**Title**: Resolution to Designate Salem Baltimore Hispanic UMC, Baltimore, MD as a Mission of the Baltimore-Washington Conference and Congregation in Transformation

**Budget Implications**: N/A  **Rationale:** Salem Baltimore Hispanic UMC is a beacon of light in the Highlandtown community of Baltimore. This small congregation of faithful English-speaking and Spanish-speaking worshippers and disciples provides vital ministry to the community surrounding the church. However, they have been challenged to sustain the financial viability and the scope of lay and clergy leadership needed to bear the rich potential fruit in their ripe and developing mission field. This is due in large part to the very systems and circumstances that make their ministry and context unique, significant, and essential to the community. The socio-economic realities of the transient community they serve, and injustices in the areas of immigration, employment, gentrification, and education continue to plague the community. Yet these challenges also provide exciting opportunities for transformation in the lives of individuals, families, and children.

The Baltimore-Washington Conference has recognized the power and potential of a majority Spanish-speaking faith community that is not a ministry within a larger congregation. In past years the conference has provided financial support through the traditional grant process, including repeated re-application. While that support is appreciated, without a more institutionalized approach to this mission, the congregation will cease to be able to minister to its members and constituents, both current and future. This projection is not based on a lack of will to engage in mission and ministry on the part of the congregation or the conference. Nor is it based on any sense that the church is not located in a ripe vineyard for making disciples of Jesus Christ. This context requires the capacity building to attract, compensate, and retain leadership with the unique skillset necessary to help the church reach its fullest potential for disciple-making and transformative ministry. Challenges and opportunities related to this vision have been:

* Salem’s geographic and relational distance from other Hispanic ministries in the BWC,
* Her identity as a solo congregation versus a ministry within an anchor church,
* A high rate of transience in the neighborhood and attrition among leadership, both lay and clergy,
* Issues around immigration and documentation of members and constituents,
* Potential to serve as a hub for apostolic, multi-cultural ministry in the Baltimore area, leading the movement on advocacy and immigration rights in Baltimore,
* Partnership opportunities with other English- and Spanish-speaking churches,
* A new vision of proactively responding to the gentrification taking place around the immediate neighborhood as a pathway to more diverse disciple-making,
* Fertile ground for the identification and deployment of new strategic leadership to help this church take its next faithful step(s) into the future.

**Submitted by:** Rev. Wanda Duckett, Baltimore Metropolitan District Superintendent

**RESOLUTION:**

**Whereas** in the Baltimore Metropolitan District, Salem Baltimore Hispanic continues to be a center for ministry with the potential for greater impact in the Baltimore area;

**Whereas** the conundrum between the high potential for this ministry, and the dismal outlook of its success in its current configuration, is not beyond our ability to address;

**Whereas** a strategic re-launch of this church over the next four years as a congregation in transformation is the most promising and powerful way forward;

**Whereas** Salem meets ALL of the requirements for designation as a mission church as set forth in paragraph 259.1.a) of the 2016 UM Book of Discipline, which says that *“When any of these conditions exist, the cabinet, in consultation with the congregational development area of the annual conference, may designate an entity a mission congregation. The mission congregation may be organized in the same manner and have the same rights and powers as any local church”,* specifically:

1. Membership opportunities and resources are limited and not likely to result in a chartered congregation for an extended period of time,
2. A strategic demographic, cultural, or language opportunity for serving a limited population is present,
3. It is expected that long-term sustaining funding from sources outside the congregation will be necessary to enable the congregation to exist, and the assumption of full connectional support items by the congregation is unlikely,
4. It is probable that the annual conference will need to provide long-term administrative guidance, including attention to the distinctive property needs of the congregation;

**Whereas** Salem also meets the BWC policy criteria for designation as a congregation in transformation (Ref para 4044.2.c. which defines a Redeveloping Church (congregation in transformation) as a congregation in areas undergoing significant demographic, environmental or visional refocusing which has resulted in the temporary loss of ability for self support;

**Whereas** the faithful members of Salem have been meeting within the congregation and with stakeholders in the community to reshape their vision for transformative ministry in these challenging times, and mission church designation and support will allow the conference to walk alongside them on this continued journey; and

**Whereas** Salem will continue to report to the District Superintendent, cabinet, and Innovative Evangelism with respect to its discipleship goals, vitality, and fruitfulness; now

Therefore, be it

**Resolved**, that the Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference supports the designation of Salem Baltimore Hispanic UMC as a mission of the annual conference and a Congregation in Transformation.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** July 1, 2022

*As per Baltimore-Washington Conference Rule Para. 3006.2.c., this resolution was reviewed by the Conference Secretary and found consistent with the current Book of Discipline.*

**Title:** Inclusion of Baltimore-Washington Conference Caucus, Black Methodists for Church Renewal representation to the Baltimore-Washington Conference Board of Trustees on matters concerning the proceeds from the sale of closed Black church property and how said proceeds will be allocated

**Budget Implications:** None

**Rationale:** Since 1968 Black United Methodist churches (both urban and rural) have been significantly impacted by transitioning communities resulting in closure, realignment and assignment to church properties that have been abandoned by predominantly White congregations. There is a need for inclusion of Baltimore-Washington Conference Caucus, Black Methodists for Church Renewal (BWC-BMCR) representation to the Baltimore-Washington Conference (BWC) Board of Trustees on matters concerning how proceeds from the sale of Black Church property will be allocated.

**Submitted by:** Baltimore-Washington Conference Caucus, Black Methodists for Church Renewal (BWC-BMCR). **Primary Contact:** Rev. Valerie A. Barnes, Coordinator

**RESOLUTION:**

Whereas church facilities assigned to Black congregations often require substantial maintenance, renovation and upkeep coupled with increased Mission Share contributions and compensation costs required for ministry presence presents an undue hardship resulting in these congregations falling behind financially;

Whereas Black churches are often encouraged to enter a forbearance lien by the Annual Conference because of debts incurred;

Whereas unlike an individual who purchases a home and through payment of their mortgage and other expenses builds equity in their property which is capital should they want to take a loan for improvement or move from one home to another, many Black congregations receive no credit for their financial investment in church facilities;

Whereas it must be taken into consideration that Black congregations have invested their time, talents, service, and finances in frequently economically marginalized communities and that community reinvestment should be a priority to revitalize Black United Methodist Churches and Black neighborhoods; and

Whereas the 2016 Book of Discipline ¶2549 details the process for the Disposition of Property of a Closed Local Church; now

Therefore, be it

**Resolved**, that before any determination is made regarding proceeds from the sale of Black church property the BWC Board of Trustees and BWC-BMCR representatives will work together to formulate a plan for how the proceeds from the sale of black church property sale will be allocated;

**Be it further Resolved**, that this group will formulate strategies on how monies can best be utilized for the equitable revitalization of existing Black congregations and the establishment of new Black faith communities in areas with significant Black community presence; and

**Be it further Resolved**, that this plan will be brought before the 2023 Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference session for discussion and action.

**Effective date:** July 1, 2022

*As per Baltimore-Washington Conference Rule Para. 3006.2.c., this resolution was reviewed by the Conference Secretary and found consistent with the current Book of Discipline. This resolution was revised after the Connectional Table meeting and after the Pre-Conference Briefing. Connectional Table members did not review this version.*

**Title**: Endorsing the Christmas Covenant

**Budget Implications**: None

**Rationale:** The United Methodist Church stands at a crossroads of determining what comes next. As we seek to dismantle old structures embedded with Colonialism and white supremacy, this resolution envisions new equitable relationships among our world connections that allow the UMC to continue to be a witness in the world of God’s love. Central Conference leaders from Africa, Europe, and the Philippines have proposed the “Christmas Covenant” legislation for adoption by the delayed 2020 General Conference and ratification by annual conferences. The Christmas Covenant would transform the existing Central Conferences into Regional Conferences and create a United States Regional Conference. It would increase the ability of each Regional Conference to adapt the Book of Discipline to fit its missional context. The Connectional Table has also endorsed the Christmas Covenant framework for a U.S. Regional Conference. We, the Baltimore Washington Annual Conference’s delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conferences, urge the members of the Baltimore Washington conference to endorse the Christmas Covenant, as we believe it is the best proposal for the United Methodist Church to move toward becoming a church that is in ministry with all people while maintaining the relationships between U.S. United Methodists and those in other countries. An endorsement from the Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference will show delegates to General Conference that there is broad support for the Christmas Covenant and that the BWAC would intend to ratify the amendments to the UMC Constitution that the Covenant would require.

**Submitted by:** Rev. Ianther Mills and Cynthia Taylor, on behalf of the 2020 General and Jurisdictional Conference Delegates from the Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference

**RESOLUTION:**

**Whereas** the delayed 2020 General Conference presents an opportunity to envision a new future for the United Methodist Church;

**Whereas** the United Methodist Church, through its seven Central Conferences and five U.S. Jurisdictions, ministers to persons in countries throughout the world;

**Whereas** the current unequal structure of the global United Methodist Church hinders its ability to adapt its ministry to diverse contexts and stems from a colonialist mindset;

**Whereas** the Christmas Covenant proposal presents an anti-colonialist vision of a United Methodist Church that places the United States and the Central Conferences in an equal position by creating Regional Conferences, including a United States Regional Conference;

**Whereas** the Christmas Covenant is the only legislative proposal for the future of the United Methodist Church that was created by leaders from the Central Conferences; and

**Whereas** the creation of a U.S. Regional Conference will create the governance structures necessary for the church to adapt to the needs of people in various contexts, including in the United States; now

Therefore, be it

**Resolved,** that the Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference support the adoption of the Christmas Covenant in full, including the creation of a U.S. Regional Conference;

**Be it further Resolved,** that we recognize and support the leadership of the Central Conferences in presenting the Christmas Covenant; and

**Be it further Resolved,** that the Conference Secretary shall send copies of this resolution to the Commission on the General Conference and urge them to take such action as is necessary for the full consideration of legislation related to the Christmas Covenant by a Committee of the Whole, and the General Conference.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** Immediate

*As per Baltimore-Washington Conference Rule Para. 3006.2.c., this resolution was reviewed by the Conference Secretary and found consistent with the current Book of Discipline. BWC Connectional Table members, meeting Feb. 26, voted concurrence with this resolution. BWC Connectional Table members, meeting Feb. 26, voted concurrence with this resolution.*

**Title**: In Celebration of Lovely Lane United Methodist Church’s 250th Anniversary

**Budget Implications**: None

**Rationale**: The Mother Church of American Methodism is celebrating 250 years of continuous ministry in 2022

**Submitter**: Rev. Deborah L. Scott, Full Elder BWC Lovely Lane UMC, and John Strawbridge, Lay Leader Lovely Lane UMC

**RESOLUTION:**

**Whereas** the congregation of **Lovely Lane United Methodist Church**, formerly known as **First Methodist Episcopal Church**, and earlier as **Lovely Lane Chapel** was founded in 1772 and continues its ministry in 2022 after 250 continuous years;

**Whereas** Lovely Lane's first pastor, Francis Asbury, was elected the first bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America at the “Christmas Conference”, which was held starting December 24, 1784, at Lovely Lane Meeting House thus why Lovely Lane UMC is considered the Mother Church of American Methodism;

**Whereas** the present church, located at 2200 St. Paul Street, is the fifth building of the congregation that began meeting in 1772, and was begun in 1884 by the congregation and Rev. Dr. John Goucher and at the urging of the Council of Bishops as the Centennial Monument to the founding of American Methodism, and;

**Whereas** the current building was designed by Stanford White and is listed as an architectural gem on the National Registry of Historic Places, and was built at a time when we were not together as a denomination, when we were divided into the Methodist Protestant, the Methodist Episcopal and the Methodist Episcopal South, and this ambitious construction was an opportunity to remind these branches of our common heritage as Methodists and as Christians and to bring the denomination back together; now

Therefore, be it

**Resolved**, that at this moment in time, when our denomination faces division once again, that the Baltimore-Washington Conference and all the churches of our conference congratulate Lovely Lane UMC for 250 years of continuous ministry and pray that they will continue to be a beacon of hope and promise as we all look to the future of the United Methodist Church.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** Immediate

*As per Baltimore-Washington Conference Rule Para. 3006.2.c., this resolution was reviewed by the Conference Secretary and found consistent with the current Book of Discipline.*

**Title:** Increasing Housing Security for All

**Budget Implications:** None

**Rationale:** Everyone deserves the right to stable, safe, accessible, and affordable housing. Yet, policies across our nation and this region have not made this a reality for everyone, particularly for people of color, women, poor people, immigrants, people with disabilities, and LGBTQ+ people. We need to address these discriminatory policies so housing is a human right for all.

**Submitted by:** Sarah Hassmer, reserve lay member to Annual Conference, Foundry UMC

**RESOLUTION:**

**Whereas** we are called, as Christians and United Methodists, to love our neighbor,[[1]](#footnote-1) and Isaiah 32:18 states, “My people will abide in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places;”

**Whereas** fair access to housing impacts every aspect of our lives. It is a social determinant of physical and mental health, which became even more clear with the stay-at-home requirements in the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic and is a vital aspect of quarantining, isolating, and/or recovering from COVID. For those who are housing insecure, the stay-at-home requirements have revealed the magnitude of this crisis. Further, housing impacts access to quality childcare, education, nutrition, and employment;[[2]](#footnote-2)

**Whereas** there is a nationwide shortage of accessible and affordable homes for low-income renters;[[3]](#footnote-3)

**Whereas** over 10.1 million people across the United States were behind on rent in late January 2022, including over 279,000 people in Maryland, West Virginia, and Washington, DC;[[4]](#footnote-4)

**Whereas** there were over 580,000 unhoused people across the United States in January 2020,[[5]](#footnote-5) including over 14,000 unhoused people in Washington, DC, Maryland, and West Virginia;[[6]](#footnote-6)

**Whereas** the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have increased housing insecurity, particularly for people of color, women, immigrants, people with disabilities, and LGBTQ+ people who already faced increased rates of housing insecurity before the pandemic;[[7]](#footnote-7)

**Whereas** Paragraph 162 of the Book of Discipline states, “We affirm all persons as equally valuable in the sight of God. We therefore work toward societies in which each person’s value is recognized, maintained, and strengthened. We support the basic rights of all persons to equal access to housing…”; and

**Whereas** Paragraph 163(E) of the Book of Discipline states, “In spite of general affluence in the industrialized nations, the majority of persons in the world live in poverty. In order to provide basic needs such as…shelter…, ways must be found to share more equitably the resources of the world. . . To begin to alleviate poverty, we support such policies as adequate income maintenance, …decent housing, …humanization and radical revisions of welfare programs… Poverty most often has systemic causes, and therefore we do not hold poor people morally responsible for their economic state.”; now

Therefore, be it

**Resolved**, that the Baltimore-Washington Conference (BWC) build on the housing work of the Wealth Equity team and add a seat focused on Housing Security Justice and Advocacy to the BWC Advocacy and Action Board;[[8]](#footnote-8) and

**Be if further Resolved**, that the person holding this seat, and any team they may build, will examine housing security from a number of angles, such as direct service to meet human needs, accompaniment and relationship building with directly impacted individuals, creating opportunities for transitional and permanent housing, legislative advocacy for the rights of people who are unhoused and underhoused, and legislative advocacy to create equitable economic conditions to include affordable housing. The person filling the new Housing Security Justice and Advocacy seat will collaborate with the existing Wealth Equity team and members of the Advocacy and Action Board.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** August 1, 2022

**CO-SPONSOR(S):**

Rev. Dr. Ianther Mills, Senior Pastor of Asbury UMC

Mittie Quinn, Lay Member to Annual Conference, Dumbarton UMC

Gladys B. Baxley, Lay Member to Annual Conference (on behalf of the Silver Spring UMC Racial Justice Ministry & LGBTQ+ Justice Ministry)

Rev. Debbie Scott, Pastor of Lovely Lane UMC

*As per Baltimore-Washington Conference Rule Para. 3006.2.c., this resolution was reviewed by the Conference Secretary and found consistent with the current Book of Discipline.*

**Title**: Encouraging a More Robust Discussion of the Science Related to Global Warming

**Budget Implications**: None

**Rationale**: God has called us to be good stewards of creation. God also tells us to encourage each other in well doing. Thus, we should encourage each other to study carefully the science related to global warming so we can better understand and respond.

**Submitted by**: Dr. Roger C. Kuhn, rckuhn@verizon.net, Lay Member of the BWC from Morgan Chapel UMC, Woodbine, MD.

**RESOLUTION:**

**Whereas** the climate is warming, it is not warming at the alarming rates often suggested.  Heroic efforts to counter this warming trend have been predicted to have only a small effect in reducing the increase in temperature. Also, climate related disasters, although very significant locally, are not, in general, increasing in intensity worldwide;

**Whereas** there are benefits for human health as a result of this warming trend (for example, less deaths are related to hot weather than are related to cold weather). We are also benefiting from increased atmospheric carbon dioxide through increased crop yields;

**Whereas** developing countries need inexpensive, available energy to develop;

**Whereas** the scientific basis of these points has been established in papers by many scientists from both developing and developed countries. Useful introductions to this literature are: S. Fred Singer, David R. Legates and Anthony R. Lupo. 2021. Hot Talk, Cold Science: Global Warming’s Unfinished Debate. Third edition. Independent Institute, Oakland, CA, USA; and the resources on the website of the Cornwall Alliance for the Stewardship of Creation;  and

**Whereas** climate change is addressed in the Book of Discipline in paragraphs 160 D  and 717; and in the Book of Resolutions, in Resolutions 1001 and 1035 ; now

Therefore, be it

**Resolved,**that in order to better understand the science related to global warming, individuals and congregations in the Baltimore-Washington Conference of the United Methodist Church are encouraged to study the above noted scientific resources, along with any other resources they may already be studying on being good stewards of God’s creation.  They are also encouraged to prayerfully reflect on and discuss the implications of this better understanding.

**EFFECTIVE DATE**: Effective immediately upon successful passage of the resolution.

 As per Baltimore-Washington Conference Rule Para. 3006.2.c., this resolution was reviewed by the Conference Secretary and found consistent with the current Book of Discipline. This resolution was revised after the Connectional Table meeting to bring it into alignment with the Book of Discipline. Connectional Table members did not review this version of the resolution.

1. Matthew 22:39; Mark 12:31; Luke 10:27-37; Leviticus 19:18. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. National Women’s Law Center and National Low Income Housing Coalition, “Gender and Racial Justice in Housing,” National Women’s Law Center, last updated October 2021, <https://nwlc.org/resource/gender-and-racial-justice-in-housing-2/>. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Economic Systems Inc., “Accessibility of America’s Housing Stock: Analysis of the 2011 American Housing Survey (AHS),” U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, March 19, 2015, <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/accessibility-america-housingStock.pdf>; National Low Income Housing Coalition, “The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Rental Homes,” accessed February 20, 2022, <https://reports.nlihc.org/gap>. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Sarah Hassmer calculations of U.S. Census Bureau, “Week 42 Household Pulse Survey: January 26 - February 7, 2022,” Census.gov, accessed February 20, 2022, <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2022/demo/hhp/hhp42.html>. ”Weeks” is the term used by the Census Bureau to define separate data collections in all phases, but ”weeks” are currently longer than a 7-day period. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. National Alliance to End Homelessness, “State of Homelessness: 2021 Edition,” accessed February 20, 2022, <https://endhomelessness.org/homelessness-in-america/homelessness-statistics/state-of-homelessness-2021/>. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Sarah Hassmer calculations based on National Alliance to End Homelessness, “State of Homelessness: 2021 Edition.” [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. National Women’s Law Center and National Low Income Housing Coalition, “Gender and Racial Justice in Housing,” National Women’s Law Center, last updated October 2021, <https://nwlc.org/resource/gender-and-racial-justice-in-housing-2/>. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Baltimore-Washington Conference, “Advocacy & Action,” accessed February 20, 2022, <https://www.bwcumc.org/ministries/advocacy-action/>. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)