

A Resolution by the  
College of Bishops  
Southeastern Jurisdiction  
The United Methodist Church  
January 6, 2012

In view of the new wind blowing through The United Methodist Church and the adaptive challenge that is calling us to develop more vital congregations, the College of Bishops of the Southeastern Jurisdiction has genuine concern for the life and ministry of the Tennessee and Memphis conferences. Although there are some vital congregations and efforts to move other local churches in that direction, we are aware that these two conferences are struggling with issues that could be strengthened by deliberative efforts to unite the two conferences in such a way as to support and expand the number of vital congregations, make disciples of Jesus Christ, and become more faithful in the support of United Methodist benevolences and missionary support.

In consultation with the Southeastern Jurisdictional Episcopacy Committee, the Southeastern Jurisdictional College of Bishops strongly encourages the Memphis and Tennessee conferences to begin immediate efforts toward uniting structurally, economically, and spiritually.

Among the items that could be done are the following:

- 1) The two Cabinets should meet together and begin making appointments within the two conferences and across conference lines.
- 2) A study committee could be appointed by the Bishop in consultation with the Cabinet(s) to look at ways to consummate unification of the conferences.
- 3) Action could be taken by each conference to unite the two conferences.
- 4) The Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference could vote to unite the Memphis and Tennessee conferences so that they begin to function as one.

The desire and intent is to see a healthier arm of the church in what is now the Tennessee and Memphis conferences, and to exercise better stewardship of resources.