



BMCR-supported General Conference documents, proposals, legislation for the 2012 General Conference

The legislation and actions affecting:

- Africa University
- The Black College Fund
- Strengthening the Black Church for the 21st Century
- The Ministerial Education Fund

In addition, BMCR supports various legislative proposals among groups: the racial ethnic plans, MARCHA, NAIC, NFAAUM, PINCUM, GCORR, GBGM, UMW, GBHEM. Specific proposals are listed on the BMCR website: www.bmcrumc.org and on www.iesdg.org

Talking Points from discussions with National BMCR Board of Directors related to the Call to Action recommendations

Black Methodists for Church Renewal is not opposed change; change is part of who we are as people. We understand that change must come. However, the Call to Action recommendations in their present form do not reflect that all groups represented or considered in The United Methodist Church were included in the planning processes. If change is so radical that it minimizes and dilutes the diversity of United Methodism, then we must address that.

BMCR cannot support the Call to Action proposal in its current state for these reasons:

- 1) We question a 15-member group that would have the governance of the church and speak for the General Conference when it is not in session. This formula, with only 15 members, means that at times someone would be representing and speaking for people who are not at the table. We believe a larger group will mean greater diversity and a richer denomination.
- 2) The Call to Action proposal reveals a diminished diversity and too much power for a small group of people, who would represent the entire United Methodist Church in all of its cultures and social dynamics. We believe that the proposal dilutes the diversity we've worked for in the church for more than 40 years. Call to Action thinks it provides diversity, but it is a diversity from the perspective of one or two people speaking for a major group.
- 3) We cannot support any plan that purports a CEO and a 15-member having the authority to change the budget of global The United Methodist Church after the General Conference has approved it.
- 4) We are convinced that using a business model for the church leaves out who we are as Wesleyan followers of Christ.
- 5) We agree that cutting costs is a good approach, but if cutting costs is at the expense of racial ethnic ministries and resources and resourcing local churches, we cannot support that approach.
- 6) We believe this model dilutes the voices of United Methodists in Europe and Africa.

7) We believe there needs to be specific reference and support for local church growth and vitality. We are concerned that focus is on general agencies and not on local churches.

8) We cannot see where a 45-member board which meets once a year would effectively oversee and strategize all that it takes to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. When we talk about ministry, how are a group of people who have historically never been at the table, going to be represented?

In addition there are many concerns that have initiated a broad range of discussions across the church:

- The number of local churches who do not know about the Call to Action proposals is shocking. Local churches need to know how this will impact their lives.
- What is being done to decrease this knowledge divide?
- Where is the incentive for ordained ministry?
- Where are youth and young adults involved in this process?
- Most rural and small membership churches could not survive without the support of the annual conference and they don't have endowments to fall support them.
- How does the seminarian who, after graduating with \$80,000 of debt, manage in a system with no guaranteed appointments? Think of that question as it relates to women and people of color.

We believe that reordering the life of the general church with greater economy and consolidation of structures in order to address more in the annual conferences can happen without diffusing the strength of current structures and reordering should not occur at the expense of groups who are voiceless or not represented at the table.

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