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Episcopal Update on Illinois Great Rivers Conference Exit Plan

November 13, 2024

Dear Friends in Christ in the Illinois Great Rivers Conference,

Grace to you and peace in the name of God our Father and our Lord Jesus

As you are aware, we are emerging from a challenging season in the life of the United Methodist Church. As you know, the Judicial Council ruled, in decision 1512, that the use of ¶12549 to replace ¶12553 to exit the denomination is unconstitutional.

Having read the decision thoroughly, and having consulted with our conference leadership, and other bishops, we have determined that the current exit plan in our conference is not compatible with the Judicial Council ruling.

The IGRC's exit plan was put forward by Bishop Frank J. Beard and the Conference Trustees in good faith. They had no way of knowing that the Council, our denominational version of the Supreme Court, would rule unconstitutional the use of ¶12549 in the way our exit plan uses it.

We encourage you to continue to focus on your ministry of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. If you have questions about these developments, please speak directly to your district superintendent. Know also that your bishops and the cabinet are in prayer for you and for the vitality of local churches in the Illinois Great Rivers Annual Conference.

Grace and Peace,

David A. Bard

Kennetha J. Bigham-Tsai



Bishop David A. Bard



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