

NOTE: RESOLUTION 2024-1: LGBTQ+ Inclusion: Expressing Gratitude and Commitment to Next Steps was submitted on time, in the correct format, and by members of the Annual Conference as required by Standing Rule 70.

After review by the Bishop, Conference Secretary, Conference Parliamentarian, and Conference Chancellor, the Conference Secretary (SR 70a) has referred this resolution to the Conference Committee on Connectional Ministries and the Conference Council of Finance and Administration for the following reasons:

- The resolution calls for the creation of a ministry team whose purpose is related to multiple ministries already under Connectional Ministries and the director of Connectional Ministries is a member of the Extended Cabinet.*
- The resolution has financial implications and falls under the guidance of Standing Rule 21 and will affect the budget of Connectional Ministries.*

It has been included for your information, but will not be considered this year.

RESOLUTION 2024-1:

LGBTQ+ Inclusion: Expressing Gratitude and Commitment to Next Steps
A resolution submitted to the 2024 South Carolina Annual Conference

Whereas, we take seriously Jesus' teaching and example to love our neighbors as we love ourselves, and

Whereas, we take seriously John Wesley's "Three Simple Rules" calling us to do no harm, do all the good we can, and to love God, and

Whereas, we are grateful to the delegates who served at Jurisdictional Conference in 2022 and the delegates who served at General Conference held in 2024, for their combined commitment to Wesley's Three Simple Rules, and for the removal anti-LGBTQ+ language and policies from our UM Book of Discipline, and

Whereas, we wish to further our understanding and increase our capacity to do no harm, do all the good we can, and love God,

Therefore be it resolved that the South Carolina Annual Conference calls on our Bishop and cabinet to create a conference-level LGBTQ+ Ministry Team for the purpose of:

- 1) Curating, creating, and sharing resources to equip local churches for:
 - a) relationship building and continuing education
 - b) meaningful ministry with and for LGBTQ+ church and community members
- 2) Collaborating with ministry-specific areas, particularly children's ministry, youth ministry, and campus ministry in a desire to safely and most effectively be in ministry with and for LGBTQ+ people of all ages.

Be it further resolved that the newly formed conference-level LGBTQ+ Ministry Team will be established within 3 months of annual conference adjournment and include:

- 1) At least 4 LGBTQ+ members
- 2) At least 2 members under the age of 25
- 3) ⅓ membership under 35, ⅓ membership 36 to 55, ⅓ membership 56 and up
- 4) Rich diversity throughout all genders
- 5) Rich diversity throughout all races and ethnicities
- 6) Lay and clergy representatives from each district
- 7) Members with established leadership in the area of LGBTQ+ inclusion

Respectfully submitted by,

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NOTE: RESOLUTION 2024-2 Worldwide Regionalization: Expressing Gratitude and Commitment to Next Steps was submitted on time, in the correct format, and by members of the Annual Conference as required by Standing Rule 70.

After review by the Bishop, Conference Parliamentarian, Conference Chancellor, and Conference Secretary it has been determined that this resolution is out of order and is not properly before the body for the following reasons:

- *This matter pertains to the Constitution and would necessitate ratification by annual conferences.*

It has been included for your information, but will not be considered.

RESOLUTION 2024-2

Worldwide Regionalization: Expressing Gratitude and Commitment to Next Steps A resolution submitted to the 2024 South Carolina Annual Conference

Whereas, we value a global United Methodist connection and wish for each region of the worldwide Church a structure that supports relevant and vibrant ministry, and

Whereas, we value the opportunity to restructure the UMC in ways that decolonize both polity and relationships, and

Whereas, we value the opportunity to restructure the UMC rooted in equity and respectful of missional context, and

Whereas, we value the example shared by the Apostle Paul, who established churches in diverse regions with shared beliefs alongside local and regional differences in structure, worship, and style best suited to particular contexts; and

Whereas, we are grateful to the many leaders around the globe who collaborated to provide a path to worldwide regionalization, and

Whereas, a shift to worldwide regionalization amends our UM Book of Discipline in ways that deserve high levels of support and command a two-step voting process, and

Whereas, we are grateful to the delegates to General Conference held in 2024 for their tireless leadership and for taking the first required step in the overall decision-making process,

Therefore, be it resolved that the South Carolina Annual Conference receives with joy the adoption of Worldwide Regionalization by the General Conference, and accepts the responsibility of taking the important next steps necessary to *complete* the decision-making process.

Be it further resolved that the South Carolina Annual Conference commits to providing and participating in a variety of educational opportunities throughout the conference, over the next calendar year, ensuring that we are fully informed and prepared to engage in the final step of a ratification vote at Annual Conference in 2025.

Respectfully submitted by,

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NOTE: RESOLUTION 2024-3 Encouraging Leadership With Integrity was submitted on time, in the correct format, and by members of the Annual Conference as required by Standing Rule 70.

After review by the Bishop, Conference Parliamentarian, Conference Chancellor, and Conference Secretary it has been determined that this resolution is out of order and is not properly before the body for the following reasons:

- *The resolution calls for the Board of Trustees to establish rules of conduct for laity and clergy, a responsibility that falls under the jurisdiction of the Board of Ordained Ministry (BOOM).*
- *The resolution goes beyond being aspirational by requesting the resignation of an individual.*
- *It makes a request that is outside the scope of the annual conference's authority, as the annual conference does not have the power to direct jurisdictional, general, or delegation matters.*

It has been included for your information, but will not be considered.

RESOLUTION 2024-3
Encouraging Leadership With Integrity
A resolution submitted to the 2024 South Carolina Annual Conference

Whereas, the vibrant future of The United Methodist Church requires deep commitment and loyal leadership at every level, and

Whereas, grounded in a sense of duty and loyalty to the mission of the church, leaders are counted on and expected to make decisions about the future of The United Methodist Church with the absolute best interest of Christ's church at heart, and

Whereas, the selection, election, and appointment of clergy and lay leaders throughout The United Methodist Church includes the implicit understanding that leaders will ethically serve in each of their leadership roles with the utmost integrity, and

Whereas, leaders who do not intend to remain in The United Methodist Church entangle themselves in a significant conflict of interest, and

Whereas, the service of a leader whose call to discipleship is aligned with The United Methodist Church is prevented by the continued leadership of an individual who has made a private decision and/or public declaration to leave The United Methodist Church, and

Whereas, in November of 2022, and in historic fashion, a resolution in support of leading with integrity was adopted at all five Jurisdictional Conferences.

Therefore, be it resolved that the South Carolina Annual Conference expresses both respect and gratitude to those who have voluntarily stepped away from positions of leadership as they journey away from membership in The United Methodist Church.

Be it further resolved that, as we continue this period of transition the South Carolina Annual Conference calls upon every United Methodist, as a disciple of Jesus the Christ, to move forward in fairness and with integrity.

Be it further resolved that the South Carolina Annual Conference asks all lay and clergy members who intend to separate from The United Methodist Church to recuse themselves from leadership roles in all areas of the church, including the local church, district, conference, jurisdictional, and general church level committees, boards, agencies, delegations, and episcopal leaders.

Be it further resolved that we encourage the South Carolina Conference Board of Trustees to develop codes of conduct to manage conflicts of interest that may arise around discussions of separation agreements.

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NOTE: RESOLUTION 2024-4 Celebrating the 40th Anniversary of Reconciling Ministries Network was submitted on time, in the correct format, and by members of the Annual Conference as required by Standing Rule 70.

After review by the Bishop, Conference Parliamentarian, Conference Chancellor, and Conference Secretary it has been determined that this resolution is out of order and is not properly before the body for the following reasons:

- *Reconciling Ministries Network is not an officially recognized entity of the General Conference. Please refer to Judicial Council rulings 847, 794, 665, 929, and 876 for further clarification.*

It has been included for your information, but will not be considered.

RESOLUTION 2024-4

Celebrating the 40th Anniversary of Reconciling Ministries Network
A resolution submitted to the 2024 South Carolina Annual Conference

“John Wesley encouraged Methodists toward perfection in the lifelong pursuit of love. Love looks like affirmation in the face of persecution, like kinship in the face of isolation and like courage in the face of despair”. (Reconciling Methodist Convocation 2023) This has always been the work of Reconciling Ministries.

Whereas in 1984, the Reconciling Congregation Program formed to help United Methodist congregations and clergy work for justice for LGBTQ people, and in 2000, the program changed its name to Reconciling Ministries Network (RMN);

Whereas recently United Methodists, particularly in the United States, have signaled their desire for the denomination to become a church home, “where LGBTQIA+ people will be protected, affirmed, and empowered in the life and ministry of the church” in large part due to the ongoing work of the Reconciling Ministries Network;

Whereas no matter what happens at this year's General Conference, Reconciling Ministries Network will continue their advocacy work, "committed to intersectional justice across and beyond the United Methodist connection for the full participation of all LGBTQ+ people throughout the life and leadership of the church";

Whereas a growing number of our South Carolina Annual Conference members have supported this international movement by serving on the Board of RMN, by becoming individual Reconciling United Methodists, by becoming Reconciling Congregations and Communities; and

Whereas the "denomination now looks to rebuild and revive and Reconciling Ministries Network members see hope that people at the social margins can be at the center of this renewed growth just as they were in the early church"; now

Therefore, be it resolved, that the South Carolina Annual Conference affirms and celebrates the 40 years of Reconciling Ministries Network's justice ministry that draws from the Wesleyan understanding of God's grace "that embraces all of creation and seeks its' restoration and perfection in love."

Submitted by

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NOTE: RESOLUTION 2024-5 A Resolution Reaffirming Our Doctrinal Standards And Heritage was submitted on time, in the correct format, and by members of the Annual Conference as required by Standing Rule 70.

After review by the Bishop, Conference Parliamentarian, Conference Chancellor, and Conference Secretary it has been determined that this resolution is out of order and is not properly before the body for the following reasons:

- *It is not within our authority to vote on the Book of Discipline, whether in favor or against.*
- *Individuals cannot be granted the privilege to vote on the Book of Discipline.*
- The footnote indicates that this information is sourced from the Book of Discipline.
- *Paragraph 33 clarifies that the Annual Conference does not have the authority to alter the Book of Discipline.*
- *Judicial Council Decision 886 states that the Annual Conference does not have the power to modify the Book of Discipline.*

It has been included for your information, but will not be considered.

RESOLUTION 2024-5 A RESOLUTION REAFFIRMING OUR DOCTRINAL STANDARDS AND HERITAGE

Whereas, the United Methodist Church is on the precipice of a significant change in the life of our denomination based on the number of churches who have and are disaffiliating; and

Whereas, the Church has become infected by the divisiveness of the society around us; and

Whereas, words like ‘progressive’, ‘conservative’, ‘liberal’ and ‘traditional’ have become words meant to separate rather than describe, despite the ways in which the church has traditionally helped the culture around them progress toward the betterment of humanity. We have attempted to conserve the real understanding of God’s liberal love to all sinners, none of whom are worthy.

Whereas, The United Methodist Church has a heritage as a big tent with a diverse membership;

Whereas, misinformation and disinformation continues to plague our communal body within and outside our United Methodist churches with individuals making claims that are untrue and misleading about the corporate body of the United Methodist Church; and

Whereas, we will continue the aspirational goal of being a connectional church in the future;

Therefore be it resolved by the South Carolina Annual Conference, meeting in Greenville, South

Carolina, June 2024, that we as United Methodists in South Carolina reaffirm our commitment to upholding the historic Articles of Religion of the Methodist Church and the Confession of Faith of the

Evangelical United Brethren Church, as found in our Book of Discipline, as well as the theological convictions found in the historic creeds of the Holy, catholic, and apostolic church. These include, but are not limited to, the Virgin Birth, the Resurrection of Jesus, the Trinity, and Salvation found in Christ alone.

Be it further resolved that when we disagree, we always keep in mind the wisdom of those who have gone before us, that “in essentials unity, in nonessentials liberty, and in all things charity”, while seeking to share the work of building the Kingdom of God, here and now.

Be it further resolved that we are reminded of the delicate nature of our Theological Task. “In the name of Jesus Christ, we are called to work within our diversity while exercising patience and forbearance with one another. Such patience stems neither from indifference toward truth nor from an indulgent tolerance of error but from an awareness that we know only in part and that none of us is able to search the mysteries of God except by the Spirit of God. We proceed with our theological task, trusting that the

Spirit will grant us wisdom to continue our journey with the whole people of God.”¹

Submitted by

Rev. Brad Gray, Pastor, Bethel UMC, Spartanburg

1 Book of Discipline

NOTE: RESOLUTION 2024-6 Resolution for Debt Forgiveness for Direct Billing Arrearages was submitted on time, in the correct format, and by a member of the Annual Conference as required by Standing Rule 70. After review by the Bishop, Conference Parliamentarian, Conference Chancellor, and Conference Secretary it has been determined that this resolution is properly before the body.

RESOLUTION 2024-6

Resolution for Debt Forgiveness for Direct Billing Arrearages

"For it is jubilee; it shall be holy unto you; ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field." - Leviticus 25:12

Whereas, the 2003 South Carolina Annual Conference decision to distribute direct billing burdens equally among local churches, regardless of financial capacity, inadvertently harmed smaller and black congregations;

Whereas, this approach failed to address historical disparities in poorer congregations, neglecting biblical admonitions to aid the less fortunate;

Whereas, the uniform billing system disproportionately affected rural and economically distressed churches, particularly those serving black communities;

Whereas, while large Anglo churches benefited, this placed undue strain on financially vulnerable black and rural congregations, exacerbated by misinformation and pressure to fulfill obligations, also the enrollment fee was an additional burden on an already strained financial system in some rural and historically black United Methodist Churches.

Whereas, equal payments of direct billing could only work if, historically there was equity in wages earned by both black and white persons regardless of geography. The US Census report indicated in 2003 that the average income for white men was 694 dollars per week compared to African American Men was \$511.00. The gap between white women and black women was white women \$548 to black women \$457.00. In either case, there is an inequity in wages earned between both white and black males and white and black females. This wage gap persists to this very day.

Whereas past apportionment payments exceeded anticipated re-payment levels, churches still find themselves weighed down by both current and overdue direct bill charges, limiting their ability to address immediate ministry needs;

Whereas, given the challenging circumstances confronting South Carolina's rural churches, characterized by stagnant wages and population growth, it is essential to urgently rectify the unjust arrearages they are burdened with.

Whereas, as a church of grace, forgiveness, and love, we must rectify the adverse effects of this decision on our missional readiness;

Therefore, be it resolved that all arrearages over 121 days old for South Carolina United Methodist Churches be forgiven, enabling a fresh start for those committed to our connectional system;

Be it further resolved, that the minimum point of the forgiveness be the amount shared by the conference treasurer in September 2023, totaling \$3,344,187.95, plus or minus the current arrearage, shall be joyfully released;

May God grant us the grace to navigate these uncertain times with love and unity. Signed:

Rev. Dr. Reginald Lee, Hartsville District, SC BMCR Chair
Rev. Keith Hunter, Florence District
Rev. Martin Luther Quick, Florence District
Michael Woodham, St. John UMC, Lamar, SC

Rev. Velma Haywood, Retired Pastor, North Orangeburg UMC
Kathy Tisdale, Mt. Zion UMC, Kingstree, Florence District

NOTE: RESOLUTION 2024-7 Resolution for the Preservation and Revitalization of Black Methodist Churches was submitted on time, in the correct format, and by members of the Annual Conference as required by Standing Rule 70.

After review by the Bishop, Conference Parliamentarian, Conference Chancellor, and Conference Secretary it has been determined that this resolution is out of order and is not properly before the body for the following reasons:

- *The resolution attempts to direct the Trustees, who are responsible for allocating separation funds, how they should carry out their duties. This goes against the guidelines outlined in 2549.7*
- *Additionally, the resolution conflicts with Judicial Council Decision 689.*
- *Lastly, it violates the principle of Separation of Powers as outlined in Judicial Council Decision 1649.*

It has been included for your information, but will not be considered.

RESOLUTION 2024-7

Resolution for the Preservation and Revitalization of Black Methodist Churches

“No pillar of the African American community has been more central to its history, identity, and social justice vision than the ‘Black Church.’” - Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr.

Whereas, the South Carolina Caucus of Black Methodists for Church Renewal Inc. (BMCR) recognizes the longstanding tradition and critical role of the Black Church in addressing societal issues, promoting justice, and fostering community resilience;

Whereas, historical and contemporary challenges, including discrimination, inequities, and the decline of Black church attendance, require innovative shifts and proactive responses;

Whereas, the 2004 General Conference approved a resolution affirming a congressional committee studying reparations and slavery’s effect on African Americans’ lives, economics, and politics today, which acknowledges the United Methodist Church’s profound regret for the massive suffering and the tragic effect slavery and the transatlantic slave trade had on millions of black men, women, and children.

Whereas, it has become apparent that there are financial funds resulting from the closure of Black churches and disaffiliation of certain congregations and it is evident that these funds are available as a consequence of these actions;

Whereas, the South Carolina Annual Conference acknowledges its past failure to provide fair equity for the development of Black New-Churches, particularly noting that several counties in South Carolina lack Black United Methodist congregations, with some having only one;

Whereas, the South Carolina Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church acknowledges the urgent need to support and invest in the preservation, revitalization, and expansion of Black Methodist churches throughout the state;

Whereas, the prevailing conditions of violence, homelessness, and unemployment underscore the vital need for a revitalized dedication to comprehensive community involvement and leadership from the Black Church.

Be it therefore resolved that the South Carolina Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church allocates a total of \$3.9 million for the creation of three Anti-Racist Discipleship & Social Justice Ministry programs as follows:

- a) **Preserving Black Churches Fund:** A \$1.7 million initiative to assist historic Black United Methodist Churches in South Carolina with preservation efforts. This fund will support capital projects, strategic planning, and alternative facility usage.
- b) **Direct Investment in human resources inclusive of both Black Laity and Clergy:** \$1.2 million to provide a Center for Excellence in Black Church Leadership Development.
- c) **Emergency Resource Grants:** \$1 million will be allocated to provide insurance gap funding grants ranging from \$20,000 to \$50,000 to address urgent needs arising from unforeseen events such as fire damage, arson, water infiltration, tornadoes, natural disasters, and other climate-related issues.

Respectfully Submitted:

Rev. Amiri B. Hooker, Florence District Advocacy Co-Chair
Rev. Dr. Reginald Lee, Hartsville District, Chair of SC BMCR
Dr. Stephanie Ganaway-Pasley, Jeremiah UMC, Vice Chair SC BMCR
Williams DuBose, New Providence UMC-Hartsville District
Rev. Dr. J. Derrick Cattenhead, Orangeburg District
Patricia McGill, Wesley Chapel UMC, Florence District