

RESOLUTION

Resolution to Address the DSC Budget by the Covenant Council

Whereas declining membership and giving and now the COVID-19 pandemic and quarantine have caused declining income for the Desert Southwest Conference (DSC);

Whereas the DSC has more District Superintendents per church than most any other Conference in the United States [consider that out of the 390 districts in the United States, (a) the DSC has the 3rd, 6th, 8th, and 14th SMALLEST districts by number of churches; (b) there are twenty districts led by a single district superintendent that have more churches than our entire DSC; and (c) in the Mountain Sky Conference (that has similar geographic distances between churches) there are almost twice as many churches per district (specifically, Mountain Sky has 7 DSs serving 376 churches compared to the 4 DSs in DSC serving 131 churches)];

Whereas the position of the Director of New & Vital Faith Communities on the Appointive Cabinet and with appointive cabinet responsibilities since 2014 (thereby effectively reducing the average number of churches per regulatory officer from 33 down to 26) arguably makes the DSC the most administratively over-staffed conference in the United States;

Whereas the position of Director of Connectional Ministries [i.e., the primary program resource officer of the conference staff overseeing ethnic ministries, leadership ministries, lay ministries, missions and outreach, and essentially all ministries serving the local churches, laity, and clergy of the Conference including (in most other conference) new and vital faith ministries] is NOT going to be filled or appointed for the 2020 - 2021 year;

Whereas the position of the Director of New & Vital Faith Communities [that traditionally (and across conferences throughout the United States) reports to the Director of Connectional Ministries] was promoted in the DSC from a Level II¹ salary schedule to a Level I¹ salary schedule and promoted to the Appointive Cabinet in 2014 WITHOUT clear and transparent informing of the Annual Conference and WITHOUT an intentional vote by either the Covenant Council nor the Annual Conference (required by DSC Conference Rules in Section B. Conference Personnel Policies. II. Employment Policies. B. New Positions--see *2019 Conference Journal*, page 159)(as confirmed by the absence of any vote in the 2014 Conference Journal) thereby improperly increasing the salary impact on the conference budget from \$79,090 in 2013 to \$101,196 in 2014 (not to mention all other benefits and expenses);

Whereas budgets for Ethnic Local Church Concerns, Religion and Race, Hispanic Ministries, and other ministries to support ethnic clergy have been dramatically reduced in a time when they are needed now more than ever;

Whereas Bishop Bob Hoshibata called the Annual Conference to join together to address systemic racism; and

Whereas we love and appreciate the individuals serving as our conference staff and also recognize that no church could possibly grow or thrive (metaphorically speaking) by eliminating the positions responsible for serving its members and community; by reducing the budgets that are to inspire, challenge, and emancipate the creativity of its members and community; and while working to preserve and protect the positions of five business administrators; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the Desert Southwest Conference (DSC):

1. have the newly appointed bishop (assigned Jan 1, 2022) to fill the appointment of the Director of Connectional Ministries on July 1st, 2022;
2. return the position of Director of New & Vital Faith Communities (if filled) to a Level II¹ exempt salaried position reporting to the Director of Connectional Ministries no later than July 1st, 2021, (which will save approximately \$30,000);
3. reduce the number of District Superintendents down to three (which will save approximately \$150,000), by July 1, 2021, and down to two by July 1, 2022.
4. yearly present a proposed line-item, detailed budget to the Conference Covenant Council with enough time for review, scrutiny, and vote prior to being submitted to the Annual Conference;
5. have Covenant Council or the Annual Conference approve all new staff positions before hiring to ensure that the vision matches the cost incurred;
6. create a new position (with appropriate funding) that hears all complaints of sexual misconduct, racist discrimination, gender-based discrimination and any other complaints of harassment, discrimination, or retribution and works with the complainant to find support and move forward appropriate actions as needed, including, but not limited to, assisting the complainant with official action if desired; and
7. prioritize returning conference program ministry budgets (particularly those focused on ethnic ministries and the elimination of systemic racism) to their 2019 levels and prioritize the return to full payments of global apportionments as GCFA recommends for the next quadrennium.

Name(s) of Petitioner(s).

Rev. Anthony Tang

Rev. Amy Barron-Gafford

Rev. Ron Bartlow

Ms. Jessica Brown, City Square UMF
Rev. Janessa Chastain
Rev. Paul Cho
Rev. Brian Kemp-Schlemmer
Pastor Nicholas Grainger
Rev. Jonathan Hall
Rev. Doug Handlong
Ms. Susan Hebert, Faith UMC
Rev. Misty Howick
Rev. Mary Klaehn
Rev. Michael Patzloff
Mr. Andrew Ponder Williams, St. Matthew UMC
Rev. Jeff Procter-Murphy
Ms. Peggy Rambikur, Prescott UMC
Rev. David Rennick
Rev. Katherine Tang

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ENDNOTES:

- 1 A detailed list of current Level I and II positions may be found in the *2019 Conference Journal* (<https://dscumc.org/annual-conference/journal/>) on page 161. Current Level I salaries may be found in the *2019 Conference Journal*, page 86. Current salary scales for Level II positions may be found in the *2019 Conference Journal*, page 88.