

## COB Approves Episcopal Supervision Recommendations for SCJ

**June 3, 2021** – The Council of Bishops (COB) of The United Methodist Church has approved episcopal supervision recommendations for the South Central Jurisdiction (SCJ), due to the retirement of two bishops. The recommendations were made by the SCJ College of Bishops following consultation with the Jurisdictional and respective Annual Conference Committees on Episcopacy.

This follows decisions by Bishop W. Earl Bledsoe (Northwest Texas-New Mexico) and Bishop J. Michael Lowry (Central Texas) to request retirement effective January 1, 2022, under paragraph 408.2b of The Book of Discipline.

Under Paragraph ¶407 of the *Book of Discipline*, the Council of Bishops has authority to fill a vacancy for presidential/episcopal supervision of an episcopal area due to death, retirement (¶ 408.1, .2, .3), resignation (¶ 408.4), judicial procedure (¶ 2712), leave of absence (¶ 410.1), or medical leave (¶ 410.4).

After prayer and discernment, the bishops have approved the following recommendations for episcopal supervision:

- Northwest Texas Conference: Bishop James G. Nunn (Oklahoma Conference/Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference)
- New Mexico Conference: Bishop Robert C. Schnase (Rio Texas Conference)
- Central Texas Conference: Bishop Ruben Saenz Jr. (Great Plains Conference)

The new roles are effective January 1, 2022 and will continue until new bishops are elected in the SCJ. The SCJ Committee on Episcopacy will make the assignment of bishops once the new bishops are elected at the next regular session of Jurisdictional Conference.

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