

## East District 2025 Church/Charge Conference Script

*The Charge Conference shall be the connecting link between the local church and the general church (§ 247). The primary responsibilities of the Charge Conference in the annual meeting shall be to review and evaluate the total mission and ministry of the church, receive reports, and adopt objectives and goals recommended by the church council that are in keeping with the objectives of the United Methodist Church (§ 247.3)*

**Rev. Dr. Andrew L. Foster, III. DS and East District Circuit Elders:**  
**Rev. Jana Purkis Brash, Rev. Brad Leight, Rev. Navin Satyavrata, Rev. Bob Strauss**  
**Associate Superintendent: Rev. Gabe Lopez**

**Presider:** Welcome to your Annual Church/Charge Conference meeting.

### Litany

**Leader:** As we gather in the name of Jesus Christ, we give thanks for the work of God in our church and community.

**People:** We come with hearts full of gratitude, seeking God's wisdom and direction.

**Leader:** For the ministries that have nurtured faith, served the needy, and shared the love of Christ—

**People:** We give thanks, O Lord.

**Leader:** For the leaders who have guided this congregation with faithfulness and vision—

**People:** We give thanks, O Lord.

**Leader:** For the times we have faced challenges and found Your strength sustaining us—

**People:** We give thanks, O Lord.

**Leader:** As we look to the future, we seek Your guidance in all we do.

**People:** Lead us, O Lord, in Your ways.

**Leader:** Strengthen us to be a people of grace, justice, and love.

**People:** Empower us, O Lord, for the work ahead.

**Leader:** May our decisions be guided by Your Spirit, our mission be shaped by Your call, and our hearts be set on making disciples of Jesus Christ.

**People:** Let Your will be done in us and through us, O Lord.

**Leader:** Bless this time of holy conferencing, that we may be faithful stewards of Your church.

**People:** We dedicate ourselves anew to Your service, O God.

**Leader:** In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—

**People:** Amen.

## **Opening Prayer by Pastor or Lay Leader**

**Presider:** I hereby call the Church/Charge Conference into session.

## **The Work of the Church**

### **1. Election of Recording Secretary or Volunteer**

- a. Minutes should be submitted to the district office via email to:  
[lromano@epagnj.org](mailto:lromano@epagnj.org) within one week of the scheduled church/charge conference.

### **2. Recording attendance**

- a. The attendance record should be reflected in the minutes of each church.

### **3. Vote to authorize virtual or hybrid meeting (when applicable)**

*We move that those who are authorized to participate in the scheduled charge conference hereby agree that we consent to proceed with a virtual or hybrid meeting using remote technology and consent that all our decisions are in accordance with the Constitution of the United Methodist Church (Division Two, Section VI, Article II (para. 33) and with the laws of the church and are therefore legal and binding actions of this charge conference.*

### **4. Approval of 2024 Charge Conference Minutes**

*These minutes provide an account of the previous year's Charge Conference and any special conferences that have occurred over the past year. The report recounts the significant action items that were approved by the Charge Conference since last convened. It is completed by the recording secretary of the Charge Conference, and new minutes should be submitted as soon as possible after the completion of the current conference.*

### **5. Approval of Audit/Fund Balance Report from 2024**

*This audit is used to facilitate transparency in the church in financial matters and protect those handling funds on behalf of the congregation. This audit also provides an accounting and report to the leadership and members of the church. The report is due each year and should be completed by someone other than those handling funds or their family members. The report should be submitted to the District Office, as well as copies to the pastor, the finance chair, and the church council chair for sharing amongst the leadership. Per Book of Discipline, this audit must be received by the Charge Conference as well. This report is completed by the church's Auditor or Auditing Committee.*

- a. Include a copy of prior year Audit/Fund Balance Report (January 1 – December 31) for the body to ratify.

## **6. Report of the Trustees**

*This is a mandatory report required by the Book of Discipline which provides needed information on incorporation, property, insurance, and investment matters. The Discipline requires that this be submitted and approved by the Charge Conference and should be completed by the President of the Board of Trustees or a designated officer.*

- a. Has the congregation received and bequests, legacy, or memorial gifts since last charge conference? If so, from whom and what amount (restricted or unrestricted)
- b. Has the congregation used any funds from investments/endowments for operating expenses since last charge conference, If so, for what specific purpose and amount?
- c. Has the congregation spent any funds realized from the sale of a parsonage?

## **7. Staff Pastor Parish Relations Report**

- a. Recommendation and approval of Base Compensation
- b. Recommendation of Housing Allowance/Exclusion where applicable

*This form is needed to meet IRS requirements that allows a clergy person to exclude a portion of his/her salary spent on maintaining or furnishing a home (either in a parsonage or in his/her own home) from taxable income. It may not be done retroactively, and only that amount that is actually spent and can be accounted for can be claimed. Any amount set aside and not spent must be added into the taxable amount by the clergy person.*

- c. Recommendation of Professional Reimbursement Account

## **8. Finance Committee Report**

- a. Year-to-date Treasurer Report.

This is a means of providing financial transparency to the congregation as to the church's financial health. Treasurers should submit a year-to-date report based on the end of the month prior to the deadline date for the Charge Conference paperwork. This should be a copy of the same report that is produced for the Church Council and other church leadership.

- b. Recommendation and approval of 2026 budget – If not ready, send to district office before 12/31/25.

## **9. Nominating Committee Report**

- a. Election of Church Leaders (Directory of Officials) - If not ready, send to district office by 12/31/25.

## **10. CLM, CSM, Lay Servant Report (when applicable)**

**Certified Lay Minister (CLM) Report:** *This report is required for persons who have been approved by the District Committee on Ordained Ministry (DCOM) following the completion of required course work and additional requirements as outlined by the Book of Discipline and the Board of Ordained Ministry. Initial certification must have the approval of the pastor and the SPRC as well. Reports are to be submitted annually, and recertification by the DCOM happens every two years.*

**Christ Servant Minister (CSM):** *This report is to be completed by persons who have completed the basic and at least one advanced lay servant course. This report serves as a request by the Lay Servant/Speaker to the Charge Conference for recertification which must be done on an annual*

basis. Without this report, there is no request to continue certification. Initial certification must have the approval of the pastor and the SPRC in addition to the completion of the required courses.

- a. Recommendation and/or recertification of persons in these categories.

**11. Candidates for Ministry Report**

- a. District Superintendent should be notified of new candidates in advance of the scheduled church/charge conference.

**12. Clergy Reports**

- a. Pastors Report including Membership Audit (1<sup>st</sup> and 2nd reading for removal of members by charge conference action) and remembering those who transitioned into the Church Triumphant

*This is the report where all membership actions taken by the church in the previous year are verified by the pastor and congregation. It is important that individual names are added as this becomes a back-up record to local church records. This report also asks for the names of clergy who report to the Charge Conference, candidates approved for ministry that must be re-approved annually, and a narrative of the pastor's significant ministries for the previous year as well as plans for the coming year. This report is completed by the Senior/Lead Pastor only.*

**13. Other business and prayers for the people.**

Motion to Adjourn

**Presider:** As our time together comes to an end, I declare this Church/Charge Conference adjourned @ Time: \_\_\_\_\_.

**DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING:** With hearts, minds, and eyes wide open Go from this place to work for God's kingdom here on Earth Be sustained by God's grace and love Be filled with God's spirit and be united with your brothers and sisters in Christ so that All you meet this day, and every day will be touched by God's spirit.

**People:** Thanks be to God! Amen.

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