With few dissenting votes, NEJ delegates Wednesday approved a resolution to change the boundaries of six of the 13 annual conferences as a way of providing more effective mission and ministry.

In presenting the resolution and rationale, Boundaries Committee Vice-Chair Bonnie Marden of the New England Conference recalled that her father, Bishop Clifton Ives, asked the NEJ to consider a similar action 16 years ago. At that time, three conferences combined in the Boston area to form the New England Conference.

Marden expressed “heartfelt affirmation” of the work done by the six conferences in developing the plan. Each had already affirmed the changes at annual conference sessions. The action reduces the number of episcopal areas from 10 to nine.

“The leadership in these six conferences has asked us to take a leap of faith,” she said.

She said the changes provided growth opportunities and challenges, but that the teams

See BOUNDARIES page 7
DCA Corrections and Changes

On Page 6 of the Tuesday, July 15, Daily Christian Advocate, in the list of NEJ Committee Leaders for theCourtesy Committee, the correct spelling is We Hyuan Chang – not Change.

On Page 7 of the same July 15 DCA, under the Nominations for General Boards and Agencies:

♦ For the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, replace Sharon Schwab of Western PA Conference with Joan Reasinger, who is also a clergy woman and member of the Western PA Conference.

♦ For the General Board of Discipleship, remove Aslam Barkat of the West Virginia Conference. The replacement was not yet available at press time.

On Page 10 of the Wednesday, July 16, DCA, under the Nominations for NEJ Committees, Programs and Arrangements, Boyd Etter is from Peninsula Delaware (PD) Conference and not the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference.

Take a Walk to Episcopal Consecration Service

Grace United Methodist Church is the site of the Episcopal Consecration service this Friday. The church is within an 8-10-minute walk on flat surfaces.

To walk, leave by the Hilton’s first floor main entrance on Second Street.

Turn right and walk along Second to State Street.

Turn right on State Street, Grace Church is on your left.

From 10:45 to 11:10 am, two buses will also shuttle people to Grace UMC. One bus will be equipped to accommodate people with disabilities or physical limitations. The buses will depart from the Second Street hotel entrance.

Buses will also shuttle people back to the Hilton after the service, though one bus will carry our bishops and their families, who have a luncheon to attend.

Remember, no extended check-out is available from the Hilton Hotel on Friday. Rooms must be vacated before the consecration worship service.

Another major convention begins Friday noon at the Hilton.

Your car may be left in the hotel garage until after the service. The hotel can store your luggage in the lobby area. See the bell captain for details.

Thank you.

Remember

- A delegate in session may not have a laptop/ desktop computer.
- Cell phones must be OFF (not just vibrate) during all sessions.
- Bring all issues of the DCA with you to session.
- The DCA and CANDID IMAGES are online at www.nejumc.org.

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

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)
NEJ Youth Make Room 430 Home

By Wendy Whiteside, Associate General Secretary, General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns

Walk the fourth floor hall of the Harrisburg Hilton after an evening session if you want to be serenaded. The singing floods out of Room 430 along with the joy, goodwill, and love of Christ that are its source. You really don’t have to look inside to know this is where the youth of the Northeastern Jurisdiction Conference gather.

But go ahead and walk into the room because you will be welcomed. Daniel, Ann, Zachary, Maegan, Gabe, Mario, Maddie, Connor and other youth are gathered there. Everyone is welcome – even adults. There is always room for one more. Within 36 hours, this group had formed a solid community. Trust and warmth fill the room. Opinions and issues exist but don’t divide this group. They are bonded by the love of God.

These young people are intelligent, articulate, and committed to The United Methodist Church. Wednesday they amended the Rules to make youth participation on NEJ committees, boards and agencies more possible. Their amendments passed unanimously with little discussion. One of the youth said, “Isn’t that cool?” clearly excited.

NEJ youth want to participate. They WANT to go to meetings. “We don’t want people to say ‘Isn’t that cute? The youth are leading worship or attending a meeting.’ We want them to find it ordinary. We want it to be expected,” said Kenny John of Troy Conference.

The youth enthusiastically participated in the interview process for the Episcopal candidates. They were prepared for this by Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton at a pre-conference meeting. There they developed questions, learned the process and found their voice. During the interviews, the youth asked insightful questions like “If you could have lunch with anyone in the Bible excluding Jesus, who would it be and what would you talk about?” and listened discerningly. “What was really cool was that some of the adults started asking the questions the youth were asking! They wanted to know about the candidate’s commitment to youth ministries, too,” exclaimed Mario Reto, a youth from Western New York Conference.

“The boundaries issue is important to me, even though it doesn’t directly affect me,” said Gabe Bedell of Eastern Pennsylvania Conference. But it does affect many of the youth. “We didn’t want to merge at first,” said Mario, “then we decided to get to know each other.” The result was 4WORD ’05. It was a “huge success and each successive annual event has been even better!” The work of the youth to get to know each other better encouraged the adults in their work to talk, negotiate, and plan for the redrawing of boundaries.

The youth keep up their enthusiasm in the face of many obstacles set before them. Comments like, “Why would a bishop be concerned with youth ministries at all?” hurt and saddened the youth. “I was hurt when I heard this comment but I know all adults don’t think this way. I know I have a place and a voice in the church and that is what encourages me,” said Ann Jacob of Eastern PA.

What is most exciting and encouraging about jurisdictional conference? Mathew Forrest of New England Conference said, “Everyone is so nice and into being Christians – really loving God.”

If you have had a long day, stop by Room 430. The youth will encourage you in your ministry. Your spirits will be buoyed and your heart lightened by the inclusive community.
Uniting Methodists—Forty Years Later

By Jack Shaw, Communicator, Greater New Jersey Conference

On April 23, 1968, Neil Irons was a young pastor pursuing his Ph.D. at Vanderbilt University and serving a small church outside Franklin, TN. At the beginning of that day he was a member of the Evangelical United Brethren, at the end of the day, he was a United Methodist. Twenty-some years later, he was a bishop of the church serving the New Jersey Area.

Reflecting on the origins of both denominations, he observed that Philip William Otterbein, (one of the first bishops of the United Brethren in Christ which later became the Evangelical United Brethren) had approached Francis Asbury about uniting, claiming the warm-hearted Christianity practiced by both were very compatible. Ironically, Asbury declined, asserting he thought there was no future for the German speakers in the U.S.

Bishop Irons commented recently on what the 1968 unification meant to him. He noted that as a young EUB pastor he had “always felt closer to the Methodist pastors” in towns where he served. The relationship “…felt natural… the EUB and Methodists were very close in theology and tradition.”

Bishop Irons noted that it is helpful to remember that the environment and culture in this country in April of 1968 was very different than now. The assassinations of John Kennedy a few years earlier and of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. just weeks earlier had profound impact. “We were living in a changing time, a time of enormous national self-doubt.” Similarly, the major changes that had come from Pope John XXIII and the Vatican Council a few years earlier meant that “ecumenicity had a different meaning than it does today…this was a very ecumenical period –there was a greater sense of the church with a capital ‘C.’ There was a sense the vision of the church was broadening rather than being restricted by denomination.” Consistent with the issues of the day was the dissolution of the segregating Central Jurisdiction which was critical in allowing the merger to take place.

Several of our clergy sisters and brothers that started as EUB have been elected to the Episcopacy in The United Methodist Church, perhaps the most notable being Bishop Reuben Jobs whose recent publication of the Three Simple Rules has become a much cited resource in recent discussion of re-emphasizing our Wesleyan roots.

Finally, in looking back at the style changes that came with the uniting, Bishop Irons observed the Methodist tradition was a little more rigid in its structure. He is pleased to see the recent changes to what he perceived to be closer to the EUB tradition of a “much less political approach to denominational realities.” He points to the Connectional Table as evidence of a more “collegial and cooperative” approach to doing the church’s business.

Wednesday’s Session by the Numbers

- Of a possible 252 NEJ delegates, 251 are attending.
- Of 29 possible youth representatives, 27 are here and each annual conference is represented.
- The Wednesday morning offering for Mission Central’s Miracle Month totaled $4,358.50.
Quadrennial NEJ Committee Nominations

The Northeastern Jurisdiction College of Bishops has nominated the following persons to serve on NEJ committees for 2009-2012.

Committee on Appeals

Elders
- Pamela Ford
- William Campbell
- Alyce Weaver Dunn
- Lyssette Perez

Diaconal
- Carolyn Hardin Englehardt

Full-Time Local Pastor
- Michael Terrell

Laity
- Royce Lyden
- Brenda Tildon
- Scott Johnson
- Alternate

Elders
- Christopher Kurien
- Kathleen Kind
- Sandra Steiner Ball
- Joan Reasinger

Diaconal
- Opal Goodrich Graham

Full-Time Local Pastor
- Jen Ihlo
- Bill Deel
- Jim Krager

Committee on Investigation

Clergy
- William B. Meekins Jr.
- William Wilson
- Martin D. McLee
- Karen Bunnell

Professing Members
- Raymond Hamill
- Lynn S. Caterson
- Jorge Lockwood

Alternatives

Clergy
- Larry Baird
- Varlyna Wright
- William Barney
- James Todd
- Constance Pak

Professing Members
- Bob Ladd
- Ruth Dickson
- Spohia Harrell
- Betty Wigal
- Shirley Readdean

Episcopal Conveners Designated for Standing Committees

“Each standing committee shall meet as soon after the election of the membership as permitted by the program of the Jurisdictional Conference. The initial meeting shall be convened by a bishop designated by the College of Bishops, at which time the committee shall organize by election of a chairperson, a vice-chairperson and secretary. If the chairperson is an ordained minister, the vice-chairperson shall be a lay person and vice-versa.”


Vision Table
- Bishop Ernest Lyght

Holy Conferencing Table
- Bishop Peter Weaver

Leadership Table
- Bishop Susan Hassinger

Partner Ministries Table
- Bishop Violet Fisher

Appeals Committee
- Bishop John Schol, president, College of Bishops

Investigation Committee
- Bishop Marcus Matthews

Annual Conference Boundaries Committee
- Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton

Episcopacy Committee
- Bishop John Schol, president, College of Bishops

Finance and Administration Committee
- Bishop Jeremiah Park

Ordained Ministry (within 3 months of NEJ Conference)
- Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar
DeAndre White, a youth representative from the Baltimore-Washington Conference, expected to be nervous when he read the Beatitudes during worship Wednesday. Instead he felt “good, and little bold.”

“I felt God was empowering me,” he said through an interpreter.

This feeling of empowerment is a relatively new one for White. Over the past few years, Christ United Methodist Church of the Deaf in Baltimore and its Shalom Zone transformed his life and has given him a desire to share God’s love.

“I am a witness,” he said.

At this session of the 2008 Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference, White has become a witness of a different kind – providing a living reminder to the delegates that the Deaf are an essential part of God’s body, who should not be ignored by the church.

White and his fellow youth representative Daniel P. Bitzer II, also of Christ UMC of the Deaf, are the only Deaf people serving on the jurisdictional level of The United Methodist Church. There are no Deaf people serving as delegates or on committees, boards or agencies at the General church level.

However the pair, and their three interpreters, believe that the Deaf need to become more that witnesses. “They ought to be a part of the body,” said Carol Stevens, who works with the Deaf Shalom Zone in Baltimore. “They need to be a part of us because Christ would want them here. Their absence diminishes the church.”

While some of the conference proceedings and the “whole lot of talking” sometimes seems boring to the boys, they are enjoying “seeing the bigger church,” which they find “inspiring.”

They’ve especially enjoyed spending time with other youth from the jurisdiction, whom they are teaching some American Sign Language.

They’ve also enjoyed being present and praying with their pastor, the Rev. Peggy Johnson, who is a candidate for the episcopacy.

“Peggy explains that praying for people is important to do. She also teaches us that it’s important to help other people, to serve” Bitzer said. “We’re praying for Peggy.”

“How often does one get to see a bishop consecrated? This is rare. It’s inspiring,” White said.

Their interpreters believe the experience at jurisdictional conference has opened new horizons for the youth and given them an increased understanding of what the church might do and be.

White said he’ll remember his experience reading Scripture during the worship. He hopes everyone got his message. In just a few words, his advice for all the delegates is simply: “Have the heart of Jesus.”
working on the proposal had kept a vision of mission and ministry before them as they moved forward.

“Some people may wonder if this can be ready by 2010,” she said. “We do not anticipate that everything will be done, but that the framework will be in place.”

Joining Marden were Wyoming District Superintendent Jan Marsi, Western New York’s Director of Connectional Ministries Larry Lundgren, North Central New York youth leader Stephanie Deckard, Beth Jones, a pastor from Wyoming Conference, and others.

Marsi said that while financial realities were the initial inspiration for boundary adjustments, “the discussions and discernment in the various conferences quickly turned from the very beginning to visions of the opportunities for ministry in new and extreme ways.”

Marden agreed. “We believe we have heard God calling us to new ways of ministry for this new time.”

And while many of the presenters acknowledged that the changes would cause grief as conferences divided and reformed, most agreed that they were excited about new possibilities and new directions for the church.

Reaction to the vote amongst members of the conference involved was upbeat.

Troy Conference District Superintendent Henry Frueh, a member of the NEJ Boundaries Committee, was pleased with the “wide acceptance by the jurisdiction for the plan,” he said. “[The delegates] were really excited, too. We really do have the possibility of creating something better.”

Though conferences have merged in the past, this is the first time that so many conference boundaries will be changed. “It’s something that’s not been done in the denomination on such a large scale,” Frueh said. “It offers a vision of how conferences can work together for a more effective church.”

“The presentation team did a really great job in presenting the vision for the new conferences,” said the Rev. Steve Deckard, director of Connectional Ministry for the North Central New York Conference and a member of the New Area Conference Team. “We’ll work with the bishops that are assigned to the two areas to put the new conference together and move into God’s future.”

Marsi, also a member of the New Area Conference Team, said there will be more conversation and cautions, “We’re going to be so excited and are riding such a high, and we’ll need to be patient. It took patience to get to his point, and it will take patience to move forward.”

The result of two years of work by Central Pennsylvania, New England, North Central New York, Troy, Western New York and Wyoming conferences,
Crain, Daugherty Re-Elected

By Jackie Campbell, Assistant Editor

NEJ delegates voted overwhelmingly Wednesday to return their key “go-to” people to office for another four years. Long-time Treasurer Dight Crain and Secretary Ruth Daugherty both graciously agreed to serve in their posts until the 2012 NEJ Conference, set for Charleston, WV, but indicated the need to have assistants ready to step in to the jobs in the future.

The Rev. Tom Salsgiver of Central PA was elected to the new position of assistant secretary. An assistant treasurer has not yet been nominated.

Daugherty, a member of the Eastern PA Conference, said serving as secretary is part of her Christian commitment. She’s “been around the church a good bit,” serving her 10th time as a General and Jurisdictional conference delegate, she learned the finer points of the job by helping her husband with it in the 1990s. When he died in 2003, she was asked to step in.

Crain, a member of the New England Conference, has served effectively for 24 years as NEJ treasurer. His wife Janet received a standing ovation for supporting and assisting him in the role.

Six Conferences Affected in Boundary Changes

Continued from BOUNDARIES page 7

the resolution created two new conferences and joined the Vermont churches of Troy Conference with the New England Conference.

The work preparing for the boundaries realignment anticipated the action of General Conference, which reduces the number of Episcopal areas in four of the five jurisdictions by 2012. With the adoption of the NEJ boundaries resolution, the NEJ will drop from 10 episcopal areas to nine, and from 13 annual conferences to 10.

Bishop Susan M. Morrison and Bishop Violet Fisher, who had launched a four-conference boundaries task force after the 2004 Jurisdictional Conference, were also pleased.

“To see all those people from all those conferences working together and being so positive even knowing there’s loss and pain is a witness beyond belief,” Bishop Morrison said Wednesday evening during a reception held as part of a celebration marking her retirement, as well as Bishop Fisher’s.

“We did our work,” Bishop Fisher said, “and we offered it up to the Lord. I’m so excited that the Holy Spirit worked through the body [today].”

While conferences and episcopal areas have merged before and conference boundaries have changed, the NEJ boundaries resolution:

◆ Creates a new conference in New York state formed by the current North Central and Western New York conferences and parts of the Wyoming and Troy conference churches located in the state;

◆ Creates a new conference from the Pennsylvania churches of the Wyoming Conference and all the churches of the present Central Pennsylvania Conference; and

◆ Unites the Vermont churches of Troy Conference with the New England Conference.

Actual changes won’t take place until sometime in 2010. though the immediate impact of the vote was a recommendation from the NEJ Episcopacy Committee to elect only one bishop this quadrennium even though Bishop Fisher is retiring this year and Bishop Morrison retired in 2006. Retired Bishop Susan W. Hassinger was appointed interim bishop to the Albany Area.

The Episcopacy Committee will announce the appointment of bishops to episcopal areas on Friday morning.

Portions of this article were written by Linda Bloom for United Methodist News Service.
Wednesday's Extreme Conferencing

Bishop Jane Allen Middleton, right, offered the Episcopal Address, State of the Jurisdiction. Using multimedia, she gave examples of extreme ministry throughout the jurisdiction.

Below, Bishop Violet Fisher preached for the Holy Communion and Memorial service. "Death will not silence our witness!"

Voting continues Thursday to elect one new bishop. After five ballots, five of the original 13 nominees remained as candidates.

Images by Mark Rehn and Don Perry
Want Info on NEJ Worship?

The services will be posted on the jurisdictional website (www.nejumc.org) following the conclusion of the conference. Material has been attributed so that you may find the source material and obtain permission to copy as necessary. We will be posting the “script versions” which give stage directions, etc.

Please note that each service was prepared primarily by one bishop and one member of the worship committee (indicated as “principal design team”). Safiyah Fosua prepared all of the Caught Up in the Spirit moments after consulting with the worship committee on the threads that we hoped would run through the conference.

Wednesday Memorial Service
Preacher: Bishop Violet Fisher
Readers: The Rev. Winifred Blagmond, Baltimore-Washington
Sarah Wagner, Central Pennsylvania
DeAndre White, Baltimore-Washington
Mario Reto, Western New York
Madeleine Horrell, North Central New York
Crucifer: Bryant Clark, Wyoming
Acolytes: Maegan Lipinski, Troy
Paul Kellogg Sweet, Wyoming
Principal design team: Bishop Violet Fisher and Darlynn McCrae, Baltimore-Washington
Musicians (for all services):
Mark A. Miller, Keyboards and Director
Cassondra Kellam, vocals
DeLyn Celec, vocals
Mike Riddleberger, drums
Solomon Dorsey, bass

Retirement Celebration
Principal Design: Bishop Ernest Lyght
Rev. Lynne Josselyn

Thursday morning Worship
Preacher: Bishop Roy I. Sano
Readers: The Rev. Hea Sun Kim, Baltimore-Washington
Constance L. Ace, Greater New Jersey
Donnalle Nelson, Greater New Jersey
The Honorable Evelyn Caterson, Greater New Jersey
The Rev. Lyzette Perez, Greater New Jersey
John W. Bishop, Greater New Jersey
Marva Usher-Kerr, New York
Jay W. Brown, Greater New Jersey
Actors:
The Rev. Lyzette Perez, Greater New Jersey
John W. Bishop, Greater New Jersey
Marva Usher-Kerr, New York
Jay W. Brown, Greater New Jersey
Principal Design: Bishop Roy I. Sano
(Dobbs-Johnson wrote the drama, liturgy.)

2008 Worship Committee
S. Darlynn McCrae, Chair, Baltimore-Washington
The Rev. Michelle Bogue Trost, Troy
Tim Brewster, Wyoming
The Rev. Lynne Josselyn, New England
The Rev. Sherrie Dobbs Johnson, Greater New Jersey
The Rev. Moses Ahn, Greater New Jersey
Sofia Harrell, New England
The Rev. Vivian C. McCarthy, Baltimore-Washington, Coordinator
Bishops Ernest Lyght and Jane Allen Middleton gave oversight to the committee’s work.
Additional Motion to Apportionments

Moved that upon the effective date of the New Conference in New York coming into existence and the Pennsylvania churches of the Wyoming Conference moving into a New Conference in Pennsylvania and the Vermont churches of the Troy Conference moving to the New England Conference, that the following adjustments be made to the adopted apportionments of the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference for the 2009-2012 quadrennium:

1) 55.1% of the Wyoming Conference remaining apportionment for the 2009-2012 quadrennium be transferred to the New England Conference and 44.9% to the New Conference in New York.

3) All of the remaining apportionments of the North Central New York Conference and the Western New York Conference be transferred to the New Conference in New York.

4) Any unpaid apportionments of the old conferences due the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference at the time of merger are the responsibility of the old conferences and be paid from remaining fund balances of those conferences.

Rationale:
The 2008 World Service Apportionments from GCF&A are the basis for determining the NEJ apportionments for 2009-2012.

There are 170 churches in Pennsylvania that are part of Wyoming Conference that will become part of the New Conference in Pennsylvania.

There are 112 churches in Vermont that will be transferred from the Troy Conference to the New England Conference.

Therefore, it is appropriate that these percentages become the basis for re-allocating the apportionments for the remainder of the quadrennium.

Check Locations for Committee Meetings

Today, in the following locations, NEJ committees will meet:

Thursday, July 17, 5 pm
Boundaries Committee Delaware Room (Hilton 2nd Floor)
Episcopacy Committee Susquehanna Room (Hilton 2nd Floor)
Finance & Administration Metropolitan A (Hilton 2nd Floor)
Program & Arrangements Metropolitan C (Hilton 2nd Floor)
Appeals Committee Sunoco Auditorium, Orchestra Box Left

Thursday, July 17, 6:45 pm
Holy Conferencing Table Metropolitan A (Hilton 2nd Floor)
Leadership Table Metropolitan C (Hilton 2nd Floor)
Partner Ministries Table Delaware (Hilton 2nd Floor)

Thursday, July 17, Evening Break
Vision Table Stage Sunoco Theater