

**ACTION REQUEST #5**  
**2022 OREGON-IDAHO ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

**TITLE: Call for a Jurisdictional Episcopacy Study Committee**  
**SPONSORING GROUP OR INDIVIDUAL: Rev. Jeremy Smith**  
**SPOKESPERSON: Rev. Jeremy Smith**  
**SPOKESPERSON'S ADDRESS: 180 Denny Way, Seattle WA 98109**  
**SPOKESPERSON'S E-MAIL: Jeremy@FirstChurchSeattle.org**  
**SPOKESPERSON'S TELEPHONE: 971-270-0179**

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

Communicate our desire that an Episcopacy Study Committee be created to continue the work of Western Jurisdictional workgroups, draw in other inputs from across the connection, and bring forth one or more proposals to the next Western Jurisdictional Conference to include:

- The role of the episcopacy and whether bishops are appointed primarily to geographic areas, or primarily to functional specialties for the entire Western Jurisdiction;
- The number of elected bishops (as few as one, no more than five) needed to fulfill that role in the Western Jurisdiction;
- Any jurisdictional or annual conference administrative structures or positions that can assist in fulfilling that role;
- The values that govern such decisions now and in the future.

This Episcopacy Study Committee would be constituted by July 31, 2022, by approval of the majority of the first-elected delegates of the 2022 Western Jurisdictional Conference, and include at least one member of the elected leadership of the following groups who have been active in these discussions already:

- The Jurisdictional Committee on the Episcopacy
- The Western Jurisdictional Stakeholder's leadership
- The Team of 10
- Representatives from each Episcopal Area or Annual Conference
- Other persons as deemed available and appropriate by the first-electeds, with an eye towards demographic diversity and representation of under-represented groups.

The Episcopacy Study Committee would recommend one or more proposals for discernment and adoption at the November 2022 Western Jurisdictional Conference. The approved proposal would continue our full year of reflective work that was first proposed in July 2021, and provide further discernment, funding strategies, and reorientation of the Western Jurisdiction to a creative, new reality before electing new episcopal leadership to carry out that work.

Any proposals from the Study Committee should not depend on General Conference action, and should utilize authority that resides with the Western Jurisdiction to structure itself for mission and ministry.

Proposals will be made publicly available one month before the Western Jurisdictional Conference Session, with jurisdictional delegate forums for discussion held and led by the Episcopacy Study Committee immediately thereafter.

1 The conference secretary will be given the text of this action request to be sent electronically to  
2 the first-elected delegates to the 2022 Western Jurisdictional Conference, the chair of the  
3 Jurisdictional Leadership Team, and the chair of the Jurisdictional Committee on the  
4 Episcopacy for distribution to their respective groups. Names and email addresses will be  
5 supplied to the secretary.  
6

7 If such a Jurisdictional Study Committee is not formed and populated by the first-elected  
8 delegates by July 31, 2022, the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference will convene such a  
9 committee, chaired by the petition author, and invite the participation of the entire jurisdiction in  
10 its work, concluding with a proposal to be sent to the next Western Jurisdictional Conference as  
11 outlined above.  
12

### 13 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

#### 14 **What will this action accomplish?**

15 This will create an ad-hoc Jurisdictional committee to study the feasibility and viability of a  
16 different structure for episcopal leadership by drawing out some administrative functions and  
17 freeing a bishop to provide visionary and specialized leadership, with proposals due by the  
18 November 2022 Western Jurisdictional Conference.  
19

#### 20 **Why is it important?**

21 With the mandatory retirement of all five bishops in the Western Jurisdiction occurring over the  
22 next 3-5 years, the time is right to rethink the episcopacy as part of a larger Jurisdictional  
23 restructuring that centers and serves local contexts, invites the full participation and leadership  
24 of the laity, encourages specialized ministries, and streamlines bureaucracies.  
25

26 The expressed desire of multiple Western Jurisdictional workgroups as of October 2021 ("[A  
27 progress report on Western Jurisdiction visioning and an invitation as we expand the table](#)") is  
28 for a different structure for episcopal leadership, and their work needs to be continued and  
29 capitalized on.  
30

31 The jurisdictional meetings held at the end of March 2022 discussed concrete steps and  
32 processes for the election of bishops, but no similar concrete steps or processes to re-envision  
33 the nature of the episcopacy, the roles of the bishops, or adjustments to bring administrative  
34 flexibility to the episcopacy.  
35

36 Since 2019, various groups and efforts in the Greater Northwest area of the Western  
37 Jurisdiction have studied the role of the episcopacy, asking if there is a better way to utilize  
38 episcopal leadership on specialties other than general superintendency?  
39

40 While most proposals deal in General Conference legislation, the Western Jurisdiction can  
41 make this decision ourselves with faithful leadership, committed study, and bold revisioning of  
42 who the jurisdiction can be, so that we can accomplish our mission.  
43

44 Given the mandatory retirement schedule of active bishops, the time is now for action.

- 45 ● Bob Hoshibata, retired after July 2021 JC
- 46 ● Grant Hagiya, retiring after November 2022 JC
- 47 ● Elaine Stanovsky, retiring after November 2022 JC (voluntary)
- 48 ● Minerva Carcaño, retiring after November 2022 JC
- 49 ● Karen Oliveto, retiring after 2024 JC

1

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

3 The Conference Secretary shall send the text of the action request to the named individuals

4 above, including the petition author in such correspondence. 5

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

7 No cost.