

1 **10-A Resolution to Call Us Back to Our Methodist Roots**

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

4 **Submitted by:** Lovely Lane, BCS, UMC, Baltimore, MD (Mother Church of Methodism),  
5 Rev. Deborah Scott, Pastor  
6 John Strawbridge, Lay Leader  
7 Baltimore Washington Historical Society, Rev. Dr. Emora Brannan, President  
8 Baltimore Washington Archives and History, Rev. Dr. Emora Brannan, Chair

9 **Whereas:** Methodism began as a spiritual movement to renew a decaying institutional church  
10 and serve the outcast, the marginalized, and the poor in response to those 18th century Anglicans  
11 who tried to quash a spiritual movement of inclusion and love; and

12 **Whereas:** early Methodism was often messy, was based in small groups, empowered women,  
13 gave enslaved persons a sense of freedom, and created a vision of justice and liberation; and

14 **Whereas:** anyone who claims to be a Methodist but who acts like one of those dogmatic 18th  
15 century Anglican prelates is NOT faithful to Methodist tradition; and

16 **Whereas:** anyone who says there are limits to whose hearts can be strangely warmed, is NOT  
17 faithful to Methodist tradition. The deepest Methodist identity is that of hearts on fire with love,  
18 of risk and rebellion, of holy revolutions, of challenging ecclesial authorities who say "NO," of  
19 listening to the voices of the outcast, specifically now our LGBTQ+ siblings; and

20 **Whereas:** people who are currently claiming to be "traditional" are really innovators and  
21 revisionists, who are turning us into something we aren't (see footnote 1); and

22 **Whereas:** John Wesley did not start a church. He wanted to renew a church that had become  
23 narrow, moralistic, and cold. He wanted to renew it through new hearts, a courageous spirit,  
24 community that included the least and the unwanted, and with passion for Jesus. It was a  
25 FEARLESS spiritual movement. Without courage and risking all for love, there would be no  
26 Methodists; and

27 **Whereas:** Methodism got "nice" when it accommodated to slavery. So, the "traditionalist"  
28 Methodism that is taking over our church would make us complicit with white supremacy and  
29 slave-holding. There was always another Methodism — the kind that shook the American South  
30 to its core in the 18th century — the revolutionary, inclusive, heart-centered, Jesus-fired  
31 Methodism that scared authorities; therefore

32 **Be it resolved:** that we are being called back to our roots. The world is our parish. We are  
33 challenging all to be authentically traditional without fear, inviting all to renewal with hearts  
34 strangely warmed; and

35 **Be it further resolved:** that we need to do a better job of understanding our historical roots. It is  
36 time for the real Methodist tradition to get reborn. We are called back to our roots to be  
37 rambunctious rebels against unjust societies and the unholiness of the dominions of this world;  
38 and

39 **Be it further resolved:** that we need to set history right. We've got a real chance here to be the  
40 sort of Methodists our founding generation dreamed when, at the Christmas Conference of 1784  
41 at Lovely Lane, the Methodist Episcopal Church in America was born; and

42 **Be it further resolved:** that the Baltimore-Washington Conference of The United Methodist  
43 Church request the General Conference of the UMC to affirm the need for an Easter Conference  
44 (not tied to a specific date) to resurrect the church of our roots, at the Mother Church of the  
45 denomination, Lovely Lane, Baltimore City Station, to be reminded what it meant to be a  
46 traditional Methodist in 1784 and what that means today, in light of our rich history. May it be  
47 so!

48 Footnote 1: Bishop Cynthia Fierro Harvey April 29, 2019 "I believe one of the reasons it has  
49 been so difficult to make the Traditional Plan fully constitutional is because it is not who we  
50 are. We are people of justice, grace, inclusion, reconciliation, and restoration and the Traditional  
51 Plan falls short of embracing these important tenets of our faith. I believe in the authority of  
52 scripture and as Wesleyan Methodists believe we interpret scripture using tradition, experience,  
53 and reason. We each bring who we are, what we have experienced, where we grew up, where  
54 we went to school to our understanding of the scriptures. To deny that is to deny the whole  
55 person of God."  
56

57 **Note:** This is a petition to be sent on behalf of the BWC to General Conference 2020.

58 *The Connectional Table voted concurrence on this resolution.*