



**General Information**

<i>Name</i>	Joseph S. Kenaston
<i>Conference Membership</i>	West Virginia
<i>Nominated by</i>	West Virginia Annual Conference
<i>Able to serve if elected</i>	12 years

**Work Experience**

<i>List all appointments</i>	2013 – present District Superintendent, Southern District of the WV Annual Conf.
	2005 – 2013 Lead Pastor, Lewisburg UMC, Lewisburg, WV
	1992 – 2005 Lead Pastor, Wayside UMC, Vienna, WV
	1987 – 1992 Assoc. Pastor, Christ Church United Methodist, Charleston, WV
	1984 – 1987 Pastor, Stretford-Urmston Methodist Circuit, Manchester, England
	1982 – 1984 Assoc. Pastor, Hazel Crest Community Church, UM, Hazel Crest (Chicago), IL

**Personal Development**

<i>Influential Books &amp; Renewal Study</i>	<b>Education:</b> D. Min., Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University, 2000; M. Div., Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, 1984; B. A., West Virginia Wesleyan College, 1981 <b>Influential books:</b> D. Bonhoeffer, <i>Cost of Discipleship</i> ; J. Cone, <i>God of the Oppressed</i> ; E. Schussler Fiorenza, <i>In Memory of Her</i> ; J. Gonzalez, <i>Santa Biblia</i> ; J. Wesley, <i>Complete Works</i> ; J. Wiggers, <i>Francis Asbury</i> ; R. Schnase, <i>Five Practices</i> ; E. Heath, <i>Longing for Spring</i> ; B. Brown Taylor, <i>The Preaching Life</i> ; St. John, <i>The Dark Night</i> ; St. Teresa, <i>The Interior Castle</i> ; K. Norris, <i>Dakota</i> ; L. Gunning Francis, <i>Ferguson and Faith</i> ; D. Kearns Goodwin, <i>A Team of Rivals</i> ; F. Dostoevsky, <i>The Brothers Karamazov</i> . For pleasure: history and contemporary fiction – e.g. Baldacci, Brown, Picoult. <b>Renewal/Study leaves:</b> 2007–09 Academy for Spiritual Formation; 2005–07 Companions in Ministry (Upper Room); 1999 Methodist Summer Exchange, Yorkshire, England.
<i>Racial Diversity Training &amp; Leadership</i>	Center for the Church and the Black Experience at Garrett-Evangelical; Bishop’s Summit on Diversity and Inclusion 2015; Diversity, inclusion, and cultural competency training 2013; GCSRW/GCORR Monitor for Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference 2012; Numerous WV events, seminars, and workshops; Planned and executed a consciousness raising experience with Jane Elliot at Annual Conference. I continue to read widely about diversity and inclusion.
<i>Language &amp; Interests</i>	<b>Languages:</b> First language is English. I had two years of biblical Greek and Spanish. <b>Special interests:</b> Hiking, kayaking, photography, watercolor painting, reading, history, baseball
<i>Self-Care</i>	Exercise, devotions, Celtic Daily Prayer, reading, Sabbath, socializing, cabin on the river

**Personal Assessment**

<i>Gifts &amp; Evidence of God’s Grace</i>	Apostleship, administration, preaching, consensus-building leadership, teaching, faith, generosity, hope-filled spirit, and a pastoral heart are some of God’s gifts in my life. I have led in the financial and pension areas in the Annual Conference. I believe that my sense of humor, ability to relate to others, and personal and friendly demeanor are key factors in my ministry.
<i>Indication of Effectiveness</i>	I have been blessed by a variety of appointments. I began my ministry in urban settings in Chicago and Manchester, England. I learned about ministry in changing neighborhoods, church healing, and moving a congregation from debt and despair to hope, financial stability, and ultimately tripling attendance in one congregation. Upon moving back to the United States, I was responsible for all staff supervision, financial concerns, and administrative functions at the then largest congregation in the West Virginia Conference, Christ Church in Charleston. At Wayside, the congregation grew from an average of 130 to over 300 and added a \$2.3 million facility that enhanced opportunity for ministry, service, and growth. The originally homogenous congregation grew to reflect the community’s economic, racial, and age diversity. At Lewisburg we implemented a comprehensive vision of ministry, entered into a shared pastoral relationship with a historically black church, and came through a challenging experience that threatened to split the congregation over ethical misconduct by a staff member. As a Superintendent of a district with some of the nation’s poorest counties and highest rates of drug-abuse, I am working on instilling hope in communities that have felt despair and abandonment. I have worked with UMC and ecumenical partners to create district-wide Church and Community Workers and educational specialist positions, a Disaster Response Center, and a UM and Mennonite shared facility for missions. The Southern District is the most

	diverse in the Conference and I have worked to identify, encourage, and support black leaders (particularly young), and the historically black churches.
<i>Further Development</i>	Sometimes I struggle with the tension between the important and urgent. I am aware of this dilemma and try to always ask what is important. Because I have high expectations of myself, I wrestle with accepting less than excellence. I also assume that other people will always put forth their best effort.
<i>Style of Leadership</i>	I am collaborative and collegial in my leadership. I like to work with people in a team approach to ministry, and can do this as the leader of the team or as a participant. I am good at building consensus, and making sure that all stakeholders are at the table. I look at an issue from a variety of perspectives, and I am willing to make the difficult and hard decisions.

*Briefly describe the process which lead you to discern the call to the office of bishop.*

My discernment of this call has come through prayer, personal experiences, and the encouragement of others. Serving as a DS in one of the poorest areas in the country has been important in my development as a Christian disciple and leader. I have learned to think creatively about systems, partnerships, and collaborative visioning. In every church that I have served, laity have said they expected that someday I would be a bishop. I have also been encouraged by clergy to enter into the discernment process. Bishop Steiner Ball affirmed that I would be an excellent bishop and a valuable colleague. My discernment to enter into the process was supported by daily prayer and my spiritual disciplines.

*The Role of the Bishop is delineated in ¶ 403 of The Book of Discipline. After reading this paragraph, please share how you are called and equipped to fulfill the responsibilities. Please elaborate on ¶ 403.1 and e-f.*

As a servant leader, a bishop has to focus his or her vision on Christ. Jesus embodied servanthood when he “*emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness*” (Phil 2:7). This has been my lifelong model for ministry and will be regardless of my title. My vision must remain on Christ as I serve and offer hope-filled leadership in collaboration with Conference and episcopal leaders. I will carry the responsibilities of leadership, oversight, and supervision with humility and in community. I will seek to expand ministries with those on the margins.

**e. Passion for the unity of the church.** I love The United Methodist Church and truly believe that God will bring us through these challenging times to a place of hope. I rejoice that we try to live in community with all people. The challenge of a large, diverse church is that we are at the Lord’s Table with people that we might not have included if we had written the guest list. Our embrace of welcoming all is a critical witness to a world of division.

**f. Ministry of administration.** I believe this is one of my key strengths. I can envision a future, see a path to reach the chosen future, and organize the movement to walk that path. I am good at creating systems, supervising, guiding, and accomplishing goals. I have experience in conference stewardship, finances, and pensions, and also non-profit boards.

*How would you as a new bishop collaborate with your colleagues on the College of Bishops to be spiritual and missional leaders for the whole jurisdiction so that NEJ better fulfills the mission and ministry of Christ Jesus?*

I would bring experience in urban, rural, large and small church, and the shared ministry model of British Methodism. I am committed to help the College and Conference strengthen existing leadership and identify new leaders through team based work. Team oriented churches would use outreach efforts, events, and local missions to build relationships in the community. They would help the church focus on evangelism, ministry, prophetic witness, and mission.

*How would you as a new bishop share the good news of Christ Jesus inviting, engaging, connecting with persons in your assigned area who are not currently active in a faith community so that you might become a leader and model for making disciples?*

I understand the bishop’s role as a spiritual leader for the entire region. I will cast a shared vision of the church engaged with the world. We are called to tear down the walls that divide us from our neighbors. We tear down these walls (physical as well as emotional, sociological, educational, racial, and cultural) by building relationships, listening, sharing, and loving. Empowering young adults and youth will help us recognize the walls that divide us. Deacons will help lead us in connecting with our communities. John Wesley discovered his purpose when he began preaching in the open fields; we will too as we make disciples and transform the world.

*Describe how you would equip the United Methodists of your area for ministry and evangelism in our culture context?*

Three experiences have emphasized for me the need for contextual ministry and evangelism: Chicago, Manchester, and the coalfields of WV. I can’t assume that I know an area, a people, or culture, but must learn and appreciate the context and sub-cultures. My role would be to inspire, resource, and support the local churches, clergy, and laity to share the love and mercy of God with all people. Identifying new and promising spiritual leaders is critical. I have used a variety of tools that are sensitive to context such as Grow Your Church, Lay Mobilization, SLI, ¶ 213 (re-purposing churches), and appreciative inquiry with lay training, church development, retreats, workshops, and clergy meetings. Consequently, the plans of evangelism would be relevant and developed collaboratively with diverse voices at the table.