

**2019 JOURNAL**

**Resolutions Approved at Annual Conference**

**RESOLUTION #1 -Kilgore Closing APPROVED**

**WHEREAS**, the Kilgore United Methodist Church located in Kilgore, Nebraska, was founded in 1909 and has had a long and faithful history of serving Jesus Christ and its community; and

**WHEREAS**, the church conference of the Kilgore United Methodist Church voted on November 2, 2018, to close the church; and

**WHEREAS**, The Rev. Cindy Karges, the District Superintendent of the Great West District, has recommended that the church be closed; and

**WHEREAS**, the consent of the Great West District Board of Church Location, the Cabinet, and Bishop Ruben Saenz, Jr. has been granted; and

**WHEREAS**, all proper Disciplinary requirements have been complied with;

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Great Plains Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church:

1. That the Kilgore United Methodist Church in Cherry County, Nebraska, is hereby declared closed as of June 30, 2019, with appreciation for its years of faithfulness and service.
2. That the membership of the Kilgore United Methodist Church be transferred as determined by each member prior to closing, and that any memberships not so designated be transferred to the Valentine United Methodist Church.
3. That title to the real property [and other assets] held by Kilgore United Methodist Church be transferred to the Great Plains Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, and that the Board of Trustees of the Annual Conference be hereby authorized and directed to hold, sell, lease, or dispose of such assets upon such terms as they deem adequate, and to incur any reasonable expenses in connection therewith.
4. That the official records and papers of the Kilgore United Methodist Church be deposited for permanent safekeeping with the Commission on Archives and History.

**RESOLUTION #3 - Closing of Trinity Community  
Church, A United Methodist Church APPROVED**

**WHEREAS**, the Trinity Community Church, a United Methodist Church located in Wyandotte County, Kansas, was founded in April 1961 and has had a long and faithful history of serving Jesus Christ and its community; and

**WHEREAS**, the church conference of the Trinity Community Church, a United Methodist Church voted on April 14, 2019, to close the church; and

**WHEREAS**, the Rev. Dr. Anne Gatobu, the District Superintendent of the Kansas City District, has recommended that the church be closed; and

**WHEREAS**, the consent of the Kansas City District Board of Church Location, the Cabinet, and Bishop Ruben Saenz Jr. has been granted; and

**WHEREAS**, all proper Disciplinary requirements have been complied with;

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Great Plains Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church:

1. That the Trinity Community Church, a United Methodist Church in Wyandotte County, Kansas, is hereby declared closed as of June 30, 2019, with appreciation for its years of faithfulness and service.
2. That the membership of the Trinity Community Church, a United Methodist Church be transferred as determined by each member prior to closing, and that any memberships not so designated be transferred to the Wyandotte United Methodist Church.
3. That title to the real property [and other assets and liabilities] held by Trinity Community Church, a United Methodist Church be transferred to the Great Plains Annual

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Conference of the United Methodist Church, and that the Board of Trustees of the Annual Conference be hereby authorized and directed to hold, sell, lease, or dispose of such assets upon such terms as they deem adequate, and to incur any reasonable expenses in connection therewith.

4. That the official records and papers of the Trinity Community Church, a United Methodist Church be deposited for permanent safekeeping with the Commission on Archives and History.

### **RESOLUTION #4 - Closing of Valley View United**

#### **Methodist Church APPROVED**

**WHEREAS**, the Valley View United Methodist Church located in Johnson County, Kansas, was founded in 1959 and has had a long and faithful history of serving Jesus Christ and its community; and

**WHEREAS**, the church conference of the Valley View United Methodist Church voted on December 2, 2018, to close the church; and

**WHEREAS**, Rev. Dr. Anne Gatobu, the District Superintendent of the Kansas City District, has recommended that the church be closed; and

**WHEREAS**, the consent of the Kansas City District Board of Church Location, the Cabinet, and Bishop Ruben Saenz Jr. has been granted; and

**WHEREAS**, all proper Disciplinary requirements have been be closed; and

**WHEREAS**, the consent of the Kansas City District Board of Church Location, the Cabinet, and Bishop Ruben Saenz Jr. has been granted; and

**WHEREAS**, all proper Disciplinary requirements have been complied with;

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complied with;

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Great Plains Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church:

1. That the Valley View United Methodist Church in Overland Park in Johnson County, Kansas, is hereby declared closed as of April 30, 2019, with appreciation for its years of faithfulness and service.
2. That the membership of the Valley View United Methodist Church be transferred as determined by each member prior to closing, and that any memberships not so designated be transferred to the Church of The Resurrection United Methodist Church.
3. That title to the real property [and other assets and liabilities] held by Valley View United Methodist Church be transferred to the Church of the Resurrection United Methodist Church, and that the Board of Trustees of the Church of the Resurrection be hereby authorized and directed to hold, sell, lease, or dispose of such assets upon such terms as they deem adequate, and to incur any reasonable expenses in connection therewith.
4. That the official records and papers of the Valley View United Methodist Church be deposited for permanent safekeeping with the Commission on Archives and History.

**RESOLUTION #5 Closing of Chetopa St. Paul United Methodist Church APPROVED**

**WHEREAS**, the St. Paul United Methodist Church located in Chetopa, Kansas, has had a long and faithful history of serving Jesus Christ and its community; and

**WHEREAS**, the church conference of the St. Paul United Methodist Church voted on October 11, 2018, to close the church; and

**WHEREAS**, the Rev. David E. Watson, the District Superintendent of the Parsons District, has recommended that the church be closed; and

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**WHEREAS**, the consent of the Parsons District Board of Church Location, the Cabinet, and Bishop Ruben Saenz Jr. has been granted; and

**WHEREAS**, all proper Disciplinary requirements have been complied with;

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Great Plains Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church:

1. That the St. Paul United Methodist Church in Labette County, Kansas, is hereby declared closed as of June 30, 2019, with appreciation for its years of faithfulness and service.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Great Plains Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church:

1. That the St. Paul United Methodist Church in Labette County, Kansas, is hereby declared closed as of June 30, 2019, with appreciation for its years of faithfulness and service.

2. That the membership of the St. Paul United Methodist Church be transferred as determined by each member prior to closing, and that any memberships not so designated be transferred to the Chetopa United Methodist Church.

3. That title to the real property [and other assets] held by St. Paul United Methodist Church be transferred to the Great Plains Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, and that the Board of Trustees of the Annual Conference be hereby authorized and directed to hold, sell, lease, or dispose of such assets upon such terms as they deem adequate, and to incur any reasonable expenses in connection therewith.

4. That the official records and papers of the St. Paul United Methodist Church be deposited for permanent safekeeping with the Commission on Archives and History.

**RESOLUTION #6 Closing of Ada United Methodist Church APPROVED**

**WHEREAS**, the Ada United Methodist Church located in Ada, Kansas, was founded August 10, 1886, and has had a long and faithful history of serving Jesus Christ and its community; and

**WHEREAS**, the church conference of the Ada United Methodist Church voted on May 10, 2019, to discontinue the church; and

**WHEREAS**, - The Rev. Delores J. Williamston, the District Superintendent of the Salina District, has recommended that the church be discontinued; and

**WHEREAS**, the consent of the Salina District Board of Church Location, the Cabinet, and Bishop Ruben Saenz Jr. has been granted; and

**WHEREAS**, all proper disciplinary requirements have been complied with;

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Great Plains Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church:

1. That the Ada United Methodist Church in Ottawa County, Kansas, is hereby declared discontinued as of June 30, 2019, with appreciation for its years of faithfulness and service.
2. That the membership of the Ada United Methodist Church be transferred as determined by each member prior to discontinuance, and that any memberships not so designated be transferred to the Minneapolis First United Methodist Church in Minneapolis, Kansas.
3. That title to the real property [and other assets] held by Ada United Methodist Church be transferred to the Great Plains Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, and that the Board of Trustees of the Annual Conference is hereby authorized and directed to hold, sell, lease, or dispose of such assets upon such terms as they deem adequate, and to incur any reasonable expenses in connection therewith.

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4. That the official records and papers of the Ada United Methodist Church be deposited for permanent safe keeping with the Commission on Archives and History.

**RESOLUTION #7 Closing of Delphos United Methodist Church APPROVED**

**WHEREAS**, the Delphos United Methodist Church located in Delphos, Kansas, was founded March 5, 1877, and has had a long and faithful history of serving Jesus Christ and its community; and

**WHEREAS**, the church conference of the Delphos United Methodist Church voted on February 4th, 2018, to discontinue the church; and

**WHEREAS**, The Rev. Delores Williamston, the District Superintendent of the Salina District, has recommended that the church be discontinued; and

**WHEREAS**, the consent of the Salina District Board of Church Location, the Cabinet, and Bishop Ruben Saenz Jr. has been granted; and

**WHEREAS**, all proper Disciplinary requirements have been complied with;

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Great Plains Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church:

1. That the Delphos United Methodist Church in Ottawa County, Kansas, is hereby declared discontinued as of June 30, 2019, with appreciation for its years of faithfulness and service.
2. That the membership of the Delphos United Methodist Church be transferred as determined by each member prior to discontinuance, and that any memberships not so designated be transferred to the Minneapolis First United Methodist Church.
3. That title to the real property [and other assets] held by Delphos United Methodist Church be transferred to the Great Plains

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Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, and that the Board of Trustees of the Annual Conference is hereby authorized and directed to hold, sell, lease, or dispose of such assets upon such terms as they deem adequate, and to incur any reasonable expenses in connection therewith.

4. That the official records and papers of the Delphos United Methodist Church be deposited for permanent safekeeping with the Commission on Archives and History.

### **RESOLUTION #8 - Closing of Portis United Methodist Church APPROVED**

**WHEREAS**, the Portis United Methodist Church located in Portis, Kansas, was founded May 8, 1897, and has had a long and faithful history of serving Jesus Christ and its community; and

**WHEREAS**, the church conference of the Portis United Methodist Church voted on March 24, 2019, to discontinue the church; and

**WHEREAS**, - The Rev. Delores J. Williamston, the District Superintendent of the Hays District, has recommended that the church be discontinued; and

**WHEREAS**, the consent of the Hays District Board of Church Location, the Cabinet, and Bishop Ruben Saenz Jr. has been granted; and

**WHEREAS**, all proper Disciplinary requirements have been complied with;

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Great Plains Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church:

1. That the Portis United Methodist Church in Osborne County, Kansas, is hereby declared discontinued as of June 30, 2019, with appreciation for its years of faithfulness and service.

2. That the membership of the Portis United Methodist Church be

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transferred as determined by each member prior to discontinuance, and that any memberships not so designated be transferred to the Downs United Methodist Church in Downs Kansas.

3. That title to the real property [and other assets] held by Portis United Methodist Church be transferred to the Great Plains Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, and that the Board of Trustees of the Annual Conference is hereby authorized and directed to hold, sell, lease, or dispose of such assets upon such terms as they deem adequate, and to incur any reasonable expenses in connection therewith.

4. That the official records and papers of the Portis United Methodist Church be deposited for permanent safekeeping with the Commission on Archives and History.

### **RESOLUTION #9 - Closing of Robinson United Methodist Church APPROVED**

**WHEREAS**, the Robinson United Methodist Church located in Brown County, Kansas, was founded in 1879 and has had a long and faithful history of serving Jesus Christ and its community; and

**WHEREAS**, the church conference of the Robinson United Methodist Church voted on March 31, 2019, to close the church; and

**WHEREAS**, the Rev. Kay Scarbrough, District Superintendent of the Topeka District, has recommended that the church be closed; and

**WHEREAS**, the consent of the Topeka District Board of Church Location, the Cabinet, and Bishop Ruben Saenz Jr. has been granted; and

**WHEREAS**, all proper Disciplinary requirements have been complied with;

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Great Plains Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church:

1. That the Robinson United Methodist Church in Brown County, Kansas, is hereby declared closed as of July 30, 2019, with appreciation for its years of faithfulness and service.

2. That the membership of the Robinson United Methodist Church be transferred as determined by each member prior to closing, and that any memberships not so designated be transferred to the First United Methodist Church of Hiawatha.

3. That title to the real property [and other assets] held by Robinson United Methodist Church be transferred to the Great Plains Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, and that the Board of Trustees of the Annual Conference be hereby authorized and directed to hold, sell, lease, or dispose of such assets upon such terms as they deem adequate, and to incur any reasonable expenses in connection therewith.

4. That the official records and papers of the Robinson United Methodist Church be deposited for permanent safekeeping with the Commission on Archives and History.

### **RESOLUTION #10 - Discontinuance of Hicks Chapel United Methodist Church APPROVED**

**WHEREAS**, Hicks Chapel Episcopal Methodist Church, commonly known as Hicks Chapel United Methodist Church, located in rural Cowley County, Kansas, in the Wichita East District of the Great Plains Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, was founded in 1909 and has had a long and faithful history of serving Jesus Christ and its community; and

**WHEREAS**, the church conference of the Hicks Chapel United Methodist Church voted on February 24, 2019, to discontinue the church; and

**WHEREAS**, the Rev. Dr. Mitch Reece, the District Superintendent of the Wichita East District, has recommended that the church be discontinued; and

**WHEREAS**, the consent of the Wichita East District Board of Church Location, the Cabinet, and Bishop Ruben Saenz Jr. has been granted; and

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**WHEREAS**, all proper Disciplinary requirements have been complied with;

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Great Plains Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church:

1. That the Hicks Chapel United Methodist Church in Cowley County, Kansas, is hereby declared discontinued as of April 28, 2019, with appreciation for its years of faithfulness and service.
2. That the membership of the Hicks Chapel United Methodist Church be transferred as determined by each member prior to discontinuance, and that any memberships not so designated by transferred to the Tisdale United Methodist Church in Winfield, Kansas.
3. That title to the real property and other assets held by Hicks Chapel United Methodist Church be transferred to the Great Plains Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, and that the Board of Trustees of the Annual Conference is hereby authorized and directed to hold, sell, lease or dispose of such assets upon such terms as they deem adequate, and to incur any reasonable expenses in connection therewith.
4. That the official records and papers of the Hicks Chapel United Methodist Church be deposited for permanent safekeeping with the Commission on Archives and History.

**RESOLUTION #11 - Renewal Leave for Clergy  
REFERRED TO CF&A-RECONSIDERED-REFERRED TO  
CLERGY EXCELLENCE**

**WHEREAS**, The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church recognizes the need for clergy to take a respite from the normal exercise of pastoral ministry; and

**WHEREAS**, clergy serving local churches need times of refreshment that often go beyond the disciplinary requirements for continuing education and spiritual growth, and Renewal Time is desired for clergy who need time for rest and reflection making for

growth in ways other than those defined by The Book of Discipline (§1350) ; and

**WHEREAS**, The Book of Discipline provides the instrument for Renewal Leave for Bishops (§410.2) and District Superintendents (§420) but not specifically for clergy under appointment; and

**WHEREAS**, Renewal Time is not “empty” or unstructured time but fits the guidelines of the early church as reflected in the Gospel of Mark where, after returning from their missionary journey, Jesus invited the disciples to “come away by yourselves to a lonely place, and rest a while.” We believe that the renewal time was not intended to be task oriented; and

**WHEREAS**, Renewal Time is needed to allow clergy the rest from normal duties in order that they may regain a lost or fading perspective on ministry; and

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, the Great Plains Annual Conference (GPAC) shall adopt a policy and procedure to allow all clergy members of the conference (§602.1, The Book of Discipline), who have served six (6) consecutive years under full-time appointment (or less than full-time appointment equivalent to 6 consecutive years of full-time appointment) to take up to three months’ leave from his or her normal responsibilities for purposes of reflection and self-renewal; This policy should be in place by January 1, 2020, and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that adequate funding shall be made by the local church/charge to pay the pastor’s salary during the period of time she or he is on Renewal Time. The Great Plains Annual Conference shall provide an amount negotiable by the District Superintendent and interim pastor for the agreed upon period in which the pastor under appointment is on Renewal Leave; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, The District Superintendent of the District in which the local church/ charge is located, shall name the interim pastor in consultation with the Pastor Staff Parish Relations Committee of the local church/charge involved. Detailed arrangements of housing, dates, etc., shall be made by the District Superintendent, the pastor who is on Renewal Leave, the local

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church/charge, and in consultation with the interim pastor.

Implemented by Clergy Excellence, Board of Ordained Ministry  
Submitted by Rev. Lenard Maxwell

**RESOLUTION #12 - Amendment to Safe Gatherings -  
Referred to Connecting Council**

**RATIONALE:** We commend the efforts and actions of the Great Plains Safe Gatherings policy. We agree wholeheartedly with the intent and wording of the Introduction and Policy lines 8-25. We do not question the need for training, certification and monitoring of persons working with children and other vulnerable populations. The intention of this resolution is to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the screening process while honoring and maintaining the spirit and intent of the current policy. Alternative training and screening procedures, as long as they do not compromise the effectiveness of the current policy, will allow congregations to train more volunteers in a more timely and cost-effective manner.

**WHEREAS,** while Safe Gatherings training is well-done, it is also a very expensive, cumbersome, and lengthy process, and

**WHEREAS,** it is true that some congregations do not have the resources to develop their own training program, other congregations do. The congregations that are able to do so should have the option create their own so long as the background check and reference provisions are included, and

**WHEREAS,** the proposed amendment will allow for a local church to train and field more volunteers to the mission field while still doing everything possible to protect vulnerable populations.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** the current Great Plains Safe Gatherings Policy be amended as follows:  
Line 58: The Certification Authority (insert) of the Great Plains Annual Conference

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Line 60: (insert) The Certification Authority of a local church or charge shall be the Senior Pastor, Director of Children's Ministry, the Administrative Board and the Trustees.

Line 73: training and certification, and it shall (insert) may also be the training and certification...

Line 77: Safe Gatherings Coordinator (insert) of the conference or the local church or charge

Line 79: The Safe Gatherings Coordinator (insert) of the conference or the local church or charge

Line 90: The Safe Gatherings Coordinator (insert) of the conference or the local church or charge

Line 92: The Great Plains Annual Conference (insert) or the local church

Line 106: serve with the Great Plains Annual Conference (insert) or a local church or charge.

Implemented by the Annual Conference and the effected local church or charge.

Submitted by St. Andrew's United Methodist Church – Omaha, Nebraska

You may find the Conference Safe Gatherings policy found at [www.greatplainsumc.org/safegatheringsbestpractices](http://www.greatplainsumc.org/safegatheringsbestpractices).

### RESOLUTION #14 - Creation Care - APPROVED

**RATIONALE:** "The earth is heating up at an accelerating rate. Climate change poses a ... threat." God's Renewed Creation document by UM Council of Bishops

**WHEREAS** Job 12: 7-8 instructs us to learn from God's creation: "But ask the animals, and they will teach you, or the birds in the sky, and they will tell you; or speak to the earth, and it will teach you, or let the fish in the sea inform you"; and

**WHEREAS** God's creation is suffering as new research shows that surveyed animal populations have declined by more than 50 percent on average in the last two generations (Source: National Geographic); and

**WHEREAS** the UM Council of Bishops offered these challenging

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words from God's Renewed Creation a decade ago: "Today, the human family is awakening to alarming news: after several thousand years of a stable climate that enabled us to thrive, the earth is heating up at an accelerating rate. Climate change poses a particular threat to the world's poor because it increases the spread of diseases like malaria and causes conflicts over dwindling natural resources"; and

**WHEREAS** the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released a report in October 2018 which indicates that we have a window of 12 years in which to keep to a minimum of 1.5 C, change beyond which the risks of drought, floods, extreme heat and poverty for hundreds of millions of people will increase to catastrophic proportions; and

**WHEREAS** the Fourth National Climate Assessment issued November 23, 2018, by 13 federal agencies has concluded that human health and safety, our quality of life, and the rate of economic growth in communities across the U.S. are increasingly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change; the cascading impacts of climate change threaten the natural, built, and social systems we rely on, both within and beyond the nation's borders; societal efforts to respond to climate change have expanded in the last five years, but not at the scale needed to avoid substantial damages to the economy, environment, and human health over the coming decades; rising temperatures, extreme heat, drought, wildfire on range lands, and heavy down pours are expected to increasingly challenge the quality and quantity of U.S. crop yields, livestock health, price stability and rural livelihoods. This reality was brought close to home as 65 of 93 counties, 74 cities and four tribal areas in Nebraska were in states of emergency in March 2019 due to catastrophic blizzards, wind and flooding; and

**WHEREAS** climate change is impacting our global partners in the mission field and will only increase if significant actions are not taken. (According to a World Bank report, climate change will transform more than 143 million people into "climate migrants" escaping crop failure, water, scarcity, and sea-level rise); and

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the conference secretary send the following message to our state and national representatives

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no later than June 14, 2019: “Members of the Great Plains United Methodist Conference are urging you to acknowledge the urgency of climate change and support policies that promote renewable energy, reducing emissions, and providing adaptation assistance for those struggling to survive in a changing climate”; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that, with the assistance of the conference Creation Care Team, the Great Plains Disaster Response Ministries will incorporate climate change mitigation into their responsibilities so that the church can become more proactive as well as reactive to increasing catastrophic climate events; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that members of the Great Plains Conference reduce our carbon footprint through specific measurable actions such as:

- becoming a Great Plains Creation Care Church <https://www.greatplainsumc.org/creationcare>
- becoming involved and take actions promoted by United Methodist Women in their Be Green program <https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/climate-justice>
- conducting an energy audit of church property to identify ways in which to reduce nonrenewable resources
- banning the use of disposable dinnerware in church kitchens
- planting community and pollinator gardens on church property
- planting native plants and grasses on church property that don't need as much water
- installing solar on church property
- installing electric charging stations on church property
- installing bike racks on church property
- divest from the fossil fuel industry
- promoting nonpartisan public policies that address reducing carbon emissions and increasing renewable energy

Submitted by the Great Plains Conference Creation Care Team

**RESOLUTION #15 - Response to Climate Change  
REFERRED TO CONNECTING COUNCIL**

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## Stewardship Response to Climate Change

**RATIONALE:** In response to the severe floods that wreaked so much destruction this spring—and remembering the scriptural mandate to be good stewards of God’s Creation—this Resolution calls Great Plains churches to become better informed about global climate change and set goals for reducing their carbon footprint.

**WHEREAS,** the Bible clearly states that all humans are created in God’s image and that God calls all persons to be stewards and caretakers of God’s good Creation; and

**WHEREAS,** flooding in Nebraska, Iowa, Wisconsin, South Dakota and other parts of the Upper Midwest caused devastating losses of property, which are estimated to exceed \$1 billion. In addition, the flooding caused the deaths of thousands of live-stock; and

**WHEREAS,** some human lives were also lost due to the flooding and 4,400 families had to be evacuated. Nebraska Governor Pete Ricketts called the flooding the “most widespread destruction we’ve ever seen in in our state’s history”; and

**WHEREAS,** there is broad consensus among scientists that the flooding severity this spring was a consequence of climate change, caused by increases in carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases over the past 150 years; and

**WHEREAS,** the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) warns that in the future Nebraska, Kansas and other Midwest states will experience heavier rain storms and increased average precipitation during the winters and springs, leading to an increased likelihood of flooding, such as was experienced this spring. Again, the projected increase in flooding will be due to climate change, caused by the increase of greenhouse gases in the environment, especially carbon dioxide, which the EPA says has increased by 40% since the late 1700s;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that Great Plains churches calculate their buildings’ carbon footprint, using information and metrics

provided by the Great Plains Mercy and Justice Team; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that Great Plains churches, using their calculated carbon footprint as a point of reference, set goals for carbon reduction over the following three years. These goals would take the form of reductions in electricity and petroleum consumption, which would be discussed and approved at their annual church/charge conference in 2020; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that for the next three years, each church report on progress made to reduce their carbon footprint and reach their goals as part of the annual church/charge conference reports; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that each Great Plains church be encouraged to offer its members educational programs on stewardship of Creation, with some discussion of climate change, using educational materials suggested by the Great Plains Mercy and Justice Team; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Great Plains Annual Conference encourage all members to calculate their own individual carbon footprint—using information and metrics provided by the Great Plains Mercy and Justice Team—and set personal goals for carbon reduction.

Implemented by Great Plains Annual Conference churches and members as well as the Great Plains Mercy and Justice Team.

Submitted by the Rev. Richard O. Randolph, clergy member of the Conference

### **RESOLUTION #16 - A Conscientious Dissent from the Traditional Plan APPROVED**

**WHEREAS**, using appropriate, quality biblical scholarship, there is no biblical mandate to discriminate against LGBTQ+ persons and relationships.

**WHEREAS**, the United Methodist Church is capable of great nu-

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ance in the matter of biblical interpretation as displayed in its treatment of issues such as divorce and the ordination of women, but reverts to simplistic literalism when it comes to the full inclusion of LGBTQ+ persons in its life and ministry.

**WHEREAS**, the United Methodist Church has singled out LGBTQ+ persons for special punitive action while ignoring the “clear biblical teaching” on other matters such as pensions (Matthew 6:19-20).

**WHEREAS**, much of the Traditional Plan had already been ruled unconstitutional before it was voted upon.

**WHEREAS**, the first general rule that John Wesley gave the people called Methodists concerns “doing no harm.”

**WHEREAS**, United Methodists promise “to resist evil, injustice and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves.”

**WHEREAS**, by passing the Traditional Plan, the denomination has done great, and perhaps irreparable harm to our LGBTQ+ siblings.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, the Great Plains Annual Conference (GPAC) condemns the decision of the 2019 General Conference to pass the Traditional Plan and apologizes for the harm that it has caused LGBTQ+ persons, their families, their friends, and the body of Christ. “We affirm that all persons are individuals of sacred worth, created in the image of God,” but we also assert and affirm that no human being is incompatible with Christian teaching.

Submitted by the Rev. John R. Collins, Clergy Member of the Conference, and the Rev. Jennifer K. Collins, Clergy Member of the Conference (A complete list of co-submitters can be found at: <https://revcollins.com/gpac-petition/>)

**RESOLUTION #17 - Action for Inclusive Ministry in the Great Plains Conference - APPROVED**

**RATIONALE:** The United Methodist General Conference of 2019 left many of our LGBTQIA+ siblings questioning whether they have

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a place at the United Methodist table. It is imperative to the mission of the Great Plains Annual Conference to take action now to uplift LGBTQIA+ persons and their ministries.

**WHEREAS**, Scripture calls us to “radical hospitality” (1 Peter 4:8-9) with the commands to “bear one another’s burdens” (Galatians 6:2) and to “encourage the disheartened” (1 Thessalonians 5:14).

**WHEREAS**, the Traditionalist Plan applies punitive measures which oppose and restrict the full leadership of LGBTQIA+ persons as they seek to live out their calling, including their calling to ordained ministry.

**WHEREAS**, LGBTQIA+ youth are four times more likely to commit suicide and more than half of transgender persons have attempted suicide.

**WHEREAS**, United Methodists promise in our baptismal vows “to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves.”

**WHEREAS**, to fulfill the mission to “Therefore Go: Serve Others,” the Great Plains Annual Conference is committed to equipping all disciples in the four areas of “serving others, seeking justice, knowing God, and proclaiming Christ”.

**WHEREAS**, the United Methodist Book of Discipline affirms that “all persons are individuals of sacred worth, created in the image of God.” (BOD, ¶161 G)

**WHEREAS** the United Methodist Book of Discipline states, “we implore families and churches not to reject or condemn lesbian and gay members and friends. We commit ourselves to be in ministry for and with all persons.” (BOD, ¶161 G)

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Great Plains Annual Conference will make \$20,000 in grant funding available to local congregations (and Conference ministries) for ministries that raise up LGBTQIA+ persons as missional leaders in the Great Plains Annual Conference to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Implemented by: The Mercy and Justice Team of the Great Plains Annual Conference

Christine Potter, Clergy member of the Conference

## **RESOLUTION #18 - Supporting UMC Next - APPROVED**

**RATIONALE:** An opportunity for the Great Plains Annual Conference to affirm the work of UMC Next.

**WHEREAS** More than 600 United Methodist leaders from every Annual Conference in the United States met May 20-22, 2019 at the United Methodist Church of the Resurrection for an event entitled, UMC Next, that explored responses to the Traditional Plan adopted by the 2019 General Conference.

**WHEREAS** There was a clear consensus from the centrists and progressives in attendance about four commitments essential to the future of the church.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** That the Great Plains Annual Conference formally adopts the statement and four commitments of UMC Next:

“We believe these commitments are essential to a hope-filled future for the global Methodist movement as we make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world:”

1. We long to be passionate followers of Jesus Christ, committed to a Wesleyan vision of Christianity, anchored in scripture and informed by tradition, experience and reason as we live a life of personal piety and social holiness.
2. We commit to resist evil, injustice and oppression in all forms and toward all people and build a church which affirms the full participation of all ages, nations, races, classes, cultures, gender identities, sexual orientations, and abilities.
3. We reject the Traditional Plan approved at General Conference 2019 as inconsistent with the gospel of Jesus Christ and will resist its implementation.
4. We will work to eliminate discriminatory language and the restrictions and penalties in the Discipline regarding LGBTQ persons. We affirm the sacred worth of LGBTQ persons, celebrate their gifts, and commit to being in ministry together.

**THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** That the Great Plains Annual Conference encourages every local church to have an open dialogue about the actions of the 2019 General Conference,

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the Traditional Plan, and these four commitments of the Annual Conference.

Implemented By: 2019 Great Plains Annual Conference

Submitted By: The Great Plains Annual Conference representatives to UMC Next:

Lora Andrews, clergy, Winfield, KS  
Bob Cox, laity, Hays, KS  
Erynn Kuehl, laity, Great Bend, KS  
Junius Dotson, clergy, Nashville, TN  
Dan Entwistle, laity, Leawood, KS  
Adam Hamilton, clergy, Leawood, KS  
Mark Holland, clergy, Kansas City, KS  
John Lee, laity, Omaha, NE  
Amy Lippoldt, clergy, Basehor, KS  
David Livingston, clergy, Lenexa, KS  
Debra McKnight, clergy, Omaha, NE  
Nanette Roberts, clergy, Olathe, KS  
Brian Sutton, laity, Wichita, KS  
Julie Wilke, laity, Winfield, KS

### **RESOLUTION #19 -On future handling of Annual Conference Resolutions - APPROVED**

RESOLUTION #16

Financial Implication: none

**WHEREAS**, Every year we routinely only have serious discussion on a small number of resolutions, and it can be predicted which ones will bring a significant discussion and which will not; and

**WHEREAS**, Every year we do not schedule discussion until we are usually already behind and discussion is limited, thus not allowing us to engage in Holy conversation commiserate to the importance of the topic; and

**WHEREAS**, One of the primary purposes of Annual Conference is to have these Holy conversations; and

**WHEREAS**, if the body wishes to refer any resolutions or petitions to a committee for more information, it is currently unnecessarily forced to thereby table the resolution until the next year's session due to time constraints; and

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**WHEREAS**, Lay Representatives from many smaller churches had determined that attending the conference is not a good use of their time in spite of being elected the representative from their local church; and

**WHEREAS**, In the age of the internet, information can be transmitted and reported in many ways and does not need to be communicated orally at Conference;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the 2019 Great Plains Annual Conference instruct the the 2020 Great Plains Annual Conference Session Planning Team, and all future conferences, to place the first discussions on any resolutions and/or petitions during the first plenary session after the Episcopal and Laity addresses; by Thursday afternoon, or equivalent.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the 2019 Great Plains Annual Conference instruct the the 2020 Great Plains Annual Conference Session Planning Team, and all future conferences, to allow for some time on subsequent plenary sessions to further discuss these resolutions and/or petitions, should more discussion be necessary or referrals need to be made.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the 2019 Great Plains Annual Conference instruct the the 2020 Great Plains Annual Conference Session Planning Team, and all future conferences, to make time for this change by reducing the time our agencies and organizations have to present, allowing for them to provide information to the Conference Body on the conference website or through email.

Submitted by Rev. Michael Brown, clergy member of the conference