

December 2022



Connected is a publication of the New England Conference of The United Methodist Church. This monthly insert is designed put Conference news directly into the hands of our local church members.

Find more at www.neumc.org.



Fresh Expression Imagination Day

Across the United States, amid a Christian landscape that looks and feels like a desert of decline, God is up to something. Inherited congregations, with long histories, deeply rooted in their traditions, are experimenting with cultivating “fresh expressions” of church.



A fresh expression is a form of church for our changing culture, established primarily for the benefit of those

who are not yet part of any church. When these congregations commit to reaching new people, in new places, and in new ways, revitalization and communal transformation are taking place. Join [Rev. Dr. Michael Beck](#) to imagine new possibilities with fresh expressions here in New England.

This hybrid event will be held 9 am to 3 pm on Saturday, March 25, 2023, at Wesley UMC in Concord, NH, and online. Organized by the Office of Congregational Development.

Updates and registration information will be added to this event on our website calendar. Scan the QR code or visit www.neumc.org/events to find more as we get closer to the day.



Welcome Bishop Peggy A. Johnson

Bishop Peggy A. Johnson will serve as Boston Area Resident Bishop beginning Jan. 1, 2023.

The Council of Bishops approved a recommendation from the Northeastern Jurisdiction College of Bishops and Committee on Episcopacy that Bishop Johnson serve New England until the end of the quadrennium in 2024.

She will succeed Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar, who retires on Dec. 31, 2022.

Bishop Johnson was elected to the episcopacy in 2008. She served the Philadelphia Area, which included Eastern Pennsylvania and Peninsula-Delaware conferences. She retired in 2021.

A coverage plan was needed for the Boston Area because the delegates to the NEJ Conference (Nov. 2-4, 2022) ultimately decided to elect only one new bishop. Bishop Héctor A. Burgos Núñez, who was elected Nov. 2, was assigned to the Upper NY Conference. The current active bishops remain in their previous assignments.

With two bishops retiring, Bishop Devadhar and Bishop Mark J. Webb serving Upper NY, a vacancy was created. The process for covering a vacant episcopal area is outlined in ¶407 of *The Book of Discipline* and that process was followed here.

Bishop Johnson was baptized and grew up in the Methodist Church in Bal-



Bishop Peggy A. Johnson

Photo by Deborah Coble, WVA Conference

timore, MD. She pursued a degree in Music Education at Lebanon Valley College, a United Methodist-related institution in Annville, PA. She taught elementary vocal music in Baltimore County Public Schools for two years.

It was during this time that she felt a call to ministry, specifically with deaf people and people with disabilities. She left teaching to pursue a Master of Divinity degree at Asbury Theological Seminary. She earned her Doctor of Ministry degree from Wesley Theological Seminary and taught deaf and disability courses as adjunct faculty at the seminary.



READ MORE ABOUT BISHOP JOHNSON ON OUR WEBSITE
www.neumc.org/news

Bishop's Thanksgiving Appeal

Support our camps & world mission

Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar writes:

Since 2019, you have received my special appeals with grace, love, and support. Your sacrificial giving has allowed us to pay 100 percent of apportioned mission shares without dipping into reserves, to support our conference as we share in the worldwide ministry of our church while giving extra to support our communities and mission locally.

This witness of solidarity through sacrificial giving is part of our covenant to share resources in mission. We can do so much more together than we can by ourselves. Again, thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

Poverty, homelessness, and other needs are very present in our communities. This year, I know you are facing the additional challenges of inflation and high fuel costs as the effects of the pandemic linger.

Even as we face these struggles, may I appeal to those of you who are able to make a one-time sacrificial donation in addition to what you are already giving to your local church?

As we prepare to celebrate Thanksgiving, may we offer this

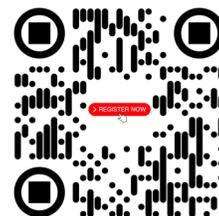


extra support to an amazing ministry that blesses our youth generation after generation: our camps. The conference will use 50 percent of what is received to support our camping and retreat ministries, and the remaining 50 percent to aid a despairing world beset by poverty, natural disaster, and war through our apportionments to the World Service Fund of the general church.

Would you kindly consider giving a special gift of 10 percent of what you spend on your family for Christmas? Or would you sacrifice the cost of a cup of coffee or tea or a bottle of soda for the next 40 days to support our common mission?

Scan the QR code to donate online or mail a check payable to New England Annual Conference with "Thanksgiving Appeal" in the memo line to:

New England Conference
411 Merrimack St., Suite 200
Methuen, MA 01844
Attention: Kerry Patles



Staffers served NEAC for more than 20 years

The New England Conference announces two retirements from the Conference staff.

Rosemary McNulty, who serves as administrative assistant to the Director of Connectional Ministries, Director of Congregational Development, and Director of Communications, will retire on Jan. 13, 2023.

JoAnn Watson, who serves as the Seacoast District administrative assistant, will retire on Dec. 31, 2022.

Rosemary joined the Conference staff on July 8, 2002.

"Rosemary has served the Conference for 20 years, in a variety of ways.

Much of the time was 'running' the second floor of the Lawrence building, coordinating with program staff, managing the resource library, going on the road for events, and keeping the ministries organized," said Rev. Rick McKinley, Director of Connectional Ministries.



Rosemary McNulty

"She has been a faithful and faith-filled member of the team and will surely be missed!" "From the beginning of my employment at the conference office I knew that the Lord had placed me here for His purpose," McNulty said. "I pray that I served Him well."

JoAnn joined the staff of the Conference on June 25, 2001. She served as the administrative assistant in the former Connecticut Western MA District

until 2020, when the districts were reorganized.

"I first met JoAnn as a recently arrived local pastor ... I experienced JoAnn as a kind and knowledgeable person. JoAnn was always willing to help in any way that she could," said Rev. Wanda Santos-Perez, Seacoast District superintendent. "I know I am not alone in saying that she will be greatly missed."

"The mystery of yet a new journey and its blessings, until we meet again," Watson said.

Please join us in wishing JoAnn and Rosemary well, and in praying for them and their families during this time of transition.



JoAnn Watson

Let's Connect

Do you have a story to share? A feature idea? A question to ask? Contact Beth DiCocco, Conference Director of Communications, at communicate@neumc.org or (978) 682-8055 ext. 150