

1 **VI. CONFERENCE REPORTS**

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4 **ADVOCACY RESOURCE TEAM**

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6 **Mission:**

7 The mission of the Advocacy Resource Team (ART) is to help the Annual Conference and our
8 local churches to live out the biblical mandate found in Micah 6:8, ". . . *What does the Lord*
9 *require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?*"
10 Jesus' calling and ministry echoed these values of the Reign of God. He was always seeking
11 to include those who were marginalized, disenfranchised, or oppressed. He then enabled
12 them to know God in a more powerful, intimate way. ART seeks to do the same through
13 sharing ministries of compassion and justice.

14
15 We also seek to help the Annual Conference live into its theme of *Healing God's World:*
16 *Physically & Spiritually* through resourcing ministries of compassion and justice at the local
17 church level. These are opportunities for us to break down walls and barriers and bring love
18 and unity to our hurting communities. As our Bishop, Peggy Johnson, has said, "*The goal of*
19 *justice is not for me to win and for you to lose, but for us to find a way forward together.*
20 *The goal of justice is not to continue to punish yourself or others, but to find a new freedom*
21 *that energizes all of life . . . Justice is the real deal: the radical surgery that creates real*
22 *healing. It demands our total involvement. And God is using it every day to change the*
23 *world.*" It is this call upon all of us that drives the team and helps give it the passion to be
24 the hands and feet of Jesus to a hurting world.

25
26 This has been a year of mixed accomplishments. We have done much, contemplated much,
27 and learned much. As we have reflected back on the last year, it is clear that we are
28 beginning to move towards a new model of ministry—one that empowers the local church
29 and its disciples to take the initiative in developing ministries of compassion and justice
30 within their own contexts and communities. This really is exciting! We hope to see
31 ministry in the local context, done by local parishioners, which help local people in need.
32 May God bless this work and the goals that we have set for next year.

33
34 **Review of Goals for 2013/2014 Conference Year:**

35 This has been a year of learning and growing. We have journeyed down the road of
36 ministry with God and have produced fruit in some areas and found barrenness in others.

- 37 • **Clearly articulate the vision of the Advocacy Resource Team for the 2012-2016**
38 **Quadrennium.** Ongoing and bearing some fruit. We hope to be living this out over the
39 next few years.
- 40 • **Improve our communication.** We have had some success in improving our
41 communication. However, there is much more work to be done. While we still value
42 two-way communication as the best way to interact with the local churches, we will
43 begin by narrowing our focus to
- 44 – Upgrade our web presence through the Conference's webpage.
 - 45 – Create and share an ongoing electronic publication of the ART accomplishments,
46 ministries, and opportunities.

- 47 • **Empower Conference ministries of compassion and justice and provide support**
48 **to help them produce fruit.** We have experienced some growth in this area.
49 DisAbility ministries is making great progress towards full inclusion for those who are
50 otherly abled, the Committee on the Status and Role of Women has been reformed and
51 is planning events for 2014 and beyond, Peace with Justice ministries are moving
52 forward with new ideas and new energy. ART is committed to serving God through
53 helping promote ministries of mercy and justice throughout the Delmarva Peninsula.
- 54 • **Begin dialogue with as many local churches as possible in the Conference to**
55 **resource their ministries of compassion and justice.** While we have expanded the
56 list, we have not accomplished nearly as much as we had hoped. Deep dialogue begins
57 with trust, and trust begins with relationship. For us to be able to understand each
58 other and genuinely dialogue, we have to develop relationships with one another. One
59 new goal for ART is to build relationships and promote deep discussion and dialogue.
- 60 • **Reach out to other Annual Conferences, General Boards, and various agencies**
61 **to leverage resources for the ART and local churches in our Conference.** We
62 began this process and are looking forward to working with the General Board of Church
63 and Society, the Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference, the Eastern Pennsylvania
64 Annual Conference, and other organizations.

65

66 **Goals for 2014/2015 Conference Year:**

67 If we are truly to learn, then we must change as a result. Our goals for the next Conference
68 year reflect some of these learnings.

- 69 • **Facilitate relationship building, amongst individuals, churches, and ministries**
70 **within the Annual Conference.**
- 71 • **Continue anti-racism work by fostering conversations amongst people in**
72 **communities across the Annual Conference.**
- 73 • **Develop programs that work towards reductions in gun violence and crime in**
74 **our communities.**
- 75 • **Improve our communication to the Annual Conference.**

76

77 We feel that these goals will focus us in areas that will make significant impact in our
78 Conference. The Advocacy Resource Team is committed to working through local churches
79 to improve the lives of people both on the inside and on the outside of our walls. We seek
80 to help committed Christians to live out their faith through ministries of compassion and
81 justice, and to engage the outside world through these same ministries so that they may
82 see Jesus in us.

83

84 You are invited to be part of this adventure with us. If you would like more information or
85 would like to join us on the team, contact our coordinator, Tom Pasmore
86 (tom.pasmore@gmail.com). We always are looking for more advocates to be about the
87 work of Christ.

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90 Submitted by:

91 Tom Pasmore, Coordinator

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COMMITTEE ON NATIVE AMERICAN MINISTRIES – CONAM

Mission: The mission of CONAM is to serve God, the Creator, while being a resource, advocate, and educational body for Native American Ministries within the Peninsula-Delaware Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church.

Section 1: Review of 2013 Goals

To participate in training events for clergy in the Annual Conference on how to relate to Native American issues and ministry. We have provided an active Native American presence at Nurturing Wholeness in Community retreats in the Conference.

To offer classes/courses for lay persons through district leadership programs such as Lay Academies regarding Native American issues and ministry. We continue to offer our resources for lay academies and other awareness and training events within our Conference and throughout the Methodist connection.

To provide speakers for Native American Ministries Sunday in particular and for Native American cultural awareness events in general. To work toward ensuring the best use of our speakers and their effective impact on local churches/communities. This is ongoing and a major goal of our committee. We are working to deploy our speakers in such a way that they have a positive impact on local churches and communities.

To continue to develop and strengthen partnerships between the two Native American Churches, Indian Mission UMC, Immanuel Union UMC and other congregations in the Conference. Our CONAM invites the two pastors from our Native American churches to be a part of our committee and encourages their presence and input at our meetings as well as the Northeast Jurisdictional CONAM annual meetings.

To expand the ministry of CONAM into other areas of the Peninsula-Delaware Conference. CONAM continues to conduct programs in a variety of settings such as schools, universities, civic organizations, camps, scouting events, historical societies, libraries, Native American cultural events such as pow wows and festivals.

To continue to promote the celebration of Native American Ministries Sunday. This is a major goal of CONAM. We make available to the local congregations resources, speakers, materials and ideas for having and conducting a service for this special offering Sunday. We are encouraging our CONAM representatives in each church or charge to help design a Native American Ministries Sunday worship service.

To provide financial support for persons to attend Native American Family Camp, Peg Leg Flamingos, a youth leadership training, Native American lay speaking school and other Native American awareness training events and leadership opportunities. This is a major goal of CONAM and is ongoing.

140

141 To continue to seek to identify other Native American/American Indian tribal peoples and
142 those with Native American/American Indian heritage, living within the boundaries of our
143 Annual Conference. This is a major goal of CONAM and is ongoing. Many people have self-
144 identified through CONAM presentations in their church. We encourage our CONAM
145 representatives to help identify Native persons within their church or charge.

146

147 To continue to provide representatives from churches/charges in our Annual Conference
148 CONAM. We shall continue to encourage District Superintendents to follow The Book of
149 Discipline, where at charge conference a person will be named as representative to CONAM.
150 Once representatives are made known, CONAM will have a gathering session to inform
151 representatives of their responsibilities, bring awareness of CONAM, its purpose and
152 responsibility within our Annual Conference, and build relationships and partnerships with
153 CONAM representatives and their church or charge.

154

155 **Section 2: Significant Events 2013**

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157 CONAM committee has supported and participated in the following events: Our members
158 serve on many board, teams, agencies and task forces with our annual conference and
159 beyond.

160

161 **NURTURING WHOLENESS IN COMMUNITY LEVEL 1 & 2:** CONAM members have
162 assumed leadership positions at these retreat experiences; sharing history of Native people
163 within the church; bringing awareness of ongoing historical trauma and unresolved grief
164 experienced by many Native peoples as a result of continued racism, stereotyping, and
165 depiction of Native people in unflattering ways such as mascots and characterizing them in
166 dehumanizing cartoons. We have expressed many ways in which racial division can be
167 reconciled and how inclusiveness can lead to healing.

168

169 **NDN STIXS:** A youth ministry made up of boys and girls from the Nanticoke tribe. The NDN
170 STIXS continue their journey of meeting on a regular basis emphasizing relationship with
171 Creator God, community service, tribal participation, mentoring younger youth and being
172 helping hands to the tribal community elders. One of the highlights of this group is to go
173 Christmas caroling to many shut-ins of the tribe. This group began more than 10 years ago
174 and today's group is made up of younger relatives and children of the original group of
175 young ladies, who were called the NDN STIX CHIXS. Some of our original group of girls
176 have committed to involvement with other UMC Native groups and some come back to visit
177 and help out with the present group. The NDN STIXS continue to fund raise so they may
178 travel to be a part of National Native American events. CONAM has committed to a monthly
179 donation so this group can have materials and crafts for their weekly meetings.

180

181 **NATIVE WRITERS WORKSHOP:** This is an ongoing event sponsored by NACP (Native
182 American Comprehensive Plan). This workshop focuses on Native adults and youth, writing
183 works for worship services, poetry, and stories that can be used by Native and non-Native
184 people. Works from the Native writers is available for use through the NACP and GBOD
185 (General Board of Discipleship) websites. Writers from this group have been asked to write
186 for other agencies or events. This gathering is vital to preparing Native people to express

187 their voices through writing. Many adults and youth from our CONAM and local Native
188 communities have participated in this event.

189

190 **MOCCASINS ROCK:** Tennessee Annual Conference CONAM invites Ragghi Calentine and
191 boe harris as leadership to help plan and participate as workshop leaders for this annual
192 event, held at Camp Benson, Tennessee. Many Native leaders from many conferences
193 across the Methodist connection are a part of this event. This event is open to Native and
194 non-Native people of all ages. The focus of this event is to bring awareness of the Native
195 culture and to educate participants of current Native issues. Participants experience
196 traditional Native stories, lectures, talking circles, workshops, Native crafts, traditional drum
197 and flute music, traditional tribal dances and open mic evenings to share their gifts and
198 talents. Personal stories from participants have expressed life changing experiences from
199 this week end. Being in leadership of this event has led to invitations for Ragghi Calentine
200 and boe harris to be workshop leaders and speakers in other annual conferences across our
201 Methodist connection.

202

203 **NATIVE AMERICAN FAMILY CAMP: NAIC (Native American International Caucus)**
204 Ragghi Calentine is chairperson of family camp. This event is open to Native families across
205 the Methodist connection with emphasis on education, experiencing the tribal people who
206 live in the area where the camp is held, workshops on current Native issues, activities for all
207 age groups and fun. This gathering is an opportunity for Native peoples to come together
208 and fellowship.

209

210 **NATIVE AMERICAN MINISTRY SUNDAY CELEBRATIONS:** Many of our committee
211 members have taken part in many churches throughout our conference and other
212 conferences celebrating this special Sunday. We thank the churches for their invitations,
213 contributions and dedication.

214

215 **NANTICOKE TRIBAL DANCE TROUPE:** CONAM members and many of the NDN STIXS are
216 members of this dance troupe and share stories, music, traditional dancing and cultural
217 traditions at various events throughout the Northeast.

218

219 **EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE:** Our CONAM and EPAC CONAM are in
220 partnership and support of each other. Many of our CONAM members have traveled to
221 churches in EPAC area to share in Native American Ministry Sunday services.

222

223 **SUN VALLEY INDIAN SCHOOL, HOLBROOK, ARIZONA:** Nancy Coswell, a CONAM
224 representative, Penny Carney and Barbara Kelly, CONAM members have participated in this
225 mission opportunity along with other members of our annual conference.

226

227 **PEN~DEL YOUTH RALLY:** Two young Nanticoke tribal youth, Cheyenne Wright and
228 Matthew Harmon joined Ragghi Calentine and boe harris to present two workshops on
229 Native American Ministry Sunday worship experiences. Cheyenne and Matthew are part of
230 the NDN STIXS. We are so proud of them as they stepped out and took leadership!

231

232 **UNITY RUN:** A grant was acquired from GBGM (General Board of Global Ministries) to fund
233 a Unity Run: An event to unite the three federation tribes of Delaware and New Jersey.

234 Unity Run committee meets every month, plans and implements activities for the three
235 communities. Shawl making, fan making, healthy living were among some of the 2013
236 events. In October the actual run took place with all three tribal chiefs leading the walk run.
237 It was a great success and will take place again in October 2014.
238

239 **HONORING OF ODETTE WRIGHT:** Odette Wright is a founding member of CONAM. We
240 honored her at annual conference and the Nanticoke Tribe had an honoring for her at their
241 Heritage Day celebration. We are grateful for Odette and all the work she has done for our
242 CONAM and her Nanticoke Tribe.
243

244 **CONAM REPRESENTATIVE TRAINING EVENT:** November 9th our representative training
245 event was held. Representatives got the opportunity to hear from our leadership and our
246 members about how they feel about CONAM and the important work that is being done.
247 After our training event was over, all representatives were invited to the Nanticoke Heritage
248 Day celebration where they could see the Nanticoke Museum, tribal dancing and the
249 honoring of Odette Wright.
250

251 **Section 3: Committee member participation in other vital ministries outside Annual**
252 **Conference:**
253

254 **NAIC: Native American International Caucus.** Ragghi Calentine and Brett Jackson, Kayleigh
255 Vickers, Nanticoke Tribal young adults are representatives to this General Church caucus.
256

257 **NACP: Native American Comprehensive Plan.** Ragghi Calentine, boe harris and Kayleigh
258 Vickers, Nanticoke young adult, are representatives for this quadrennium.
259

260 **UMCom: United Methodist Communications,** Ragghi Calentine is a board member for this
261 quadrennium.
262

263 **NEJCONAM: Northeastern Jurisdictional Committee On Native American Ministries,** four
264 CONAM representatives attended this year's meeting at Drew University, New Jersey.
265 Ragghi Calentine, boe harris, Ron Schatz and Barbara Kelly.
266

267 **Section 4: Goals for 2014**
268

269 CONAM shall continue to make our voices and presence known within conference and
270 beyond, being a pathway to awareness and education. We shall continue to bring awareness
271 of historical trauma and unresolved grief and how the continuing of racism prevents
272 reconciliation and the healing process of our Native people.
273

274 CONAM will continue to encourage our conference to fulfill the position of CONAM
275 representative in each church or charge to our conference committee.
276

277 CONAM will plan events for committee members, representatives and conference
278 communities that bring awareness of Native peoples.
279

280 CONAM will continue the journey with our Bishop and conference leadership to bring
281 awareness of the Act of Repentance and paths to forgiveness, reconciliation and healing.
282

283 CONAM wishes to thank all those that have invited us to be a part of their Native American
284 Ministries Sunday worship services, gatherings and events. We look towards many more
285 invitations. We appreciate all the financial support that our churches and charges have
286 given us so we might continue our ministry.
287

288
289 In His Service,
290 Ragghi Calentine, Co~Chair
291 boe harris, Co~Chair
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294
295 *TOUCHED by the HEART of*
296 **SALISBURY URBAN MINISTRIES**
297

298 **Salisbury Urban Ministries (SUM) mission** is to develop and implement programs that
299 serve and minister to the needs of materially impoverished people and to promote concern
300 for racial understanding and appreciation of all people regardless of their economic
301 condition.
302

303 Our programs assist folks in Wicomico, Somerset and Worcester Counties through
304 mentoring, tutoring, nutrition, health resources and financial assistance. We are able to
305 touch many lives with the assistance of our dedicated volunteers and staff. Our ministries
306 include:

- 307 • **Young Men of Promise** (Mentoring) - this group will allow our young men to interact
308 with African American men who are positive, successful members of the community.
309 They receive positive reinforcement and experience fellowship with male figures.
- 310 • **Kid's Café** (Mentoring & Tutoring) - an after school program provides a safe, learning
311 environment for children in the community in order to help them flourish academically,
312 socially and civically while exposing them to activities and services that promote overall
313 growth and development so that they may become productive, successful citizens.
- 314 • **God's Kitchen** (Nutrition & Health) - a community outreach program hosted by Grace
315 UMC, one of the seven SUM covenant churches addresses the need for meals and with
316 the assistance of HOPE, provide blood pressure checks and flu shots for the homeless
317 and less fortunate. Thirty-two organizations and churches volunteer their resources to
318 serve 150-200 lunches every Saturday.
- 319 • **Lazarus Food Pantry** (Nutrition and Health Resources)-the food pantry is greatly
320 supported by volunteers who assist in distributing food to over 800 families in the past
321 year. Through grants and donations SUM continues to help supplement the nutrition
322 needs within our community.
- 323 • **The Lazarus Fund**-offers financial assistance for those facing eviction, disconnect utility
324 notices and prescription assistance.

- 325 • **Men's Welcome Center** (Health Resource)-is open Saturdays for homeless men to do
326 laundry, shower, get a haircut and fellowship with Christian volunteers. Our Parish
327 Nurse noted in the past year, during a 24 hour period 187 different people were
328 identified as homeless just in Wicomico County.
329

330 Through the generosity of the United Way, the Peninsula-Delaware Conference, covenant
331 churches, area churches, local businesses, civic groups and individuals Salisbury Urban
332 Ministries continue its mission to reach to the materially impoverished.
333

334 Salisbury Urban Ministries' goal for the coming year is to continue to reach out to those in
335 need in our tri-county area. We will research the resources available to our community.
336 We will strive to educate our community as to the needs of our neighbor by speaking to
337 local churches, civic groups, and businesses. And with God's grace continue to be of service
338 in His name.
339

340
341 Submitted by:
342 Debbie Donaway, Executive Director
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346 **NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE, INC.**
347

348 ***1218 B Street***
349 ***Wilmington, Delaware 19801***
350

219 West Green Street
Middletown, Delaware 19709
351

352 ***Mission Statement: "With God's love from within, we provide services and***
353 ***programs that educate, enlighten and empower people and the community."***
354

355 ***Neighborhood House, Inc.*** is a multi-purpose non-profit community center located in
356 South Wilmington with a satellite office in Middletown, Delaware. The agency was founded
357 in 1927, in South Wilmington, by the United Methodist Women's Home Missionary Society
358 and remains a mission of the United Methodist Women, national office, to The United
359 Methodist Church. Neighborhood House is committed in making a difference in the lives of
360 people in New Castle County especially the South Wilmington and the Middletown, Odessa
361 and Townsend communities.
362

363 ***Neighborhood House's Mission*** is accomplished by offering a wide variety of programs
364 and services that include Crisis Alleviation/ Family Services, Promoting Safe and Stable
365 Families, Youth Development, Weatherization Assistance Program, Housing Counseling and
366 a Computer Technology Center. The agency opened a satellite office in Middletown,
367 Delaware in 1992 in response to the need to assist residents of the Middletown, Odessa,
368 and Townsend area in crisis situations. Crisis Alleviation/Family Services, Housing
369 Counseling, Promoting Safe and Stable Families and Weatherization are Programs offered in
370 Middletown.

371
372 Fifty one percent 51% of the agency's clientele are low to moderate income households who
373 live in New Castle County. The average family size is 4. Most of the families are in
374 emergency situations, or experiencing housing problems.

375
376 ***The Family Services program*** is designed to assist families and individuals to meet their
377 immediate basic needs of food, heat and electricity in a crisis situation. Some of the
378 services offered are: emergency food closet, financial assistance/leveraging funds for utility
379 bills, Thanksgiving/Christmas food baskets, and Christmas adopt-a-family program, bus
380 tickets for employment and life skill workshops, back to school giveaway including book
381 bags, books and new pajamas. ***The program assisted 801 unduplicated households in***
382 ***2013.***

383
384 ***The Promoting Safe and Stable Families program (PSSF)*** is designed to promote the
385 healthy development of children by strengthening and preserving families. The program
386 serves families with social, physical and emotional factors, such as lack of resources and
387 support, stress and crisis, and child behavioral difficulty and certain parental characteristics
388 that can often challenge a parent's coping skills. The Program uses a unique family centered
389 intervention that helps parents to become the driving force behind the planning process to
390 meet their children's needs. ***The program serviced 300 unduplicated families with***
391 ***children under 18 in 2013.***

392
393 ***The Housing Counseling Program*** is designed to provide a full range of services and
394 advice to housing consumers in order to increase the number of homeowners and tenants
395 by assisting them to purchase, rent and maintain affordable housing. The program is
396 approved by the Dept. of HUD to provide comprehensive housing counseling. The program
397 also offers pre-purchase seminars, homebuyer education workshops and home ownership
398 preservation workshops. The Housing Counselors are certified by *Neighborworks*. The
399 program counseled 246 unduplicated families in 2013.

400
401 ***The Youth Development Program*** provides a variety of after-school, evening and
402 weekend programming for youth. The Homework Help Program provides youth, grades k
403 thru 12, homework assistance, tutoring and access to computers for research and reports,
404 and computer training. Other activities include field trips, Extended Hours, Recreation &
405 Sports Teams, Summer Enrichment Camp and cultural enrichment trips, urban bike
406 program, Gun Violence Summit, Too Smart Too Start Program, Delaware leadership
407 program. ***Over 300 youth participated in the different programs and 20 youth from***
408 ***South Wilmington and 19 from Middletown spent a week at Camp Pecometh in***
409 ***2013.***

410
411 ***The Weatherization Program*** provides energy efficient improvements in the homes of
412 low-income families to maximize energy savings and improve the health and safety of
413 families. ***The agency administers the program in New Castle County and performed***
414 ***weatherization measures in 145 homes in 2013.***

415
416 Neighborhood House Board of Directors is in the process of developing a five year strategic
417 plan in order to meet the needs of the communities we serve.

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Submitted by:
Veronica Oliver, Executive Director

METHODIST ACTION PROGRAM (MAP)

In 2013, the Methodist Action Program (MAP) continued to provide ministries, directly, to at-risk populations in the City of Wilmington, DE. The specific ministries of MAP were:

- Youth Moving Forward, a program for first-time, non-violent adjudicated youth,
- Old Asbury UMC Historic Building and grave site, and Centros Los Abuelos (a Hispanic Senior Center) that works with the Latin American Community Center to provide ministries.
- Centros Los Abuelos (a Hispanic Senior Center) that works with the Latin American Community Center to provide ministries.

Additionally, the Methodist Action Program partnered with the following non-profit agencies to provide services: Friendship House and Emmanuel Dining Room East in the delivery of services to the homeless in the community, and the F.A.I.T.H Center for the provision of emergency utility and housing services.

In 2013, the Methodist Action Program experienced two changes in staffing that have provided opportunities to examine, upgrade, and update the core offerings of MAP. The original founder and coordinator of the Youth Moving Forward program obtained other employment with the City of Wilmington towards the end of 2012. Also, in the second quarter of 2013, the Executive Director position became vacant.

The Youth Moving Forward program served at-risk youth assigned by the Department of Youth and Rehabilitative Services (DYRS), and provided mentoring and life-skills training to first-time adjudicated youth. Changes in operations at DYRS have necessitated a redesign of the Youth Moving Forward program that is an opportunity to refresh, update and increase effectiveness.

In addition to the services provided in conjunction with ministry partners listed above, the Old Asbury Church continued to rent space to a growing Macedonia Baptist Church. Additionally, MAP provided opportunities for Career Team volunteers to gain supervised work experience at the Old Asbury church during the conference year. The Methodist Action Program utilized a homeless person from the Old Asbury community, a skilled craftsman, to provide window glazing and repair work at the church, wood repair for doors and windows, and painting. He provided excellent work for the Methodist Action Program, while the paid compensation was a blessing to him.

463 Los Abuelos is a program ministering to Latino seniors in the Wilmington community. Los
464 Abuelos continued providing a myriad of services during the 2013-year that included
465 educational and enrichment services, cultural, and recreational services, and supportive
466 health and nutrition services.

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469 Respectfully,
470 Lawrence Pelham, Interim Executive Director
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474 **DISABILITY MINISTRIES COMMITTEE**
475 (Subcommittee of the Advocacy Resource Team)
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477 **Summary of Activities:**

478 The Committee on Disability Ministries was created to help the church grow in its' ministry
479 with people of all ages who have challenges with mobility, hearing, vision, psychological,
480 cognitive and intellectual disabilities. In 2013, the restructured committee with new
481 leadership continued with its specific set of goals to guide our work for the next four years.
482 Throughout the year, we have sought to give the local church more information and
483 opportunities to explore more connections with people with disabilities and their families
484 who are often marginalized, misunderstood, and objects of prejudice.
485

486 This year, we offer two resolutions (R4 and R5) to advocate for justice and ministry to
487 clergy with disabilities – generally,

- 488 – **R4** to include in the membership of the Conference Joint Committee on Clergy
489 Medical leave, a clergy member of the Conference with a disability, preferably one
490 under appointment, nominated by the Conference Committee on DisAbility; and
- 491 – **R5** for the Conference Joint Committee on Clergy Medical Leave to form a plan by
492 2015 to address the conflict between the Comprehensive Protection Plan in regard to
493 the disability of mental illness and its conflict with the United Methodist Social
494 Principles.

495
496 We have also offered churches information on accessibility grants, worship resources, and
497 learning opportunities to increase awareness and advocacy efforts within our conference.
498

499 **Updated/new 2014 Goals**

- 500 1. To improve our communications to the local church in regard to advocacy for,
501 outreach to and inclusion of people with disabilities within our churches and our
502 community in an effort to make Christ accessible to ALL regardless of ability or
503 disability.
 - 504 a. **Late December** – information and resources available on Pen-Del website
505 for Disability Awareness/ Differently Abled Sunday, which is the last
506 Sunday in January; resources include sermon starters using Revised
507 Common Lectionary, children’s messages, and liturgical resources.

- 508 b. **Feb. 14** – Deadline for DisAbility Connection Award nomination
509 submissions for those churches that have a “heart” for all of God’s
510 children, especially those with different abilities. This award includes
511 recognition to encourage churches to work together and a monetary
512 award to support the advocacy efforts of the nominated church(es). This
513 year we have nominations from **Richardson Park UMC in the**
514 **Wilmington District and St. John’s UMC in the Dover District.**
515 c. Timely links to conference/regional events promoting and equipping the
516 local church for ministry with people with disabilities and their families are
517 available on our webpage under “Ministries” tab on www.pen-del.org . The
518 Peninsula Delaware Conference will host the Tri-Conference event in **April**
519 **2015 at Cornerstone UMC in Bear, DE** (CEU’s will be available).
520
521 2. To include more laity and a broader representation of the community on our
522 committee so we can be more connected in our efforts to minister to and with
523 people with disabilities in our churches and our communities.
524 a. To accomplish this, active and engaged district contacts/liasons are
525 needed for every district. We are seeking support to become more visible
526 and connected within the Easton and Salisbury Districts.
527 b. Beginning in September, each District Superintendent and District Lay
528 Leader will be contacted to schedule educational and equipping workshops
529 and information sessions to help the local church connect and support the
530 ministry to and with people with disabilities and their families in their
531 neighborhoods and the larger global community.
532
533 3. To offer more education to clergy and laity on how to include persons with
534 disabilities within the life of the church while meeting them where they are in
535 their beliefs and their abilities. Awareness of the challenges of physical disabilities
536 have increased because of visibility; work still needs to be done to educate
537 churches on grace-filled ministry with people with “invisible” disabilities, including
538 but not limited to cognitive limitations and mental illnesses.

539
540 The Peninsula Delaware Conference, through the Advocacy Resource Team and the
541 Disability Ministries Committee, seek to assist churches and individuals in showing our love
542 for our Lord, and Savior by fulfilling the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20) and the Great
543 Commandment (Matt. 22:37-39) to ALL people, including people with disabilities.
544 Suggestions and ideas are welcomed by the committee.

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547 Respectfully submitted,
548 Rev. Rebecca Kelly Collison, Chairperson, Disability Ministries Committee