



## CALIFORNIA-PACIFIC ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

**Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank**

September 10, 2026

**Dear Pastors,**

Grace and peace to you in the name of Jesus Christ.

As we begin the Black Church Revitalization Initiative, I want to begin with gratitude. Thank you for your ministry. Thank you for the many ways you continue to serve your congregations and communities, often under circumstances that require extraordinary creativity, resilience, and faith. And thank you for the honesty you have brought to the conversations that have helped shape the work before us.

I am aware that for years you have shared both what you cherish about our Black churches and what concerns you about their future. You have named places of strength and possibility, as well as challenges involving participation, leadership, finances, property, community connection, and sustainability. You have also brought your hopes, frustrations, questions, and sometimes your skepticism. The conference has not always listened well to your wisdom or responded well to your needs. We are seeking to change that now.

This initiative begins with a conviction that I hope you hear clearly from me: our Black churches matter. Their history matters. Their witness matters. The communities they serve matter. And their future matters to the California-Pacific Annual Conference. Because they matter, we must be willing to engage their present realities with both honesty and hope.

Pastors, you have an important role in helping your congregations wrestle with their present realities. But I also want to relieve you of a burden that pastors too often carry: You are not responsible for saving your church. You are called to lead it. There is a difference. Your role is to proclaim the Gospel, create space for discernment, help people tell the truth, call forth the gifts of the baptized, invite people into responsibility, and help the congregation recognize where God may be leading. The work of discerning and building a faithful future belongs to the whole congregation. Please do not carry alone what belongs to the Body of Christ.

The same is true of our relationship with you. We are not asking you and your congregation to undertake this journey while Conference leadership watches from a distance. I have asked our Cabinet to walk alongside this initiative. We intend to listen, learn, resource, connect, challenge, and support our churches as they discern their futures. We cannot promise that every congregation's path will be easy, or that every path will lead to the same destination. We can promise that we will seek to engage this work with transparency, care, courage, and presence.

My hope for this first phase is not that we rush toward answers. My hope is that we learn to see clearly so that we can move faithfully. There will be things worth celebrating. There may be realities that are difficult to acknowledge. There may be possibilities we have not yet imagined.

And there may be changes that ask something significant of us. Whatever emerges, I pray that we will resist both fear and nostalgia and remain attentive to the movement of the Holy Spirit.

Thank you for saying yes to this journey and for inviting your people into it with you.

Grace y paz,

*Bishop Dotire Escobedo-Frank*

Resident Bishop  
California-Pacific Conference  
The United Methodist Church



## **BLACK CHURCH REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE PASTORS' ORIENTATION**

**Friday, September 11, 2026 | 10:00 a.m.– 2 p.m.  
Scott United Methodist Church**

**Purpose:** To prepare pastors to lead their congregations into Phase 1 of the Black Church Revitalization Initiative

**By the end of the gathering, pastors will:**

- Understand why the initiative exists and how it emerged from the conversations of Black pastors.
- Understand the components, expectations, and timeline of Phase 1.
- Understand the commitments being made by the Bishop, Cabinet, and Conference.
- Understand their particular role in cultivating congregational ownership rather than doing the work for the congregation.
- Have an opportunity to name questions, concerns, skepticism, and hopes.
- Leave prepared to register and orient their team of 3–5 lay participants.

### **Agenda**

- Devotion – Royce Porter
- Welcome – Deborah Bass
- Gathering Activity – Erin Hawkins

### **Break**

#### **Orientation to Phase 1**

- (1) Opening Worship – Erin Hawkins
- (2) *Choosing the Faithful Path*, six-week Bible study and congregational conversations - Ken Suhr
- (3) Congregational assessment - Ken Suhr, Jennifer Gaylord, Kathey Wilborn
- (4) StrengthsFinder assessment and individual conversations with pastors to explore leadership gifts and capacity – Erin Hawkins
- (5) Property-Use Exploration – Victor Cyrus Franklin
- (6) Closing Worship and Joint Charge Conference – Erin Hawkins

### **Lunch**

- Preparing for the Road Ahead – Erin Hawkins
- What's real? What's in the way? What's possible? – Deborah Bass
- Covenant and Closing – DS Saia Tu'itahi and DS Garth Gilliam



## **BLACK CHURCH REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **What is the Black Church Revitalization Initiative?**

The Black Church Revitalization Initiative is a collaborative effort of Black congregations, pastors, the Bishop, Cabinet, and California-Pacific Annual Conference to strengthen the vitality, sustainability, discipleship, leadership, and missional impact of Black churches across Cal-Pac.

The initiative grew out of a process of listening, including surveys and individual conversations with Black pastors followed by months of collective conversation, prayer, and discernment among pastors.

This initiative is not starting with a predetermined answer about what every church should become. It begins with assessment, truth-telling, biblical reflection, and discernment so that each congregation can better understand its current reality and determine its faithful path forward.

### **Why are we doing this now?**

Our Black churches possess extraordinary spiritual, cultural, historical, relational, and physical assets. They also face real challenges. Some congregations are experiencing declining participation, aging membership, financial pressures, changing neighborhoods, leadership challenges, deferred property maintenance, or difficulty connecting with emerging generations.

Ignoring those realities will not make them disappear. This initiative creates an opportunity to face them together while there is still time, capacity, and possibility to act.

### **What is the goal?**

The goal is to help each congregation discern: Who is God calling us to be now, in this place, for these people, in this time?

Through assessment, biblical reflection, conversation, leadership development, and practical support, congregations will identify their strengths, understand their challenges, clarify their mission, and develop faithful responses to what they discover.

### **Is the Conference trying to close or take our church?**

**No.** The purpose of this initiative is revitalization, discernment, and strengthening congregations, not creating a hidden process for closing churches or acquiring property.

The initiative does require honest conversations about the realities facing each congregation. Avoiding difficult information would undermine the very purpose of the process. Assessment findings are intended to help churches and Conference leaders make better decisions together, not to manufacture predetermined outcomes.

Transparency must work both ways. Conference leaders are committing to be transparent about what help they can offer, and congregations are being asked to be equally honest about their circumstances.

### **Have decisions already been made about our church?**

**No.** The initiative begins with assessment precisely because faithful decisions should emerge from a clear understanding of each congregation rather than assumptions made in advance. The first decision is made by the congregation as they faithfully discern what a faithful future looks like for them.

Different congregations may ultimately discern different paths. Revitalization does not require every church to look alike.

### **Why does our church need a team?**

Revitalization cannot belong only to the pastor.

Each participating congregation will identify a team of approximately three to five lay members who will work alongside the pastor throughout the process. Team members will participate in study, assessment, conversation, and discernment and help engage the wider congregation.

The initiative intentionally develops congregational ownership rather than placing responsibility for the church's future solely on its pastor.

### **What is expected of team members?**

Team members are asked to:

- Participate consistently.
- Pray for their congregation and the initiative.
- Attend *Choosing the Faithful Path* and other scheduled gatherings.
- Speak honestly about the congregation's strengths and challenges.
- Listen to perspectives different from their own.
- Help the congregation examine information without defensiveness or blame.
- Remain open to change.
- Communicate with and engage the wider congregation.
- Help move discernment toward faithful action.

### **What is Choosing the Faithful Path?**

*Choosing the Faithful Path* is a six-week Bible study that provides the spiritual and theological foundation for the first phase of the initiative.

All participating churches will gather together by Zoom. Each session will include biblical reflection followed by approximately 45 minutes in church-based breakout groups. Congregational teams will discuss what that week's Scripture and teaching mean for the particular realities of their church.

### **What role will the Bishop, Cabinet, and Conference play?**

The Bishop and Cabinet are committing to walk alongside, support, and resource congregations through this process.

District Superintendents will participate in the initiative. The Conference will help provide assessment tools, facilitation, expertise, coaching, learning opportunities, funding, connections, and other resources as the needs and opportunities of participating churches become clearer.

This is intended to be a partnership. The Conference cannot revitalize a congregation on its behalf, and congregations should not be expected to navigate significant challenges without support.

### **What happens after the first phase?**

The assessment phase is the beginning, not the entire initiative.

What comes next will be informed by what congregations learn about themselves. Future work will focus on taking action through training, programs, collaborative ministries, and making strategic investments in the long-term health and sustainability of our ministries.





## **BLACK CHURCH REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE PASTOR MESSAGING GUIDE**

### **Helping Your Congregation Choose Its Faithful Path**

#### **The Most Important Message**

This initiative is not something being done to your congregation. It is an opportunity for your congregation to take greater responsibility for discerning and shaping its future, with the support and resources of the wider Church. Your leadership as pastor will be essential.

#### **The Pastor's Role**

Pastors naturally carry significant responsibility for their congregations. When churches encounter difficulty, pastors can easily become the people expected to solve every problem, generate every idea, recruit every volunteer, and carry every new initiative. This process intentionally resists that pattern.

As pastor, your role is to:

- Invite participation rather than manufacture agreement.
- Ask questions rather than provide every answer.
- Help people examine reality rather than protect them from uncomfortable information.
- Create space for voices beyond the usual leaders.
- Encourage ownership rather than assuming responsibility for everything.
- Keep the conversation spiritually grounded.
- Help people distinguish between what they love about their church and what God may be calling their church to become.
- Resist the temptation to rescue the congregation from the work.

**Do not work harder on your congregation's future than the congregation is willing to work.**

Instead, invite your people to step forward as disciples and leaders who share responsibility for the ministry God has entrusted to them.

#### **How to Introduce the Initiative**

Keep the message simple:

**“We have been invited into a process that will help us understand where our church really is, listen together for where God is calling us, and receive support for making the changes necessary to move faithfully into that future.”**

Do not lead primarily with institutional anxiety, membership decline, finances, or Conference expectations. Those realities may need to be discussed, but the larger frame is **faithful discernment about God's future.**

#### **If People Ask, “Is the Conference Trying to Close Us?”**

Respond clearly rather than dismissing the concern:

**“No. There is no predetermined decision about our church. The purpose of this process is to help us understand our reality and discern our future. That means we cannot be afraid of difficult information or difficult conversations, but the goal is discernment, not a predetermined outcome.”**

#### **If People Say, “There's Nothing Wrong With Our Church”**

Avoid arguing.

Try:

**“Then this is an opportunity to identify what is strong and discover how God might use those strengths even more powerfully. Assessment isn't only about finding problems. It helps us understand what God has already placed among us.”**

#### **If People Say, “We've Done Programs Like This Before”**

Acknowledge the history:

**“That's a fair concern. We have experienced initiatives before, and not everything has produced lasting change. This time, we are being asked not simply to participate in a Conference program but to do serious work about our own congregation. The question will be what we choose to do with what we learn.”**

#### **When People Resist Change**

Resistance to change should be expected. For many people, the church is more than an organization. It carries memories, relationships, identity, family history, spiritual formation, and sometimes the legacy of people they loved who are no longer present. What looks like resistance may be protecting something that matters deeply.

The pastor's task is neither to defeat resistance nor to allow it to determine the congregation's future. Listen to it. Understand it. Name what is underneath it. And then help people distinguish what deserves to be honored from what must be allowed to change.

When someone says, **“I don't want our church to change,”** resist the temptation to immediately explain why change is necessary.

Instead, begin with curiosity:

**“Tell me what you are most afraid we might lose.”**

Or:

**“What about this church is so important to you that you want to make sure we carry it with us into the future?”**

Listen carefully to the answer.

People may name the congregation's sense of family, its Black identity, a worship tradition, a ministry, its history in the community, relationships, theological commitments, or the sacrifices of previous generations.

Honor what is underneath the resistance:

**“I hear how important that is to you. I don't want us to lose that either.”**

Then move the conversation from **whether change will happen** to **how the congregation will faithfully respond to the change already happening around it.**

You might say:

**“The difficult truth is that our church is already changing. Our membership has changed. Our neighborhood has changed. Our finances have changed. The people who are here have changed. The people who are no longer here have changed. So our choice isn't really between changing and not changing. Our choice is whether we will participate faithfully in shaping what comes next.”**

That distinction is important.

Sometimes congregations imagine that maintaining current practices is the neutral choice. It isn't. Doing nothing is also a decision, and it has consequences.

The pastor can therefore ask:

**“If we continue exactly as we are for the next three to five years, where will that take us?”**

Do not answer the question for them. Let the congregation wrestle with it.

Then ask:

**“Is that where we believe God is calling us?”**

If the answer is no, the conversation shifts. The question is no longer *whether* change is necessary.

The congregation can begin discerning what kind of change is faithful.

## **When Resistance Is Really Grief**

Sometimes people are not resisting the future as much as they are grieving the past.

A congregation may be grieving when the sanctuary was full, when there were more children, when the choir was larger, when particular families were present, or when the church occupied a different place in the community.

Do not argue people out of that grief.

Name it:

**“I wonder whether part of what we are experiencing is grief. We remember what this church has been, and some of us are mourning that it isn't that church anymore.”**

Then create room to honor what has been lost without making restoration of the past the goal:

**“What from that season do we want to bless and carry forward? And what do we need to release so that we can receive what God may be doing now?”**

### **When a Few People Are Blocking Everyone Else**

Not all resistance should be treated as though the congregation is evenly divided. Sometimes a small number of influential people can prevent the congregation from moving because others do not want conflict. When this happens, do not allow the loudest voices to become the congregation's voice.

Broaden participation.

Ask:

**“Who have we not heard from yet?”**

Use small groups, anonymous responses, one-on-one conversations, surveys, and other ways of hearing from people who may not speak when dominant voices are present. The goal is not to marginalize people who disagree. It is to make sure disagreement does not become veto power.

### **When Someone Says, “We've Always Done It This Way”**

Rather than responding with a slogan, invite the person into the history:

**“Tell us what made that way of doing things work so well when it began.”**

Then ask:

**“What was happening in the church and community at that time?”**

And finally:

**“Are those same conditions present today?”**

This honors the wisdom of the past while allowing the congregation to discover for itself that a faithful response in one season may not be the faithful response in another.

### **When People Say No Before They Understand the Possibility**

Do not force an immediate decision. Move from proposal to experiment.

Instead of:

**“We're changing this.”**

Try:

**“Would you be willing to try this for three months and then evaluate together what we learned?”**

Experiments lower the emotional cost of change. They allow people to experience something before being asked to make a permanent commitment.

### **When Resistance Continues**

Listening does not mean that everyone must eventually agree. There may come a point when the congregation has listened carefully, examined the evidence, prayed, discerned, heard multiple voices, and still has people who oppose moving forward.

At that point, the pastor may need to say:

**“I hear that you do not support this direction, and your concerns have been taken seriously. But discernment cannot mean that we move only when everyone is comfortable. We have a responsibility to make the most faithful decision we can with the information and wisdom available to us.”**

The goal is not consensus at any cost. The goal is faithful discernment with meaningful participation.

### **The Posture We Want to Cultivate**

Encourage your congregation to enter this process with:

**Courage** to tell the truth.

**Curiosity** about what you do not yet know.

**Humility** to acknowledge what is not working.

**Gratitude** for what previous generations have built.

**Freedom** to release what no longer serves the mission.

**Imagination** about what could emerge.

**Faith** that God's future is larger than our fear of change.

The goal is not to convince your congregation that everything must change.

The goal is to help your congregation become courageous enough to ask:

**"God, what are you asking of us now?"**



## **BLACK CHURCH REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE CHOOSING THE FAITHFUL PATH**

### **Fall 2026 Schedule**

Please reserve all applicable dates and plan for full participation by your congregational team.

**SEPTEMBER 11 | 10:00 A.M.**  
**Initiative Orientation**  
**Scott United Methodist Church**

Pastors and congregational teams gather to launch the Black Church Revitalization Initiative.

**Purpose:**

Understand the vision, process, expectations, assessment phase, resources, and responsibilities of participating congregations.

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**SEPTEMBER 20 | 3:00 P.M.**  
**Kick-Off Worship Service**  
**Faith United Methodist Church**

Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank, Preaching  
Black congregations from across Cal-Pac gather for worship, prayer, and the spiritual beginning of our shared journey.

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### **CHOOSING THE FAITHFUL PATH**

**Six-Week Bible Study**  
**Wednesdays | 6:30–8:00 P.M.**

**Zoom** <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89670134369?pwd=cOrCubMmiFKTnab8lU71dbONPT8Ltn.1>

Session One - September 30  
Session Two - October 7  
Session Three - October 14  
Session Four - October 21  
Session Five - October 28  
Session Six - November 4

Each gathering will include shared biblical reflection and teaching followed by approximately **45 minutes of congregation-specific conversation in breakout rooms.**

Congregational teams will reflect together on what the Scripture and teaching invite their church to see, consider, and do.

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**DECEMBER 6 | 3:00–6:00 P.M.**  
**Culmination Worship & Joint Charge Conference**  
**Holman United Methodist Church**

Bishop Cedrick Bridgeforth preaching

Participating congregations gather to worship, reflect on what has been learned during the first phase, celebrate our shared journey, and prepare for what comes next. Each congregation will have its charge conference after the worship service ends.

**Our Journey**

**Gather → Worship → Study → Listen → Assess → Discern → Choose → Act**

**The Question That Guides Us:**

**Who is God calling us to be now, in this place, for these people, in this time?**





## BLACK CHURCH REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE

### A Three-Year Journey Toward Vitality, Sustainability & Faithful Mission

#### Our guiding question:

**Who is God calling us to be now, in this place, for these people, in this time?**

This initiative is not a fall program that concludes on December 6. The work we begin together this fall is the first movement in a longer journey of discernment, development, experimentation, and growth. The three years are not separate stages in which we study first and only make changes later. We will learn and respond throughout the journey. As congregations discover something that needs attention, identify an opportunity, or recognize something that is bearing fruit, they can begin responding immediately. Each congregation will move according to its own context, needs, opportunities, and capacity.

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#### YEAR 1 - 2026 | SEE CLEARLY

*Where are we now, and what has God placed in our hands?*

**LISTEN → ASSESS → DISCOVER → DISCERN → RESPOND**

We begin with truth, curiosity, and spiritual discernment, making appropriate changes as we learn. Congregations and pastors develop a clearer understanding of:

#### **Congregational Reality**

Strengths • Challenges • Vitality • Sustainability • Ministry Patterns • Community Context

#### **Pastoral & Leadership Gifts**

StrengthsFinder • Spiritual Gifts • Leadership Capacity • Pastoral Gifts & Ministry-Site Alignment

#### **Congregational Assets**

People • Relationships • Community Connections • Property • Financial & Ministry Resources

#### **Spiritual Discernment**

Scripture • Prayer • Honest Conversation • *Choosing the Faithful Path*

**YEAR 1 Goal = Develop a shared understanding of where we are, what we have, what requires attention, and what God may be inviting us toward, while beginning to respond to what we discover.**

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## YEAR 2 - 2027 | ALIGN & STRENGTHEN

*How do we bring who we are and what we do into greater alignment with where God is calling us?*

**CLARIFY → ALIGN → DEVELOP → EXPERIMENT → STRENGTHEN**

Building on what has been learned, congregations continue making changes while strengthening the capacities needed for greater vitality.

### **Mission & Identity**

Mission • Vision • Values • Community Calling

### **Leadership**

Pastoral Leadership • Lay Leadership • Shared Responsibility • Leadership Development • Healthy Governance

### **Discipleship & Ministry Systems**

Making Disciples • Spiritual Formation • Nurture • Outreach • Witness • Community Relationships

**YEAR 2 Goal = Strengthen and align leadership, ministries, resources, and discipleship practices around the congregation's emerging sense of mission and context.**

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## YEAR 3 - 2028 | DEEPEN & MULTIPLY

*What is bearing fruit, and how do we deepen, sustain, and multiply it?*

**FOCUS → DEVELOP → IMPLEMENT → LEARN → MULTIPLY**

By Year 3, the emphasis increasingly shifts toward focusing energy around what congregations have learned, tested, and discerned.

### **Signature Ministry**

Develop a focused ministry expression that brings together the congregation's gifts, community context, and sense of God's calling.

### **Ministry Action Plan**

Translate discerned priorities into clear goals, responsibilities, timelines, resources, and measures of progress.

### **Leadership Pipeline**

Identify • Equip • Mentor • Deploy • Multiply new lay and ministry leaders.

### **Continual Learning**

Implement • Evaluate • Adapt • Strengthen what bears fruit • Release what does not.

**YEAR 3 Goal = Deepen what is bearing fruit, build the structures necessary to sustain it, multiply leadership, and increase the congregation's capacity for ongoing renewal.**

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## **DECEMBER 6 IS A MILESTONE, NOT A FINISH LINE.**

Our Culmination Worship and Joint Charge Conference marks an important milestone in the first year of this journey. We will celebrate what we have learned, name what is emerging, and continue the work. The Conference's commitment does not end when the fall calendar ends. We are not launching another program. We are cultivating churches with the capacity to discern, respond, learn, adapt, and flourish.



## **BLACK CHURCH REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE**

### **THE FAITHFUL PATH ... FOR NOW**

**Main Resources:** Visit [www.calpacumc.org/faithfulpathstart](http://www.calpacumc.org/faithfulpathstart) for links to all resources.

- Study: There will be weekly reading and homework, due Tuesday night before the Wednesday Zoom meeting. See below for the full schedule. The PDF reading is available at the above website.
- Assessment: Sections of the assessment will be completed each week.
- Charge Conference: Specific forms will be completed each week. All Charge Conference forms are available at [www.calpacumc.org/chargeconference](http://www.calpacumc.org/chargeconference)

#### **Friday, September 11 | 10:00 a.m.: Orientation to the Black Church Revitalization Initiative** **Scott UMC or via Zoom**

We will introduce the initiative, explain the process and expectations, answer questions, and prepare congregations for the first phase of the work.

#### **Sunday, September 20 | 3:00 p.m.: Kick-Off Worship Service** **Faith UMC of Los Angeles**

Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank, preaching

We will gather as Black churches from across the conference to worship, pray, and publicly begin this journey together.

#### **Wednesdays, September 30 – November 4 | 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.** **Six-Week Bible Study**

Pastors and participating congregational teams will engage together in a six-week season of biblical and theological reflection designed to ground our revitalization work in our identity, calling, and hope as the Church.

#### **Week #1: COMPLETE THESE ITEMS BY TUESDAY September 29, 2026**

- Study: Read the Introduction and Chapter 1: Our Unchanging Call in a Shifting Landscape
- Study: Complete worksheet #1 and submit.
- Assessment: Complete "Choosing The Faithful Path" assessment Questions A1-A4, D1-D7. Remember to have your Save & Resume URL emailed to your team leader.

#### **Week #1: WEDNESDAY September 30, 2026**

- Study: Attend study class on Wednesday, September 30, 2026

#### **Week #2: COMPLETE THESE ITEMS BY TUESDAY October 6, 2026**

- Study: Read Chapter 2: For the Love of God and Others

- Study: Complete worksheet #2 and submit.
- Assessment: Complete "Choosing The Faithful Path" assessment Questions B1-B5, B11-B19. Remember to have your Save & Resume URL emailed to your team leader.
- Charge Conference: Read & review CCF#0 Instructions
- Charge Conference: Complete and sign CCF#2 Annual Report of the Finance Committee

**Week #2: WEDNESDAY October 7, 2026**

- Study: Attend study class on Wednesday, October 7, 2026

**Week #3: COMPLETE THESE ITEMS BY TUESDAY October 13, 2026**

- Study: Read Chapter 3: For the Love of Our Neighbors
- Study: Complete worksheet #3 and submit.
- Assessment: Complete "Choosing The Faithful Path" assessment Questions B20-B29. Remember to have your Save & Resume URL emailed to your team leader.
- Charge Conference: Complete CCF#1 Annual Report of the Trustees A to ii
- Charge Conference: Complete and sign CCF#4 Annual Report on Church Staffing

**Week #3: WEDNESDAY October 14, 2026**

- Study: Attend study class on Wednesday, October 14, 2026

**Week #4: COMPLETE THESE ITEMS BY TUESDAY October 20, 2026**

- Study: Read Chapter 4: Generative Disciple-Making
- Study: Complete worksheet #4 and submit.
- Assessment: Complete "Choosing The Faithful Path" assessment Questions B30-B40. Remember to have your Save & Resume URL emailed to your team leader.
- Charge Conference: Complete CCF#1 Annual Report of the Trustees iii to v
- Charge Conference: Complete and sign CCF#6 Abuse & Sexual Harassment Prevention Verification

**Week #4: WEDNESDAY October 21, 2026**

- Study: Attend study class on Wednesday, October 21, 2026

**Week #5: COMPLETE THESE ITEMS BY TUESDAY October 27, 2026**

- Study: Read Chapter 5: Being Wise and Faithful Stewards
- Study: Complete worksheet #5 and submit.
- Assessment: Complete "Choosing The Faithful Path" assessment Questions B41-B43, C1-C9. Remember to have your Save & Resume URL emailed to your team leader.
- Charge Conference: Complete CCF#1 Annual Report of the Trustees vi to vii
- Charge Conference: Complete and sign CCF#5 SPRC Appointment Request & Clergy Evaluation

**Week #5: WEDNESDAY October 28, 2026**

- Study: Attend study class on Wednesday, October 28, 2026

**Week #6: COMPLETE THESE ITEMS BY TUESDAY November 3, 2026**

- Study: Read Chapter 6: Partnering in Collaboration, Not Competition
- Study: Complete worksheet #6 and submit.
- Study: Read Chapter 7: Determining the Path Forward... for Now
- Study: Complete worksheet #7 and submit.
- Assessment: Complete "Choosing the Faithful Path" assessment Questions C10-C23.
- Assessment: Meet with your church team to edit, revise, and submit "Choosing the Faithful Path" assessment.

**Week #6: WEDNESDAY November 4, 2026**

- Study: Attend study class on Wednesday, November 4, 2026

**Week #7: COMPLETE THESE ITEMS BY TUESDAY November 10, 2026**

- Optional Study as a church team: Read Finding our Burning Bush: Spiritual Gifts
- Optional Study as a church team: Complete your Spiritual Gift Inventory, and submit.
- Charge Conference: Complete and sign CCF#1 Annual Report of the Trustees viii to x
- Charge Conference: Complete and submit CCF#7 Annual Report of the Pastor

**Week #8: COMPLETE THESE ITEMS BY TUESDAY November 17, 2026**

- Charge Conference: Complete and send to district office CCF#3 Salary & Benefits Compensation Package worksheet as applicable
- Charge Conference: Complete and submit CCF#8 Clergy Appointment Request
- Charge Conference: Complete and send to district office CCF#18 Membership Audit worksheet
- Charge Conference: Complete and send to district office Housing Allowance Resolution text, and charge conference agenda draft

**Week #9: COMPLETE THESE ITEMS BY TUESDAY November 24, 2026**

- Happy Thanksgiving!
- Charge Conference: Collect charge conference forms #9 to #14 as applicable from congregation members.

**Week #10: BY MONDAY November 30, 2026**

- Charge Conference: Collect charge conference forms #9 to #14 as applicable from congregation members.
- Charge Conference: Prepare written or presentation materials as needed.

**Sunday, December 6 | 3:00 – 6:00 p.m.**

**Culmination Service and Joint Charge Conference**

**Holman UMC, Bishop Cedrick Bridgeforth, preaching**

We will conclude this first phase by gathering our churches together to worship, reflect on what we have learned, and take the next steps in our shared journey. Each church will also have their charge conference on this day as well.