

South Central Jurisdiction Conference 2022
Resolution 22-02

Support of a U.S. Regional Conference

A resolution to the 2022 South Central Jurisdictional Conference

WHEREAS the seven Central Conferences and five U.S. Jurisdictions of The United Methodist Church engage in mission together in 136 countries; and

WHEREAS the connectional ties between the church in the United States and the Central Conferences are significant and vital to the continued mission and ministry of the worldwide United Methodist Church; and

WHEREAS the existing structure of The United Methodist Church at the general church level has historically impeded each region from effectively tailoring its ministry to its specific contexts; and

WHEREAS the existing structure of The United Methodist Church at the general church level diminishes our ability to be a vital and effective church and needs to be re-envisioned to achieve more fair and equitable church governance; and

WHEREAS the creation of a U.S. Regional Conference and the conversion of the Central Conferences to Regional Conferences, as outlined in the Christmas Covenant, developed by Central Conference leaders in Africa and the Philippines, would establish structural parity throughout the worldwide church; and

WHEREAS the creation of a U.S. Regional Conference, as outlined in legislation put forward by the Connectional Table will establish the governance necessary to allow each region to design ministry for its particular contexts, and thus more effectively make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world; and

WHEREAS the South Central Jurisdiction of The United Methodist Church continues to work toward inclusion and justice for all God's people; and

WHEREAS the South Central Jurisdiction aspires to vital, thriving, multicultural, and diverse ministries that are open to all people and can be a beacon of hope for the worldwide United Methodist Church.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the South Central Jurisdiction of The United Methodist Church supports the expressed intents of the Christmas Covenant and Connectional Table legislation, including the creation of Regional Conferences in Africa, Europe, the Philippines, and the U.S., respectively; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the South Central Jurisdiction recognizes and supports the leadership of our Central Conferences in the creation and furtherance of the Christmas Covenant as well the Connectional Table's future visioning on behalf of our worldwide fellowship; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the South Central Jurisdiction urges every Annual Conference within its boundaries to support both the Christmas Covenant and Connectional Table proposals to establish a fair and equitable general church structure; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the South Central Jurisdiction urges the Council of Bishops to expedite the process of voting on the constitutional amendments necessary to enact the regional conferences legislation, calling special sessions of annual conferences where necessary; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in line with the intent of the non-disciplinary petition submitted by the Connectional Table, the South Central Jurisdiction requests the Council of Bishops to immediately appoint a 20-25 member Interim Committee on Organization for a US Regional Conference to develop and propose to the 2024 general conference the structure and organization of a US Regional Conference. In line with the CT's legislation, this body would organize and plan for the establishment and functioning of a new United States Regional Conference comprising the five jurisdictions of the United States. Committee membership should have a minimum of 3 members of each US jurisdiction, 3 central conference members and shall meet standards of racial and gender diversity. The Committee should recommend a structure for the US Regional Conference including considerations such as its membership, committee structure, meeting time, agency, and function; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Jurisdiction Conference Secretary shall send copies of this resolution to all delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conferences, including alternates, from the South Central Jurisdiction and to the Commission on the General Conference.

Submitted by:

Rev. Kim Jenne
Clergy delegate, Missouri