

PETITION TO THE 2014 ROCKY MOUNTAIN ANNUAL CONFERENCE

TITLE: Discontinuance of Warren UMC, Denver

ACTION TO BE VOTED ON:

1
2 Whereas Warren United Methodist Church located at 1630 E. 14th Ave., Denver, CO 80218-2503 has enjoyed many
3 years of fruitful ministry in its neighborhood community; and
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5 Whereas the congregation has declined over several decades in size, programmatic ministry, financial vitality and
6 fruitfulness due to numerous causes including decades-long neighborhood transition; and
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8 Whereas the congregation, along with the district superintendent and the district committee on church location and
9 building have recommended discontinuance of Warren UMC, and
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11 Whereas the congregation of Warren UMC has expressed their preference that the building be retained by the Rocky
12 Mountain Conference to be used a) to house present and future groups that are aligned in mission to the Capitol Hill
13 area of Denver with the Rocky Mountain Conference, and b) to possibly house a future new United Methodist Church
14 start, and
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16 Whereas the district superintendent, the district committee on church location and building, the Rocky Mountain
17 Conference Board of Trustees, the presiding bishop and a majority of the district superintendents have consented to
18 discontinuance and are in agreement with said use,
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20 Whereas the church's last day of worship and use of the property was June 8, 2014,
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22 Whereas the district superintendent, the district committee on church location and building, the presiding bishop and a
23 majority of the district superintendents recognized that and agreed that the property of the church was to be treated as
24 abandoned under ¶ 2549.3 of the 2012 *Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church* as of June 8, 2014,
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26 Whereas, based on this abandonment, the Conference Board of Trustees assumed control of the church's property and
27 assets as of June 8, 2014, and
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29 Whereas the provisions of the *Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church* have been fulfilled,
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31 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rocky Mountain Conference express its gracious appreciation of the
32 many years of faithful ministry of Warren United Methodist Church, and
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34 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Warren United Methodist Church be discontinued effective July 1, 2014 and that
35 all real and personal, tangible and intangible property be transferred to Rocky Mountain Conference Board of Trustees
36 to be managed according to the provisions of the 2012 *Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church*, and the
37 conference policy on use and disposition of discontinued or abandoned local church property (Standing Rules and
38 Operational Procedures 6.3).
39

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2014.

TERMINATION DATE: None

ORIGINATOR OF THE PETITION (individual, church or organization)

Name: Rev. Steven K. Goodier, District Superintendent of the Metropolitan District
6110 Greenwood Plaza Blvd., Greenwood Village, CO 80111

PERSON TO PRESENT PETITION TO CONFERENCE:

Name: Rev. Steven K. Goodier
Address: 6110 Greenwood Plaza Blvd., Greenwood Village, CO 80111
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FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Will there be any financial impact to the Conference? Yes
If YES, fill in appropriate information below.

(To be completed by Originator of Petition)

Cost: \$24,000 - \$40,000 Time Period: year (Not to exceed one year.)
Funds provided by Annual Conference/Agency: \$24,000 - \$40,000
Funds provided by external agency: _____

(To be completed by Conference Council on Finance and Administration)

Reviewed by Council on Finance and Administration: May 8, 2014
Included in the Proposed 2015 Budget (Yes/No): No In the amount of: n/a

Recommendation by Council concerning funding: CF&A recommends that the first year and subsequent years be funded from accounts under the jurisdiction of the Legacy Committee or other accounts managed by the Conference Board of Trustees. It is the position of CF&A that the Conference operational budget will not be responsible for funding and oversight of a discontinued church property and its ministries without appropriate review within the annual budgeting process. It would establish a problematic precedent for a petition concerning the discontinuance of a church to insert demands on the Conference annual budget, especially since there are several accounts within the Rocky Mountain Conference already designated or restricted for property usage. Note that the \$24,000 - \$40,000 estimated costs are not included in the 2015 fiscal year proposed budget, and neither are funds available within the 2014 budget to support any of these costs.

Reason(s): Retaining ownership of this property, using it as a center for urban ministry and identifying a vision for the property and then implementing that vision is a longer-term strategic activity that should not be funded from the annual Conference operating budget.

RATIONALE: (may attach additional pages, numbered)

The Warren UMC building is strategically located for ministry to and with the Capitol Hill neighborhood. The church has a long history of vital ministry to the area, including the founding of Warren Village located next door to the church. It seems that giving up the property is shortsighted as the acquisition of new property in the area is costly and we might never get back into that area once we leave. If we can hang onto the building for a few years, we can continue to serve the community by housing groups compatible with Warren's mission to serve. And we might want to consider re-opening the building for a brand new UM worshiping congregation in the near future. Oftentimes, a new church start that looks and feels very different from the old church can take root in such a neighborhood and grow quickly. The advantage of already owning property is huge in such a case.

The problems will be around how to maintain and oversee ministries housed in the building where a congregation is not present. They may be addressed by hiring a person to oversee such ministries. Some of that person's salary may come from rental fees, but the RMC will undoubtedly have to bear much of the cost. Such a person might be hired for \$6,000-\$12,000 annually, depending upon their responsibilities. Upkeep and utilities may cost between \$18,000 and \$28,000 annually depending upon how well used the building is and how much rent money can defray costs. So the financial outlay to the RMC looks to be from \$24,000 to \$40,000 annually.

The alternative, of course, is to sell the building. But that seems short-sighted as this property is one that the RMC may want to retain for future use.