



**CALIFORNIA – NEVADA ANNUAL CONFERENCE
THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

P.O. Box 980250 / West Sacramento, California 95798 – 0250 (offices at 1350 Halyard Drive, W. Sacramento, 95691)
Tel: (916) 374 – 1500 fax: (916) 372 – 5544 web: <http://www.cnumc.org>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - July 1, 2019

**Disaffiliation & Non-Payment of Apportionments
Statement of the Extended Cabinet
of the California-Nevada Annual Conference
of The United Methodist Church**

“I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect. For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another.”

– Romans 12:1-5, NRSV

“The pretenses for separation may be innumerable, but want of love is always the real cause; otherwise they would still hold the unity of the Spirit in the bound of peace. . . . And as such a separation is evil in itself, being a breach of brotherly love, so it brings forth evil fruit; it is naturally productive of the most mischievous consequences. It opens a door to all unkind tempers, both in ourselves and others. It leads directly to a whole train of evil surmising, to severe and uncharitable judging of each other. It gives occasion to offense, to anger and resentment, perhaps in ourselves as well as in our brethren; which, if not presently stopped, may issue in bitterness, malice, and settled hatred; creating a present hell wherever they are found, as a prelude to hell eternal.”

– “On Schism” by John Wesley

As the Extended Cabinet of the California-Nevada Annual Conference, we believe that this is a Kairos moment in the life of the broader church. This moment emerges in the wake of the completion of jurisdictional annual conferences of the connection. The new composition of the delegations to General and Jurisdictional Conferences gives us hope for the future of the United Methodist Church and calls us to more closely examine our ongoing conversation about how to best be the church in this time. What follows is an encapsulation of our own perspective regarding some of the important issues before us. First among these is the notion of disaffiliation of the Western Jurisdiction from the United Methodist Church. We offer these observations in the hope that we might be in deeper and more prayerful conversation.

- 1. Does disaffiliation from The United Methodist Church fulfill the promise of the Wesleyan Spirit and Methodist Ethos?** Our belief is that it does not and if we are to embrace our General Rules and plant a stake in our connectional system, we must remain on the side of unity. Wesley, himself, found affinity with others whose theological opinions were opposite his own. Wesley maintained his unity with the Anglican Church in a posture of righteous defiance. Disaffiliation is contrary to every fiber of Wesleyan theology. As Wesleyans ours has always been a dynamic faith not one of dogma and ideology.
- 2. How does disaffiliation fulfill our calling to leadership as a jurisdiction within the denomination?** Some members of the Wesley Covenant Association, Institute for Religion and Democracy, and others have been planning this deconstruction of the connection for almost 40

years. The schismatic endgame of this strategy is apparent. Yet many of their movement are no longer represented in General and Jurisdictional delegations. This does not mean the tide is turning; the numbers bear witness that they are not. However, facilitating THEIR exit should be the primary goal rather than having us waste valuable time and energy planning what is ultimately the will of the WCA and IRD. Remember, it was the Methodist Episcopal Church South that left the Methodist Episcopal Church.

3. **How can the Western Jurisdiction best claim integrity as leaders in the denomination?** Disaffiliation erodes the integrity of the West as a leader. Rather than functioning as a leader for the church, the West becomes a “leave-er.” It is important to remember that the Western Jurisdiction does not exist in a vacuum. Disaffiliation would do great harm to other parts of the connection and those looking to the West for leadership. The question must be asked if the perception and the reality of the US church punishing the African church is what faithfulness looks like for the Western Jurisdiction.
4. **Is disaffiliation by the Western Jurisdiction a lifeboat to save the church?** Here the answer is a resounding No. As the weakest of all the jurisdictions, the West has been dependent on the connectional church for its survival. Loss of the connectional relationship will accelerate its decline. The primary issues facing the West in its disciple-making capacities and congregational vitality will remain whether we disaffiliate or not. We believe that full inclusion is a necessary, but not the sole component of healthy evangelism and growth.
5. **Is non-payment of General and Jurisdictional Apportionments an effective strategy for change?** Whether intended or not, non-payment inflicts financial and other forms of punishment on the Central Conferences, the entire connection, and those beyond ourselves whom we are called to serve. It is a clear violation of our first General Rule of “Do no harm.” This action is a misdirection of our pain that evades any notion of a redemptive outcome. Many ministries, and the work of boards, and agencies of the church are deeply impacted by non-payment. Understanding all of these ramifications is beyond a comprehensive analysis and will certainly result in some unintended consequences. Defying our apportionment covenant and relying solely on the excuse of ignorance or oversight of this impact, lacks integrity and courage in this form of resistance.
6. **Does the withholding of General and Jurisdictional apportionments create new expressions of justice across the life of the church?** To function under the assumption that the Central Conferences are completely beholden to the US church is a *de facto* admission of a neo-colonial posture. In addition, attempting to control Central Conferences through withholding funds is manipulative and coercive. In fact, this withholding is primarily expressed in Caucasian congregations whose perception is that their entitlement to control others with money is an expression of white privilege. The logical end of this flawed thinking is to punish congregations that do not conform to presumptive standards. This is the embodiment of Jim Crow laws. The withholding of connectional giving is not a morally neutral issue. Lives will be lost as a result of this kind of action.* We seek to create genuine relationships with our Central Conference brothers and sisters rather than simply leverage them, for any purpose, using financial means.

*Dollars denied for education, disaster relief, medical assistance, feeding the hungry, confronting expressions of racism and tribalism, sexual violence, misogyny and many more areas of concern and including support for the infrastructure that allows the church to respond to such concerns, will place lives at risk.

Bishop Minerva Carcaño, Resident Bishop of the San Francisco Area
Jorge Domingues, Executive Director of Connectional Ministries
Debra Brady, Central Valley District Superintendent, Dean of Cabinet
Diane Knudsen, Executive Director of Finance and Administration
Staci Current, Bay District Superintendent
Shinya Goto, El Camino Real District Superintendent
Schuyler Rhodes, Los Rios District Superintendent
Blake Busick, Great Northern District Superintendent
Gere Reist, Executive Director of Leadership Development
Craig Brown, Executive Director of Congregational Development