

1 **Action Request #3**

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3 **2021 OREGON-IDAHO**
4 **ANNUAL CONFERENCE**
5

6 **TITLE: Support for Christmas Covenant proposals**
7 **SPONSORING GROUP OR INDIVIDUAL: Methodist Federation for Social Action, Western Methodist**
8 **Justice Movement**
9 **SPOKESPERSON: Jan Nelson**
10 **SPOKESPERSON’S ADDRESS: 1845 High St SE, Salem, OR 97302**
11 **SPOKESPERSON’S E-MAIL: jannelson515@msn.com**
12 **SPOKESPERSON’S TELEPHONE: 503-689-3688**
13 **LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY ACTION: Recommend for approval 14-4-1.**

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15 **We petition the Oregon-Idaho Annual conference to take the following action:**

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 - Affirm the work of the team that produced the Christmas Covenant legislation, as a step toward

18 a more equitable structure for the United Methodist Church. We value the voices of members
19 outside the USA that have long been absent from submitting legislation to the General
20 Conference.

 - Urge our annual conference and especially our delegation to study this legislation as a possible

21 way to a more just and less colonialist church. The legislation and supporting information can be
22 found at www.christmascovenant.com.
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25 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

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27 **What will this action accomplish?**

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29 Support from our conference will help build support across the UMC for this change in the Church to a
30 regional form of governance that will take a large step toward equity between regions. It will allow us to
31 remain a global Church by allowing more effective ministry in the cultural and historical context of the
32 various regions, and it will begin to dismantle the colonial structure of the Church.
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34 **Why is it important?**

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36 The connectional ties between the church in the United States and the central conferences are of sacred
37 worth and are vital to the ministry and work of the global United Methodist Church. But the existing
38 structure of the UMC prohibits each region from effectively ministering within their own local context.
39 The existing structure is highly US-centered and requires General Conference delegates from other parts
40 of the world to debate and vote on matters that affect only the US. The creation of a US Regional
41 Conference will allow uniquely US matters to be decided by US delegates. Currently, central conference
42 delegates have some power to do the same in their areas. This legislation will help establish structural
43 parity throughout the UMC. As the changes in the legislation are implemented, it will become possible
44 for regional questions to be decided in that region.
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46 The Christmas Covenant legislation was written by a team of clergy and laity representing the central
47 conferences of the UMC, something that has rarely happened in the past. It was adopted by the Cavite

1 Annual Conference (Philippines) as a petition to General Conference. Its proposal for regional structure
2 incorporates a similar proposal from the UMC's Connectional Table.

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4 The Christmas Covenant team is looking for a way to address long-standing problems of equity while
5 maintaining unity. In their own words, "Our unity is not for unity's sake but for the effective
6 proclamation of the Gospel—to invite all into a loving relationship with God and with one's neighbor.
7 We welcome and affirm the sacred worth of all God's children and embrace everyone's participation in
8 building God's beloved community."

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10 **How will it be carried out? By whom?**

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12 Most of the work will be carried out by our General Conference delegation. The Conference Secretary
13 will send this resolution to the Commission on General Conference.

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15 **How much will it cost? Where will the money come from?**

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17 No cost beyond the time it takes the Secretary to send this.

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