

DRAFT NEJNAMC Annual Meeting, October 7, 2022

Attending: Todd Warfield, NE; Patty Richardson, NY; Pat Parent, NE; Myrna & Walt Clinton, NY; Cynthia Mosley, GNJ; Ken Krimmel, WV; Barbara Revere, EPA; Ron Crouch, GNJ; Sherry Wack, EPA/guest; Sandra Boone & Tim Murphy, guests; Kae Wilber, UNY; Gail Gould, GNJ; Stacey Cole Wilson, BW; RoBear Wilson, WPA; Shane Moran, Pen-Del; Ragghi Rain, Pen-Del; Neal Christie, Inter-Ethnic, BW guest; Jill Maisch, BW; Richard Church, BW; Joy Frazier, EPA; Sue Zahorbenski, GNJ guest; Naomi Bowyer, WPA; Diana Pearce, GNJ guest; Pete Hill, Guest Speaker; Verna Colliver, EPA; Enger Meteteke, GCORR guest; Breanne MacFarland, NE; Bishop John Schol, GNJ & EPA Episcopal Leader and NEJ College of Bishops; a person from phone 717-405-7882, Jennifer Kerby, Pen-Del. (33 participants)

The meeting began at 9am with a welcome from Chairperson, Pat Parent.

Devotions were offered by GNJ CoNAM member Rev. Dr. Ron Crouch sharing scripture from the Gospel of John and a reflection on the power of friendship in working for justice.

The workshop on Boarding School Trauma and Healing led by Mr. Pete Hill, a citizen of the Cayuga Nation, Heron Clan of the Haudenasaunee Confederacy (Iroquois). Disclaimer: While he works for the Native American Community Services of Erie and Niagara Counties, Inc. in Buffalo, NY today he is speaking from his own personal perspective and experiences, NOT representing NACS in any way.

Mr. Hill provided a program of excellent insight and information and began with the Haudenasaunee Confederacy Thanksgiving Address (one example: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sWKac3o7isk>) to set a vital context for considering the depth and impact of Boarding School trauma. The short video “Every Child Matters” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=odtyOikFt5U>) was also shared to help explain the origins of Orange Shirt Day, September 30. After reviewing the extensive reality of health and social disparities among Native people and within Native communities, Mr. Hill emphasized the power of Creation stories, the necessity of focusing on the traditional practice of decision making with and for the 7 generations before and after. He then set the context of Trauma Healing perspectives that asks the question ‘what has happened to a person?’ rather than ‘what is wrong with the person?’

The documentary “Unseen Tears” (<https://www.filmsforaction.org/watch/unseen-tears-2009/>) provided a clear and compelling portrayal of the impact of Boarding Schools in Western NY State. For 100-150 years, leading to 4-8 generations of children, families dealt with painful separations and the denial of access to their children, the cultural genocide of traditional practices and language imposed on the children, the harsh, punitive and unhealthy environments of the schools and the lack of positive cultural parenting, Dr. Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart, PhD, was quoted as saying, “It’s not our fault; it is our responsibility.”

Mr. Hill emphasized the remembering of the perseverance, endurance, beauty, strength and wisdom of our ancestors in surviving and turning to a path of healing and reclamation of the “Good Mind.” He closed with a short video asking the four questions: What is the Good Mind? What clouds our minds? How can we restore our Good Minds? And How can we maintain our Good Minds? Mr. Hill suggested that a life of gratitude and dedicated expression of appreciation is always foundational. A short time of questions, comments and sharing followed, after everyone expressed their appreciation to Mr. Hill for his presentation, work and insights.

Resources from the workshop include:

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/trauma-informed-care-what-it-is-and-why-its-important-2018101613562>

Another resource for trauma care, with a specific Native American perspective, is found on the NAIC website

<https://www.triumphovertrauma.info/>

<https://youtu.be/Q3AmKDM-j7A> This is a trauma informed recovery podcast presentation produced by the UMC

<https://www.naicumc.com/boardingschool-justice.html>

<https://www.lakelandsinstitute.com/we-are-waiting/>

Much excellent information can be found at the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition's website <https://boardingschoolhealing.org/>

The morning session closed at 11:35am with the request to return at 12:15pm.

The afternoon session opened at 12:30pm with a review and Approval of the Business Agenda. Myrna moved to approve. Sherry seconded. **Motion passed.**

Roll Call was completed by Secretary Jennifer Kerby with the following voting members and guests present:

New England: Pat Parent, Todd Warfield, Breanne MacFarland

Upper New York: Kae Wilbert

New York: Myrna Clinton, Patty Richardson

Western Pennsylvania: RoBear Wilson, Naomi Bowyer

Greater New Jersey: Gail Gould, Cynthia Mosley, Guests/non-voting: Diana Pearce, Sue Zahorbenski

Eastern Pennsylvania: Verna Colliver, Joy Frazier, Barbara Revere, Guest/non-voting: Sherry Wack

Peninsula-Delaware: Ragghi Rain, Shane Moran, Jennifer Kerby

Baltimore Washington: Stacey Cole Wilson, Jill Maisch, Richard Church

West Virginia: Ken Krimmel

Guests: Bishop John Schol, Neal Christie, Enger Meteteke

2021 Annual Meeting Minutes were reviewed and approved.

The reading and review of the Treasurer's Report and Audit Report was delayed due to Kae's absence. It was subsequently reviewed by the gathering with a balance of \$11,345.41 as of 8/30/22. Motion to approve the report as submitted with the condition to amend as necessary at a later date if additional questions or information is raised. Motion made by Jennifer. Seconded by Ken. **Motion passed.** Likewise, the Audit Report was reviewed. Ken moved to accept the report. Gail seconded. **Motion passed.**

The NEJNAMC Mission Statement was reviewed. Comments from Bishop John Schol questioned the wording/use of Northeastern vs. Northeast. *How was this resolved?*

No Communications Report

Advocacy Committee Report was made by Sherry Wack and Ragghi Rain. Sherry recommended the Native News online website as a good and free source of current issues and developments. Ragghi emphasized the need to keep focused on the good happening as well as the protests, resistance and advocacy for all the hard, hurtful and harmful realities continually confronting us. She encouraged everyone to take good care of ourselves and not brush off the very real trauma we experience when it is spoken and shared. She then shared briefly about the Nanticoke Language Book project ongoing in the Peninsula Delaware Annual Conference.

Bishop John Schol of Greater New Jersey and Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conferences shared some of what has been developed in Greater New Jersey with the Journey of Hope Project that returns church held land of closed churches to Tribal groups with additional perpetual care funds of \$1.3 million allocated at this time. Currently some 70 church properties are engaged in the process. Additionally Bishop Schol informed us that he has volunteered to be the Episcopal representative to NEJNAMC from the NEJ College of Bishops. Welcome Bishop Schol and thank you for your dedicated efforts in GNJ on behalf of Native justice. More information can be found at <https://www.gnjumc.org/journeyofhope/>.

Ryan Pierce, Nanticoke Leni Lenape performing artist, shared an excerpt from his one-man play “Native Made” with characters intersecting the past and present to share cultural traditions and challenges. All were grateful for his insights and commentary through this artistic medium. We look forward to seeing more of this talented young man!

Neal Christie, guest representative from the NEJ Center for Ethnic Ministries and the Baltimore Washington Annual Conference and CoNAM, shared a brief report on various justice/advocacy efforts that all CoNAM members can be supporting at present: 1) Federal legislation to establish the Truth and Healing Commission on Native American Boarding Schools . Neal encouraged everyone to make use of the Action Alerts on this effort (listed below); 2) Working in each of our Annual Conferences to hold the church accountable in love to know how the Methodist institution contributed to and enabled the Boarding Schools (and work together to develop some means of acknowledgement and restitution); and, 3) continued efforts to advocate for the church to be involved in MMIWG work supporting greater federal law enforcement practices that work collaboratively with Tribal governments/law enforcement. We appreciate the hard work that Neal continues to do to enable our CoNAM members to be more effective and impactful with our advocacy efforts.

Specific resources mentioned:

Friends, please sign on to this Action Alert and share it widely with others in the NEJ--tell our representatives to finally establish the "Truth and Healing Commission" on the residential boarding schools <https://bwcaction.org/establish-the-truth-and-healing-commission-on-indian-boarding-school-policies-act/>

Enger Muteteke, guest representative from GCORR (General Commission on Race and Religion), shared information on current GCORR programs and the three Native American resources they have on their website (links listed below):

<https://www.r2hub.org/library#gsc.tab=0>

<https://www.youtube.com/c/gcorrweb>

<https://www.gcorr.org/facingthefuture2022>

GCORR resources for Native American ministries:

<https://www.r2hub.org/library/native-american-ministries-sunday><https://www.r2hub.org/library/11-facts-about-native-people-in-society-and-the-church>

<https://www.r2hub.org/library/ongoing-acts-repentance-featuring-rev-kernell>

Additional Business – Ragghi Rain recommended the endorsement of Rev. David Wilson for election as Bishop. He would be the UMC’s first Native American Bishop.

Link to a brief bio on Rev. Wilson <https://www.umc-oimc.org/members/john-jackson/>

https://tulsaworld.com/lifestyles/oklahoman-may-be-first-native-american-bishop-of-united-methodist-church/article_cd7a6a42-81ba-5145-9835-48cc34c34e07.html

Next year’s NEJNAMC Annual Meeting will be held in Western PA Annual Conference (Pittsburgh area) and hosted by WPA CoNAM, chaired by RoBear Wilson. Dates are tentatively set for Thursday-Saturday, either Oct 5-6-7 or Oct 12-13-14, 2023 depending on the Pittsburgh Steelers football team’s schedule. Dates will be determined and communicated asap. RoBear mentioned a few highlights of the Adena Mounds, the Point Museum and the Three Rivers American Indian Center. Great appreciation was expressed to the GNJ CoNAM members for all their work in trying to hold the meeting in person. Hopefully we will be able to do so next year.

At 2:30pm, the meeting was adjourned. Motion to adjourn made by Ken. Seconded by Stacey. **Motion passed.**

Fellowship and general sharing:

West Virginia CoNAM shared greetings and welcomed all to their Annual Conference website. Prayers for Elle High are requested as she faces multiple continuing challenges.

Baltimore Washington CoNAM shared their online report at

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1sCD3QtZmVXvMZtPnktYwb3KPJVX5vzNk/edit?usp=sharing&oid=112501559384889377790&rtpof=true&sd=true>

Western PA CoNAM's report is also available online. They are celebrating their ongoing relationship with COTRAC and that the NAMS giving has increased this year. They are hosting an Intersection of Faith and Race Summit later this month with Mark Charles speaking on the Doctrine of Discovery.

Eastern Pennsylvania CoNAM report is online and they were especially impressed with the restoring the language program offered by a speaker from the Yuchi Tribe.

New England CoNAM report included their video on MMIWG that was shared throughout the Annual Conference.

Peninsula-Delaware CoNAM shared their video report online and gave a brief update on the Nanticoke Language Book Project.

Greater New Jersey CoNAM welcomes a new Chairperson, Ms. Gail Gould, and gives thanks to Cynthia Mosley for all her wonderful contributions and efforts over the years.

Warm appreciation and prayers for all our NEJ CoNAMs and the continued work they are doing!

Closing Worship and farewells ended at 3pm.

Minutes submitted by NEJNAMC Secretary, Rev. Jennifer Kerby, to be approved at the 2023 Annual Meeting.