

## 2020 Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference

### PRINCIPALS AGREEMENT FOR THE ELECTION OF BISHOPS

The 2016-2020 Southeastern Jurisdiction Committee on Episcopacy believes that the election of bishops is primarily a spiritual undertaking. We intend, therefore, that Episcopal elections in the Southeastern Jurisdiction be held in an atmosphere in which

- delegates allow the Holy Spirit to work
- bishops are elected on the basis of their gifts in relation to the needs of the church
- each delegate is free to vote as he or she is led by the Spirit

We strongly encourage all persons involved in the election process to join us in agreement that

- No delegate shall engage in exchanging (swapping) votes.
- No one shall communicate information concerning any numbers of proposed votes from his/her delegation or group for a particular nominee.
- No attempt shall be made to coerce any delegate to support a particular nominee.
- No effort shall be made within a delegation to ascertain numbers of votes for a particular nominee by straw vote or otherwise.
- No bishop shall be involved in the nomination and election process, other than as a spiritual leader and/or presiding officer of the jurisdictional conference in accordance with *The Book of Discipline*.

Such an understanding of our election process dates back at least to the 1996 jurisdictional conference, when delegation leaders first adopted a statement similar to this. It is crucial that all persons in the jurisdiction read, understand, and subscribe to it. While annual conferences and other participating groups rightly nominate elders deemed to be called to the life and work of a bishop, our election process must never be primarily a political matter. Spiritual leaders are called by God and, at best, affirmed by our process.

We call upon all persons to respect the feelings of those who offer themselves for the Episcopal office, to avoid statements and criticisms that are mean-spirited and hurtful, to seek out the truth if negative comments surface and to share only information which is known to be true.

We recognize that the approach described in this document cannot be legislated. It is a matter of the soul and heart. It is integral to the covenant life we are called to live together in Christ. Our calling is not to elect the nominee of our own conference or group. Our calling is to elect those who God has equipped and is calling to the ministry of general superintendent. This, by God's grace, we intend to do.

Copies of this document shall be provided to all delegates to the 2016 Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference, through the delegation leaders, and to other participants in the election process. In Christian conscience, we call upon all—delegates, elders

nominated for election, bishops of the church, members of caucuses and others—to commit themselves to it as well.

Adopted by SEJ COE in January 2015

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When being used by a nominee or a representative of a nominating body to indicate intention to abide by the provisions of this document:

SIGNATURE OF NOMINEE OR REPRESENTATIVE OF NOMINATING BODY  
(send to: Conference Secretary, Southeastern Jurisdiction, 2042 Town Center Blvd  
#138, Knoxville, TN 37922)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Check One:  } Nominee  
 } Representative of this nominating body: \_\_\_\_\_