



The Ministry Plan
North Central New York Conference
The United Methodist Church
September 2006

*(The Strategic Plan as adopted by the North Central
New York Annual Conference 2003
and subsequently revised)*

The Statement of Faith of the North Central New York Conference of the United Methodist Church

We are Christians in the United Methodist tradition who have entered into a personal relationship with God by grace through Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit. John Wesley taught us “The world is our parish,” and “we exist to spread scriptural holiness through out the land.”

We are called:

- To develop our relationship with God through discernment, prayer, Bible study, worship and service.
- To witness for Jesus Christ.
- To relate to others with love, faith, openness, honesty, and integrity.
- To respect and live at peace with all of God’s creation as faithful stewards.
- To reject evil and seek justice.
- To bear one another’s burden.
- To lead Christ-filled lives.

Mission Statement

(Our mission explains who we are and why we exist)

Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ, to nurture and equip Christ-centered spiritual leaders to be in ministry and mission in God’s world.

Vision Statement

(Our vision is our understanding of who God calls us to be in three to five years)

We envision the North Central New York Conference as the dynamic Body of Christ, transforming the world through:

- Vital spiritual leaders
- New and revitalized congregations
- Racial and ethnic diversity
- Connectional ministries.

Core Values of the NCNY Conference of the United Methodist Church

Christ is at the center of all we are and all we do. We will practice inclusiveness, as described in ¶138 Book of Discipline.” The mark of an inclusive society is one in which all persons are open, welcoming, fully accepting, and supporting of all other persons enabling them to participate in the life of the church, the community and the world, and according to ¶162 Book of Discipline, “We therefore work toward societies in which each person’s value is recognized, maintained, and strengthened. We deplore acts of hate or violence against groups or persons based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, or economic status.” As a conference, we will strive to be a community that sees the image and likeness of God in every human being regardless of, but not limited to, race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, age, economic status, or physical or mental condition.

- We value, as John Wesley did, scripture, tradition, experience and reason, which informs and forms us, by our worship, prayer and study as we connect with God and others
- We value the openness of God's Grace to ALL. God accepts us as we are, and loves us too much to leave us there.
- We are stewards of God's gifts and are committed to the responsible use of our time, talents, gifts, and resources.
- We value God's call to become Spirit-led witnessing disciples passionate for Christ and our ministries.
- We value each person as a child of God, therefore, we will reach all people with the Good News of God's love, mercy and forgiveness.
- We value God's call to us to be culturally relevant and socially responsive while remaining Christ-centered in everything we do.
- We value and affirm that ALL people are brothers and sisters in God's creation. We seek to be faithful to the example of Christ's ministry to ALL persons. As a diverse people of God, we are called to accept, support, forgive and learn from each other.
- We value openness and integrity.
- We value the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit, which empowers all people to attain uncommon results by living into God's vision.
- We value individual and collective efforts to learn, embrace, and commit ourselves to the concept of covenant relationships. (Romans 12:4-5)
- We value a closer working relationship with our brothers and sisters in neighboring conferences, as well as partnering with conferences and colleague Christian bodies throughout the world.
- As Christians in the United Methodist tradition, we respect people of all faiths and are committed to freedom of religious beliefs. We will dialogue with other faiths working together to create peace and justice for all people.

Critical Issue 1: Spiritual Leadership

CRITICAL ISSUE DEFINED:

There is a need for Christian spiritual leadership within and coming from the local congregations, districts and conference. There is clear expectation within many of our congregations that all spiritual leadership comes from the pastor. Some laity recognize their spiritual gifts for leadership but lack direction and are unable to use them, while others have the gifts for spiritual leadership but need some spiritual guidance to recognize their gifts.

RECOMMENDATION:

We recommend that we reestablish, reemphasize, and reenergize Christ-centered theology (Luke 4 and Matthew 25) and church ministry with the clergy and laity of our conference. We recommend creating tools for our clergy and laity that will enable gifts discovery and use of gifts within every congregation. We must provide opportunities for pastors and laity to maintain spiritual health and growth.

ACTION STEPS:

1. Pray continually in the name of Christ, asking the Holy Spirit to help us to continually discover our spiritual gifts and ways in which we can use them to fulfill our mission statement of making disciples.

2. Develop programs to encourage the spiritual leaders of our North Central New York Conference to form clergy and lay leadership (youth through adult) teams in Christ through:
 - A. Prayer, Bible study, discipleship, accountability and spiritual disciplines.
 - i. ALL clergy will be invited to participate in spiritual covenant groups. The spiritual covenant groups will become a part of the pastoral conversations with the district superintendent.
 - ii. The director of spiritual leadership will offer training for cluster covenant groups for local church leaders. Teams will be trained, covenant groups formed, and the director will report progress.
3. Use programs and workshops that are already defined and working to enable a spiritual gifts discovery in every congregation.
4. Research, design and pilot a spiritual leadership workshop for local churches and districts. Evaluate effectiveness through qualitative assessment of changes in knowledge.
 - A. Establish a School of Evangelism, which will motivate and equip clergy and laity.
 - B. Provide and promote opportunities for revival, worship and social justice. Offer workshops on Evangelism, Christian spiritual formation such as: Academy of Spiritual Formation, Conference Council on Youth Ministries, Christian Education in all forms, Disciple Bible Studies, Covenant Disciples groups, Emmaus Movement, Lay Speaking programs, Order of St. Luke, programs offered by our Camps, Conferences and Retreat Ministries, including summer camps and year-round retreats for all ages, programs offered by our Board of Ordained Ministries, Volunteers in Mission, Mission of Peace (youth), mission projects.
5. Reestablish the Office of Evangelism in the local church, district, and annual conference as per paragraph 629.3 and paragraph 254 in the 2004 Book of Discipline, which will coordinate all resources and direction pertaining to evangelism and Christian spiritual formation.
6. Research and resource opportunities for pastors to maintain spiritual health and growth that are offered within our denomination or elsewhere.

Critical Issue 2: Revitalizing Congregations and New Church Starts

CRITICAL ISSUE DEFINED:

We are called to make disciples of Jesus Christ. We must strengthen the integrity of our Christian witness if we expect to minister to the unchurched and seekers. We must rediscover our passion for the transforming power of Christ's love by reaching out to all God's children, developing strategies for more effective worship, witness and evangelism, providing resources, motivation and training. As United Methodists, we realize that revitalizing congregations and new church starts are equally important strategies for making disciples for Christ.

RECOMMENDATION FOR REVITALIZING CONGREGATIONS:

We recommend that all congregations strengthen their disciple making ministries.

ACTION STEPS:

1. Offer resources that will encourage and empower every congregation to fulfill this recommendation.

These resources may include:

- Group and individual training opportunities to develop leadership skills, for example: church starts, church revitalization, Think Tank, Urban Academy, Academy for Spiritual Formation, staff and volunteer consultants
- Assistance in writing grant applications to strengthen disciple making ministries
- Consultants to address issues of vision and mission in local churches
- Sharing membership growth strategies between churches
- Recruiting and training Christian education consultants for the revitalization of Sunday Schools
- Sharing resources addressing the specific needs of small churches
- Recruit and train worship consultants to revitalize worship
- Assisting with the establishment of a team in each congregation that will monitor population trends, community needs, and the interests of non church persons in order to recommend ministry strategies
- Exploring opportunities for multi-congregational ministry initiatives
- Resources from the Board of Ordained Ministry to address spiritual and leadership opportunities for pastors, lay and ordained.

2. Identify six or more congregations per district that have notable potential in significantly expanding their disciple making ministries. Examples might include:

- Churches experiencing numerical growth that could be assisted in building programs to under gird the growth and assimilate new disciples
- Churches in growing demographic areas that propose new programs for outreach and evangelism
- Churches initiating outreach and evangelism ministries to specific age, racial, ethnic, or other identifiable groups not currently being served by that congregation.

These congregations will receive strategic assistance including financial grants, training opportunities, consultation and information with the understanding that they will not only realize their own ministries to the fullest possible way, but will also become a resource for other churches in the conference.

Every effort will be made to offer this program to churches in diverse situations – rural, urban, and suburban; small, medium and large size churches and churches serving in various generations. The Congregational Development Ministry Area and district discipleship coordinators working together and through District Councils on Ministry will direct this. The team will identify resources already in place and develop a comprehensive delivery strategy. The team will recruit and train consultant leadership and the team will develop strategy to be used in ongoing implementation.

RECOMMENDATION FOR NEW CHURCH STARTS:

We recommend that a comprehensive strategy and a feasibility for New Church Starts be developed and implemented.

ACTIONS STEPS:

1. Affirm, fund, back and expand the New Church Development Team and this initiative. Engage in ministry such as Strengthening the Black Church for the 21st Century, the National Hispanic Plan, the Native American Comprehensive Plan, the National Korean American Plan, the General Board of Global Ministries Shalom Zone, the Multi-Ethnic Academy, the Appalachian Plan, and the Town and Country Ministries among other denominational and church initiatives.
2. Encourage several congregations (working with others) to begin a new church service at a non-church location. This service could be non-traditional and would include a lead group of a preacher and others who would assist in welcoming new people. These services would begin under the direction of the New Church Development Team.
3. Encourage existing congregations to covenant together to establish new churches.
4. Encourage the use of existing structure to identify the pastor's gifts, desires and skills. Pastors are encouraged to discuss their gifts and graces with the district superintendent in regards to ministry to which they are called.
5. Recruit pastors who have the ability and desire to build congregations. The Board of Ordained Ministry Division of Commissioning, Probation and Ordination shall be linked with the Congregational Development Team.
6. Use the current new church plant as a learning model and develop multiple strategies for planting at least five new congregations in 10 years.

Critical Issue 3: Racism

CRITICAL ISSUE DEFINED:

Racism: The combination of the power to dominate by one race over other races and a value system that assumes that the dominant race is innately superior to the other. (§162A, the 2004 Book of Discipline) Of the sins of prejudice, racism stands foremost for its pervasiveness and institutionalization. We recognize that we are a people of different races, traditions and cultures. We must value every person as a unique child of God. We must tear down the walls of racism by identifying and naming the issues that divide us.

RECOMMENDATION:

Within the Body of Christ, we must learn to celebrate the value of every person. We will seek healing for pains and wounds suffered by many peoples as the result of racism, and discover ways to build healthy relationships by dismantling the sin of racism. We will measure progress, evaluate outcome, and celebrate success continually in the future.

ACTION STEPS:

The Bishop has appointed persons within the North Central New York Conference to be members of the Dismantling Racism Team which has developed and implemented dismantling racism training for people in leadership, including Conference staff. All Conference Staff must participate in a training session prior to 2009. The Dismantling Racism Team will offer dismantling racism training sessions for local congregations. All persons under the appointment system and newly elected congregational leaders will be trained by the Dismantling Racism Team working with the Board of Ordained Ministry. A process will be developed, in coordination with BOOM, for the ongoing training for every new person under the appointment system.

The process of addressing racism will be used as a model to address other issues of prejudice.

Critical Issue 4: Connections

CRITICAL ISSUE DEFINED:

As United Methodist we are called to be in connection. This is one of the strengths of being United Methodist. However, one of the critical issues identified for the North Central New York Conference is our lack of connectionalism at all levels. In addition, there is a belief that the connection among local churches and the conference and general church agencies is primarily about finance and administration and that there is little benefit for the local church.

RECOMMENDATION:

The annual conference will provide local congregations what they need to be effective stewards in discipleship, spiritual formation, and transformation. We are called to be Christ-centered spiritual leaders in churches and other mission and ministry centers and to link local churches with each other, the conference, and the global church.

ACTION STEPS:

1. The annual conference will provide ongoing opportunities bringing in general and global resources which will enable congregations to connect in order to share information and resources.
2. The Mission Interpretation and Communications Team and the director of Computer Services will expand and maintain the NCNY website so that it will be a tool for local church lay and clergy to find accurate information and to connect and provide tools that will resource local churches.
3. The Lay Ministries Team will oversee the creation of an effective database of the gifts and expertise of clergy and laity who should serve as consultants in a variety of ministry areas. The database will be easily accessible to churches, and will provide guidelines for churches and consultants. The Resource Center will make the database easily accessible to churches. The database should be reviewed and updated annually.
4. Encourage the development of "Teaching Churches" and resource them to assist other congregations. (See also Critical Issue Two, Revitalizing Congregations, action step two.)
5. It was recommended that the position of director of stewardship and development be considered. This position would have the responsibility of providing stewardship education, marketing and promoting the mission of our conference, identifying donors, enhancing relations with prospective donors, inviting people "make an offering unto the Lord" for the sake of God's mission in NCNY Conference. Within one year this position would be expected to raise significant financial resources, well over the cost of the position itself, allowing our conference to fulfill the mission to which we are called.

Rationale for the Structure of the North Central New York Conference

The structure is intended to be a permission giving structure that brings together working teams of interested parties who have been given authority and responsibility for a vital part of the ministry and mission of the conference. They need to be given permission to carry out that work within a framework of existing policy and funding. They need to be supported in ways that allow them to take initiative to develop and energize new ministries whenever possible, and as quickly as possible. When needed, they should be able to propose new policy that can be approved ad interim for immediate action whenever possible on behalf of the Annual Conference between sessions to support the missional goals that have been adopted by the conference itself. The Book of Discipline places certain requirements on the structural design of annual conferences. We should be able to implement our critical issues more effectively in this design that differentiates policy making structures from action teams. It represents a new way for working together as a conference to achieve our goals and purposes as the living body of Christ.

North Central New York Conference Organizational Structure



Connecting laity and clergy in local congregations, districts, and annual conference in ministry throughout the world in the name of Jesus Christ

The Organizational Structure

Purpose – The purpose of the annual conference is to make disciples for Jesus Christ by equipping its local churches for ministry and providing a connection for ministry beyond the local church; all to the glory of God. (2004 Book of Discipline ¶ 601)

Connectional Ministries – Each annual conference is responsible to focus and guide the mission and ministry of The United Methodist Church within its boundaries by: 1. envisioning the ministries necessary to live out the mission of the church in and through the annual conference; 2. creating and nurturing relationships and connections among the local, district annual conference, and general church ministries; 3. providing encouragement, coordination, and support for the ministries of nurture, outreach, and witness in districts and congregations for the transformation of the world; 4. ensuring the alignment of the total resources of the annual conference to its mission; 5. developing and strengthening ethnic ministries, including ethnic local churches and concerns; 6. providing for advocacy and monitoring functions to ensure that the church is consistent with its stated values. (2004 Book of Discipline ¶ 607) The annual conference is responsible for structuring its ministries and administrative procedures in order to accomplish its purpose (2004 Book of Discipline ¶ 609). In so doing it shall provide for the connectional relationship of the local church, district, and conference with the general agencies. It will monitor to ensure inclusiveness of race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, age, economic status, or physical or mental condition. This structure enables the connection between our ministry teams, the Council and Transition Team in order to equip local congregations and districts, and for fulfilling the mission and vision of our conference and to address the four critical issues.

The structure includes ministry areas with teams or boards that are mandated by 2004 Book of Discipline and other teams created by the Ministry Plan that will address all four of the critical issues that are presented and established in this structure.

The teams shall have funding for their ministry ¶613.2b, 613 3b. The teams and team leaders shall be nominated (according to the requirements set forth by The 2004 Book of Discipline) by the Nominations Team.

THE COUNCIL

The Council shall hold before all the ministries the mission and vision of the Annual Conference. The Council membership is, (but is not limited to): the Bishop, The Conference Lay Leader and Associate Lay Leaders, District Superintendents, Director of Connectional Ministries, Conference Treasurer, District Council Chairs or equivalent, Area coordinators of: Global Ministry, Spiritual Leadership Ministry, Lay Ministry, Congregational Development Ministry, Service Ministry, Social Ministry; District Lay Leaders or representative, Council on Youth Ministries Chair and one representative, Young Adult Ministries Team Leader, United Methodist Women President, United Methodist Men President, Finance Team Leader, Religion and Race Team Leader, and Conference Secretary of Global Ministries. The Council may add five additional members to ensure inclusiveness. The Council will meet at least twice a year in order to link the teams for the purpose of communication, coordination and program budget building. The Council is not a micro-manager of the teams and their ministries; rather,

this structure is permission giving which gives the teams the freedom to live out their responsibilities for our conference and the Ministry Plan. The Council shall annually review and approve action plans of each Ministry Area. Where policy changes are warranted, the Council shall act on behalf of the Annual Conference ad-interim and report all recommendations for policy change at the next regular session of the Annual Conference. The Council shall be amenable to and function as the administrative agency of the Annual Conference. The convener of the Council will be selected by the Council.

THE MINISTRY AREAS

The six ministry areas are:

1. Spiritual Leadership Ministry
2. Lay Ministry
3. Service Ministry
4. Social Ministry
5. Congregational Development Ministry
6. Global Ministry

The coordinator of each ministry area shall call a gathering of their respective ministry teams for the purpose of communication and coordination and shall meet at least twice a year. The coordinators of each ministry area are members of the Council. After this gathering, every ministries team will meet together in order to fulfill their disciplinary responsibilities and to include the four critical issues assigned to them from the Ministry Plan.

1. Spiritual Leadership Ministry (¶629)

Administrative Review Committee (¶635)
Board of Higher Education (¶633)
Board of Ordained Ministry (¶634)
Committee on Investigation (¶2703)
Camps, Conferences and Retreats Ministries Team
Christian Education Ministries Team (¶329.2)
Evangelism Ministries Team (¶629.3)
Faith Formation Ministries Team
Nominations Committee
Resource Ministries Team
Stewardship Task Force (¶629.5)
Walk to Emmaus
Worship Ministries Team (¶629.4)

2. Lay Ministry

Council On Youth Ministries (¶649)
District Lay Leaders (¶630)
Lay Speaking Ministries (¶630.6d)
Older Adult Ministry
United Methodist Men (¶647)
United Methodist Women (¶646)

Young Adult Ministries

3. Service Ministry

Archives and History (¶640)

Board of Pension and Health Benefits (¶638)

Conference Sessions

Finance Team (¶610)

Joint Committee on Incapacity (¶651)

Personnel Team

Mission Interpretation and Communication Team (¶645)

Trustees (¶2512)

(Sub Team) Camp Directors Housing Task Force

(Sub Team) Insurance Task Force

(Sub Team) Investment Task Force

4. Social Ministry

Christian Unity and Inter-religious Concerns (¶641)

Church and Society (¶628)

Environmental Justice Coordinator

Peace with Justice Coordinator

(Sub Team) Peace with Justice Palestine and Israel

Committee on Sexual Harassment Awareness

Commission on Status and Role of Women

Committee on Disability Concerns (¶652)

Dismantling Racism Team

Native American Ministries Team (¶653)

Religion and Race (¶642)

5. Congregational Development Ministry

Boundaries Task Force

Equitable Salaries (¶624)

Mission Priorities

New Church Starts

Revitalizing Congregations

Town and Country Ministries (¶642)

Urban Strategies Team

6. Global Ministry

Bishops' Initiative on Children and Poverty

Board of Global Ministries

Disaster Relief (¶632.4b.22)

Volunteers in Mission (¶632.6)

The Ministries Teams explanation:

¶ Listed here are short explanatory paragraphs for disciplinary teams taken directly from The 2004 Book Of Discipline, In order to see the complete duties and responsibilities of each ministries team, look to The 2004 Book of Discipline. Teams that are disciplinary, with the symbol ¶ are not subject for voting, but are a part of who we are as an Annual Conference. @Those statements or words that are symbolized with an @ are the work of the Strategic Planning Task Force. Teams that are not listed in the 2004 Book of Discipline and are listed here are those ministries deemed important and necessary to carry on the mission of our annual conference and the critical issues named in this document.

1. SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP MINISTRY (¶629)

Administrative Review Committee: Its only purpose shall be to ensure that the disciplinary procedures for involuntary leave of absence, involuntary retirement, or administrative location are properly followed. ¶ 635

Board of Higher Education: Provides for the connectional relationship between the Division of Higher Education of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry and the conference, district and local church and shall provide for a ministry in higher education related to the objectives and scope of work of the general board. ¶ 633

Board of Ordained Ministry: Assumes the primary responsibility for the enlistment and recruitment of ordained clergy by working in consultation with the cabinet and the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry to study and interpret the clergy needs and resources of the annual conference, with due regard to the inclusive nature of the church. ¶ 634

Camps, Conferences and Retreats Ministries Team: Oversees the administration, ministry programs and properties of Casowasco Retreat Center and Aldersgate Camp and sets policies and procedures for these respective sites. Membership: two representatives from every district, exofficio: director of CCRM, directors of Casowasco and Aldersgate.

Christian Education Ministries Team: Develops and promotes a conference program of Christian education for the whole life span, to lead, assist and support congregations and districts in developing systems for educational and small-group ministries that give children, youth, young adults, adults, older adults, and families knowledge of and experience in the Christian faith and spiritual disciplines as motivation for Christian service in the church, the community, and the world. This team is also to develop and maintain an organized system for communicating and working with persons responsible for Christian education programs in local churches, districts, jurisdictions and the General Board of Discipleship. ¶ 629.2

Evangelism Ministries Team: Plans and promotes an effective, comprehensive ministry of evangelism for people of all ages, creates an understanding of, interest in, and commitment to evangelism throughout the conference, provides for the training of clergy and laypersons in leadership in ministries of evangelism, the distribution of promotional literature, the encouragement and enlistment of local church participation in an ongoing ministry of evangelism, and the support of church revitalization and new church development. ¶ 629.3

Nominations: Guided by the Book of Discipline, this team provides for the membership of every team in our conference.

Resource Ministries Team: Maintains the conference resource center, consultant resources database and deployment of consultants. Produces media for use by our Annual Conference and local churches. Membership: one representative from every district, UMW representative, Christian Education Team representative, ex-officio: Director of Resource Ministries.

Stewardship Ministries Team: Plans and promotes a comprehensive program of stewardship for people of all ages throughout the conference in such areas as stewardship education, proportionate giving and tithing, funding the church's ministries, planned giving, time and abilities, economics and money management, and lifestyle. A working relationship with and resources from The United Methodist Foundation shall be formed to accomplish these responsibilities. ¶ 629.5

Worship Ministries Team: Responsible for the concerns of worship for people of all ages within the annual conference. ¶ 629.4

2. LAY MINISTRY

Conference Council On Youth Ministries: Initiates and supports plans, activities and projects that are of particular interest to youth, acts as an advocate for the free expression of the convictions of youth on issues vital to them. ¶ 648

District Lay Leaders: Fosters awareness of the role of the laity both within the congregation and through their ministries in the home, workplace, community and world in achieving the mission of the church; develops and promotes programs to cultivate an adequate understanding of the theological and biblical basis for lay life and work among the members of the churches of the annual conference. ¶ 630

Lay Speaking Ministries: Sets criteria and guidelines for district committees on Lay Speaking Ministries, develops lay speaking courses and approve courses developed by district committees, organizes conference-wide lay speaking events. ¶ 630.6

United Methodist Men: Builds and supports the district organizations of United Methodist Men in developing resources to meet the needs and interest of men and the responsibilities of discipleship; empowers personal witness and evangelism; enables outreach in individual and group mission and ministry; encourages and supports spiritual growth and faith development, and promotes the objectives and responsibilities of the General Commission on United Methodist Men. ¶ 647

United Methodist Women: Works with the district organizations and the local units of United Methodist Women in developing programs to meet the needs and interests of women and the concerns and responsibilities of the global church; to encourage and support spiritual growth, missionary outreach, and Christian social action; and to promote the plans and responsibilities of the Women's Division. ¶ 646

Older Adult Ministry: This team shall serve as an advocate for older adult concerns and issues and shall serve to support ministries for older adults throughout the conference.

Young Adult Ministries: It's purpose shall be to strengthen the young adult ministry in the local churches and districts of the annual conference. ¶ 649

3. SERVICE MINISTRY

Archives and History: Collects and preserves the historically significant records of the annual conference and its agencies, including data relating to the origin and history of the conference and its antecedents; encourages and assists the local churches in preserving their records, compiling their records, compiling their histories, and celebrating their heritage, and provides for the permanent safekeeping of the historical records of all abandoned or discontinued churches in the bounds of the annual conference and its antecedents. ¶ 640

Board of Pension and Health Benefits: Has charge of the interests and work of providing for and contributing to the support, relief, assistance, and pensioning of clergy and their families, other church workers, and lay employees of The United Methodist Church, its institutions, organizations, and agencies within the annual conference, except as otherwise provided for by the general board. ¶ 638

Conference Sessions: Cares for the annual meeting and/or special sessions of our annual conference. Membership of this team is: one representative from every district, a District Superintendent, two representatives from The Board of Ordained Ministry, the Bishop, Worship Team leader, United Methodist Women, United Methodist Men, Conference Council on Youth, conference staff, conference secretary.

Finance Team (Conference Council on Finance and Administration): Develops, maintains and administers a comprehensive and coordinated plan of fiscal and administrative policies, procedures and management services for the annual conference. ¶611 –CF&A: Members shall be elected at the Annual Conference succeeding General Conference for a period of four years. ¶ 610

Joint Committee on Incapacity: Studies the problems of incapacity in the annual conference, provides for a continuing personal ministry to any disabled clergy of the conference and aids them in maintaining fellowship with the members of the conference. ¶ 651

Mission Interpretation and Communications Team: Acts as a service agency to meet the communication, publication, multimedia, public and media relations, interpretation, and promotional needs of the annual conference. ¶ 645

Personnel Team: Provides reviews of personnel policies and processes. The team will be a second step in the problem resolution process as specified in the employee handbook. The Personnel Team will act as a sounding board for conference staff on personnel related issues.

Trustees: ¶ 639, Membership and duties are detailed in ¶ 2512.1-7.

4. GLOBAL MINISTRY

Bishops' Initiative on Children and Poverty: Responsible for raising awareness issues of children around the world who are suffering from poverty and gives interpretation of how churches can be involved to help relieve poverty stricken children in our world. Membership, one representative from every district, with the chair who is appointed by the Bishop.

Board of Global Ministries: Interprets to the annual conference the programs, plans, and policies of the General Board of Global Ministries, plans and promotes emphases on global ministries, and undergirds with education, constructive evaluation, communication and cultivation the total program of the General Board of Global

Ministries. ¶ 632 Members of General Boards and Agencies will select the ministries to which they relate.

Disaster Relief: Responsible for disaster relief within our conference and also provides training opportunities for disaster relief district coordinators. Relates to the conference Board of Global Ministries and United Methodist Committee On Relief Membership: conference disaster relief coordinator, and district disaster relief coordinators.

Volunteers in Mission (VIM Coordinator): coordinates the volunteer-in-mission ministries of the annual conference in cooperation with the General Board of Global Ministries' mission volunteers office and the jurisdictional Volunteer In Mission office.

¶ 632.6

5. SOCIAL MINISTRY

Christian Unity and Inter-religious Concerns: Interprets, advocates and works for the unity of the Christian church in every aspect of the life of the conference and its churches and encourages dialogue and cooperation with persons of other living faiths.

¶ 641

Church and Society: Connects the General Board of Church and Society and the district and local churches in relating the gospel of Jesus Christ to the members of the church and to the persons and structures of the communities, nation, and world in which they live. Programs shall be developed that provide education and action on issues confronting the church consistent with the social principles and the policies adopted by the General Conference. ¶ 628

Peace With Justice Team (Coordinator): Responsible for administering the conference Peace with Justice Special Sunday Offering receipts and for coordinating peace and justice ministries.

Environmental Justice Coordinator

(Sub Team) Peace with Justice for Palestine and Israel: Conference endorsed task force

Commission on Status and Role of Women: The responsibility of this commission is to be informed about the status and role of all women in the total life of the conference.

¶ 643

Committee on Disability Concerns: Provide awareness and advocacy for the role of persons with disabilities in ministry, including ordained and diaconal ministries and local church and annual conference leadership positions; advocates for and help develops programs within the annual conference that meet the needs of persons with disabilities.

¶ 652

Dismantling Racism Team: Provides dismantling racism training for our conference as set forth in Critical Issue Three action steps. Membership for this team will consist of a representative from every district and will be provided for by the terms of the Ministry Plan. @

Native American Ministries Team: Determines the distribution of the Native American Ministries Sunday offering, coordinates the promotion of Native American Ministries Sunday, and monitors Native American ministries within the annual conference. ¶ 653

Religion and Race: Assumes responsibility for such matters as: providing resources and training to enable the work of the local church ministry area of religion and race, examining ethnic representation on all of the conference boards, agencies,

commissions and committees, as well as the governing boards of related institutions. After such an examination, appropriate recommendations for total inclusiveness should be made to the annual conference. ¶ 642

6. CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT MINISTRY

Boundaries Task Force:

Equitable Salaries: Supports full-time clergy serving as pastors in the charges of the annual conference by: recommending conference standards for pastoral support, administering funds to be used in base compensation supplementation; and providing counsel and advisory material on pastoral support to district superintendents and committees on pastor parish relations. ¶ 624

Mission Priorities: Supports churches that are part of the overall NCNY Conference and supports those churches in strategically locations for mission purposes.

Membership determined by the Congregational Development Ministries. ¶632.5

New Church Starts: Determines through data gathering where to develop new churches and oversees the new churches and their pattern for success; follows the action steps as set forth in Critical Issue Two. Membership for this team will consist of a representative from every district and those determined by the Congregational Development Ministries. @

Revitalizing Congregations: Resources local churches with the tools to revitalize their congregations as set forth in Critical Issue Two action steps. Membership of this team will consist of a representative from every district and those persons determined by the Congregational Development Ministry. @

Town and Country Ministries: Seeks and shares information about the needs and opportunities of the small membership church in rural, suburban, and urban settings of the total life of the conference. ¶ 642

Urban Strategies Team:

Episcopacy Responsibilities:

Conference Committee on Episcopacy ¶ 636

Episcopal Residence Committee ¶ 637

Understandings about the districts

The districts and the congregations are all involved in the mission and vision of the conference because they are the annual conference. The districts shall aid their churches to network together. Churches that are willing to share in ministries, leadership events, workshops, and other events are to be encouraged by the districts, even though district boundaries are crossed.

An “anchor church” may be named to encourage the sharing of successful ministries to other churches within their geographical area.

In this structure local churches, districts and the conference share in the ministry and mission of Jesus Christ.

Commission on Futures

Recommend that a Commission on Futures be created to provide guidance to the Annual Conference and its teams and committees. This Commission will look to future needs and trends, as well as best practices of the past and areas for improvement. The Commission will take the broad look:

at the critical issues of the conference,
the design of the ministry plan, and
the structure of the annual conference.

The charter of the Commission on Futures will include (but not be limited to):

- Analysis of trends in ministry and witness,
- Devising goals and objectives that provide for mid-course changes,
- Recommendation on new directions, and
- Recommendations of program positions, budget, staffing patterns, and recourse commitment.

The Commission will be flexible, advisory, and will not hold official membership on any annual conference organization. The commission will pass recommendations on to ministry areas and / ministry teams of the annual conference. The Commission will report at least once a year to the Council and Annual Conference.

The Commission will be named by the Bishop. Membership will be divided into two classes of four persons each. Each class will serve four years. (The beginning Commission will include one class of four named for two years, and one class of four persons named for four years. This sentence will be deleted in 2008.) Each class will include lay and clergy, as well as racial, ethnic, gender, and geographic diversity. The Chair of the Commission will be named by the Bishop. Ex-officio members, without vote, will include the Bishop, DCM, Treasurer, Dean of the Cabinet, and Conference Lay Leader.

Glossary

These terms are not all inclusive but relate to terms used in this document.

Annual Conference: (referred to in this document as conference): “The purpose of the annual conference is to make disciples for Jesus Christ by equipping its local churches for ministry and by providing a connection for ministry beyond the local church...(¶601 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church)) [and] is responsible for structuring its ministries and administrative procedures in order to accomplish its purpose. In doing so, it shall provide for the connectional relationship of the local church, district, and conference with the general agencies...(¶609 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church)

Christian Spiritual Formation: see spiritual formation

Christian Spiritual Leader: Anyone (lay or clergy) who gives direction to the Christ centered church and the world and guides others on their path toward God. A visionary;

asking, seeking, discovering, what God is calling the Body to be and do next. Christian Spiritual leaders lead according to the gifts and graces God has provided them.

Cluster Covenant Group: A small group, six to eight in number, organized with in the church for the purpose of developing mutual accountability for living a disciplined life. The group finds its structure from the Covenant Discipleship model developed by David Lowes Watson and outlined in his book Covenant Discipleship.

Congregation Revitalization Team: Team selected and trained by the Annual Conference for the purpose of spiritual and connectional renewal in the local church.

Connection: Connectionalism in the United Methodist tradition is multi-leveled, global in scope and local in thrust. Our connectionalism is not merely a linking of one charge conference to another. It is rather a vital web of interactive relationships. We are connected by sharing a common tradition of faith, including our Doctrinal standards and General Rules; by sharing together a constitutional polity, including a leadership of general superintendency by sharing a common mission, which we seek to carry out be working together in and through conferences that reflect the inclusive and missional character of our fellowship; by sharing a common ethos that characterizes our distinctive way of doing things. (§130 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church).

Core Value: The values that drive an organization's life and ministry.

Conference Council: The organizational structure adopted at the 2003 Annual Conference The structure delineates functioning teams, boards and agencies of the conference that are charged to provide planning, interpret and implementation of the mission and ministry of the annual conference.

Covenant Relationship: Groups organized with in the church for the purpose of developing mutual accountability for living a disciplined life. (§ 256.1b)

Discipleship: Following the teachings of Jesus Christ as expressed in scripture, and doctrine.

New Church Development Team: People selected and trained by the conference for the purpose of developing new churches.

Pan-Methodist: Denominations that share the historical relationship and Wesleyan tradition called Methodists in America, including the African Methodist Episcopal church, the African Methodist Episcopal Zion church, the Christian Methodist Episcopal church, the United Methodist church and its predecessors.

Racism: The combination of the power to dominate by one race over other races and a value system that assumes that the dominant race is innately superior to the other. (§ 162A)

Seeker: A person who is searching for a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Spiritual Covenant Group: see Cluster Covenant Group

Spiritual Formation: A pattern or series of concrete actions that will gently move us toward transformation in Christ. This transformation is God's work of grace which is a pure gift – not of our own doing. (Richard Foster: Spiritual Classics; p. xiii)

Unchurched: Persons who are not experiencing the fellowship of the Body of Christ.

Appendix

Taken from the **Book of Discipline**

* Paragraph 120: The Mission – The mission of the church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ. Local churches provide the most significant arena through which disciple-making occurs. Paragraph 121: Rationale for Our Mission: The mission of the church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ by proclaiming the good news of God's grace and thus seeking the fulfillment of God's reign and realm in the world. The fulfillment of God's reign and realm in the world is the vision Scripture holds before us. The United Methodist Church affirms that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Savior of the world, and the Lord of all. We respect persons of all religious faiths and we defend religious freedom for all persons. Jesus' words in Matthew 28: 19-20 provide the Church with our mission: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you."

This mission is our grace-filled response to the Reign of God in the world announced by Jesus. God's grace is active everywhere, at all times, carrying out this purpose as revealed by the Bible. It is expressed in God's covenant with Abraham and Sarah, in the Exodus of Israel from Egypt, and in the ministry of the prophets. It is fully embodied in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is experienced in the ongoing creation of a new people by the Holy Spirit. John Wesley, Phillip Otterbein, Jacob Albright and our other spiritual forebears understood this mission in this way. Whenever United Methodism has had a clear sense of mission, God has used our church to save persons, heal relationships, transform social structures, and spread scriptural holiness, thereby changing the world. In order to be truly alive, we embrace Jesus' mandate to make disciples of all people.

Paragraph 122: The Process for Carrying Out Our Mission – We make disciples as we:

- proclaim the gospel, seek, welcome and gather people into the body of Christ;
- lead persons to commit their lives to God through baptism and profession of faith in Jesus Christ;
- nurture persons in Christian living through worship, the sacraments, spiritual disciplines, and other means of grace, such as Wesley's Christian conferencing;
- send persons into the world to live lovingly and justly as servants of Christ by healing the sick, feeding the hungry, caring for the stranger, freeing the oppressed, and working to develop social structures that are consistent with the gospel; and
- continue the mission of seeking, welcoming and gathering persons into the community of the body of Christ.

**Paragraph 254: Other Ministry Group Coordinators – In order to fulfill the mission of the local church, the charge conference may elect annually a coordinator or ministry group chairperson for any or all of these areas: Christian unity and interreligious concerns, church and society, community volunteers, education, evangelism, higher education and campus ministry, missions, prayer advocacy, religion and race, status and role of women, earth advocacy, stewardship, and worship.

Where desirable, the charge conference may combine coordinators' or ministry group chairpersons' assignments. Each coordinator or ministry group chairperson, if elected, shall work with the church council (or other appropriate body), pastor(s), and other church leaders to address the needs and opportunities of the particular area, utilizing all appropriate resources and relationships of the district, annual conference, and/or general church.

***Paragraph 629.3: Responsibilities in the Area of Evangelism –

- a) To plan and promote an effective, comprehensive ministry of evangelism for people of all ages.
- b) To create an understanding of, interest in, and commitment to evangelism throughout the conference.
- c) To provide for the training of clergy and laypersons in leadership in ministries of evangelism, the distribution of promotional literature, the encouragement and enlistment of local church participation in an ongoing ministry of evangelism, and the support of church revitalization and new church development.
- d) To give guidance to the groups responsible for the work of evangelism in the districts and to the ministry area of evangelism in the local church.
- e) To give particular emphasis to the promotion of ministries of evangelism, which may include ministries in jails and prisons with offenders, victims, and their families, in order that all persons living in a community where there is a local United Methodist Church, and who are without a church affiliation or who make no profession of faith, will be included within the nurturing and caring responsibility of that local church.
- f) To recommend annually, in consultation with the board of ordained ministry, to the conference and to the bishop in charge the appointment of certain effective members of the conference as general evangelists, provided that such persons shall meet the standards set for general evangelists by the General Board of Discipleship. This person shall serve as an ex officio member of the conference board of discipleship area of evangelism. In the event that there is more than one general evangelist in said annual conference, at least one shall be selected by the conference committee on nominations.
- g) To recommend and endorse the ministry of said general evangelist to the pastors and leadership of the annual conference.