

1 **R-7 PRIDDY RESOLUTION**  
2 **“IN SUPPORT OF CREATING A U.S. REGIONAL CONFERENCE”**

3  
4 **Resolution:**

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

7  
8 Whereas, the connectional ties between the church in the United States and the Central  
9 Conferences are significant and vital to the continued mission and ministry of the worldwide United  
10 Methodist Church; and

11  
12 Whereas, the existing structure of The United Methodist Church at the general church level has  
13 historically impeded each region from effectively tailoring its ministry to its specific contexts; and

14  
15 Whereas, the existing structure of The United Methodist Church at the general church level  
16 diminishes our ability to be a vital and effective church and needs to be re-envisioned to achieve  
17 more fair and equitable church governance; and

18  
19 Whereas, the Apostle Paul offered a beautiful example making clear the value of a church  
20 established in diverse places with shared beliefs, alongside local and regional differences in  
21 structure, worship, and style best suited to particular contexts; and

22  
23 Whereas, the creation of a U.S. Regional Conference and the conversion of the Central  
24 Conferences to Regional Conferences, as outlined in the Christmas Covenant, developed by  
25 Central Conference leaders in Africa and the Philippines, would establish structural parity  
26 throughout the worldwide church; and

27  
28 Whereas, the creation of a U.S. Regional Conference, as outlined in legislation put forward by the  
29 Connectional Table will establish the governance necessary to allow each region to design  
30 ministry for its particular contexts, and thus more effectively make disciples of Jesus Christ for the  
31 transformation of the world; and

32  
33 Whereas, the Indiana Annual Conference aspires to vital, thriving, multicultural, and diverse  
34 ministries that are open to all people and can be a beacon of hope for the worldwide United  
35 Methodist Church, and

36  
37 Whereas, in November of 2022, and in historic fashion, a resolution in support of a U.S. Regional  
38 Conference was adopted at all five Jurisdictional Conferences.

39  
40 Therefore, be it resolved that the Indiana Annual Conference supports the expressed intents of the  
41 Christmas Covenant and Connectional Table legislation, including the creation of Regional  
42 Conferences in Africa, Europe, the Philippines, and the U.S., respectively; and

43  
44 Be it further resolved that the Indiana Annual Conference recognizes and supports the leadership  
45 of our Central Conferences in the creation and furtherance of the Christmas Covenant as well the  
46 Connectional Table’s future visioning on behalf of our worldwide fellowship; and

47  
48 Be it further resolved that the Indiana Annual Conference urges the Council of Bishops to expedite  
49 the process of voting on the constitutional amendments necessary to enact the regional  
50 conferences legislation, calling special sessions of annual conferences where necessary; and

1 Be it further resolved that in line with the intent of the non-disciplinary petition submitted by the  
2 Connectional Table, the Indiana Annual Conference requests the Council of Bishops to  
3 immediately appoint a 20-25 member Interim Committee on Organization for a US Regional  
4 Conference to develop and propose to the 2024 general conference the structure and  
5 organization of a US Regional Conference. In line with the CT's legislation, this body would  
6 organize and plan for the establishment and functioning of a new United States Regional  
7 Conference comprising the five jurisdictions of the United States. Committee membership should  
8 have a minimum of 3 members of each US jurisdiction, 3 central conference members and shall  
9 meet standards of racial and gender diversity. The Committee should recommend a structure for  
10 the US Regional Conference including considerations such as its membership, committee  
11 structure, meeting time, agency, and function; and  
12

13 Be it further resolved that the Indiana Annual Conference secretary shall send copies of this  
14 resolution to all delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conferences, including alternates, to the  
15 Commission on the General Conference, and to the Council of Bishops.  
16

17 ***Rationale:***

18 The goal of the Christmas Covenant is establishing regional equity in the structures of the church  
19 for missional effectiveness while sustaining connectional unity. It is rooted in connectional  
20 relationships rooted in mission, respect for contextual ministry settings, and legislative equality for  
21 regional bodies of the church. These goals align with the mission of the Indiana conference and  
22 our missional aspirations.  
23

24 The Christmas Covenant achieves regional equity by transforming Central Conferences to  
25 Regional Conferences. The change in name will undo the negative connotation associated with  
26 the term "Central" (i.e. the Central Jurisdiction segregated Black churches and clergy in the United  
27 States). The proposed constitutional amendments will strengthen the ability of Regional  
28 Conferences to adapt the Book of Discipline to meet the unique missional needs of each region.  
29 The Christmas Covenant also creates the United States Regional Conference with regional equity  
30 and structure (as proposed by The Connectional Table) and authorizes contextual adaptations of  
31 the Book of Discipline for missional effectiveness.  
32

33 Supporting the Christmas Covenant will put Indiana conference in alignment with the growth in  
34 equity and inclusion that we believe is vital for the mission of the church.  
35

36 We are stronger together. Being in mission together as a global church celebrates our unity in  
37 diversity and positively impacts the different contexts we represent. While diversity is a challenge,  
38 we do not believe dissolution is the right way to heal the wounds that cause us pain as Christ's  
39 Body. A truly global church committed to be in mission together embraces its differences and  
40 allows for self-determination. It is able to find common ground in affirming how we do effective  
41 ministry in places we serve. Acknowledging that our different contexts need different solutions is a  
42 better way forward and fosters mutuality. This path affirms a stronger common witness to the  
43 global community. God's grace is present everywhere and in everyone. We are called to humbly  
44 respond to this grace in recognizing its many expressions around the world. This call we do best  
45 together.  
46

47 ***Financial Implications:*** No  
48

49 ***Groups to forward/affirm:***

50 All delegates to General Conference and Jurisdictional Conferences, including alternates  
51 Commission on the General Conference

1 Council of Bishops  
2  
3 *Shannon Priddy*  
4 *priddysh@gmail.com*  
5 *317-610-6899*