

REC 26-17 | CLOSURE OF BETHANY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

SUBJECT: Closure and Property Disposition of Bethany UMC, Honolulu, Hawaii.

SUBMITTED BY: Appointive Cabinet

WHEREAS, Bethany United Methodist Church has faithfully served Korean, Samoan, Pacific Islander, and multicultural communities in Hawaii and has contributed significantly to the mission and ministry of The United Methodist Church in the Hawaii District; and

WHEREAS, the congregation comprises a merger of two congregations: Pacific Islanders UMC, primarily serving the Samoan community; and Bethany Korean UMC, primarily serving the Korean community; and

WHEREAS, the merged congregation, known as Bethany UMC, faced challenges of dwindling membership: in part because of the division in the Korean community over actions taken at the 2024 General Conference resulting in a large departure of members; in part because of the difficulty in identifying Samoan pastoral leaders; in part because of financial difficulties, including a large delinquency owed to the district union; and also because the church campus has a large number of deferred maintenance issues; and

WHEREAS, the membership has voted to discontinue as a local church through a special charge conference on March 26, 2026, and consent to discontinue has been granted by the presiding Bishop, the Cabinet, and the Hawaii District Board of Church Location and Building pursuant to the Book of Discipline ¶2549; and

WHEREAS, the District Superintendent has obtained the opinion of legal counsel as to the existence of any reversion, possibilities of reverter, right of reacquisition or similar restrictions pursuant to 2020/2024 Book of Discipline ¶ 2549.2.a.2,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the California-Pacific Conference of The United Methodist Church approves the formal closure of Bethany United Methodist Church, effective June 30, 2026; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Annual Conference authorizes the Appointive Cabinet and the Board of Trustees to sell the property with the assistance of the Hawaii United Methodist Union; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all costs of sale, outstanding liabilities, restricted grants, conditional gifts, loans, and other legal or financial obligations shall be satisfied prior to any distribution, and the remaining net proceeds shall thereafter be distributed in accordance with Conference Resolution 17-9; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that since the allocation of 50% of the net proceeds from the sale is given to the Conference Trustees and Conference Committee on Finance and Administration in funding strategic ministry initiatives in collaboration with the Cabinet and the Connectional Table, that consideration be given to supporting the following ministries: recruitment and support of leaders and pastors for Samoan language ministry; support for Korean churches deeply affected by the disaffiliation process and related issues; Wesley Foundation ministries in our conference that

- 1 support full-time campus pastors; support for the Acts of Repentance for the Overthrow of the
- 2 Hawaiian Kingdom.