



The Northeastern Jurisdiction of The United Methodist Church

# Daily Christian Advocate



Harrisburg, PA

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Tuesday Edition

July 15, 2008

## Help Make a Miracle for Mission Central!

*By Jackie Campbell, Assistant Editor*

The growth and vitality of Mission Central's ministry since it was established by the Central Pennsylvania Conference in 2002 has been something of a miracle. While providing a base for mission outreach in Central PA, by partnering with UMCOR and the NEJ, Mission Central has become a vital link in collecting and distributing relief supplies throughout

the world.

The 48,000-square-foot warehouse in Mechanicsburg provides space to store supplies donated from Central PA and other Conferences and for volunteers to process and distribute them. The initial \$2 million debt on the



*A Western PA Conference image*

**Groups of United Methodists from several Northeastern conferences have traveled to Mission Central to volunteer, tour or train. Here, a group of Western PA volunteers spent a weekend to work on United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) kits.**

Mission Central building has been reduced to \$1.75 million, as eight HUBS have been opened

See **MIRACLE MONTH**/page 2

### In this issue:

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*See full Boundaries Report attached*



*Image by Jackie Campbell*

**The Rev. Safiyah Fosua of the General Board of Discipleship, leading the opening Bible Study Monday evening, gave snapshots of the extreme actions of the early church described in the Acts of the Apostles and provided modern day examples of how the church has fulfilled extreme expectations.**

## Be Kind to the Monitors

During sessions of the Northeastern Jurisdiction Conference, Kim Coffing of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women and Barbara Isaacs and Dr. Jacob Dharmaraj of the General Commission on Race and Religion will monitor inclusiveness.

The two agencies maintain inclusiveness with regard to gender and race as mandated by the Book of Discipline.

The monitors will share their findings after plenary sessions and offer advice to leaders to encourage more diverse participation. Tell the monitors your stories of exemplary programs and support groups in your conference.

## News You Need to Know

from the NEJ Program & Arrangements Committee

### Parking Included

Good news if you drove to the Hilton Hotel - the cost of parking is included in your room and registration! Get a green parking garage pass from the NEJ Registration Desk on the second floor of the Hilton. The card provides unlimited in-and-out privileges. But lose the card and you'll have to pay for a replacement. With questions, see the crew at NEJ Registration.

### Friday Check-Out is 11 am for All

For Friday, July 18, the Hilton Hotel will grant no late check-out privileges. Anyone affiliated with the NEJ Conference must check out no later than 11 a.m. unless registered for a stay through Saturday.

Luggage storage is available through the Bell Captain.

### Wanna Eat?

#### Bring Your Ticket!

If you ordered a meal plan for the NEJ Conference, remember to bring your meal ticket to each meal. The tickets were in your registration packet. Monday dinner through Friday breakfast is included in the plan.

## Help Retire Mission Central Debt

Continued from **MIRACLE MONTH**/page 1

in Pennsylvania and in Courtland, NY.

Now Mission Central needs your help to make another miracle happen: July is Miracle Month, a time of intense fund-raising to pay off the debt by August and provide for an endowment



to ensure Mission Central's ministry continues to grow! Retiring the debt will free \$100,000 a year for ministry through Mission Central!

As the relationship between Mission Central and the NEJ continues to emerge and grow, only God can imagine what ministry miracles may be accomplished.

Read more about Mission Central on the hand-out in your registration packet and at [www.missioncentral.org](http://www.missioncentral.org).

### Thank you for your generous support of Mission Central's Miracle Month!

Checks may be written to "NEJ" and placed in the offering during the memorial worship service at 8:30 a.m., Wednesday, July 16. To mail your offering, send it to NEJ Treasurer Dight Crain, 10 Clover Lane, Natick, MA 01760. On-line donations may be made through the Mission Central website.

*Extreme Church, Extreme Expectations* reflects an approach to Christian life for this time in history. In Ephesians 3:16-20, God has high standards and expectations for each disciple to live a Christ-like life.

For the church to reach people now, you must practice extreme commitment, extreme hospitality and extreme discipleship!

The Northeastern Jurisdiction of The United Methodist Church covers the 10 episcopal areas (13 annual conferences), from Maine south to West Virginia. The Northeastern is one of five U.S. jurisdictions along with seven Central conferences that serve United Methodists around the globe.

## Daily Christian Advocate

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The United Methodist Church  
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[www.nejumc.org](http://www.nejumc.org)

The 2008 *Daily Christian Advocate* carries the stories and records of the NEJ Conference held July 13-18 at the Harrisburg (PA) Hilton.

**Editor** Mark Rehn (Western PA Conference Communications Director)

**Assistant** Jackie Campbell (Western PA Conference Editor/Writer)

# Reports

## Multi-Ethnic Center for Ministry

### *Center for Excellence in the 21st Century*

Romans 12:5, "... in the same way we who are many are one body in Christ and individually members of one another."

1 Corinthians 10:17, "Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for all of us share that one bread."

1 Corinthians 12:12, "For as the body is one and has many parts, and all the parts of that body, though many, are one body—so also is Christ."

Galatians 3:28, "There is no Jew or Greek, slave or free, male or female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

### **Preface**

If we are to live out the mandates that Jesus Christ expects of us, we must live in harmony, work in unity and aspire to achieve justice and peace. The primary mandate that He set before us was "to love one another as He loved us."

The church has always been the place where brothers and sisters sat at a common table to resolve differences and bring harmony through love. Our task as United Methodists does not differ in that objective. John Wesley promoted the ideals that we have sought to follow from the beginning of the Methodist church on these shores.

### **Vision, Mission and History**

In the past 30 years, we have been working through the Northeastern Jurisdiction Multi-Ethnic Center for Ministry to live out the founding ideals that have led us to become United Methodists. We have taken major steps toward achieving that Beloved Community. We have yet to arrive there. As a response to the Civil Rights Movement, the Northeastern Jurisdiction moved to tear down walls that divide us and build bridges to unite us. The impact of the Civil Rights Movement led to important efforts within our church for inclusive ministry. Inclusive ministry meant then and continues to mean serving the needs of the whole while addressing the needs of the marginalized and working to identify and eradicate the causes of discrimination and disparity that exists in our world and in the church.

The inception of the Multi-Ethnic Center was cause for celebration in our church. We in the Northeastern Jurisdiction were first among The United Methodist Church's ethnic centers to recognize the need for a major shift in paradigm that both addressed racism, sexism and all other "isms" and reached out to receive and honor the diverse gifts of the emerging multi-culture. In retrospect, the vision was revolutionary and forward thinking. The critical objective of the Multi-Ethnic Center for Ministry was to become more faithful and effective as the people of God of The United Methodist Church in building bridges between cultures and diverse ethnic group.

### **Current Status and Projected Future**

There have been rough places along the way. The current status of the Multi-Ethnic Center is transitional. Our past experience has produced results on the plain of cultural relationships related to our racial and ethnic differences. We have been instrumental in the stand against the formerly acceptable recognition of people of privilege at the cost of the least, left out and lost. Many have not seen or experienced the need to be inclusive. Some of our members have seen this program as unnecessary in light of the "progress" that has been made in race relations. The "progress" is a foretaste of things to come. We continue to strive toward the INCLUSIVE church that God intends us to be. We are now The United Methodist Church. As such, our goals are motivated toward reconciliation, renewal and restoration of the diverse people in the wider multi-cultural community.

The Multi-Ethnic Center is in a period of renewal in order to appropriately address the denominational and societal conditions that confront us daily. We recognize the decline in membership of our churches. We acknowledge the decline in attendance of youth and young adults. The decline in membership coupled with an aging population presents us with an opportunity to modify what has always been to become who we will be in God's sight.

The Multi-Ethnic Center expects to achieve

major advances in developing the means to justice, peace and harmony. We do not have the answers; indeed, we work to discern the new questions that come before us. We understand that community-building in the Northeastern Jurisdiction requires that we work with connective structures and all racial and ethnic partners to become builders and servants in the community God has called us to be.

We have begun to remember our past, recognize our present and journey toward our sanctified future. Our work has just begun. Thirty years within the 2,000 years since our Lord came to live among us is short time in the larger scheme. We are keenly aware that the path to peace is not an easy road. But, we have been striving to live in true community with others of faith, hope and charity.

There are five major goals projected by the Multi-Ethnic Center. The goals and objectives are the consequence of the renewed vision of the Multi-Ethnic Center for Ministry board of directors. The strategic plan for vital ministry through the Multi-Ethnic Center is as outlined below.

1. The Center will partner with seminaries in the Northeastern Jurisdiction, to increase the number of racial/ethnic leaders through enlistment of persons for ordained ministry as well as lay leadership.
  - a. Identify potential leaders through communication with conference leaders, clergy and laity in local churches.
  - b. Communicate the central message of the Multi-Ethnic Center for Ministry.
  - c. Develop stronger connection between seminaries, annual conferences and local churches.
2. To equip, nurture and support leaders and congregations for effective and successful cross-racial appointments.
  - a. Develop a flexible model for effective cross-racial appointments
  - b. Identify and train persons with potential for cross-racial appointment
  - c. Train leaders in local churches to prepare congregations for a cross-racial appointment
  - d. Prepare and ongoing training module to provide guidelines for effective and successful appointments
3. To provide an adequate assessment of communities where there are racial/ethnic persons who are presently underserved by our denomination in the Northeastern Jurisdiction. The Multi-Ethnic Center will tap existing databases (i.e.,

GBGM and GCFA research and analysis data.)

- a. Develop an ongoing method to access and obtain ever-changing data
  - b. Develop measurement tools to follow patterns and needs for adjustment
  - c. Identify existing areas that are underserved and assess potential for positive change
4. To provide a climate for bridge building amongst and between racial/ethnic caucuses and emerging racial/ethnic constituencies in the Northeastern Jurisdiction.
    - a. Identify and begin dialogue with the racial/ethnic caucus leaders.
    - b. Make connections for common good for racial/ethnic communities.
    - c. Organize opportunities to bring constituents to the common table for relationship development and understanding each culture.
    - d. Promote harmony in leadership through seminars and training opportunities.
  5. To strengthen the connection between our Northeastern Jurisdiction episcopal areas and the racial/ethnic caucuses and emerging racial/ethnic constituencies in the Northeastern Jurisdiction.
    - a. Communicate the M-EC vision with Episcopal leaders, one on one as much as possible.
    - b. Develop relationships with key leadership in annual conferences.
    - c. Coordinate activities with seminaries, leaders in annual conference.

### Summary

The objectives of the Multi-Ethnic Center for Ministry in the Northeastern Jurisdiction involve the entire constituency of the jurisdiction. The task before us is no greater than the road behind us. If the Multi-Ethnic Center is going to be effective in the future, the community of faith in The United Methodist Church must live out the mandate of Jesus Christ and the ideal of John Wesley who said, "The world is my parish." We are in the struggle for equality, justice and unequivocal recognition of the diverse cultures seeking to live in harmony and peace in The United Methodist Church and the larger society. Pray that God will be with us in our struggle to live faithfully and minister effectively

## 2008 Committee on Nominations

### Albany Area

Bishop: Susan Hassinger  
 Clergy: Henry Frueh (Troy Conference)  
 Layman: Eric Yetter (Wyoming Conference)  
 Laywoman: Joyce Miller (Wyoming Conference)

### Boston Area

Bishop: Peter D. Weaver  
 Clergy: Wee-Li Tan  
 Layman: Will Green  
 Laywoman: Bonnie Marden

### Harrisburg Area

Bishop: Jane Allen Middleton  
 Clergy: Mark Webb  
 Layman: Vance Hart  
 Laywoman: Shirley Sowers

### New Jersey Area

Bishop: Sudarshana Devadhar  
 Clergy: Haesun Kim  
 Layman: Jay Brown  
 Laywoman: Janet Blohm

### New York Area

Bishop: Jeremiah J. Park  
 Clergy: Noel Chim  
 Layman: Robert Hunsinger  
 Laywoman: Betsy Ingram

### New York West Area

Bishop: Violet L. Fisher  
 Clergy: Beth Quick  
 Layman: Kurt Karandy  
 Laywoman: Christine Doran

### Philadelphia Area

Bishop: Bishop Marcus Matthews  
 Clergy: Susan May (Eastern Pennsylvania)  
 Layman: Kevin Goodwin (Peninsula Delaware)  
 Laywoman: Candace Carter (Eastern Pennsylvania)

### Pittsburgh Area

Bishop: Thomas J. Bickerton  
 Clergy: Sharon Schwab  
 Layman: Matthew Johnson  
 Laywoman: Sharon Gregory

### Washington Area

Bishop: John R. Schol  
 Clergy: Joan Carter-Rimbach  
 Layman: Sherman Harris  
 Laywoman: Sandra Ferguson

### West Virginia Area

Bishop: Ernest S. Lyght  
 Clergy: Ellis Conley  
 Layman: James Berner  
 Laywoman: Judi Kenaston

## Interview Group Leadership by Gender, Ethnicity

### Interview Team 1

William Kieser layman Caucasian CPA  
 Cathy Stengel clergywoman Caucasian WNY

### Interview Team 2

Jay Brown layman African Am GNJ  
 Rebekah Sweet clergywoman Caucasian WY

### Interview Team 3

Samuel Purushotham layman Asian NE  
 Ellis Conley clergyman Caucasian WV

### Interview Team 4

Betsy Ingram laywoman Caucasian NY  
 Lysette Perez clergywoman Latino GNJ

### Interview Team 5

Phyllis Bowers clergywoman Caucasian CPA  
 Renee Perez clergyman Latino EPA

### Interview Team 6

Darryl Barrow clergyman African Am NCNY  
 Ilah Sisson Walser laywoman Caucasian Troy

### Interview Team 7

Sun Ho Lee clergyman Asian NCNY  
 Rebeca Parsons young adult Lay Caucasian EPA

### Interview Team 8

Melissa Lauber laywoman Caucasian BW  
 John Ciampa clergyman Caucasian WPA

### Interview Team 9

William Campbell clergyman Caucasian NE  
 Brenda Tildon laywoman African Am EPA

BW	Baltimore-Washington
CPA	Central Pennsylvania
EPA	Eastern Pennsylvania
NE	New England
NCNY	North Central New York
Troy	Troy
WNY	Western New York
WPA	Western Pennsylvania
WV	West Virginia
WY	Wyoming

# Read Replacement Resolution by Annual Conference Boundaries Committee

*Note: This replaces the resolution in the committee report in the Advance Daily Christian Advocate.  
This resolution was also mailed with the biographical information on each episcopal candidate.*

## New Conference Configurations

Whereas, there has been extensive work and discernment by United Methodists in the four annual conferences of the Albany and New York West areas, and between the Wyoming and Central Pennsylvania conferences, and between the Troy and New England conferences, with the understanding that dialogue and discernment will continue,

Whereas, all six conferences at their May or June 2008 annual conference session strongly affirmed resolutions requesting the 2008 Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference change their boundaries,

Whereas, the North Central, Troy, Western New York and Wyoming annual conferences

resolutions call for one conference to be formed from their churches in New York State,

Whereas, the Troy and New England resolutions affirm uniting the Troy Conference churches located in Vermont with the New England Conference,

Whereas, the Wyoming and Central Pennsylvania resolutions affirm the creation of a new conference to include the current Central Pennsylvania Conference and the current Wyoming Conference churches located in Pennsylvania:

Therefore, be it resolved that the 2008 Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference affirms this discernment by enacting the following boundary changes during 2010:

1. Creating a new annual conference composed of the

Pennsylvania churches of the present Wyoming Conference and all the churches of the present Central Pennsylvania Conference,

- 2.. Uniting the Troy churches currently located in Vermont with the New England Conference, and
3. Creating a new annual conference composed of churches of the North Central New York, Troy, Western New York, and Wyoming annual conferences located in New York State.

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*For supporting information on the proposed annual conference to be formed from the current Western New York, Troy, Wyoming and North Central New York annual conferences, see the background materials at the back of this issue.*

## Bishops Nominate NEJ Committee Leaders

The Northeastern Jurisdiction College of Bishops has nominated the following people to lead NEJ committees:

### Credentials

Clergy: Michael Minnix (CP), Cathy Stengel (WNA)

Lay: Darlene McCrae (BW); Donna Lee Nelson (GNJ)

### Journal

Clergy: Boyd Etter (PD); Timothy Riss (NY)

Lay: Ralph Odour (NE); Maidstone Mulenga (NCNY)

### Examination of Annual Conference

#### Minutes

Clergy: Cynthia Belt (BW); Rodney Shearer (EPA)

Lay: Peggy Ward (WP); Gregg Forrester (NCNY)

### Courtesies

Clergy: We Hyuan Change (NE);  
David Jasper (WV)

Lay: Emily DeSalvatore (TR); Blenda Smith (WY)

### Tellers

Kenneth Summers, Chief Teller  
Renee Perez, Assistant Teller  
Judith Hill

### Ushers, Assistants

George Barto, Suella Barto, Tim Brewster,  
Janet Crain, Larry Conrad, Sophia Harrell,  
Sherrie Johnson, Lynn Josselyn, H. Jin Kim,  
Rhonda and Louis Kouterick, Larry McCrae,  
Marjorie Summers Daniel Rothfuss,  
David Simpson

# Nominations Set for General Boards, Committee

Columns indicate Conference; Ethnicity (African-American' White American' Native American, etc.); Clergy or Laity & Gender, and Age (Older Adult, Young Adult, Adult) or Person with Disability (PD)

## Connectional Table

Raymond Hamill	WY	WA	LM	A
Sandy Ferguson	BW	AF	LW	A
Elizabeth Braddon	NY	WA	CW	A
Darryl Barrow	NCNY	CAR	CM	A

## General Board of Church and Society

Frederick Brewington	NY	AF	LM	A
Sinnathamby Thevanesan	WNY	AS	CM	A
Zachary Allen	WV	WA	LM	YA
Donna Burkhart	WPA	WA	LW	A
Kurt Karandy	NCNY	WA	LM	YA
Boe Harris	PD	NA	LW	A
Sung Hoon Ahn	GNJ	AS	CM	A

## General Board of Discipleship

Mark Webb	CPA	WA	CM	A
Aslam Barkat	WV	AS	CM	A
June D. McCullough	GNJ	WA	LW	OA
Wee-Li Tan	NE	AS	CM	A
Eric Park	WPA	WA	CM	A
Larry Baird	WNY	WA	CM	A
Dorothy Watson Tatem	EPA	AF	CW	OA

## General Board of Global Ministries

A. Fernandez	NE	HA	CW	A
Ellis Conley	WV	WA	CM	A
Dan Moseler	CPA	WA	LM	A
Joan Carter-Rimbach	BW	AF	CW	A
Jay Brown	GNJ	AF	LM	OA
Tim Riss	NY	WA	CM	A
William B. Meekins Jr.	WPA	AF	CM	A

## General Board of Higher Education and Ministry

Ramon Evangelista	GNJ	HA/L	CM	A
Stephanie Deckard	NCNY	WA	LW	YA
Alfred Maloney	EPA	AF	CM	A
Sandra Steiner Ball	PD	WA	CW	A
Sharon Schwab	WPA	WA	CW	A
Lewis Parks	CPA	WA	CM	A
Will Green	NE	WA	LM	YA

## General Board of Pension and Health Benefits

Zedna Haverstock	CPA	WA	LF	OA
Kevin Goodwin	PD	WA	LM	A

## United Methodist Publishing House

Ruth Daugherty	EP	WA	LW	OA
				2012 Class
Garey Hope	GNJ	WA	CM	OA
				2012 Class
Edward Kelley	BW	WA	LM	
				2012 Class
Deborah Pritts	WY	WA	CW	
				2012 Class
Maidstone Mulenga	WNY	African	LM	A
				2020 Class
Robert Higginbotham	WPA	WA	CM	A
				2020 Class

## General Commission on Communication

Mike McCurry	BW	WA	LM	A
Rebecca Kohler	NCNY	AS	LW	A
Gregory Cox	WPA	WA	CM	A

## General Commission on Christian Unity & Interreligious Concerns

Olu Harding	WY	AF	CM	OA
Tracy Merrick	WPA	WA	LM	A
Michele Bartlow	WPA	WA	CW	A
Sharon McCraw	BW	AF	LW	A

## General Commission on Religion & Race

Taka Ishii	NY	AS	CM	A
Shirley Readdean	Troy	AF	LW	OA
William Wallace	PD	AF	CM	A
Christopher Kurien	EPA	AS	CM	A
David Jasper	WV	AF	CM	A
Anthony Hunt	BW	AF	CM	A
Pam Ford	CPA	WA	CW	A

## General Commission on the Status and Role of Women

Fay Flanary	NE	WA	LW	PD
Diane Kenaston	WV	WA	LW	YA
Maria Maine	NY	HA	LW	A
Mary Baldrige	BW	WA	LW	OA

## Division on Ministries with Young People

Bethany Amey	GNJ	AS	LW	YA
Robert Zilhaver	WPA	WA	CM	A

(worker with young people)

## National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA General Board

Dorie Heckman	WPA	WA	LW	OA
Paul Taylor	WPA	AF	CM	A
Jeff Sterling	WPA	WA	CM	A
Faith Geer	WPA	WA	LW	A
David Morse	WPA	WA	CM	OA

George Porter	WPA	WA	CM	A	Holly Nye	Troy	WA	CW
Jim Davis	CPA	WA	CM		Galen Goodwin	GNJ	WA	CM
Kathy Kind	CPA	WA	CW		Lysette Perez	GNJ	WA	CW
Gary Sowers	CPA	WA	LM		Joyce Perry	GNJ	AF	CW
Samuel Sheffler	CPA	WA	CM		Cynthia Ann Kent	GNJ	NA	LW
Donald Rudalevige	NE	WA	CM		Connie Ace	GNJ	WA	LW
Travis Bonnette-Kim	NE	WA	CM	A	Robert Hill	WNY	WA	CM
Scott Campbell	NE	WA	CM	A	James Pollard	WNY	WA	CM
Donna Costa	NE	WA	LW	A	William Wilson	GNJ	WA	CM
Laurel Scott	NE	AF	CW		Bruce Webster	NCNY	WA	CM
Noel Chin	NY	AF	CM	A	Heather Williams	NCNY	WA	CW
Evy McDonald	NY	WA	CW	PD	Cassandra Salter Smith	NCNY	AF	CW
Kevin Nelson	NY	WA	LM	YA	Tom Wolfe	NCNY	WA	CM
Tanya Linn Bennett	GNJ	WA	CW		Ron Bretsch	NCNY	WA	LM
Robin Hynicka	EPA	WA	CM		Howard Mason	PD	WA	LM PD
Susan J. May	EPA	WA	CW		Elizabeth Marrero	PD	HA	LW
Boyd Etter	PD	WA	CM					
Gloria Maloney	EPA	AF	LW					
Cynthia Belt	BW	AF	LW					
Ianther Mills	BW	AF	CM					
Melissa Lauber	BW	WA	LW					
Conrad Link	BW	WA	CM					
Ralph Williams	BW	WA	LM					
Chan Gilham	NY	AS	LW					
Jaewon Kim	NY	AS	LW					
Kevin Nelson	NY	WA	LM	YA				
Randy Flanagan	WV	WA	CM					
Jeffrey Matheny	WV	WA	LM					
Ken Ramsey	WV	WA	CM					
Janet Harman	WV	WA	CW					
Mark Smith	WV	WA	CM					
Chai Oudonkhathi	WY	AS	CM					
Blenda Smith	WY	WA	LW					
Gregory Smith	Troy	WA	CM					

**Members Selected for General Agency  
Additional Member Nominating  
Committees**

**GBCS**—Sung Hoon Ahn, GNJ; Donna Burkhart, WPA; Kurt Karandy, NCNY.

**GBOD**—Dorothy Watson Tatem, EPA; June D. McCullough, GNJ; Larry Baird, WNY.

**GBGM**—Aida Fernandez, NE; Jay Brown GNJ

**GBHEM**—Ramon Evangelista, GNJ; Stephanie Deckard, NCNY

**COCUIC**-Michele BArtlow, EPA; Sharon McCrae, BW; Tracy Merrick, WPA

**CORR**-Christopher Kurien, EPA; Shirley Readdean, Troy

**COSROW**-Brolin Parker, WY; Maria Maine, NY

**GCCOM**-Mike McCurry, BW

## Remember -

A delegate in session may not have a laptop/desktop.

Cell phones must be completely off during any sessions.

Bring all issues of the *DCA* with you to each NEJ session.

The *DCA* is now online at [www.nejumc.org](http://www.nejumc.org).





# Report to The Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference

From  
New Area Conference Team  
of the  
*North Central New York,  
Troy, Western New York, and Wyoming  
Annual Conferences*



*June 1, 2008*

## **Brief Overview and Context for the Boundaries Committee Resolution to create a new conference**

Early on as they began their leadership of the Albany Area and New York West Area, Bishop Morrison and Bishop Fisher began praying and discussing the vision of United Methodism in this part of God's world. They invited others to be open to a "new thing" that God might be preparing. Upon Bishop Morrison's retirement, Bishop Hassinger eagerly joined the conversation and leadership. For years, various persons and groups across the conferences had envisioned different ways of shaping ministry and conferences. During the past two quadrennia the Bishops and annual conferences have formed committees for discernment and discussion. We spent time building relationships, singing and praying. Time was given to worship and scripture. Over time walls began to crumble and God's nudging moved people deeper in the Spirit and into Holy fellowship.

Folks acknowledged that the current boundaries do little to facilitate our common witness. Each conference struggles with finance and declining membership. As we looked across the state and other UM conferences, we sensed that God was calling us to something new. We know there is pressure to reduce the number of episcopal areas.

Formal teams have been created and have met. Publicity, listening sessions, discussion, and revisions have created interest, support and enthusiasm across the local churches and several districts of the four conferences. The folks in Pennsylvania and Vermont have considered God's call in this time of transition. Specific motions at the Troy, Wyoming, Central Pennsylvania, and New England Conferences in 2008 will address these churches and districts. The work has just begun.

God is not done with us yet. The vision and specifics the new ministry plan are not finalized. Other UMs who have taken the journey of merged and united conferences have told us: "it takes time", "live into it"; "don't act like you have it all figured out". We are convinced that we are called by God to move ahead to create a new conference and new ministries so that we may provide stronger witness for Jesus Christ in this part of God's world.

Each of the four annual conferences meeting on October 6, 2007 gave strong support for the resolution to unite. The Boundaries Committee of the NEJ gave strong support, as did the Vision Table of the NEJ at their February 2008 meetings. Now we prayerfully request that the NEJ meeting in Harrisburg, PA, July 2008, support the resolution to create this new conference in 2010. Our prayers join yours as together we live into God's Holy Future.

The following detailed report will provide complete information on the holy journey that has captured the spirit of the North Central New York, Troy, Western New York, and Wyoming Conferences for the past several years.

With minor revisions for additional clarity the following, through page 22, is the report presented to

**The Northeastern Jurisdictional Boundaries Committee**  
**From**  
**The Joint Boundaries Task Force**  
**Of the**  
*North Central New York, Troy, Western New York, and Wyoming*  
*Annual Conferences*

*This document reports the decisions and actions of the clergy and lay members of the North Central New York, Troy, Western New York, and Wyoming Annual Conferences resulting from their simultaneous Special Sessions on October 6, 2007.*

**I. The Vision**

We dream and pray for a vibrant New Conference of the United Methodist Church “existing to embody the word and to give itself away in love and service to the world.”<sup>1</sup> By New Conference we mean a conference in upstate New York, emerging from the present North Central New York Annual Conference, the New York portion of the Troy Annual Conference, Western New York Annual Conference, and the New York portion of the Wyoming Annual Conference.<sup>2</sup> This new conference would make possible:

- A new community of congregations, lay leaders and pastors working together to meet the changing needs of our society.
- A sharing of wisdom, personnel, finance and facilities
- A conference size able to influence the state capital
- Concentrating episcopal leadership through one episcopal area served by one bishop
- A chance to start fresh and move in new directions
- A sharing of the varied ministries of each annual conference across conference lines<sup>3</sup>

Through the creation of this new conference the NEJ gives to the whole church a model of congregational re-creation in which the conference seeks to become a kingdom community where congregations seek to live together in the way of Jesus, evidenced by:

- Order becoming opportunity
- Stability melting into movement and change
- Status quo giving way to a revolution of community and neighborliness
- Policy bowing to love
- Domination descending to service and sacrifice

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<sup>1</sup> From the October 6, 2007 recommendation document

<sup>2</sup> The new conference is built on the understanding that the Pennsylvania portion of the Wyoming Annual Conference will merge with the Central Pennsylvania Annual Conference and that the Troy Annual Conference and the New England Annual Conference will continue in conversation regarding the Vermont portion of Troy being added to the New England Annual Conference.

<sup>3</sup> From the October 6, 2007 recommendation document

- Control morphing into influence and inspiration<sup>4</sup>

We dream, pray and commit ourselves to fashion this new conference by 2010, a conference which would exist to serve God, neighbor, and the world.

## **II. Rationale**

### **Changed Topography**

Over the last generation our entire region has experienced changes which have altered the demographic, financial and missional topography of our world. We are in need of some rebuilding.

While the General Church has encouraged us to keep the urgent issues of financial shortfalls and membership decline on the table, North Central New York, Troy, Western New York and Wyoming have sought to talk with one another about ministry and vision – a conversation focusing on a new missional strategy for our region.

As we talked we named the strengths of each of our unique annual conferences. These include, but are certainly not limited to.....

#### **In North Central New York:**

- Passion for mission work and support for mission near and far;
- Enthusiasm for camping and retreat ministry for all ages;
- Commitment to provide resources for support of healthy churches;
- Strong leaders supporting 21<sup>st</sup> century ministry.

#### **In Troy Conference:**

- A commitment to global mission, both in mission giving and in widespread involvement with hands-on mission, including Volunteers In Mission;
- Commitment to racial reconciliation, including a growing awareness of the ways that racism and economic injustice affect our global mission;
- Emphasis on spiritual formation, guidance, and discernment;
- Innovation in funding/supporting local church ministry

#### **In Wyoming:**

- Innovative and creative worship leaders;
- A passion for mission both abroad and at home;
- A modern camping and retreat center which represents spiritual holy ground for many;
- Strong youth and vital, self-inspired young adult and college age fellowship/nurture groups;
- A passion for nurturing strong, spiritual leaders

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<sup>4</sup> Drawn from *Everything Must Change* by Brian McLaren.

### **In Western New York:**

- Conference wide understanding that the Annual Conference exists to equip local churches in making disciples for transforming the world;
- A strong local-church commitment to mission, including mission trips and local outreach;
- Strong Conference and District youth ministries;
- Commitment to combating racism by promoting understanding of cultural and racial diversity;
- Intentional focus on leadership and congregational development, and on discerning and utilizing spiritual gifts.

In addition to the above, there are a number of shared values among our conferences, including mission experiences and mission support; camping and retreat ministries; ministries with (and by) youth; justice ministries; and the nurture of healthy churches.

❖ *See Appendix A for a comparison chart of the four Conferences*

### **III. History**

Following the 2004 General Conference, Bishop Violet Fisher and Bishop Susan Morrison urged each of their Annual Conferences (*North Central New York, Troy, Western New York, and Wyoming*) to establish Boundaries Task Forces to shape their future. In light of anticipated changes to the deployment of bishops, they were asked to consider new ways of organizing themselves for effective mission and ministry.

Using a formula in *The Book of Discipline* (§405.2), General Conference determines the number of bishops in each jurisdiction based primarily upon church membership. At the time of the 2004 General Conference, local church membership in the Northeast Jurisdiction had reached the point where a reduction in the number of bishops was indicated. Additionally, at the 2004 General Conference the General Commission on Finance & Administration (GCFA) proposed a cost-saving motion requiring every jurisdiction to reduce its number of bishops by one. Action on the motion was deferred pending receipt of a study on the episcopacy, to be delivered at the next General Conference, meeting in April and May 2008 in Fort Worth, Texas. This formula also states that a jurisdiction's number of bishops "shall be determined on the basis of missional needs."

The Jurisdictional Conference, by recommendation from the Jurisdictional Committee on Annual Conference Boundaries, "determines the boundaries of their annual conferences" and may change "the number, names and boundaries of the annual conferences and episcopal areas." (This is from §§ 27.4 & 40 of *The Book of Discipline*). The Northeast Jurisdiction Boundaries Committee has expressed the hope that the conferences of the jurisdiction would develop a plan suited to their needs and vision.

Since these four conferences are among the smallest in the jurisdiction, and given that the Albany Area (including Troy and Wyoming Conferences) was the last Episcopal area formed, in 1990, these four Annual Conferences have had reason to feel that changes would likely affect their areas. Meanwhile, the conferences of the New York West Area (North Central New York

and Western New York), had had previous conversations about enhancing their ministries together in some way.

So it was that in 2005 intentional conversations among the four conferences in these two episcopal areas began. A wide variety of listening sessions, meetings, and brainstorming sessions happened within each of the four conferences, within each episcopal area, and among all four conferences. It was soon discovered that there had already been a high level of interaction and mutual ministry among the conferences. The youth 4WORD events in 2005, 2006 and 2007 had brought the youth together on multiple occasions. The camping directors and conference communicators had for years maintained strong networks to share information and offer support and assistance to each other.

These valuable conversations led the conferences to broaden their vision and look in new directions for future ministry. As the Troy and Wyoming Conferences had churches in two states, they felt that additional conversation with other contiguous conferences was essential. Meetings were held with representatives from the New England, Central Pennsylvania and Eastern Pennsylvania conferences. As a result of those meetings, additional conversations took place within each of the four annual conferences, in listening/discernment sessions throughout the past year, and at the 2007 Annual Conference sessions. Each of these meetings was valuable both in sharing information and insights and, more importantly, in building relationships and fostering new visions of what the ministries might look like in New York, Pennsylvania and Vermont.

All of this conversation, prayer, visioning and dreaming brought the four conferences to schedule Adjourned Sessions of each Annual Conference on October 6, 2007. Significant portions of the conference sessions were shared through a live audio/video link.

#### **IV. The Resolution and potential timeline into the future**

##### **❖ See Appendix B for the complete resolution**

The two-page resolution document begins by setting the recommendation within the context of Scripture. The Gospel calls us to listen for and to follow God's voice as we seek to be faithful to our calling to most effectively take the love of Christ into the world.

It names a guiding principle for this call:

*"The Church of Jesus Christ exists to embody the Word and give itself away in love and service to the world."*

It names a number of desirable outcomes for our conferences, our local churches and, especially, for the world around us.

And it concludes with the resolution on which the conferences acted at their October 6, 2007 special sessions:

*Therefore, be it resolved: The people of the North Central New York, Troy, Western New York and Wyoming Annual Conferences, in order to revitalize the mission of The United Methodist Church in the region to make disciples of Jesus Christ, agree to request the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference to create a new Episcopal Area and a new Annual Conference from all or portions of these and/or other contiguous conferences, with the Pennsylvania churches of the Wyoming Annual Conference considering alignment with the Central Pennsylvania Annual Conference and the Vermont churches of the Troy Annual Conference considering alignment with the New England Annual Conference, to be implemented in 2010.*

It may be helpful to look at this Resolution as asking three separate, but connected, requests:

1. It asks the Jurisdiction “*to create a new Episcopal Area and a new Annual Conference from all or portions of these and/or other contiguous conferences*”.
2. It asks that “*the Pennsylvania churches of the Wyoming Annual Conference [consider] alignment with the Central Pennsylvania Annual Conference and the Vermont churches of the Troy Annual Conference [consider] alignment with the New England Annual Conference*”.
3. It asks that the resulting new creation, or creations, “*be implemented in 2010*”.

## **V. The timeline**

❖ *See Appendix C for a visual time line*

- The resolution is being forwarded to the NEJ Boundaries Committee, meeting February 12-13, 2008, so that it may review, refine and make recommendations to the 2008 NEJ Conference.
- The four annual conferences will continue to work together to discuss, amplify and refine further details of a possible new annual conference.
- The Wyoming Conference will work with the Central PA Conference, and the Troy Conference will work with the New England Conference, to complete consideration of mutual boundaries changes. It is expected that those conferences would be prepared to act upon specific recommendations at their respective sessions of Annual Conference in the spring of 2008. These recommendations will be forwarded for action by the 2008 NEJ Conference.
- The General Conference will meet on April 23 – May 2, 2008. Actions taken there may have a direct influence on all recommendations.

- The Northeast Jurisdictional Conference will meet on July 13-18, 2008, and will act on boundaries recommendations brought before it from this and other parts of the jurisdiction.
- If the recommendation is approved as written, there will be 2 years to prepare for the creation of a new conference and adjustments to neighboring conferences.

## **VII. Matters to be resolved**

**Structure:** The Annual Conferences each have similar, yet different structures. Discussions between various committees, agencies, and ministries have begun. The following are some observations from these early conversations.

### ***Council on Finance and Administration***

- From a macro perspective, the four conferences are more similar than different.
- Coming up with a uniform apportionment formula will be a challenge, but not insurmountable.
- There is a need to develop a plan to retain and compensate non-clergy staff in each conference through this transition.
- The administrative overhead in a merged conference will be the same or slightly less than exists currently. There will not be large financial savings in merging.
- The combined CFA groups look forward to helping create the funding that will enable the vision. They are looking forward to being an integral part of funding the mission that the various groups want to put in place.
- All four conferences are operating within current budgets.
- Development of a common Shared Ministries (apportionment) formula will be a challenge as each conference has a different approach.
- Based on the experiences of other conference mergers, the administrative costs for a new combined conference would be about the same as the sum of each of the current conferences. No significant savings should be expected.
- A single operating budget can be developed once the overall administrative structure has been outlined. A new conference budget will impact local church apportionments in ways that yet unknown.
- Many challenges lay ahead, yet the CF&A chairpersons and Treasurers of the 4 conferences agree that a new financial structure is achievable.
- The finance leaders of the conferences are working together to develop a financial comparison of the conferences which will include compensation plans, minimum salary levels, health care, billing of benefits, endowments, and pensions

**UMW:** These are the main priorities:

- keep Jesus in our window
- always be mindful of others' feelings, opinions
- excited by what lies ahead
- this will be a challenge to accomplish
- concerned that communication be done very well in all conferences



- concern about changes to the district UMWs
- Would like to include this discernment process throughout the conference UMWs, and would like to have a written script for this so it's a consistent message each time. UMW has unique, well-developed avenues for this kind of discernment to happen in many district and conference settings.
- There is a national UMW listserv. May we post questions on this national listserv about this merger process?
- UMW conference teams will continue to get/plan together as this process moves forward.

### *Pensions*

- The respective Boards of Pension and joint conversations need to be proactive.
- 3 Annual Conferences are in Health Flex, Western New York is not.
- It seems as if all Conferences have cared for the pre-82 unfunded liability.
- Differences in pre-82 annuities differ and future payments will need to be equitably balanced.
- There are differences in the billing processes for pensions between the conferences which will need to be reviewed and modified for consistency in the new conference.

### *Archives*

- The four conferences have similar situations in size, etc for archives.
- Concern about:
  - Where will archives go in a new conference? Will there be a new, central location for new archives/records?
  - How do we achieve the Disciplinary mandate to maintain archives?
  - How will we divide up records if two of conferences split along state lines?
  - Where do records go in the new conference?
  - As more churches close, where do those records go?
  - How do we network district archive offices?
- A large central location, that is environmentally sound and physically accessible with a paid archivist, would be needed to absorb the physical materials. All four conferences currently have volunteer archivists.

### *Trustees: Concerns*

- Assessment of the several camp locations.
- How to incorporate and include the current corporations that exist within New York State
- Consolidation of other conference properties, e.g. conference centers, conference owned parsonages
- There are differences in the billing processes for insurances between the conferences.

***Board of Ordained Ministry:*** concerns

- There are different understandings of the roles and responsibilities of Board of Ordained Ministry in each conference.
- There are different probationary processes: including steps, mentoring
- There are differing processes for training for the local pastors license

***UMM*** less organized than ***UMW***, and would seem to easily be consolidated

***Camping:***

- A review of the different camping facilities and programmatic approaches is needed to maximize ministry.
- The camping program is stronger in some conferences than others.
- An informal network currently exists between camping executives

***Lay Leader/Conference Governing Bodies:*** The critical issues are very similar in all four conferences, with small differences. The conference structures are also largely similar, and the differences can be worked out.

***Nominations:***

- When the new structure is developed it will be challenging for a nominations team to be familiar with the gifts and graces of the people in the combined conference.
- Conversations should be held with other conferences of a similar size to ascertain how they handle the nomination process.
- Consideration should be given to forming sub-teams with responsibilities to prepare nominations for smaller and more focused ministries areas.
- Initially it may be beneficial for the current/common ministry areas to develop a pool of suggested nominations for consideration by the conference nominations process.

***Communications:*** The present Directors of Communication know each other, work together, and can tap into each other's strengths.

- A future role will be to interpret what's going on in these discussions so that lay and clergy can feel a part of this process.
- The Communicators have been working with the Boundaries Team on a coordinated communications plan.
- They would like to develop a publication for all four conferences, to be distributed at the same time. Plans are currently being developed to produce four joint issues of the conference newspapers for distributions in 2008.
- Would like to develop a transition logo that incorporates the theme of "creation."
- They have developed a website that is linked to all four conference websites; to provide information and a place for dialogue about the boundaries process.

***Equitable Compensation:***

- The Annual Conferences compute pastoral compensation, and hence minimum compensation, in different ways.
- In at least one Annual Conference “total compensation” includes cash salary, pensions, death benefits, cafeteria plan, and health insurance. In this conference (Western New York) if a pastor’s total compensation remains the same and there are increases in other areas of the compensation, the result is a reduction in the pastor’s cash salary. This differs from conferences where insurance is paid for by the conference (through apportionments) or by the local church (as an addition to pastoral compensation).
- There is disparity in minimum compensation, and pastoral compensation overall, even with adjustments which take into consideration differing computation methods. The creation of new formulas will impact congregations in the new conference in different ways.

***Other***

- A new conference structure will involve changes in both the professional and volunteer staffing of the conference.
  - These changes will need to occur in a manner which acknowledges the service of the professional staff and the volunteer leadership of the various ministry teams, boards, and agencies of the four conferences.
  - Consideration will need to be given to severance packages in the event paid staff positions are changed or eliminated
- The leadership of the new conference will need to be based on individual’s spiritual gifts and call to ministry while seeking to be representative of people from across the broad spectrum of the new conference. This would include attention to diversity and geographic distribution.

**VIII. New Conference/Area Team**

**Background**

The present Northeastern Jurisdiction boundary issues are many, varied and complex, involving three concurrent threads of shared discussions:

1. Central Pennsylvania/Wyoming
2. New England/ Troy
3. North Central New York/Troy/Western New York/ Wyoming

Each annual conference’s internal conversation and each set of cross-conference conversations are at a different point. They will continue to be so until the Northeast Jurisdictional Conference makes its decisions in July of 2008. Thus, the most helpful course will be to develop processes that allow the six conferences to be involved, singly or jointly, at the particular level they want or need at any particular moment.

Prior to 2008, each of the four Annual Conferences had their own Boundaries Task Force. Following the decisions made on October 6<sup>th</sup> at the respective special sessions, a new transition team was formed consisting of four representatives from each of the four conferences and the two resident Bishops resulting in a team of eighteen persons. These persons will have a sense of

the emerging vision and a passion for the new conference as God leads us to create something new. They should also possess a solid understanding of all areas of conference life and be as inclusive as possible in regards to people of color, youth and young adults. A common resolution regarding the formation of a New Area/Conference Team setting forth its responsibilities and authorizing its work was adopted by each of the Annual Conferences at their respective 2008 Annual Conference Sessions. (See page 22)

The newly formed Conference/Area Team will:

- Prayerfully seek to discern God’s leading as a vision of mission and ministry emerges out of their work. They will seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
- Strive to become a covenant community through building relationships within the team. They will see their team as a long-term commitment involving patience, prayer, laughing, listening. They can expect some “wilderness wandering time” as God births something new.
- Understand that vision must be the driving force in the new creation rather than finances or structure. When the vision becomes clear, a structure will then emerge to support and enable the vision.
- Seek to learn through consultation with those of other conferences which have been through the “re-formation” process.
- Enable opportunities to nurture and build relationship with similar entities between conferences.
- Reach beyond itself in the formation of task groups to perform particular tasks necessary for the development of the shared emerging vision. Care will be taken to be inclusive of people of color, youth, and young adults.
- Do its best to eliminate the word “merger” from its work in order to proclaim the new thing God is birth in our midst.

### The Role

The work of members of this New Conference/Area Team (New C.A.T.) will focus primarily on developing and overseeing the process of creating the proposed new conference/area in upstate New York. The Troy and Wyoming Annual Conferences will develop other teams focusing on plans relative to the Troy churches in Vermont becoming a portion of New England and the Wyoming churches in Pennsylvania creating a new conference with Central Pennsylvania.

The New Conference/Area Team is charged with two main responsibilities:

1) **To articulate a strategic vision and planning process** enabling United Methodists in upstate New York to develop new conference institutions, programs, policies and practices. It is understood the New Conference/Area Team will be the primary voice of this strategic vision and planning process, though the actual outlines of this vision and process will be the product of consultation with many persons and groups.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> All communication will be coordinated through the New Conference/Area Team. See empowering resolution on page 23.

2) **To oversee the work of developing the actual “blueprint”** for the creation of the new conference’s institutions, programs, policies and practices. It is understood the New Conference/Area Team will act as the primary coordinating body of new conference development.<sup>6</sup>

### The Work

The initial task for the New Conference/Area Team will be to focus on shepherding the New Conference Recommendation to the Northeast Jurisdiction Conference meeting in July of 2008. This will involve presenting a proposal to the NEJ Annual Conference Boundaries Committee in February 2008 and ensuring this proposal is acted on at the Jurisdiction Conference in July.

One of the first challenges the New Conference/Area Team must tackle is making decisions how to coordinate the work of developing the new conference in tandem with the other bilateral discussions going on between Troy and New England and Wyoming and Central Pennsylvania. Specifically the New Conference/Area Team will need to determine (1) how to represent churches in Pennsylvania and Vermont and (2) the kind of involvement they will have. The cross-conference teams in Pennsylvania and New England/Vermont will face similar questions as their efforts move forward.

Once the Northeast Jurisdictional Conference has made its determination regarding conference boundary lines, the New Conference/Area Team will oversee the development of an overall vision and plan. It is anticipated that the Team will develop a design of proposed institutions, programs, policies and practices for the new conference capable of adaptation as circumstances, experience and the prompting of the Holy Spirit at work in the new conference demand. The proposed design will be presented to the first convening session of the new conference for consideration and adoption.

The role and work of the New Conference/Area Team will focus on the strategic vision, beginning now and continuing through 2010 or until another structure(s) is developed. The team will concentrate on framing the big picture and visioning new missions & ministries. The outcome question is most important: What are we trying to make different in three, four, five years? This work needs to be done by strategic planners who communicate well, trust each other, and work with transparency.

### Guiding Principles

As the New Conference/Area Team goes forward into the next phase of the creation of a new conference, its members are committed to:

1. Transparency: “No secrets, no surprises, no subversions”

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<sup>6</sup> Final authority to make or change decisions lies with the New Conference/Area Team.

2. Relationships are primary – community is everything: They are committed to communicating with the annual conferences often and openly. They will be attentive to conference staff whose employment may be affected by the changes, providing as much notice as possible about impending changes, and making sure they stay available and helpful to them in the transitions. They will use every opportunity to foster and nurture new relationships, reaching out and reaching beyond their comfort zones. They are committed to creating a culture of invitation and hospitality.
3. Our neighbor is the reason for this ministry: They are committed, as the Body of Christ, to embody the Word, to live the Word in love, and to serve to the world. In this process of new conference creation, they commit themselves to seeking ever more effective and meaningful ways to offer Christ and serve their neighbors. They will be attentive to the voices and needs of their neighbors, and to the particular socio-economic, ethnic, and cultural settings of the areas.
4. Speak the truth in love: They are committed to open, honest, and respectful conversation making sure all voices are heard.
5. Stay in Love with God: They commit themselves, individually and corporately, to nurturing their connection to the Creator, through regular worship, prayer, study, and service.
6. Prayerful discernment: They are committed to praying, when in doubt and when in apparent certainty. They will remember that listening for God’s direction and yearnings will take more time, and they will lovingly remind each other to be patient.
7. Dare to risk: They are committed to entertaining something new before they resort to what they already know how to do. They recognize that, even as they envision a new day and new conference configurations, their tendency will be to return to what is familiar: familiar structures and styles. They are committed to engage outside their comfort zones. They will not be afraid of a process that is “messy”.

## **X. Transitional Budget**

The NEJ budget process for the 2009-2012 quadrennium completed its first phase in mid-October 2007, when the Vision Table Budget Task Force and the NEJ Finance & Administration Committee met and reviewed budget requests received and developed a budget to be presented to the NEJ Vision table in February of 2008. The following is summary of NEJ funding for recent mergers:

- In 1991 a onetime grant of \$25,000 was made to the *New York Area* for re-alignment expenses.
- In the 1993-1996 quadrennium the 1992 NEJ Conference budgeted \$150,000 for Area Re-Alignment in the new *Boston Area*. An Additional sum of \$40,000 was approved during the quadrennium. A total of \$190,000 was paid to the Boston area, with \$100,000 from the budget and the balance from Reserve Funds.

- During the 1997-2000 quadrennium there were no re-alignment payments.
- For the 2001-2004 quadrennium the new *Greater New Jersey Area* was granted a total of \$200,000 re-alignment funding by the 2000 NEJ Conference. \$100,000 was paid from Reserve Funds and \$100,000 from budget funds during the quadrennium.
- For the 2005-2008 quadrennium a figure of \$20,000 re-alignment contingency money was placed in the budget by the 2004 NEJ Conference. At the 2006 Vision Table meeting a proposal was approved to cover up to \$20,000 for the expenses of the Adjourned Sessions held in October 2007 (NCNY, Troy, WNY, and Wyoming) and an accompanying video production. Actual expenses, totaled \$17,800.
- With the exception of the current budget funding (2005-2008), all previous money was paid to the new Conference or new Area Office, spread out quarterly throughout the quadrennium. The funds were to help with the costs associated in the start up of the new Conference after the mergers had taken place. The funding was in the form of a grant, not as payment of expenses by NEJ. The Conference determined what expenses the payments were applied too.

It should be noted that rather than waiting until an established merger date arrives to begin the transition process, there is the anticipation that if this merger is approved by the NEJ Conference for implementation in 2010, that the transition process will begin immediately after approval and thus will require immediate funding. Making major financial investments before implementing boundary changes will allow for strong relationships among clergy and laity and care-filled attention to the development of missions and ministries. The new conference could then begin its service from a position of strength and certainty. Rather than strangers scrambling to build a conference from scratch, friends would be “fine-tuning” that which they had already designed together.

It is very difficult to anticipate what expenses would be involved in a transition to a larger conference. At a minimum, the previous grant of \$200,000 should be adjusted for inflation. Further, the previous grants supported transition within one Episcopal area, while in the current discussions there is the potential of transitions in three areas (the NCNY/Troy/WNY/Wyoming, the New England/Vermont portion of Troy, and the Central Pennsylvania/Pennsylvania). We believe that the NEJ budget for 2009-2012 should include support for each of these transitions. We estimate that the costs of creating this new conference alone will exceed \$500,000.

We are suggesting at least three funding sources for this transition.

1. Each Annual Conferences would incorporate some costs for transitions within their respective annual budgets. It should be noted that each of the conferences under discussion in this document have/are experiencing financial constraints and are seeking to hold or reduce the amount apportioned to local churches.
2. Significant funding for this transition is requested from the 2009-2012 Northeast Jurisdictional Conference budget.
3. We will ask that the Northeast Jurisdictional Finance Team and Vision Table support us in requesting the General Council on Finance and Administration to provide transitional

financial support using the long-term savings potentially resultant from the reduction in the number of episcopal areas.

Transition expenses include, but are not limited to the following:

- Transition teams meeting expenses (travel, accommodations, food)
- Legal consultations: deed and name changes, division of corporate assets (particularly for Troy and Wyoming), etc.
- Clerical support
- Consultant(s) - current rates are \$1,500/day
- Property consolidations
- Costs involved in staffing changes – including severance, particularly for lay employees
- Actuarial study – regarding retiree medical (Estimated at \$12,000 for WNY)
- Adjustments required to equitable compensation, minimum compensation, and insurance and pension costs.



## Addendum A

**Fact Sheet 2007**  
**Comparing North Central New York, Troy,**  
**Western New York and Wyoming conferences**

	North Central New York	Troy	Western New York	Wyoming
Base Minimum Salary 2007: Full Time Local Pastor	\$32,035	\$28,975	\$41,023 <sup>†</sup>	\$34,133
Full Time Probationary Member	\$34,200	\$30,160	\$43,255 <sup>†</sup>	\$35,875
Full-Time Associate Member	\$34,200	\$30,450	\$43,255 <sup>†</sup>	\$34,850
Full Time Full Connection Member	\$34,200	\$31,325	\$46,500 <sup>†</sup>	\$35,875
Incremental Benefits	\$300 for each year of service. Current maximum is \$4500. Maximum by 2011 will be \$6,000	\$100 per yr. F/T service, \$500 added for PM in 3 <sup>rd</sup> or greater yr. of F/T service, \$500 each additional church on a charge	5-9 years - \$1000 10-14 years - \$2,000 15-19 years - \$3000 20-24 years- \$4000 25+ - \$5,000	\$150/year of service for a maximum of 25 years. Also possible educational and multi-church benefits
Total Equitable Compensation 2006	\$96,550	\$145,000	\$40,000	\$77,023
Cost of insurance annual premium per person/family (clergy/staff)	Aver Clergy \$8,580 Aver Empl \$6,761	\$12,600 standard premium for all full-time churches	\$5,280 - \$9,840	Lay: \$8,112 to \$9,656 Clergy: after 60% sub. \$3240 to \$7860
Health Ins.	HealthFlex@ GBP&H mandatory	HealthFlex: BC/BS and MVP (HMO)	4 HMOs offered	HealthFlex: NY:BC/BS & HMO; PA: MVP
Vision & Dental	Vision, but no dental	Limited vision and full dental	HMO discounts, but no vision and dental benefit	Yes, but coverage is minimal
How are Health Ins. costs distributed to churches?	Churches w/ full-time pastor bill \$8400 annual rate plus additional bill for retiree cost	Churches w/ full-time pastor billed a single monthly rate	Churches are direct billed for their clergy's health ins.	60% of total cost is billed to churches, based on FSR
2007 Retiree Health Insurance Subsidy	\$225,000	\$140,000	\$200,000	\$277,235
Pension: How Apportioned?	Direct bill CRSP and CPP	Modified direct bill CRSP, CPP	Direct bill CRSP and CPP	Ea. church is billed for 16.4% of their pastor's compensation
Pension: Pre-1982 liability	No liability	No liability	No liability- over funded	No liability
Worker's Comp:	Direct billed on NYS rates. Coverage through Church Mutual.	Included in each church's ins. policy. A conference sponsored program is available.	Direct billing to each church from conference office.	Apportioned to local churches based on salary
Disability Ins.	Direct bill. Coverage through Zurich Ins.	Included in each church's ins. policy. A conference sponsored program is available.	Direct billing to each church from conference office.	Apportioned to local churches passed on salary.
Number of Elders	148	112	236 <sup>#</sup>	195
Number of Deacons	3	2	6 <sup>#</sup>	2
Number of Associate Members	8	6	24 <sup>#</sup>	15
Number of Local Pastors	96	54	71 <sup>#</sup>	61
Number Student Local Pastors	1	3	0 <sup>#</sup>	0
Number of Probationary Elders	14	11	18 <sup>#</sup>	16
Number of Probationary Deacons	1	1	2 <sup>#</sup>	0
Number of Retired Elders	164	113	117 <sup>#</sup>	85
Number of Retired Associate Members	21	8	20 <sup>#</sup>	10
Number of Professing Members at close of Year (2005)	77,225	51,573	57,096	62,913
Number Avg Attendance in Principal Weekly Worship (2005)	23,038	14,942	21,573	16,409
Number Churches @ end of 2006	392	300	258	296
Number Charges @ end of 2006	270	264	233	206
Number Districts	5	4	4	4

Square Miles	18,108	Total: 18,121 plus (NY- 8,872; VT – 9,249)	10,511 <sup>7</sup>	10,066
	<b>North Central New York</b>	<b>Troy</b>	<b>Western New York</b>	<b>Wyoming</b>
Counties	Cayuga, Chemung, Cortland, Franklin, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, Ontario, Oswego, St. Lawrence, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Tioga, Tompkins, Wayne, Yates	x NY: Clinton, Essex, Warren, Hamilton, Saratoga, Washington, Rensselaer, Schenectady, Albany and parts of Fulton, Montgomery, Schoharie and Columbia Co.; the State of Vermont except Canaan in Essex Co. and Stamford in Bennington Co.,	State of New York: Allegheny, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Niagara, Orleans, and Wyoming, parts of Ontario, Steuben	In NY: Broome & Tioga and portions of Chenango, Otsego, Cortland, and Delaware. In PA: Lackawanna, Susquehanna, Wayne, Wyoming and portions of Luzerne, Pike and Bradford
Full-time staff	12 <sup>1</sup>	7 <sup>3</sup>	8 <sup>5</sup>	8 <sup>8</sup>
Part-time staff	3 <sup>2</sup>	4 <sup>4</sup>	2 <sup>6</sup>	0 <sup>4</sup>
2007 Budget (Total)	\$3,811,284	\$2,997,049	\$3,613,627	\$2,374,374

\* WNY Salary figures are based on Total Compensation: cash salary, pensions, health insurance, and death benefit. Other Conference Salary figures are calculated differently as some do not include benefits.

# WNY clergy numbers reported in 2007 *Journal*

<sup>1</sup> does not include staff paid through camping income

<sup>2</sup> does not include 5 district administrative assistants

<sup>3</sup> Does not include 4 District Superintendents or Conference Statistician and Conference Secretary

<sup>4</sup> Does not include 4 part-time district administrative assistants

<sup>5</sup> Does not include 4 District Superintendents and 4 full time district administrative assistants

<sup>6</sup> Paid for by Conference budget, 3 cover by camp operating budgets

<sup>7</sup> as per 1992 *NEJ Journal* p. 111

<sup>8</sup> Does not include 4 District Superintendents

Rev. 10/2/07

**Addendum B**

**"Listening for God's Call in a New Day"**

Recommendation to the Northeastern Jurisdiction Conference from  
the North Central New York, Troy, Western New York, and Wyoming Annual Conferences  
meeting October 6, 2007 in Special Sessions,

Prepared by the Four-Conference Boundaries Coordinating Team

<sup>18</sup>Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. <sup>19</sup>I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.... for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen people, <sup>21</sup>the people whom I formed for myself so that they might declare my praise. (Isaiah 43: 18-21)

<sup>34</sup>He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. <sup>35</sup>For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. (Mark 8: 34 & 35)

<sup>15</sup>When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my lambs." <sup>16</sup>A second time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Tend my sheep." <sup>17</sup>He said to him the third time, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" And he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep. (John 21: 15-17)

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Guiding Principle: The Church of Jesus Christ exists to embody the Word and give itself away in love and service to the world.

\*\*\*\*\*

Because we believe that congregations of The United Methodist Church in Vermont, New York, and Pennsylvania desire to respond effectively to Jesus' claim on our lives and service, and ...

because we believe that membership and demographic changes in the Northeastern Jurisdiction have created a situation where it makes practical sense to consider a new shape for a new time, and ...

because we believe that any change must be considered in a spiritual context, through a process of seeking God's leading for our shared mission, and ...

## **Addendum B *continued***

because we seek to identify and celebrate our many strengths, and to share these beyond our traditional boundaries, for the benefit of those beyond our church walls, and ...

because we believe that congregations and leaders will benefit from the opportunity to share their gifts and experiences beyond current conference boundaries, bringing the transformational power of the Gospel to God's diverse communities....

We therefore affirm the intentional conversations among these four annual conferences, who together have uncovered hope for unleashing new possibilities in community development, ministry collaboration and inspired creativity. We envision creating a new Episcopal Area and a new Annual Conference:

+Committed to faithful witness through:

- a compassionate presence in local communities,
- strategic witness across the entire region,
- a voice of hope and promise with and for the least, the lost and the lonely,
- nurturing church members of all ages,
- prophetic influence in town, county, state and national issues, and
- a church open to people of all ages, nations and races;

+ Calling forth and empowering the Gifts and Graces of all God's Children to:

- facilitate effective ministry in small towns and rural, suburban, and metropolitan regions,
- step out of the church and invite all people of the community to encounter God,
- help persons grow in Christian faith and action,
- encourage the discovery of and resource the use of God's good gifts in service to all, and
- strengthen Disciples for joy in ministry.

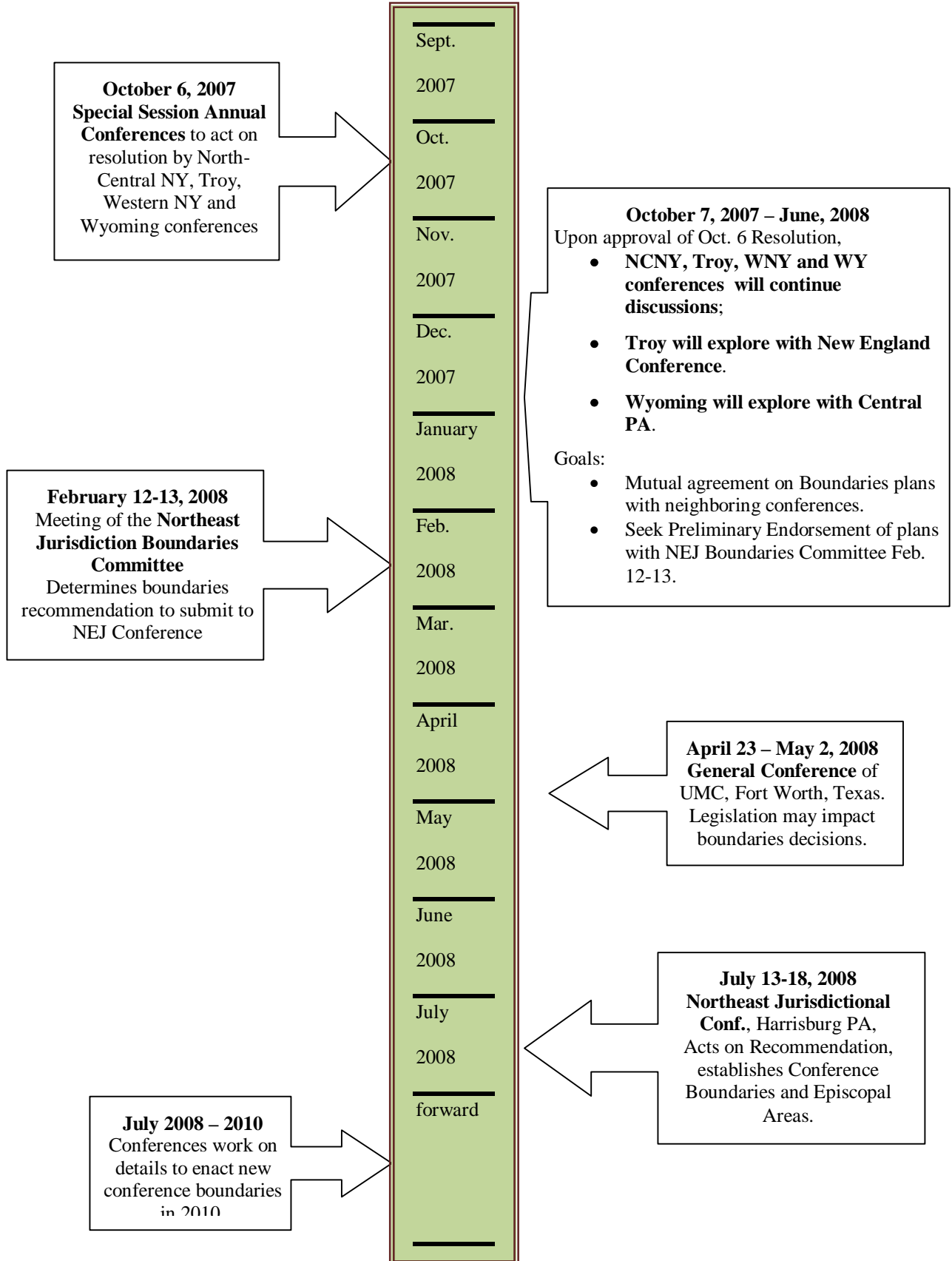
+ Utilizing creative ways to come together, including:

- the best in technology
- intentional practices for sustaining pastoral excellence
- visioning new ways to resource and link churches, districts and regions

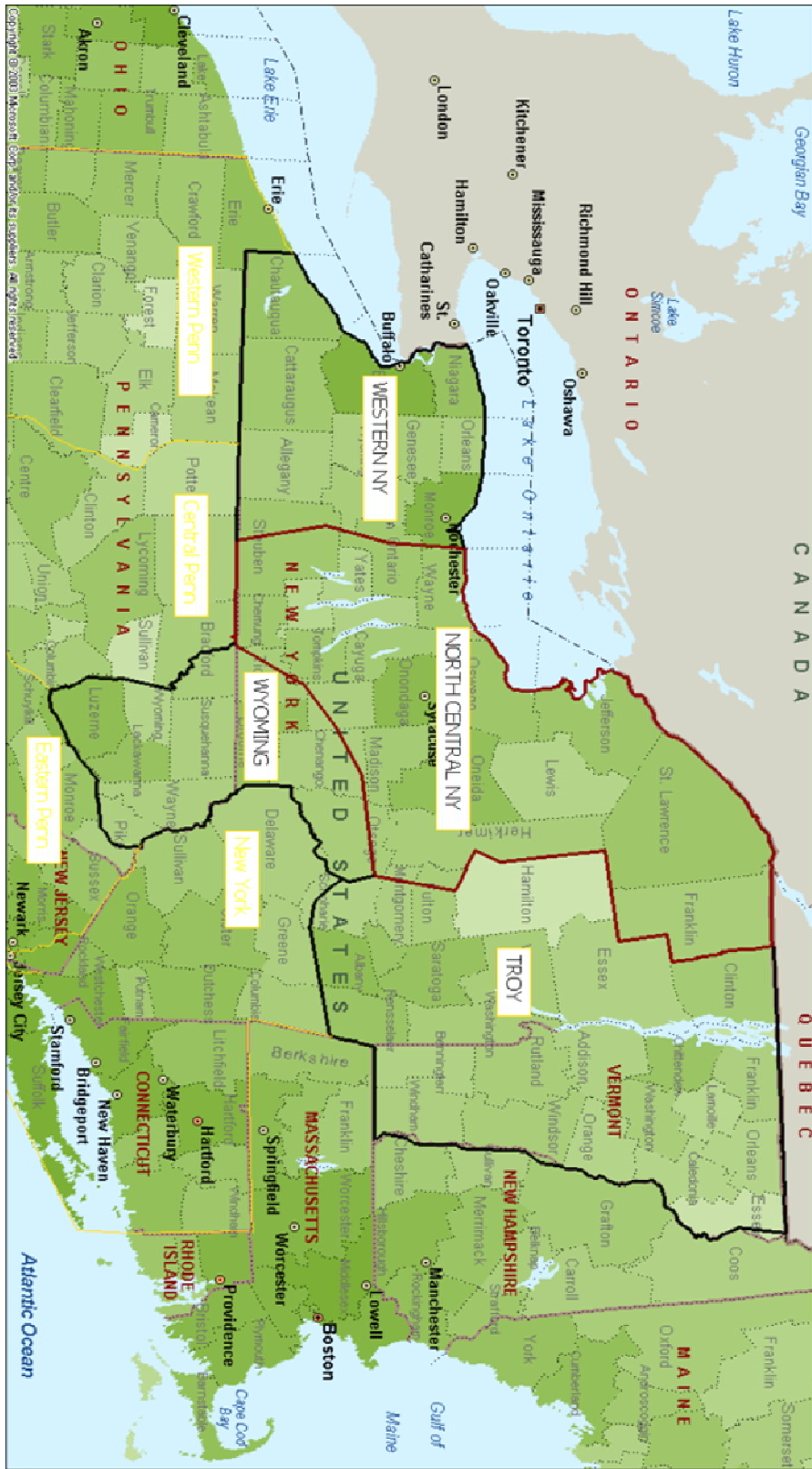
**Therefore, be it resolved:** The people of the North Central New York, Troy, Western New York and Wyoming, in order to revitalize the mission of The United Methodist Church in the region to make disciples of Jesus Christ, agree to request the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference to create a new Episcopal Area and a new Annual Conference from all or portions of these and/or other contiguous conferences, with the Pennsylvania churches of the Wyoming Annual Conference considering alignment with the Central Pennsylvania Annual Conference and the Vermont churches of the Troy Annual Conference considering alignment with the New England Annual Conference, to be implemented in 2010.

# Appendix C

## Boundaries Timeline October 2007 - 2010



# Addendum D



## **The New Area Conference Team resolution:**

*Presented and approved by the Northern New York, Troy, Western New York and Wyoming Annual Conference Sessions,  
May - June, 2008*

The North Central New York, Troy, Western New York, and Wyoming Annual Conference, in separate adjourned sessions convened on October 6, 2007, voted to request of the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference the creation a new Episcopal Area and a new Annual Conference from all or portions of these and/or other contiguous conferences, with the Pennsylvania churches of the Wyoming Annual Conference considering alignment with the Central Pennsylvania Annual Conference and the Vermont churches of the Troy Annual Conference considering alignment with the New England Annual Conference, to be implemented in 2010.

Following the October Adjourned Sessions, Bishop Violet Fisher and Bishop Susan Hassinger, episcopal leaders of the New York West Area and Albany Area respectively, dissolved the Boundaries Task Forces in the four conferences and constituted a single New Area/Conference Team to lead the conferences forward. This team consists of 18 people: the two presiding Bishops, three members at large from each Annual Conference, and each conference's Director of Connectional Ministry.

The Northeastern Jurisdictional Boundaries Committee, meeting on February 13, 2008, unanimously endorsed this request and forwarded it to the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference meeting July 16 – 18, 2008 for action. The Northeastern Jurisdictional Vision Table, meeting on February 14, 2008, acted to support the recommendation to the 2008 session of the jurisdictional conference, along with recommendations for jurisdictional financial support for the transition.

In order to facilitate continued discussions between the four conferences and prepare for a union of these bodies, should the Northeastern Jurisdiction concur with the afore mentioned recommendation, the New Area/Conference Team will initiate, facilitate, and coordinate conversations among a variety of groups in the conferences. These discussions will include, but are not limited to, vision, mission, financial, property, pension, credentialing of persons for ministry, and leadership concerns

Be it therefore resolved that the North Central New York, Troy, Western New York, and Wyoming Annual Conferences authorize the New Area/Conference Team to engage in discussions necessary to form:

1. A vision for this new area/conference that will lead forth into the coming decade
2. A plan of union for the new conference in 2010
3. A proposed design to facilitate the initial union of the conferences, and a process to develop the necessary structure which will support the vision and mission of the new area/conference

Be it further resolved that the New Area/Conference Team shall present an interim report to the 2009 Session of the Annual Conferences. The plan of union and accompanying initial structure recommendations shall be presented to the first session of the New Area/Conference in 2010 for adoption and implementation

**Resolution presented and approved at the Wyoming Annual Conference,  
May 29 – 30, 2008**

Regarding the creation of a new Annual Conference in Pennsylvania from the Pennsylvania portion of the Wyoming Annual Conference and the Central Pennsylvania Conference.

**RESOLUTION #5: Creating a New Conference in Pennsylvania**

**WHEREAS** the people of the United Methodist Church in the Wyoming Conference have sensed a movement of the Holy Spirit leading it to discern God’s will for “A Future with Hope” and the birthing of more effective mission and ministry; and,

**WHEREAS** we envision the marvelous possibilities that arise when the people called United Methodists celebrate their connection by joining together and utilizing the generous spiritual gifts with which God has blessed our communities of faith; and

**WHEREAS** on October 6, 2007 the following resolution was adopted by special conferences of the North Central New York, Troy, Western New York, and Wyoming Conferences:

“Therefore, be it resolved: The people of the North Central New York, Troy, Western New York and Wyoming Conferences, in order to revitalize the mission of The United Methodist Church in the region to make disciples of Jesus Christ, agree to request the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference to create a new Episcopal Area and a new Annual Conference from all or portions of these and/or other contiguous conferences, with the Pennsylvania churches of the Wyoming Annual Conference considering alignment with the Central Pennsylvania Annual Conference and the Vermont churches of the Troy Annual Conference considering alignment with the New England Annual Conference, to be implemented in 2010.”; and,

**WHEREAS** on the same date the Wyoming Conference enacted the following “enabling resolution”:

“Therefore, be it resolved, that the Wyoming Conference strongly urge the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference meeting in July 2008, realign the conference boundaries along state lines with the New York churches becoming a part of the new Episcopal Area to the north, and the Pennsylvania churches joining with the Central Pennsylvania Conference. Be it further resolved, that intentional conversations moving to this end begin as soon as possible following this action in order that future mission and ministry not be constrained beyond that which is necessary during the transition period.”; and,

**WHEREAS** on February 13, 2008, the Boundaries Committee of the Northeastern Jurisdiction took action supporting the above requests;



**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Pennsylvania churches of the Wyoming Conference having the support of the whole annual conference, and after much discernment, acting in concert with the Central Pennsylvania Conference, request of the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference meeting in July 2008, its support of a new conference in Pennsylvania consisting of the Pennsylvania churches of the Wyoming Conference and the churches of the Central Pennsylvania Conference to be created in 2010; and,

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that intentional plans moving to this end begin as soon as possible following this action in order that future mission and ministry not be constrained beyond that which is necessary during the transition period.

Submitted by:

**Resolution presented and approved at the Central Pennsylvania Conference,  
June 5 – 7, 2008**

Regarding the creation of a new Annual Conference in Pennsylvania from the Pennsylvania portion of the Wyoming Annual Conference and the Central Pennsylvania Conference.

**RESOLUTION CONCERNING NEW BOUNDARIES**

**WHEREAS** the Holy Spirit is moving in new and bold ways as Central Pennsylvania Conference makes disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world through transformational leadership, healthy and vital congregations, and persons alive in Christ; and **WHEREAS** there is great potential for new ministry and mission when the people of God join together utilizing the generous gifts with which God has blessed United Methodist communities of faith; and

**WHEREAS** on October 6, 2007 the following resolution was adopted by special conferences of the North Central New York, Troy, Western New York, and Wyoming Conferences:

"Therefore, be it resolved: The people of the North Central New York, Troy, Western New York and Wyoming Conferences, in order to revitalize the mission of The United Methodist Church in the region to make disciples of Jesus Christ, agree to request the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference to create a new Episcopal Area and a new Annual Conference from all or portions of these and/or other contiguous conferences, with the Pennsylvania churches of the Wyoming Annual Conference considering alignment with the Central Pennsylvania Annual Conference and the Vermont churches of the Troy Annual Conference considering alignment with the New England Annual Conference, to be implemented in 2010."; and

**WHEREAS** on the same date the Wyoming Conference enacted the following "enabling resolution":

"Therefore, be it resolved, that the Wyoming Conference strongly urge the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference meeting in July 2008, realign the conference boundaries along state lines with the New York churches becoming a part of the new episcopal area to the north, and the Pennsylvania churches join with the Central Pennsylvania Conference.

Be it further resolved, that intentional conversations moving to this end begin as soon as possible following this action in order that future mission and ministry not be constrained beyond that which is necessary during the transition period."; and

**WHEREAS** on February 13, 2008 the Boundaries Committee of the Northeast Jurisdiction took action supporting the above requests.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Central Pennsylvania Conference express to the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference meeting in July 2008, its support of the Pennsylvania churches of the Wyoming Conference joining the churches of Central Pennsylvania Conference to form a new conference in 2010; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that intentional conversations moving to this end begin as soon as possible following this action in order that future mission and ministry not be constrained beyond that which is necessary during the transition period.

**Resolution presented and approved at the Troy Annual Conference,  
June 4 – 7, 2008**

Regarding the relationship of the Vermont portion of the Troy Annual Conference and the New England Annual Conference.

306R-1 Boundaries

Whereas the Troy Annual Conference has for several years been involved in re-visioning the configuration of annual conferences in our region, seeking to minister in new ways for a new time; and

Whereas, in this process, churches in Vermont have expressed a desire to unite with the New England Annual Conference, even as the New York portions of the conference work to create a new annual conference and Episcopal Area along with NCNY, WNY and Wyoming Conferences; and

Whereas the October 6, 2007 Special Session of Troy Annual Conference affirmed a process of dialogue and discovery that would explore the possibility of uniting the Vermont portion of TAC with New England Annual Conference; and

Whereas the Boundaries teams of Troy Conference and New England Conference have been in dialogue in 2008, building on earlier discussions that began in 2006 among leaders from both of these conferences;

Therefore, be it resolved that the Troy Annual Conference, at its 2008 session, recommend to the Northeast Jurisdictional Conference, meeting July 14-18, 2008, that the Vermont portion of TAC be united with the New England Annual Conference, and that this union take place in 2010, concurrent with the formation of the new annual conference in the upstate New York region. Details for this proposed union will be worked out between 2008 and 2010, pending approval of the union by the Northeast Jurisdictional Conference.

**Resolution presented and approved at the New England Annual Conference,  
June 13 – 15, 2008**

Regarding the relationship of the New England Annual Conference and the Vermont portion of the Troy Annual Conference.

RS – 209A – A RESOLUTION EXTENDING HOSPITALITY TO VERMONT UMC'S  
(submitted by the New England Conference Boundaries Committee, John Blackadar, Ernest Belisle, Charles Carnahan, Oscar Harrell, Joan Humphrey, Ha-Kyung Cho-Kim, Bonnie Marden, Jim McPhee, and Alexx Wood)

Whereas conversations among the Western New York, North Central New York, Wyoming, and Troy Annual Conferences have led to the development of a proposal to create a new conference together, and

Whereas Vermont churches in the Troy Annual Conference have expressed a desire to unite with the New England Annual Conference even as the New York Portions of that conference work to create a new conference along with the NCNY, WNY, and Wyoming Conferences, and

Whereas listening sessions held at last year's New England Annual Conference and again throughout the fall of 2007 have surfaced positive response to such a possibility, and

Whereas the October 6, 2007 Special Session of the Troy Annual Conference affirmed a process of dialogue and discovery that would explore the possibility of uniting the Vermont portion of Troy Annual Conference with New England Annual Conference, and

Whereas the Boundaries teams of the Troy Annual Conference and the New England Annual Conference have been in dialogue in 2008, building on earlier discussions that began in 2006 among leaders from both annual conferences, and

Whereas Troy Annual Conference overwhelmingly affirmed on June 6, 2008 the recommendation to the upcoming Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference that the Vermont portion of the Troy Annual Conference unite with the New England Conference in 2010,

Therefore, be it resolved that the New England Annual Conference, at its 2008 session, recommend to the Northeast Jurisdictional Conference, meeting July 14-18, 2008, that the Vermont portion of Troy Annual Conference be united with New England Annual Conference, and that this union take place in 2010, concurrent with the formation of the new annual conference in the upstate New York region. Details for this proposed union will be worked out between 2008 and 2010, pending approval of the union by the Northeast Jurisdictional Conference and

Be it further resolved that the Vermont/New England Boundary Team engage in discussions necessary to prepare a plan of union for the uniting in 2010, and

Be it further resolved that the Vermont/New England Boundary Team shall present an interim report to the 2009 Session of the Annual Conferences.