



# Southeastern Jurisdiction College of Bishops

## The United Methodist Church

May 26, 2021

**To:** Secretary of the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference  
Treasurer of the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference  
Chairperson of the Committee on Program and Arrangements  
Annual Conference Secretaries  
Heads of Delegations to the 2020 General and Jurisdictional Conferences

**From:** Bishop R. Lawson Bryan  
President, Southeastern Jurisdiction College of Bishops  
The United Methodist Church

**Subject: Special Session of the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference**

The College of Bishops of the Southeastern Jurisdiction hereby issues a call for a Special Session of the Jurisdictional Conference per Division Two, Section IV, Article V of The Constitution of The United Methodist Church (Paragraph 521, The United Methodist Book of Discipline, 2016).

The Special Session of the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference will be held on Wednesday, July 21, 2021, at 10:00 a.m. Eastern (9:00 a.m. Central) time and shall be convened online.

This call is issued to gain a quorum for the purpose of voting on a resolution from the Tennessee and Memphis Conferences to unite the two conferences to form the Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference.

In accordance with ¶521.4 of The Book of Discipline, the special session of the Jurisdictional Conference shall be limited to the following agenda items:

1. Vote to authorize the formation of the Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference of The United Methodist Church
2. Receive a report from the Southeastern Jurisdiction on the pandemic response in the jurisdiction and the work of antiracism across the jurisdiction and the work of the jurisdiction moving forward into the next 18 months

We will begin and end our time together in worship.

### **Agenda Item #1**

#### **Petition Requesting the Southeastern Jurisdiction to Authorize Formation of the Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference of The United Methodist Church**

Whereas: The Nashville Episcopal Area is comprised of the Memphis and Tennessee conferences, and

Whereas: In 2019, the Tennessee Annual Conference and Memphis Annual Conference sessions each voted to petition the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference to take action at its 2020 session setting the boundaries of the two conferences to form a new conference, with the new conference to operate as a fully unified annual conference beginning in January 2021, and

Whereas: Due to delays in General Conference and Jurisdictional Conference meetings resulting from the global COVID-19 pandemic, the Jurisdictional Conference did not meet in 2020 session, but has called a special session for July 2021, and

Whereas: It has become necessary to delay the new conference's commencement of operation as a fully unified annual conference to January 1, 2022, and moving forward with this adjusted commencement date was acknowledged and affirmed by the Tennessee Annual Conference and the Memphis Annual Conference in their June 2021 sessions:

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference approves realigning the boundaries of the Memphis and Tennessee annual conferences to form one new annual conference known as the Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference of The United Methodist Church, with boundaries coextensive with the current Tennessee and Memphis conferences.

Be it further resolved that the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference authorizes such new conference to conduct an organizational meeting consisting of the voting membership (lay and clergy) of the Tennessee and Memphis annual conferences prior to January 1, 2022, and to begin operations as a fully unified annual conference on January 1, 2022, all in accordance with a Plan of Union adopted by both conferences at their June 2021 annual conference sessions.

This action will become effective upon the adjournment of the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference, July twenty-first, 2021.

Submitted by:

Holly Neal  
Tennessee Conference Lay Leader

Janice McCallen  
Memphis Conference Lay Leader

#### **Agenda Item #2**

Receive a report from the Southeastern Jurisdiction on the pandemic response in the jurisdiction and the work of anti-racism across the jurisdiction and the work of the jurisdiction moving forward into the next 18 months

Following the conclusion of these items of business, the Special Session will adjourn. All votes taken will be certified and reported to members of the delegations on August 1, 2021.

Based on the Judicial Council's canons of interpretation, ¶14, Article II of the 2016 United Methodist Book of Discipline should be interpreted to mean that the delegates for a special session in 2021 would be those persons elected by the annual conferences as delegates to the 2020 General and Jurisdictional Conferences. Likewise, the phrase "or their lawful successors" in ¶14 should be construed to mean that persons elected for the postponed 2020 General and Jurisdictional Conferences are the delegates to a special session of the Jurisdictional Conference in 2021.

The Secretary of the Jurisdiction will be in communication with annual conference secretaries regarding delegate information. At the appropriate time prior to the called session, the Conference Secretary will also provide additional information to each delegate and alternate regarding the logistics of the online Special Session of Jurisdictional Conference.

The College of Bishops encourages all churches of the Southeastern Jurisdiction to be in prayer for the Church and the world in this time of challenge and great opportunity.

Very gratefully yours,



R. Lawson Bryan  
Resident Bishop, South Georgia Area