

RESOLUTIONS

*The South Georgia Conference
of The United Methodist Church*

2017 Annual Conference Session



**June 4-7, 2017
Jekyll Island, Georgia**

**RESOLUTION 1 – Resolution in support of a Coordinated Action
on Behalf of Undocumented Neighbors**

WHEREAS, we recognize that there are numbers of people seeking new life in the United States, continually putting themselves at risk both in travelling and taking up residence in the United States, and the federal government continues to fail to enact comprehensive economic and immigration reforms; and

WHEREAS, the teaching of the Old Testament clearly commands that we love the alien as we love ourselves (Leviticus 19:33) and Jesus defines his own ministry as “to set those who are oppressed” (Luke 4:18); and

WHEREAS, the Methodist tradition in its past had leading figures standing against the injustice of slavery and oppression, including our own John Wesley, Thomas Coke, Gilbert Haven, and Orange Scott, who serve as examples for us fighting for the rights of our undocumented neighbors; and

WHEREAS, distress and fear are paralyzing and affecting our ministry with “the least of these” (Matthew 25: 40), and believing that God will bring justice, the words of Esther 4: 14 are very pertinent today, “For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place....And who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?”;

THEREFORE, be it resolved, that we, the Hispanic/Latino pastors and allies of the South Georgia Conference, call on the presiding Bishop of the Annual Conference to form a specific task force for the purpose of developing a strategy to:

1. provide education to the members of the South Georgia Conference, both clergy and laity, about the history of immigration throughout the centuries and human and civil rights concerning our undocumented members, and
2. encourage members of our South Georgia United Methodist churches who so choose to engage in concrete Wesleyan works of piety and mercy—seeking justice, ending discrimination and addressing the needs of the poor—on behalf of our undocumented neighbors.

FURTHERMORE, be it resolved, that due consideration be given to the cost and duration of such efforts to educate and engage this important issue.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the South Georgia Conference, and especially those entities relating to social issues, such as Advocacy Discipleship Team, Connectional Ministries and the Cabinet, along with pastors, congregations and individual members who share or want to be in ministry, unite to promote education and works of mercy in a number of ways, including:

1. Identify or develop a curriculum that teaches our churches the Biblical foundations regarding aliens and foreigners and examines our Wesleyan roots and United Methodist Social Principles in a way that promotes working on behalf of undocumented neighbors among us;
2. Identify, recruit, and equip churches, clergy and individual members to imagine and strategize, in partnership with our undocumented neighbors, social action and advocacy opportunities in which all interested parties may engage;
3. Provide for the Conference published tools, both print and online, in collaboration with the Connectional Table, including pertinent publications to educate and update on specific issues related to the struggles of “the foreigner among us” at local, state, and federal levels;
4. Build bridges with other religious and non-religious organizations in our region to cooperate in these efforts and so multiply our effectiveness in this endeavor;
5. Form a research and work group, in cooperation with Global Ministries and any pertinent agency, to promote mission cooperation in the countries of origin of many of our undocumented neighbors to support and create development in these communities to alleviate the problems that cause our undocumented neighbors to flee their beloved countries in the first place.

1 Respectfully submitted,

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3 **The Hispanic/Latino Pastors and allies of the South Georgia Conference:**

4 Rev. Dr. Ivelisse Quiñones, Associate Pastor for Hispanic Ministries, St. Luke UMC, Columbus

5 Rev. Isaac Salgado, Pastor Lake Park UMC

6 Rev. David A Diaz, Pastor Casa de Vida y Paz UMC, Bainbridge & El Faro UMC, Albany

7 Rev. Daniel Medina, Associate Pastor for Hispanic Ministries First UMC, Warner Robins. Nueva Vida UMC,

8 Macon & El Buen Samaritano UMC, Morgan

9 Rev. Brett Maddocks, Associate Pastor St. Luke UMC, Columbus

10 Rev. Felipe Ricardo, Associate Pastor Cordele First UMC, Cordele & El Buen Samaritano UMC, Morgan

11 Rev. Noel Perez, Associate Pastor for Hispanic Ministries Americus First UMC, Americus

12 Carlos F. Lopez, Lay Member Lake Park UMC, Lake Park

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14 **RESOLUTION 2 – A Resolution Regarding the**
15 ***Report to the Bishop and Cabinet Form***

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17 WHEREAS, the United Methodist Church believes that longer appointments are beneficial to the overall health of
18 the church/clergy and

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20 WHEREAS, in multiple studies on church growth and vitality document that churches and pastors often have their
21 best ministry beginning after the fourth year and

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23 WHEREAS, the average tenure for all ministers in the United States is at 3.6 years due to conflict in years three and
24 four of shared ministry and

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26 WHEREAS, the South Georgia annual conference mails the *Report to the Bishop and Cabinet* form every year that
27 ask about a change in pastor and

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29 WHEREAS, when the current *Report to the Bishop and Cabinet* form is received it causes anxiety for the clergy, the
30 family of the clergy and the local church

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32 **Be it therefore resolved** that the *Report to the Bishop and Cabinet* form mailed to the clergy and the pastor/staff
33 parish will no longer indicate a desire to change pastors but instead remind churches of the desire for longer
34 appointments and ask for ways to continue to improve the ministry of the local church. (See below for potential
35 revised form.)

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37 If necessary, a study committee could be appointed to come up with a new form that reflects the change in language
38 to be presented at the next annual conference.

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40 **New form:**

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42 Dear Colleagues and Churches in ministry:

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44 Each year the appointive cabinet meets together to prayerfully consider each clergy person and church in our annual
45 conference. The desire is to place a clergy person into a setting for ministry that best reflects their gifts with the
46 needs of the local church or extension ministry. It has been noted in multiple studies that longer tenured
47 appointments are better for the health of the church and clergy. As such we will no longer be asking about a change
48 for clergy but rather asking how we can best assist in making your church-clergy relationship more healthy.

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50 What are your strengths as a church/clergy? (This will be different, depending on whether it is for the clergy or the
51 church.)

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59 In what areas do you as a church/clergy need to grow and are you willing to attend training in these areas?

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Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Garth Duke-Barton
Rev. David Wood
Rev. Michael Finn
Rev. Tammy Fincannon
Rev. Randy Mosely
Rev. Rebecca Duke-Barton

RESOLUTION 3 – Multiculturalism Taskforce Resolution
A Resolution on Multiculturalism
Developing a Taskforce in the South Georgia Conference
Submitted by The Advocacy Discipleship Team

There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free; nor is there male or female, for you all are one in Christ Jesus. (Galatians 3:28)

WHEREAS, the Constitution of The United Methodist Church in Paragraph 4, Article IV mandates racial inclusiveness; and

WHEREAS, The United Methodist Church and its predecessor organizations in years past have participated in acts which have perpetuated the sin of racism and continue to be a barrier to Christian unity; and

WHEREAS, there still is a need among United Methodists in general and the South Georgia Conference in particular for education concerning the church’s past history, and the opportunity we each have today as Christians to grow in the areas of Multiculturalism and dialogue around issues of diversity and racial justice; and

WHEREAS, learning ways to honor our brothers and sisters in Christ across racial, ethnic and cultural divides will help all of us as Christians witness to the love of God for all people within our church and communities; foster healthy dialogue in our communities and enable clergy and laity to have difficult conversations in times of peace and conflict; and

WHEREAS, education, healthy dialogue and deepening relationships around Multiculturalism is but a first step toward the changing of hearts leading to healing and wholeness;

Therefore, be it resolved, that a taskforce be appointed to consider the implications programmatically and financially of clergy and laity education around the issues of Multiculturalism in the South Georgia Conference, and,

Be it further resolved, that this taskforce be appointed by the Bishop of the South Georgia Conference and be a diverse group in age, race, gender and bring a recommendation of its finding to the 2018 South Georgia Annual Conference.

See the *Book of Discipline* of The United Methodist Church - 2016, ¶ 162.A

Signatures:

Rev. David Diaz
Ms. Denise Rooks
Rev. Melissa Traver
Rev. Denise Walton
Rev. Ashley Randall