



Bay District

California-Nevada Annual Conference
of the United Methodist Church

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Dear Sisters of Brothers of Epworth United Methodist Church,

Greetings in the name of our Risen lord, Christ Jesus. It has been my joy to work more closely together with Pastor Kristin and the leaders of Epworth as we have engaged in our ***Mission: It's Possible*** Bay District Strategy for the past four months. I view Epworth as our anchor church in the Berkeley mission field with great capacity to lead us in expanding our witness in the city and surrounding region. With this in mind, I write to share with you how Bishop Carcaño and I, with the full support of our Conference Extended Cabinet, are asking Epworth to lead in the mission strategy for the circuit.

As many of you already know, Trinity UMC has been engaged in discerning the best missional potential of its property. It is, indeed, a very strategic location to engage young people attending UC Berkeley as well as those who are employed at this important institution of higher learning. This discernment has led to the realization that after the Trinity property is redeveloped, the church that is planted there will truly be a new church start. We hope that with God's help we can intentionally infuse this new church start with the kind of DNA that will enable it to reach the people in its community. So, as we live into this vision of repurposed property and a new church start, we see the real need to allow the Trinity property to lie fallow for a season. This is very much like farmers allowing fields to lie fallow in some seasons, so that they can produce an even more abundant crop in the next season.

In this fallow season, Trinity will not be having worship services. Instead, we are asking that the twenty to thirty members who are active at Trinity be shepherded over to Epworth UMC for worship, community, and spiritual/pastoral care. Trinity UMC is not closing, rather Bishop Carcaño will be appointing your pastor, Rev. Kristin Stoneking to provide pastoral supervision for both congregations. This configuration is called a two-point charge. A two-point charge consists of two churches that are being cared for by the same pastoral supervision and oversight. This two-point charge will be governed by a charge conference that will include leadership from both churches. The governing committees (SPRC, Church Council, Trustees, Finance) will provide leadership for the charge. I will work with Rev. Stoneking, Rev. Cordes, and both nominations committees to work out this configuration. This will be followed by a charge conference.

As part of this two-point charge, we are asking Pastor Kristin to be a part of a connectional development team that will work together on developing the Trinity UMC property. The members of the Trinity Development Team will consist of myself, Rev. Craig Brown-Executive Director for Congregational Development, Rev. Kristin Stoneking, a member from the Bay District Committee on Church Building and Location, two members from our Conference Board of Pensions, one member from Epworth UMC and Berkeley Methodist United (fellow circuit churches,) along with two to three members of the current Trinity UMC Building Team. Considering this increased

workload, and to provide the amount of pastoral coverage that will be needed for a successful two-point charge, Bishop Carcaño intends to appoint an Associate Pastor to work in partnership with Rev. Stoneking as Senior Pastor. I will be working with your Staff Parrish Relations committee in the coming weeks and an announcement of the new associate pastor will be forthcoming.

It is very important to Bishop Carcaño and me that Epworth be strengthened as it is asked to participate in this connectional venture. I attended worship at Epworth earlier this month with Bay District's Church growth consultant, Jim Griffith. Jim was very impressed by the warm welcome and spirited worship. He did observe, that Epworth was at the place in its attendance of being 'uncomfortably full.' This means that the sanctuary is already 75-80% full. It is at this point that folks perceive an invisible barrier and new visitors don't return. His suggestion, which I have shared with your pastor and leaders, is to begin a new worship service. With the addition of an associate pastor, it is our great hope that a new worship service and other new ministries could be initiated at Epworth.

On April 18, 2019, I met with Pastor Kristin and Epworth leaders and had a very candid, thoughtful, and hopeful conversation. Their support of the two-point charge is something for which we are deeply grateful. In the coming weeks and months, I am committed to working very closely with your pastor, SPRC chair, lay leaders, and leaders of Trinity UMC to ensure a good transition.

May the peace and power of the Risen Christ continue to be with us all.

In Christ's service,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Staci Current".

Rev. Staci Current
District Superintendent
c: Bishop Minerva G. Carcaño