



BOARD OF ORDAINED MINISTRY

LIBERIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE
THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
13TH STREET SINKOR, MONROVIA, LIBERIA
Email: bindujua08971@gmail.com
Mobile: +231777564851; +231886808434

A FOLLOW-UP MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF ORDAINED MINISTRY
AND OFFICE OF THE CONFERENCE SECRETARY
LIBERIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE, THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

To: All Clergy and Lay Membership of the LAC/UMC

Date: June 19, 2024

Subject: **Next Steps in Addressing Current Crisis in the United Methodist Church-Liberia**

On behalf of the Board of Ordained Ministry of the Liberia Annual Conference, The United Methodist Church, and the office of the Conference Secretary, we bring you greetings of best wishes in the name of Jesus Christ, our Resurrected and Risen Savior of peace, tranquility, and reconciliation. We want to thank you for honoring our request to exercise calm and commit to prayer a week ago as we engage our Resident Bishop, Bishop Samuel J. Quire, Jr., to address the current impasse that had engulfed our church.

About a week ago, the Board put out a passionate message to the people called United Methodists in Liberia, titled: "*A Call to Prayer and Calm for the Way Forward for the Liberia Annual Conference.*" That call was necessary to ease tension and discontent that had ensued between and among members of the Church who demanded the leadership of the church to call for a Special Session of our Annual Conference after the postponed 2020 General Conference that was convened in Charlotte, North Carolina, USA 23rd April to 3rd May 2024 for two purposes. One, to hear a report from its elected delegation to the postponed 2020 General Conference held in Charlotte, NC from 23rd April to 3rd May 2024, and two, to take a decision on the Way Forward Committee's report that the 191st Session postponed pending the return of the delegation from the General Conference.

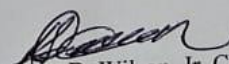
Notably, that was the decision of the 191st Session of our Annual Conference based on an appeal from our Resident Bishop, Bishop Quire, following the report of the *Way Forward Committee* to the Annual Session that needed an Annual Conference vote for its rectification. To set the basis for this special session, Bishop Quire and cabinet met in a post-Annual Conference cabinet meeting in the David Tweh Toe conference room on February 22, 2024 and decided the following: 1. That a special session of the Liberia Annual Conference will be called in the City of Gbarnga, Bong County July 16-17, 2024 to be followed by the mid-year cabinet meeting to be held July 17-19, 2024. However, since the end of General Conference, many of you have waited without any indication from the Bishop and his Cabinet to announce the holding of the special session, amidst massive actions taken by the recent General Conference with indelible impacts upon all annual conferences worldwide.

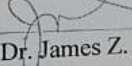
In that message, the Board sought the indulgence of the people called United Methodists in Liberia to engage in a period of prayer and to remain calm while the Board engages Bishop Quire for a way forward to the matter. The Board of Ordained Ministry, in the company of Retired Bishop Arthur F. Kulah and other conference officials, met with Bishop Quire in the David Tweh Toe conference room at the UMC Conference Center on 12th Street, Sinkor on 11 June 2024 and encouraged him to call for the Special Session of the Liberia Annual Conference as he had requested at the seat of the 191st annual session. At that meeting, Bishop Quire requested for one week before responding to the request to call for a Special Session. The Board is of the candid conviction that it is only at a duly called special Annual Conference session that the voice of the entire membership of the Liberia Annual Conference can be heard through their elected representatives of lay and clergy members. Then a dialogue can take place regarding decisions reached at the 2024 General Conference for appropriate reporting, discussions/reflections and voting by the special session of the Liberia Annual Conference.

The administrative structure of the United Methodist Church dictates that no single leader has the authority to speak on behalf of the church on any critical matter that has the propensity to impact the church spiritually, including its Resident Bishop, when the Annual Conference has not given him or her the mandate to do so. The leader derives legitimacy to speak for and on behalf of the UMC in Liberia on any critical matter, such as the recent decisions taken at the postponed 2020 General Conference, only when the membership of the Annual Conference, represented by their elected lay and clergy delegates have first decided on the matter.

As requested by our Resident Bishop, the Board and other leaders of the church met with Bishop Quire this morning in furtherance of our consultation. Regrettably, we are deeply saddened to inform you that Bishop Quire has informed the leadership of the Board of Ordained Ministry that he will not call a Special Session despite the Board's appeal. Our Bishop has refused to listen both to the Board of Ordained Ministry to which all elders of the UMC, irrespective of his or her status, is accountable and other leaders of the Conference.

In view of the foregoing, we call on all District Superintendents, Chairpersons of District Committees on Ordained Ministry to be in readiness to attend a mass gathering of all clergy of the Liberia Annual Conference. You are also encouraged to bring along your lay members. The Board of Ordained Ministry will announce the date and venue for its visit to each District/Region of our Conference, along with other key leaders of our Conference, including the delegation to the General Conference, to provide you with full report of decisions that the General Conference took on behalf of the Worldwide UMC. During our visit, you will also have the opportunity to vote per district/region on the report of the Way Forward Committee. Following this exercise, we shall all meet at our next annual conference and take a collective vote, based on our individual district/regional votes we would have taken during our visits. Meanwhile, we ask every Committee on Ordained Ministry of each district to work along with the District Superintendent to coordinate the schedule for our visit along with the Chair of the Board of Ordained Ministry, and Secretary of our Annual Conference. Thank you.


Rev. Dr. George D. Wilson, Jr. Chair, Board of Ordained Ministry


Rev. Dr. James Z. Labala, Conference Secretary, LAC/UMC

