
33        *Committee on Nominations Fund* and elected by the Annual Conference and shall serve terms of three  
34        years and may serve a maximum of six years out of nine.

35  
36        *Rationale: Change the rule to align with the current practice of the Nominating Committee’s role and*  
37        *reduce the membership to reflect the six districts.*

38  
39                    **RECOMMENDATION 6G - COMMISSION ON EQUITABLE COMPENSATION**

40  
41 5.5.9 COMMISSION ON EQUITABLE COMPENSATION

42        The Commission on Equitable Compensation is composed of a lay and a clergy person from each  
43        district *superintendent region* and a representative from the Cabinet and the Connectional Ministries  
44        staff. *The Book of Discipline* empowers the Commission to recommend standards for clergy  
45        compensation, administer funds for salary supplements, and provide counsel and materials to District  
46        Superintendents and Pastor/Staff Parish Relations committees. Requests for salary supplements must be  
47        a joint effort of the District Superintendent, pastor and charge conference and must be in the hands of  
48        the Committee before December 1 of each year (¶625).

49  
50        *Rationale: Reduce the committee to reflect the newly created District Superintendent Retions that combine*  
51        *two districts into one region. Any members currently serving on the Council, in excess of the newly allotted*  
52        *membership, will continue to serve and complete their term, rotating off as scheduled, and the committee*  
53        *on nominations will live into nominating to the newly structured membership moving forward.*

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17

**RECOMMENDATION 6H -  
COUNCIL ON FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION**

18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24

6.1 COUNCIL ON FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Membership and responsibilities are defined in ¶611-619. The Council on Finance and Administration (CFA) shall be composed of ~~eighteen (18)~~ **nine (9)** elected members: ~~ten (10)~~ **five (5)** lay persons and ~~eight (8)~~ **four (4)** clergy persons.

25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32

*Rationale: Reduce the number of committee members in keeping with both the Book of Discipline requirements and reflecting the current size of the South Georgia Annual Conference. Any members currently serving on the Council, in excess of the newly allotted membership proposed of nine (9), will continue to serve and complete their term, rotating off as scheduled, and the committee on nominations will live into nominating to the newly structured membership numbers moving forward. This recommendation has the support of the chair of the committee.*

33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50  
51  
52

**RECOMMENDATION 6I - ARCHIVES**

53  
54  
55  
56  
57  
58

6.4.3 COMMITTEE:

The Archives/History and Museum Committee shall be composed of ~~nine~~ **five** persons nominated by the Conference Nominating Committee and elected by the Annual Conference. In addition, the Committee will include the Chairs of The Friends of the Museum and the Historical Society. Four non-voting ex-officio members will include the Epworth by the Sea President/CEO, the Museum Director, and the Conference Historian.

*Rationale: Streamlining the work of the commission; Any members currently serving on the Commission, in excess of the newly allotted membership proposed of five (5), will continue to serve and complete their term, rotating off as scheduled, and the committee on nominations will live into nominating to the newly structured membership numbers moving forward. The current size of the South Georgia Conference makes it possible for this committee to be reduced and still function.*

**RECOMMENDATION 6J -  
APPENDIX A: POLICY ON CHURCH PROFESSIONAL SEXUAL MISCONDUCT**

IV. ~~Sexual Ethics Support Team~~ *The Bishop's Response Team*

A. TEAM PURPOSE:

The Bishop of the South Georgia Annual Conference may, at his/her discretion, create and deploy on a case-by-case basis, a ~~Sexual Ethics Support Team~~ a team to respond to sexual misconduct situations. ***The Bishop's Response Team responds and assists a congregation experiencing a crisis or trauma so that healing can begin. The team is trained to care for and provide support to those who are hurting. The trained team members are both laity and clergy. The Bishop may send the team after any kind of crisis, traumatic event, or unexpected change that may occur in a congregation. Some examples include sudden death of a pastor, embezzlement or misuse of funds by pastor or layperson, clergy sexual misconduct, laity sexual misconduct directly involving the congregation, sudden sabbatical by a pastor, church closures, sexual abuse of a church member at a church camp or other church event, and any other instance as requested by the Bishop. The team purpose shall be to*** ***The Bishop's Response Team will be in place to*** offer support for any party involved in a complaint of sexual misconduct including: the complainant, the accused church professional, and/or a congregation affected by such a complaint.

B. TEAM MAKEUP:

~~The South Georgia Annual Conference Sexual Ethics Support Team shall consist of persons chosen by the Bishop in consultation with the Conference Crisis Team, Cabinet, Board of Ordained Ministry, and/or the Conference Pastoral Counselor.~~ The Bishop shall be sensitive to issues of race, gender, and the inclusion of persons who will advocate appropriately for potential victims of sexual harassment, misconduct, and abuse. ~~The Conference Pastoral Counselor is accountable for~~ Coordinating, training, and supporting the work of this team as ***will be*** directed by the Bishop.

1 C. TEAM FUNCTION:

- 2 1. The Bishop may offer one or more persons in response to the needs of a complainant, an  
3 accused church professional, or a congregation experiencing a sexual misconduct complaint.  
4 2. When deployed, a support team member(s) will:  
5 a. Explain the procedures available within the structures of the church for addressing a  
6 complaint and for following fair process as defined in *The Book of Discipline 2016*.  
7 b. Offer resources and consultation to the accused church professional, the complainant,  
8 and/or the congregation and assist in any appropriate manner.  
9 c. Accompany the person(s) to whom they are assigned (either complainant or accused)  
10 to meetings with church authorities if the person(s) so desires.

11  
12 V. Procedures for Reporting and Responding to Complaints of Sexual Misconduct

13  
14 A. A person desiring to report an alleged incident of sexual misconduct by a church professional  
15 may contact a Sunday school teacher, choir director, or any other trusted person including their  
16 pastor, another United Methodist pastor, a District Superintendent, or the Bishop. If a pastor is  
17 contacted with such a report, that pastor shall personally notify his or her Superintendent or another  
18 member of the Cabinet within 24 hours. Regardless of who receives the report, the Bishop and/or  
19 Conference Crisis Team shall be notified immediately thereafter.

20  
21  
22 The South Georgia Conference urges any clergy to consider it a moral obligation to act as a legally  
23 mandated reporter when the alleged victim is a minor or adult incapable of self-reporting. (See *Book*  
24 *of Discipline 2016*, ¶341.5)

25  
26 B. The provisions of ¶363 and ¶2701-2719 of *The Book of Discipline 2016* shall determine and in  
27 all ways define the process of appropriate response.

28  
29 C. In all cases of complaint involving sexual misconduct, great care shall be taken to explain to both  
30 the accused church professional and the complainant their rights to fair process as provided in *The*  
31 *Book of Discipline 2016*.

32  
33 VI. Prevention Education: Developing Boundary Awareness

34  
35 Every church professional or lay person in any status or relationship with the Annual Conference  
36 whose appointment is set or approved by the Bishop, and lay speakers serving as supply pastors,  
37 shall be required to attend a five-hour seminar on sexual ethics every ~~three~~**four** years. ~~The~~  
38 ~~Conference Pastoral Counselor or other designated persons~~ **Office of Ministerial Services** will offer  
39 seminars on sexual ethics across the conference ~~on a regular basis throughout each three-year cycle~~  
40 **as part of a quadrennial emphasis. Note: Any persons newly assigned, appointed, or serving ad-**  
41 **interim shall be required to complete a training workshop to be offered annually for them within**  
42 **the first conference year of active service. Afterwards, these persons will** ~~assume the three-year~~  
43 ~~training cycle participate in the quadrennial emphasis.~~ Audits for compliance are conducted based  
44 on the Annual Conference year. The cost for the Sexual Ethics Workshop will be ~~\$35.00~~ **\$50.00** per  
45 participant. Local churches are encouraged to reimburse the pastor for this expense.

46  
47 For ministers who serve outside the bounds of the Annual Conference, a comparable course on sexual  
48 ethics approved by the ~~Conference Pastoral Counselor~~ **Office of Ministerial Services** will satisfy the  
49 requirement. In such cases, the minister is responsible for sending certification of course participation to  
50 the ~~Conference Pastoral Counselor~~ **Office of Ministerial Services**.

51  
52 South Georgia Annual Conference clergy who serve outside the bounds of the annual conference are  
53 also required to be in compliance with this policy. There are two ways for these clergy to complete the  
54 requirement every ~~three~~**four** years:

- 55  
56 1. The clergy may attend a comparable five-hour sexual ethics seminar sponsored by another  
57 United Methodist Annual Conference. In such case, the clergy person is responsible for sending  
58 certification of course participation to the ~~Conference Pastoral Counselor~~ **Office of Ministerial**  
59 **Services**. The content of the seminar must be similar in content to the course in South Georgia.

1 2. The clergy may contact the ~~Conference Pastoral Counselor~~ **Office of Ministerial Services** and  
2 request an electronic or hard copy of the course material. Attached to the packet is a one-page  
3 statement that must be signed and returned verifying that the clergy has read and understands the  
4 course content.

5  
6 Because of the intimate nature of ministry, relationships can be sexualized. Therefore, seminars on  
7 sexual ethics will be designed to help church professionals do the following: gain a clear understanding  
8 of what is best practice; become boundary sensitive; be alert to situations that place them at risk in  
9 pastoral ministry; and become aware of the power differential accorded to them by virtue of their role as  
10 minister.

11  
12 Because sexual ethics is a serious matter, failure to comply with the continuing educational requirement  
13 will generate an administrative complaint (See Book of Discipline ¶363a). Retired ministers are exempt  
14 from the continuing education requirement related to ethics unless they are serving a full-time or part-  
15 time appointment in a local church or extension ministry; however, all retired ministers remain under all  
16 other provisions of this Sexual Ethics Policy.

17  
18 *Rationale: Changes are needed to the Sexual Misconduct Policy this year in order to change from a mandated*  
19 *three-year cycle to a quadrennial emphasis model. The parts referring to the role of the Conference Pastoral*  
20 *Counselor are outdated. The Sexual Ethics Support Team will be referred to as "The Bishop's Response Team."*

# SPECIAL OFFERING

CHURCH PLANTING & REVITALIZATION

Making disciples of  
**JESUS CHRIST**  
for the transformation  
of the **WORLD**



[www.sgaumc.org/specialoffering](http://www.sgaumc.org/specialoffering)