



College of Bishops

North Central Jurisdiction

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Statement for release

July 7, 2020

10:00 AM EDT

NCJ ANNOUNCES INTERIM LEADERSHIP FOR 2021

Today the North Central Jurisdiction College of Bishops announces the plan proposed to and approved by the Council of Bishops for episcopal leadership for 2021 in light of the vocational retirements of Bishops Sally Dyck and Bruce Ough (¶408.2b), and the inability to gather and engage in episcopal elections during the current COVID-19 pandemic. The retirements of Bishops Dyck and Ough have been approved by the NCJ Committee on the Episcopacy and become effective January 1, 2021.

To serve the Northern Illinois Conference, Bishop John Hopkins, retired, will be appointed from January 1, 2021, until another bishop is assigned, but no later than December 31, 2021 (¶409.3).

To serve the Dakotas/Minnesota Area, Bishop Laurie Haller, Iowa, and Bishop David Bard, Michigan, will be assigned as a team. Bishop Haller will assume primary supervisory responsibility for the Dakotas Conference, and Bishop Bard will assume primary supervisory responsibility for the Minnesota Conference. This assignment begins January 1, 2021, and continues until another bishop is assigned, but no later than December 31, 2021.

In devising this plan to fill episcopal vacancies, and in accordance with ¶407 of The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, the NCJ College of Bishops consulted with our retired colleagues, and with retired colleagues outside our jurisdiction. We have consulted with our jurisdictional committee on the episcopacy, the area committees on the episcopacy for the two areas needing bishops for 2021, as well as cabinet leadership in those conferences. We offer a plan we think is deeply responsive to the missional needs of these areas, of our jurisdiction, and of the missional and fiduciary needs of The United Methodist Church in this unprecedented time.

The NCJ College of Bishops asks for your prayers as we implement this rather unique plan for Episcopal oversight.