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## R2 SCANLAN-HOLMES RESOLUTION

### “RETURN TO ACTIVE MINISTRY FOR IMPAIRED CLERGY”

**Resolution:**

WHEREAS we are people of God, and we seek to minister to one another with love and compassion, and

WHEREAS All Elders, Deacons, and Licensed Pastors are human and therefore subject to behavioral health issues such as substance use disorders, other addictions, and mental health disorders; and

WHEREAS the recent pandemic has created more stress in the professional work of Elders, Deacons, and Licensed Pastors, increasing their behavioral health concerns; and

WHEREAS most employers have policies or guidelines regarding the proper care of staff; and

WHEREAS, the Indiana Annual Conference has not had sufficient guidelines and, therefore, has been inconsistent in addressing the behavioral health issues among Elders, Deacons, and Licensed Pastors; now,

Therefore, be it RESOLVED that the Indiana Annual Conference in assembly direct the Indiana Annual Conference Nominating Committee or its designee to appoint a committee to address the issue of Elders, Deacons, and Licensed Pastors whose work is impaired by behavioral health issues; and

Be it further RESOLVED that this committee research guidelines currently used by other Conferences and church bodies regarding Elders, Deacons, and Licensed Pastors whose work is impaired by behavioral health concerns; and

Be it further RESOLVED that this committee develop guidelines to address these issues; and

Be it further RESOLVED that there be various guidelines to guide anyone who is concerned regarding the behavioral health of Elders, Deacons, and Licensed Pastors. Specific guidelines would be developed for each of the following: Conference staff, colleagues of impaired Elders, Deacons and Licensed Pastors, congregational leaders, congregational members and family members of Elders, Deacons, and Licensed pastors; and

Be it further RESOLVED that there be a guideline for Elders, Deacons, and Licensed Pastors when they follow a ministry that has been damaged by behavioral health issues, and

Be it further RESOLVED that this committee recommend the guidelines above to the Indiana Annual Conference for adoption in the 2025 Indiana Annual Conference, and

Be it further RESOLVED that this committee recommend an education or orientation process to the Indiana Annual Conference to implement these guidelines effectively at the Conference, District, and congregational levels.

1 **Rationale:**

2 NOT WITHSTANDING ANY LEGAL CONSEQUENCES OF AN INDIVIDUAL'S ACTIONS, which must  
3 always be addressed.

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5 The Problem: Like other people, clergy have behavioral health problems related to substance misuse and  
6 mental health issues. Church officials, lay leaders, congregations and clergy family members often lack the  
7 policies and education to restore those clergy to the work they have been called to do. Other professions  
8 such as legal, medical, and airline staff, have successful programs for restoring their workers. Our mission  
9 in forming a committee to address the problem is to build a similar model for clergy by adapting those  
10 successful programs. The committee will be tasked to build a model program to include policies, training and  
11 guidelines for judicatory staff, and others. To cost the implementation of such a policy in the Indiana  
12 Conference, which already has a good reputation as a provider of clergy care and provide a pathway for  
13 its successful implementation. The work of the committee will be presented to the 2025 Indiana Annual  
14 Conference for adoption and then training can be offered to roll out the policy in the Conference.

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16 **Financial Implications:** No

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18 **Groups to forward to once affirmed:**

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