

PETITION TO THE 2017 ROCKY MOUNTAIN ANNUAL CONFERENCE

TITLE: Study the Effects of Rolling Back Tithe Plus Mission Giving to 10%

ACTION TO BE VOTED ON:

- 1 The Rocky Mountain Conference Council on Finance and Administration shall facilitate a study of the effects of
2 rolling back the Tithe Plus Mission (13%) giving formula (apportionment), to a formula based on the traditional tithe,
3 or 10% of adjusted gross revenue, and shall provide a recommendation to the 2018 Annual Conference, consistent
4 with ¶615, *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church 2016*.
5

PETITION DETAILS

This petition is a

- Binding Action
 Non-Binding Resolution

Effective Date: July 1, 2017

Termination Date: June 30, 2018

Does this petition modify the Annual Conference Standing Rules and Operational Procedures (SROP)?

- Yes
 No

If "Yes," please complete the information below.

- This petition will modify Section 3.2.2
 This petition will create a new Section x.x.x

Conference Agency responsible for implementation and termination review:
Council on Finance and Administration

NOTE: All paragraph numberings within the SROP and the final designation of the Conference Agency responsible for implementation and termination review are subject to review by the Rules Committee.

ORIGINATOR OF THE PETITION (individual, church, or organization):

Name Longs Peak United Methodist Church
Address 1421 Elmhurst Drive
City, State, Zip Longmont, CO 80503
Phone 303-776-0399

PERSON TO PRESENT PETITION AT ANNUAL CONFERENCE:

Name Roger Wisehart
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Phone @ Conference 303-931-4211

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Will there be any identifiable financial impact to the Conference?

Yes
 No

If "Yes," please fill in the information below.

To Be Completed by the Originator of the Petition

Cost:

Period

One Time
 One Year
 Multiple Years

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

Review by CFA 05/12/2017

Included in proposed 2018 budget

Yes
 No

Amount if included: N/A

May be considered for budgets in future years:

Yes
 No

Projected Amount: N/A

Recommendation by CFA concerning funding:

N/A

Reason for recommendation:

No Rocky Mountain Conference 2018 operating budget impact.

RATIONALE (Not debatable):

- 1 The Annual Conference voted in 2007 to raise the local church contribution for wider missions to a level of tithe + 1%
- 2 (total of 11% of church revenue). This apportionment level was in place for calendar year 2008, during which time,
- 3 the Annual Conference approved an increase to tithe + 3%, which took effect in calendar year 2009. The "Tithe Plus
- 4 Mission" rate of 13% has remained in effect since then. Proportionally, this increase amounts to a 30% increase in
- 5 apportionments that has been assessed at the local church level for the past 8 years.
- 6 The year 2008 was tumultuous in many respects from a financial standpoint, and the increase in apportionments from
- 7 11% to 13% was proposed as a sacrifice that was needed to get the Conference through a rough economic period. It
- 8 was presented and approved as a temporary measure that would be rescinded once the storm had been weathered. So,
- 9 although local churches and our members were hit just as hard as the Conference, we agreed to cut our own budgets to
- 10 help our umbrella organization get through the immediate crisis. This 30% increase in apportionments meant a

11 dollar-for-dollar decrease in support that churches could offer to local outreach and mission programs, and this
12 decrease can now be multiplied over a duration of eight years, and counting.

13 In the 8 years since 2008, no proposals have been made to roll back the Tithes Plus Mission apportionment rate of 13%
14 to the traditional tithe. These eight years have seen declining attendance and membership in churches nationwide, and
15 some United Methodist congregations in our conference have manifested this trend to varying degrees. The 13%
16 apportionment has thus become increasingly burdensome every year to local churches, and it represents an ongoing
17 detriment to our ability to support local outreach and ministries.

18 A rollback of the temporary 30% increase in apportionments would immediately improve funding positions for local
19 missions, programming options, and physical-plant maintenance/improvements, and would ameliorate sacrifices by
20 staff, as well as other facets of local church life that have been postponed or adjusted downward for the duration of the
21 13% apportionment rate. Paragraph 615 of the *2016 Book of Discipline* states, “*When a change to the apportionment*
22 *formula or method is proposed, the council should provide for a study of the proposed change’s effects. After its study,*
23 *which may include resources supplied by the General Council on Finance and Administration, the council shall*
24 *recommend such formula or method to the annual conference for its action...*” In this paragraph, “council” refers to
25 the Conference Council on Finance and Administration (CF&A).

26 In considering a proposal to roll back the Connectional Giving amount to 10%, the study proposed in this petition will
27 address the aforementioned suggestion from the *Discipline* to begin with an assessment of the proposal’s financial
28 implications.

29 Coming from a position of having complied faithfully with the higher apportionment rate for its duration, the
30 petitioner posits that the time has come to consider a return to the traditional tithe for Connectional Giving. Such a
31 change obviously would have an impact on the finances of the Conference, but the umbrella organization cannot stand
32 indefinitely on a foundation weakened by financial hardship. Thus, we consider the proposed study warranted, if not
33 overdue.

34

ATTACHMENTS (Additional Information / Not Debatable)

None