

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Why Should Your Annual Conference Make a Financial and Survivor Healing Commitment?

1. When people are hurt, United Methodists help. We are called to help with the healing of Scouts who participated in United Methodist-affiliated Scout programs and who experienced harm. Following through with our commitment is a testimony to our values, ideals and ethical responsibility to do what is right in the name of Christ.
2. United Methodists are connectional. We have seen over and over again the value of our connectional system when we work together to address challenges and crises. We work collectively to help one another, not only for our individual needs but for the good of the whole church and particularly for those who are in crisis or who have been harmed while participating in any of our ministries. Following through with our commitments strengthens the connection and our witness.
3. We have chosen to follow our values in the bankruptcy. Within the church and publicly, there is an appreciation for the leadership and work of United Methodists. Responding fully and faithfully to each of our commitments, including giving our full contribution of \$30 million, is essential. If we fail to raise our portion of the settlement, the public will decide how faithfully we responded.

If we do not contribute the full amount, a substantial number of our congregations and U.S. annual conferences will be forced to litigate the claims in court. This will create significant challenges not only for those congregations and conferences, but for all of us as we make a public witness. Connectionally, United Methodists help when people are hurting.

### Financial Questions

*What will happen if we fail to reach the \$30 million contribution?*

What we have contributed will be returned and no United Methodist entities will receive a release for the abuse claims arising out of scouting activities. Congregations in every U.S. annual conference are implicated in such claims, which threatens all such congregations, conferences, and other UM entities with lawsuits that your congregations and conference would have to defend in court. Given the magnitude of the defense costs and damage awards typically imposed in cases of this nature, not meeting our \$30 million commitment is not an option.

*What happens if an annual conference does not contribute its share?*

Other United Methodist Conferences may have to pay that annual conference's contribution.

*Why should our conference contribute if we are protected by the statute of limitations?*

While it is true that there are states have not opened the statute of limitations for child sexual abuse claims, more and more are opening up to allow child sexual abuse claims to be tried in the courts. HOWEVER, as the Church, ours is not only a legal obligation but a moral and ethical obligation; AND the BSA, insurers and other chartering organizations are also contributing toward all BSA sexual abuse claims regardless of the statute of limitations.

*Suppose United Methodists oversubscribe and raise more than our stated contribution?*

Ten percent was added to the overall request to carry out the healing initiatives, assist in the release of all charter organizations, provide legal representation, and to guarantee we raise the full \$30 million. If excess funds are raised, contributions will be returned proportionately to annual conferences for any funds raised over the amount needed.

*How long does a conference have to raise and give their contribution?*

Two or fewer years. If needed, a conference may take up to a third year. The sooner the funds are raised and paid, the sooner survivors who were part of United Methodist troops receive compensation and the sooner we receive releases for all United Methodist entities and other charter organizations.

### **Allocation Questions**

*How was our conference's contribution identified?*

Your conference's contribution is proportionate to the number of claims that implicate congregations in your annual conference. This is outlined in your Commitment Form.

*When our conference researched its claims, we found some claims were not associated with our conference. Was this taken into account?*

Yes, that is correct, and they were deducted along with a number of other claims that were researched through staff with the General Commission on United Methodist Men. You will see these deductions in the form.

*Who approved the contribution allocations?*

The BSA Leadership Team is made up of bishops, treasurers, chancellors and specialists in certain disciplines (e.g., insurance). The allocations sub-team reviewed a number of methods for allocating amounts to conferences. The team recommended that the total claims be reduced by the number of claims on or after January 1, 1976 (those claims are to be covered solely by the BSA, BSA Councils and insurers), and then further reduced by to eliminate claims that could not fairly be attributed to your conference. After applying those deductions, the remaining number was divided by the total of all claims implicating UMC congregations. The resulting percentage, when applied to the total United Methodist contribution, reflects your conference's allocated share of the \$30 million the UMC has committed to contribute to the Survivor Trust Fund and other associated costs such as legal fees.

*Why are only claims before January 1, 1976, considered?*

Starting in the mid-1970s, the BSA committed to cover all liabilities for chartering organizations related to Scouting activities. Insurance carriers, the BSA and BSA Councils are paying for all claims on or after January 1, 1976.

### **Fundraising**

*How will funds be raised?*

Each annual conference is asked to contribute as part of the settlement to the Survivor Trust Fund that will be used to compensate survivors. Conferences will determine how to raise the funds. The United Methodist BSA Leadership Team's fundraising sub-committee has developed ideas and resources for your annual conference that will be available by mid-January for annual conferences to use. These will include strategies and materials.