

*Discipline Paragraph: ¶2548.7*  
*Financial Implications: None*  
*General Board of Global Ministries*

1 **Suggested Title: Petition Regarding Urban Centers**

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3 *Whereas, ¶2548.7 of the 2004 Book of Discipline states, “When properties from the*  
4 *discontinuation of a congregation or abandonment are sold in urban centers with more than*  
5 *50,000 population, the proceeds of sale must be used for new and/or existing ministries within*  
6 *that urban center,” and*

7

8 *Whereas, in Judicial Council Decision 1067, the Council ruled, “Paragraph 2548.7 of the 2004*  
9 *Book of Discipline vests each annual conference with the authority to determine what constitutes*  
10 *an urban center given the context of ministry in each annual conference,” and this decision*  
11 *weakens the intent of ¶2548.7, again leaving open the potential for Annual Conferences to*  
12 *sacrifice their inner city communities, via ending ministries in the inner city and liquidating their*  
13 *resources, in order to redirect those resources to other areas outside the inner city, and*

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15 *Whereas, in ¶163E of the Social Principles, poverty is identified as a special area of social need,*  
16 *and this concern is supported by Methodism’s founder, John Wesley, who expressed great*  
17 *concern for and emphasis on ministry with the poor, as evidenced particularly in his teachings*  
18 *related to social holiness, and*

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20 *Whereas, inner cities are often areas of concentrated poverty in the United States, and these are*  
21 *areas that are in special need of our attention and efforts in ministry, and*

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23 *Whereas, inner cities are also often areas where non-Caucasian racial and ethnic persons are*  
24 *concentrated, and*

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26 *Whereas*, it is a form of racism (“...both personal and institutional,” The Social Principles,  
27 ¶162A), even if not intended as such, to re-direct ministries and resources away from racially and  
28 ethnically diverse inner cities towards predominantly white suburbs, and such actions, however  
29 inadvertent they may be, contribute to systems of institutional racism.

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31 *Therefore, be it resolved*, that ¶2548.7 be amended as follows:

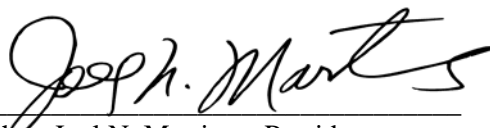
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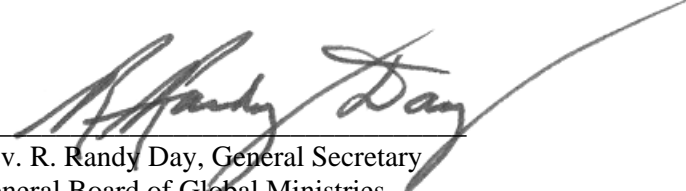
33 When properties from the discontinuation of a congregation or abandonment are sold in urban  
34 centers with more than 50,000 population, the proceeds of sale must be used for new and/or  
35 existing ministries within ~~that urban center~~. **urban transitional communities, as described in**  
36 **¶212, and consistent with the Annual Conference’s urban ministry strategic plan.**

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