

1 Total Number of Pages: 3

2 Suggested Title: Support for Multicultural Ministry

3 General Church Budget Implications: None

4 Global Implications: Applies Globally

5 WHEREAS, demographic projections highlight that our communities are becoming
6 increasingly non-white, non-English speaking and non-Christian, the importance of
7 relationships with those who differ from the average United Methodist cannot be emphasized
8 enough; and

9 WHEREAS, the mission of The United Methodist Church to “[m]ake disciples of Jesus Christ
10 for the transformation of the world” requires us to open our eyes, ears, hearts, and hands to
11 the people around us, especially when it feels uncomfortable and unfamiliar; and

12 WHEREAS, The United Methodist Church has been called by God to minister to people with
13 different histories, race and ethnicities, cultures, and languages; and

14 WHEREAS, the Book of Discipline (2016) states that district superintendents should work to
15 promote collaborative, ecumenical, and multicultural ministries (§ 419.1), but nowhere does
16 the Discipline define what multiculturalism is; the definition either is assumed to be standard
17 across the connection, or is left to individual interpretation; and

18 WHEREAS, there is no one model of multicultural ministry that is the standard best model, so
19 multiculturalism is best thought of as an approach to ministry that both seeks and serves the
20 wholeness of God and seeks to stretch beyond the limitations that only one experience of God
21 can provide; and

22 WHEREAS, multiculturalism refers to an approach to ministry in which diversity is
23 celebrated with no pressure to assimilate, and the wisdom of God, as it is uniquely
24 experienced and expressed by persons of different life stories, is listened to and respected;
25 thus, everyone becomes a teacher and a learner because everyone realizes that a single
26 perspective could not possibly contain the fullness of God's grace and truth; and

27 WHEREAS, multicultural ministry is understood as inherently relational and requiring the
28 humility to learn from others, then Wesleyan ideals are certainly relevant; and

29 WHEREAS, multicultural ministry requires that we leave our silos of certainty and
30 homogeneity in order to experience God anew; and

31 WHEREAS, this form of spirituality is social, rather than individualistic; and

32 WHEREAS, multicultural ministry is shaped by everyone in an equitable manner and not by
33 any one dominant group; is an approach to church and ministry that actively seeks to engage
34 authentically across lines of similarities and differences, for the purpose of mutual learning,
35 teaching, and serving; and

36 WHEREAS, multicultural ministry goes beyond being in ministry with persons and groups of
37 different lived experiences, by valuing all voices, incorporating all traditions and experiences
38 into the ministry of the church; and

39 WHEREAS, the General Commission on Religion and Race is mandated by the church to
40 ensure the equitable participation of all believers as members of the same body that is the
41 body of Christ; and

42 WHEREAS, the question of multicultural ministry is not an either/or proposition but rather a
43 distinct path to achieve the inclusive spirit revealed to us at Pentecost, when people

44 understood each other, not through a common language, but through the power of the Spirit
45 who affirmed, embraced, and empowered everyone;

46 Therefore, be it resolved, that The United Methodist Church's commitment to inclusiveness
47 affirms the continued development and strengthening of multicultural ministry approaches as
48 defined above; and the Council of Bishops shall direct annual conferences on matters of
49 ministry so that local churches and ministries are provided with resources and guidance in
50 their efforts to respond to diverse communities.

51 Be it further resolved, that United Methodist seminaries and schools of theology will
52 incorporate into their curricula cross-racial and cross-cultural competencies needed to prepare
53 students who will minister in diverse settings.

54 Be it further resolved, that the General Commission on Religion and Race will partner with
55 other appropriate general agencies, such as the General Board of Global Ministries, General
56 Board of Higher Education and Ministry, General Board of Church and Society, and General
57 Board of Discipleship to develop resources, within current budgetary framework, that
58 undergird the creation and the strengthening of multicultural ministries.

59 Date: August 1, 2019