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SCJ Committee on Episcopacy Recommends
Episcopal Election and Coverage Plan

June 29, 2022 – The South Central Jurisdiction Committee on Episcopacy has decided, in consultation with the College of Bishops, to recommend that the Jurisdictional Conference elect three new bishops in November 2022.

With three elections, the SCJ would have a total of nine bishops available to be assigned to nine of the 10 current episcopal areas. The tenth episcopal area will be left open with episcopal coverage to be determined by the Council of Bishops upon recommendation from the SCJ College of Bishops immediately following the adjournment of Jurisdictional Conference. That area is anticipated to be the Northwest Texas/New Mexico area, which is currently covered by active SCJ bishops. The recommendation to provide coverage rather than assignment for the tenth episcopal area was due to missional reasons related to continuity of leadership.

Four SCJ bishops are retired or have requested retirement. Bishop W. Earl Bledsoe (Northwest Texas-New Mexico) and Bishop J. Michael Lowry (Central Texas) retired earlier this year. Bishop Michael McKee (North Texas) and Bishop Scott J. Jones (Texas) will retire effective January 1, 2023.

Bishops are elders in full connection set apart for a ministry of servant leadership, general oversight and supervision. The SCJ has a process for the election of bishops. Questions related to the process can be directed to SCJ Executive Director Eddie Ervin or eerwin@scjumc.org.

Following the election of new bishops, the SCJ Committee on Episcopacy will recommend, and the Jurisdictional Conference will assign, all nine active bishops to episcopal areas, with terms beginning January 1, 2023. Coverage for the tenth area will be assigned by the SCJ College of Bishops immediately following the adjournment of Jurisdictional Conference. The South Central Jurisdictional Conference is scheduled for November 2-4 in Houston, Texas.

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