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and how they can be used is available on the Kaleidoscope Institute website at <http://www.kscopeinstitute.org/>.

This time of training was an early step in the journey that the Call to Action from the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference has started, and the Conference Commission on Religion and Race is ready to lead the process. In the near future, an entire issue of the Advocate will be dedicated to this important work, but for now those who would like to get involved can contact Blenda Smith at [bsmith@binghamton.edu](mailto:bsmith@binghamton.edu).

While this was just the beginning of a lot of work that is to come, the feeling in the room seemed to be one of excitement about the future.



*The time of training with the Kaleidoscope Institute ended with the sacrament of Holy Communion.*

The better equipped leaders become to reach new people and raise up more diverse leaders, the better the Conference as a whole will become at making new disciples for the transformation of the world.

## In Brief

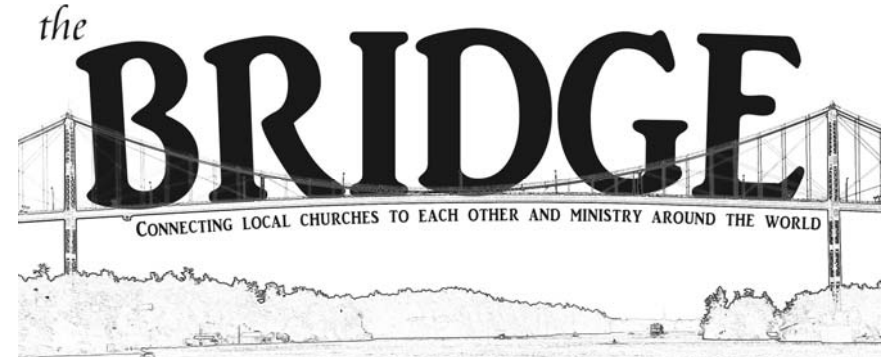
### 2016 On Track Churches

Through Ministry Shares, your local church supports amazing ministries around the world and in your backyard. Many Upper New York Conference churches are currently on track to pay 100 percent of their Ministry Share benevolence for 2016. By fully paying Ministry Shares, you and your congregation become a part of these life changing ministries locally and around the world. Is your church on track? Visit <http://www.unyumc.org/about/2016-on-track-churches> to see the full list of on track churches. If your church is not yet where you want to be with Ministry Shares, the Conference Finance Ministry Area is here to provide support and ideas to help you to move to where you want to be. Contact them at the Conference Office at (315) 424-7878.

*The **Bridge** is a Conference Communications Ministry tool that delivers to local churches news and stories of ministry from around the Upper New York Conference and the world.*

[www.unyumc.org](http://www.unyumc.org)

Learn about the ministry of Upper New York Conference staff with the Day in the Life blog at: <http://bit.ly/UNYdayinthelife>



The Upper New York Conference's vision is to live the gospel of Jesus Christ and to be God's love with our neighbors in all places.

## A look inside!

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# UNY's Scott Johnson one of 32 people named to Commission on a Way Forward



*Scott Johnson*

The United Methodist Council of Bishops has announced the membership of the Commission on a Way Forward. Dr. Scott Johnson, the former UNY Conference lay leader, was one of the members chosen for the Commission.

"After three months of diligent and prayerful discernment, we have selected eight bishops, 11 laity, 12 elders and one deacon to serve on the Commission," said Bishop Bruce R. Ough, President of the Council of Bishops. "This group is representative of our theological diversity."

Bishop Ough said the makeup of the 32-member commission is roughly comparable to U.S. and Central Conference membership.

All of the members of the Commission have already indicated their willingness and availability to serve. The team of moderators—Bishop Ken Carter, Bishop Sandra Steiner-Ball and Bishop David Yemba—will soon convene the Commission to begin to organize their work and finalize their meeting schedule.

The Commission's mission is to "bring together persons deeply committed to the future(s) of The United Methodist Church, with openness to developing

new relationships with each other and exploring the potential future(s) of our denomination in light of General Conference and subsequent annual, jurisdictional and central conference actions."

The 2016 General Conference gave a specific mandate to the Council of Bishops to lead The United Methodist Church in discerning and proposing a way forward through the present impasse related to human sexuality and the consequent questions about unity and covenant.

The Commission is a group appointed by the Council of Bishops to assist the Council in fulfilling this mandate. As such, the Council has appointed bishops from across the global connection to serve on the Commission alongside laity and clergy. While clergy and laity will vote at a General Conference on these matters, the bishops have the responsi-

bility to lead the church. Thus, the Commission is designed to inform the Council's leadership of the General Conference. After hearing concerns that the proposed composition did not include enough laity, three additional laypersons were added from the original pool of more than 300 nominees.

Dr. Scott Johnson was one of five individuals that Bishop Mark J. Webb nominated. Dr. Johnson is honored to have been chosen to be a part of the Commission. He said, "Knowing some of the other people who have been chosen for the Commission, I trust that the work that we will do will be done with great integrity and faithfulness."

He continued that, "The importance of this work was made very clear at General Conference. I'm very excited to be a part of this important work and I am honored to have been selected."

## Cabinet and other leaders gain diversity tools

On Wednesday, Oct. 19, the Conference Committee on Religion and Race invited members of the Upper New York Conference Cabinet, the Executive Staff Team, and adult leaders of youth ministry to take part in a full-day diversity training provided by the Kaleidoscope Institute. The training was in response to the Northeastern Jurisdiction's Call to

Action about racism. The goal of the training was to give leaders in Upper New York tools to understand and communicate in diverse setting.

A unique aspect of the day of training was that adult leaders of youth ministry were being trained alongside Cabinet members. This was because the adult leaders of youth ministry asked to

be a part of the training time. The Conference Council of Youth Ministry has been proactive about increasing diversity of youth leadership; the Call to Action reinforces the priority of that goal.

The day was spent learning about and practicing with tools from the Kaleidoscope Institute including:

- Respectful Communication Guide-

lines

- Mutual Invitation
- Kaleidoscope Bible Study Process
- Cultural Makeup
- Iceberg Analogy of Culture
- Stages of Intercultural Sensitivity
- Cycle of Gospel Living

More information about these tools