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Suggested Title: Strengthening the Black Church for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Initiative for 2005-2008

Resolution: New

Financial Implications: Yes

Agency Name: General Council on Ministries

Add a new resolution to the *Book of Resolutions*

**WHEREAS, Strengthening the Black Church for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (SBC21) Initiative was approved by actions of the 1996 and 2000 General Conferences as a major program initiative; and**

**WHEREAS, the goal of SBC21 is to offer the United Methodist Church the gift of a transformational learning model that enables vibrant, growing congregations (Congregation Resource Centers) to share their experiences and learnings with other churches (Partner Congregations) seeking growth, vitality and transformation; and**

**WHEREAS, these church-to-church encounters are very motivational and effective in facilitating new directions and commitments for mission and ministry; and**

**WHEREAS, the SBC21 model is making significant contributions toward diminishing the differences and building a deeper understanding between large and small, urban and rural congregations; and**

**WHEREAS, evaluations, written reports, and consultant visits to Partner Congregations reflect an overall assessment of SBC2s as a creative and innovative program; and**

**WHEREAS, while significant accomplishments have been achieved in the 2001-2004 quadrennium of SBC21, the reality of declining and struggling black congregations still remains. The task of restoring, reconstructing, redeeming, reconciling, revitalizing and renewing churches for mission and ministry is unfinished; and**

**WHEREAS, new program developments for 2005-2008 will include development of curriculum for training in Partner Congregations appropriate to the needs and contexts of the communities in which they minister; a study for the solution to the exodus of youth/young adults from African-American churches; the identification and recruitment of African American congregations which are the only, or one of a very few, black churches in an annual conference; the development of program and relationships with congregations of African descent in central conferences and other nations of the global community.**

***Therefore, be it revolved,* that the General Council on Ministries endorses, supports, affirms and recommends continuation of the Strengthening the Black Church for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century for the 2005-2008 quadrennium and urges that the \$2.2 million quadrennial budget request be given funding priority within the 2005-2008 World Service budget.**

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Suggested Title: Continuation for Strengthening the Black Church for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Initiative  
for 2005-2008

Resolution: New

Financial Implications: Yes

Agency Name: General Council on Ministries

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*Rationale: The General Council on Ministries helps with administrative support for the Strengthening the Black Church for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Initiative. The accomplishments of the Initiative speak well of the programs and the commitment to work churches that want to be relevant and effective in ministry. The GCOM endorses the work of this initiative and recommends continuation of the initiative for the 2005-2008 quadrennium.*