



May 6, 2021

Dear Members of the Western Jurisdiction Conference,

In these days of tumult and challenge, my reflections about retirement have been fraught by indecision and thoughts of hopes not yet realized as well as some sense of accomplishment. I am refreshed by the fond memory of hearing God's call when I was fourteen years old, inviting me to give my life to The United Methodist Church's ordained ministry. God is now calling me to do something radically different. The call I now hear invites me to a new life, still within the definition of a call to "ministry."

This has been a difficult decision! I offer you the fruits of my prayerful discerning. These are some of the key thoughts that figured prominently in my decision.

**In my mind and heart are words from my baptism:**

1. I will remember that I was incorporated into God's mighty acts of salvation and I will cherish salvation as a gift from God, offered to me without price.
2. I will continue to renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of this world, and repent of my sin.

**I am remembering my membership vows:**

1. I will offer my prayers, presence, gifts, and services to a local church where I will worship and participate in its ministries.
2. I will do as I can to increase the faith, confirm the hope, and perfect in love those who are my sisters and brothers in faith.

**As if it were yesterday, I recall and hold dear these commitments I made at my ordination:**

1. I promise to share in Christ's ministry of love and service in the world, to the glory of God and for the redemption of the human family and the whole of creation.
2. I will represent Christ's servanthood in special ministry of oversight, offering my wisdom and experience where it is welcomed.

**Continuing the pledge I made at my consecration as a bishop:**

1. I will guard the faith, order, liturgy, doctrine, and discipline of the Church against all that is contrary to God's Word.
2. I will strive to be a prophetic voice and a courageous leader in the cause of justice for all people.

**I will hold sacred the vows I made to my spouse 47 years ago:**

to love her and comfort her, honor and keep her, in sickness and in health, and forsaking all others, be faithful to her as long as we both shall live.

In keeping with these vows and commitments I made in significant moments in my journey to the episcopacy, I now request voluntary retirement from residential episcopacy under ¶ 408.2a of the *2016 Book of Discipline*, effective October 1, 2021. In retirement, I pledge to be a faithful and present husband; a loving and nurturing father and grandfather; a faithful Christ-follower; and a steward of God's creation.

In Christ's love,



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Resident Bishop  
The Desert Southwest Conference  
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