

## ANNUAL CONFERENCE NOTES 2022

Representing Canton FUMC: Lead Pastor Dr. Kenny Ott; Executive Pastor Kelly Beckley; Director of Administration Julie Little; Lay Delegates Wayne Harmon, JoEllen Wilson

Delegates have copies of Conference Handbook for reference and additional, detailed information.

Note: All opening and closing prayers were given by Conference Youth

### Thursday, June 2, 2022:

Noon: Laity Luncheon Speaker - Russell Davis, Director AC Camp Ministry

Session One: Opening Worship by Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson, Resident Bishop Text: John 21:6 - 14.  
Communion in 3 languages: English, Asian, Spanish.

Opening of Conference - Call to Order 156th Session. Conference Theme: "A Place for You at the Table".  
Opening Hymn "And Are We Yet Alive?" has opened AC since post-Civil War. Welcome by Host Committee - Athens D.S Dr. Rodrico Cruz. Remembrance of Native Americans (Creek, Cherokee) who occupied geographical territory of NGUMC.

Organization of Conference by Max Vincent, Conference Secretary

Area of Focus # 1 - Community Engagement. Recognized Churches in 5 areas of AC for Community Engagement.

Disaffiliation Vote: Bishop called for vote on [70] churches requesting disaffiliation: 1176 Yes; 91 No; 55 Abstain  
- All ministers of churches disaffiliating were asked to stand. Bishop prayed for churches to be successful in new endeavors. (Mentioned they would be welcomed back into AC, if desired). A list of all churches granted disaffiliation is in Conference Handbook.

Adjourned 5 p.m.

### Friday, June 3, 2022

Session Two Call to Order - 8:30 a.m. by Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson

#2 Area of Focus: Scriptural Literacy and Imagination - Acts 2 - 27 To break cycle of poverty and incarceration, Methodist Churches are filling a need for individual and corporate encouragement and growth. Programs promoting Literacy and Imagination were highlighted.

Pension and Health Benefits and Commission on Equitable Benefits were presented. John Wesley and Francis Asbury emphasized clergy financial and physical assistance since 1774. The 2023 budget is outlined in Handbook. Motion to include end of year "roll over" for unused funds to be transferred to Barnes Fund for church development. Vote - Yes: 1152 No: 44 Abstain: 22 Amy King, Conference Benefits Officer reported the Barnes Fund was overfunded prior to 2021 and recommended a decrease in Barnes Fund to reduce unfunded mandate for local churches. (Note: Barnes Fund currently has a \$32M balance from sale of churches, apportionments, and other revenue. Grants are offered to churches for expansion of service, planting of new churches and necessary purchases for better service to community. \$780,000 in Grants for 2021 and \$1.4M is available in 2022. Currently 33 applications have been submitted.] Motion from Benefits to transfer to

Unfunded Liability from overfunded Health Benefits to reduce local church liability: 1144 Yes; 15 No; 25 Abstain:  
A recommendation to decrease monthly health benefits billed to churches to \$1,250 per month - Yes: 1155;  
No: 20; Abstain: 15.

[Note: Local unfunded mandate totals are located on Conference Website.]

Equitable Commission Report: (1) To assure clergy finances are sustained when a church falls behind on apportionment, Conference covers benefits to prevent on-going liability for church in arrears. Any church more than 3 months in arrears may apply for grant. (2) Clergy Compensation was last increased at 2018 Annual Conference and Housing last addressed at 2015 Annual Conference. Recommendation: To increase Pastor's Salaries (5.8%) and stewardship for Parsonages. Vote - Yes: 1167 No: 32 Abstain: 14

Trustees Report: Conference Trustee Chair Julie Childs reported an \$800,000 investment from Parks Eye Fund for assistance to individuals experiencing blindness. Trustees recommend that \$1M from Camp Ministries Endowment be transferred to operating budget in light of pandemic issues. Yes: 1119 No: 80 Abstain: 27. Trustees reported on Relocation for Conference Center. Lease for current building expires in 2023. Relocation Task Force recommended new location adjacent to College Park UMC. Proposal is to build Methodist Office Center of about 5,000 sq. ft - as opposed to current 15,000 sq. ft. to be completed by 2024. Yes: 930 No: 295 Abstain: 43

Candidates for New Local Pastors, Provisional Members (5) and Full Connection Elders (13) were presented.

General Conference Update: 2022 Conference postponed until 2024 because of travel restrictions and Visa difficulties. Jurisdictional Conference will meet in November 2022 to recommend new and appointed Bishops. Hand vote confirming The Reverend Dr. Byron Thomas as candidate for NGC Episcopal nominee.

Focus # 3 of New Faith Opportunities for cultivation in secular and church communities was presented. Twelve churches were recognized for bringing everyday people together in familiar places. Fresh Expressions is one of the New Faith Opportunities. Pastor of Fairmount UMC is cultivator for Fresh Expressions for NW District (our District). Other opportunities include new Church Planting, Merging two churches into one congregation, Deeding churches no longer viable for other community ministries, on-line church presence.

ACE Academy currently has 22 Laity and Clergy enrolled.

UMF President presented (1) Candidate for Diaconal Commissioning and (1) candidate for Home Missions Commissioning.

Five Resolutions and one Attachment were presented: 1. Provide for a Special Called AC Session, since General Conference did not meet in 2022 - - Yes: 374 No: 742 Abstain: 40 [Failed] 2. Support for Fair and Unambiguous process for Disaffiliation as provided in #2553 - - Yes: 536 No: 644 Abstain: 42 [Failed]. 3. Fair allocation for unfunded liability - - Before vote, a motion on floor was heard to send this Resolution back for more clarity - - Yes: 718 No: 443 Abstain: 24 [ Motion Passed]. 4. Resolution to change cycle of General Conference to meet during non-US Presidential Elections - - Yes: 392 No: 736 Abstain: 53 [Failed]. 5. Request for General Board to advocate/protect and recognize Native American landmarks, wildlife, and property (14thousand acres) in Georgia - - Yes: 1011 No: 88 Abstain: 50 An attachment to the Resolution called for support of Native American sovereignty and dual citizenship- - Yes: 1030 No: 79 Abstain: 37 [Both Passed]

Service of Remembrance for deceased clergy, laity, and conference officials during 2021 lead by Reverend Jane Brooks.

Annual Conference offering taken for UMCOR

The Greek word for Worship: PROSKUNEO was presented under title: "The Dangers of Monocultural Worship" with the following risks: - We risk centering our church around something other than Jesus. - We risk sending a wrong message to the community. - - We risk fracturing families by not showing God's love. We should ask the question "Are people from different socio-economic cultures welcome in my church?"

Recognition and Passing of Mantle from Retirees to new clerical candidates. Ecclesiastes 3:18

Adjourned at 6: 15 p.m.

Saturday, June 4, 2022

8:30 a.m. Call to Order - Bishop Hauptert-Johnson.

Fourth Area of Focus: Racial Justice and Healing. "We aim to resist in such a way that when we are victorious, those who opposed us can celebrate." MLK. Jr. Five churches/organizations were recognized for their role in racial justice, reparations, healing, and advocacy ministries.

Two proposed Standing Rules Amendments were presented for vote. (1) Rule J-13 - Barnes Fund be able to issue grants to churches for innovation. Approved via hand vote. (2) Rule H - A Connectional Ministries Team to be nominated to close a gap for more effectiveness by Annual Conference and will include a Director for Inclusion/Advocacy. Approved via hand vote.

Chancellor Jim Thornton presented 7 churches for closure by 2022 Annual Conference. [ Note: The only church in (our) NW District is Wesley Chapel in Trion.] Churches are generally considered for closure if they are unable to keep insurance and/or pay Minister. Discussion following regarding the closure of Red Oak Church, since two families are interested in receiving this church after closure. A motion to request that Board of Trustees consider this request passed via hand vote. All churches presented for closure passed via hand vote.

Nominations Committee presented the list of Nominations for 2023. Nominations approved via hand vote.

Eleven Churches of Excellence and Outreach were recognized with Awards: Ben Hill, Carrollton, Cornerstone, Douglasville, East Cobb, Jackson First, Mt. Zion, Northside, Oak Grove, Vinings.

Area of Focus # 5 - Health and Well Being. Churches are encouraged to find new ways to connect emotionally, by not just asking "How Are You?"

The 2022 Recipient of the Francis Asbury Award [to establish a place of learning for each congregation] is the Reverend Dr. Luther Findley, Paine College Campus Ministry.

Fixed (new) Appointments were announced by the District Superintendent and Lay Leader of each of the 8 Districts. [Note: The N/W District Superintendent John Pinson is retiring. The new District Superintendent is Beth Sanders. Lay Leader for N/W District is Dawn Townsend.]

Following the Service of Licensing, Commissioning and Ordination, the 156th Session of the North Georgia Conference was adjourned.