



**The Arkansas Tithe Initiative: A New Way to Share Ministry
A Resolution for a Change in Calculating Shared Ministry Apportionments**

Sponsored by the 2015 Arkansas Conference Council on Finance and Administration

Whereas, Arkansas United Methodists are the Body of Christ connected by our calling, and through this connection we can better accomplish our mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ who are equipped to transform lives, communities, and the world;

Whereas, funding for General, Jurisdictional and Conference ministries are part of our historical connection and required by *The Book of Discipline*;

Whereas, the current apportionment formula is a complex calculation that many find difficult to understand, using selected expense items found on Table II of the year-end statistical reports which do not provide a significant financial or theological rationale for inclusion in the calculation, and using two-year-old statistics that do not reflect the current vitality of a congregation;

Whereas, an apportionment based on a tithe of revenue would not only provide a theological foundation for the apportionment but would also be easier to understand and explain than the current expense-based formula;

Whereas, a tithe of such revenue would directly tie each local church apportionment to its individual financial situation and directly tie the conference budget to the financial health of the local churches, thus enhancing the sustainability of future conference and local church budgets; and

Whereas, any change in the method of apportioning may have a significant impact on some local church budgets, thus necessitating a phase-in period to allow churches time to prepare for such changes;

Therefore, be it resolved that the Arkansas Conference adopt an apportionment formula for local churches that will:

- Be a tithe (10%) of adjusted gross income. (gross income minus capital campaigns, memorials, endowments, sale of church owned real estate, tuition-based services, direct costs of fund-raising, and pass-through funds)
- More clearly define revenue-reporting guidelines.
- Be based on prior month reporting and not a two-year lag.

Therefore, be it further resolved that in order to phase-in to a revenue-based apportionment, the 2016 apportionments for individual churches will be calculated as an average of the 2015 expense-based formula and a tithe of revenue as reported on lines 62 & 64 of the 2014 Table III year-end statistical report; and

Therefore, be it further resolved that in order to prepare for full implementation in 2017, monthly reporting of revenue will begin in the fall of 2015.