

**PETITION**  
**to the**  
**2021 MOUNTAIN SKY CONFERENCE**

**TITLE: Annual Accessibility Building Audits**

**ACTION TO BE VOTED ON:**

1       The Mountain Sky Conference hereby incorporates an annual building audit/assessment for all church  
2       buildings and congregational spaces within our church/charge conference forms. The audit is to be an  
3       awareness tool to assist in assessing our spaces for their accessibility.

**RATIONALE (Not debatable):**

1       Currently, the Mountain Sky Conference does not include an annual audit of church buildings/gathering  
2       spaces for accessibility.

3

4       An annual building audit would encourage awareness for our gathering spaces.

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6       The United Methodist Church Denominational Disability Ministries states on their website: “Conducting an  
7       audit does not guarantee compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, building codes, or other  
8       legal requirements, but it can be used to alert you to potential problems and possible solutions.”

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10       Per Paragraph 2533.6 of *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church 2016*, “The board of  
11       trustees shall conduct or cause to be conducted an annual accessibility audit of their buildings, grounds, and  
12       facilities to discover and identify what physical, architectural, and communication barriers exist that  
13       impede the full participation of persons with disabilities and shall make plans and determine priorities of  
14       the elimination of all such barriers. It is highly encouraged that members of the congregation or from the  
15       community who have disabilities, who are family members of persons with disabilities, and who are  
16       builders or architects or rehabilitation professionals be involved in conducting the audit. The Accessibility  
17       Audit for churches shall be used in filling out the annual church and/or charge conference reports.”

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19       We are a Conference seeking to live our call through inclusive and intersectional ministry; we cannot talk  
20       about diversity while failing to include disability.

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22       While we cannot mandate such an audit without causing detriment to our historical buildings and smaller  
23       congregations that cannot adapt their spaces due to cost or historic preservation hinderances, we want to  
24       recommend adding this audit to increase our awareness for the spaces we frequent. Our world is crafted by  
25       and for able-bodied people, which can lead us to miss ways that we can make our worship and gathering  
26       spaces more welcoming and inclusive for those with mental and physical disabilities.

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28       This audit, as stated on the form, and on the Denominational site, is to help bring our attention to our  
29       neighbors that can get overlooked and left out. It is to help hold ourselves accountable. This is also an  
30       opportunity for us to get creative with inclusive leadership and representation.

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**EVALUATION (Not debatable):**

- 1 This action will be considered accomplished once the Mountain Sky Conference has added this annual
- 2 audit/assessment to the paperwork due from the local congregations as they gather for church/charge
- 3 conferences each year.

**ATTACHMENTS (Additional Information / Not Debatable)**

N/A

**PETITION DETAILS**

This petition is a

- Binding Action
- Non-Binding Resolution

Effective Date:

NOTE: Unless otherwise stated, petitions will be effective November 1, 2021.

Termination Date:

NOTE: Unless otherwise stated, petitions will terminate on June 30, 2025.

**PETITION ADVOCATE**

*This person will be the contact person for the Petition before and during the annual conference session and will be responsible for overseeing the presentation of the Petition in Hearing Groups and Plenary.*

Name: Amber (Oxley) Mitts  
 Address: 1221 First St.  
 City, State, Zip: Alamosa, Co. 81101  
 Email: reverend.arm@gmail.com  
 Phone: (727) 2629129  
 Phone @ Conference: same

**PETITION SUPPORTERS:**

*Names of additional persons who wish to be identified in support of the Petition.*

Anna Viehland **Clergy/Laity** Church/Location: Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran, Townsend  
 MT, Deaconess Hospital, Bozeman MT

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

Will there be any identifiable financial impact to the Conference?

- Yes
- No

If "Yes," please complete the information below.

To Be Completed by the Originator of the Petition

Cost: \$

Over what span of time (check one):

One Time

One Year

Multiple Years

To Be Completed by Conference Council on Finance and Administration (CFA)

Review by CFA on: 09/27/2021

Included in proposed 2021 budget?

Yes

No

Amount if included \$

May be considered for budgets in future years?  Yes  No

Projected Total Amount \$

Recommendation by CFA concerning funding

Reason for recommendation