

A Missional Initiative of the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference  
From  
The Southeastern Jurisdictional College of Bishops

The Bishops of the Southeastern Jurisdiction recognize the unique strengths, characteristics, and challenges of our Episcopal Areas. As leaders of the Church in the SEJ, we see a timely opportunity to increase our strategic thinking and action with regard to our context in the Southeast. Further, it is our hope to continue to focus on the mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

In Article V Paragraph 27.1 of the constitution of the 2012 Book of Discipline, the jurisdictions are given responsibility to:

*Promote the evangelistic, educational, missionary, and benevolent interests of the Church and to provide for interests and institutions within their boundaries.*

To that end, the Bishops of the SEJ recommend the following:

Forming a Southeastern Jurisdictional Missional Initiative for the purpose of focusing on the following:

- 1.) new forms of church beyond the walls,
- 2.) children and poverty,
- 3.) unity and human sexuality,
- 4.) making disciples,
- 5.) structure, finance and the future church.

At the 2017 College of Bishops meeting in January, we will collaborate with the Conference Lay Leaders, the Committee on Episcopacy, and Directors of Connectional Ministries on this initiative. It is our hope that our collaboration will offer input to the commission being formed by the Council of Bishops. We also will connect this work to the Four Areas of Focus for the United Methodist Church.

We will assign a bishop and appropriate lay leaders to convene and guide the work of these five initiatives. We hope to then invite every delegate here this week to a gathering which will be held within the next eighteen months where recommendations will be received from the leadership of the Initiative. Expenses will be the responsibility of individual delegates. We encourage each conference to provide scholarships as needed.

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