October 10, 2018

For Immediate Release

EXTENDED CABINET RELEASES STATEMENT REGARDING A WAY FORWARD

We, the members of the Extended Cabinet of the Indiana Conference, are aware of the uncertainty concerning our United Methodist Church. We hear the many concerns and understand the discomfort of these uncertain times. This statement is our collective encouragement and commitment to continue listening, loving, and praying for our congregations, clergy, and communities.

We hope that all United Methodists in Indiana will navigate these times with a “humble openness,” as we listen to the ways the Holy Spirit is prodding us to refocus on the mission, and recommit to the cause of Christ, so that we strengthen our witness and extend the invitation into relationship with Jesus Christ.

As we journey over the next several months, and beyond February 2019, we ask all to engage and commit to the following:

• Faithfully practice in thought, speech, and action the words from Ephesians 4:4-6: “Therefore, as a prisoner for the Lord, I encourage you to live as people worthy of the call you received from God. Conduct yourselves with all humility, gentleness, and patience. Accept each other with love, and make an effort to preserve the unity of the Spirit with the peace that ties you together. You are one body and one spirit, just as God also called you in one hope. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of all, who is over all, through all, and in all.”

• Prioritize a daily discipline of the practice of prayer. Why pray? There is more power in prayer than the votes of the 885 voting delegates. We invite you to be faithful in your prayers for the United Methodist Church, the Special General Session, and the delegates who will be attending. We invite you to join us in prayer every day leading up to and through the Special General Session from 2:23 p.m.- 2:26 p.m.

• Actively participate in a District Call to Prayer and Conversation, and prepare yourself by studying the information about A Way Forward. (http://www.inumc.org/wayforwardresources).

• Accept the challenge to create brave spaces, and host courageous conversations in your congregations and communities, where all may be heard without
condemnation. “Love of God is always linked with love of Neighbor, a passion for justice and renewal in the life of the world.” We believe our primary identity is as “children of God”; therefore our behavior and attitude is not predicated on legislative outcomes, but Christlike relationships.

- Remain diligent in Jesus’ primary directive, as found in Acts 1:8, in seeking ways to be fruitful in our INUMC missional emphasis and assist in accomplishing our WIG (Wildly Important Goal); living as those who are sent to connect people to Jesus.

While we do not know what the future will hold, what we do know...God is Sovereign, Jesus is Lord, and we are to continue striving to be Hope and Light!

Humbly Shared and Equally Committed
<named members of Extended Cabinet>

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John Groves
Ian Hall
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