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Agency: GCOM

Title: Report of the GCOM Ethnic Local Church Concerns Committee

Financial Implications: None

Report No. 18

Petition Number:

REPORT OF THE GCOM ETHNIC LOCAL CHURCH CONCERNS COMMITTEE

Mandate

The 2000 General Conference approved Calendar Item No. 1430 on the consent calendar that recommended that the General Council on Ministeries (GCOM) continue the Ethnic Local Church Concerns Committee for 2001-2004. Further, GCOM is given the responsibility “to coordinate the denomination’s efforts to incorporate the contributions and concerns of the ethnic local church into all programs, budgets, agenda and resources.” (¶ 906.5)

History and Background

From 1976 to 1988 ethnic minority local churches were lifted up as a missional priority because they offered The United Methodist Church its greatest growth potential and a priority in evangelism. These churches, and the communities in which they are located, consistently experience the most serious domestic and international challenge; they offer an unparalleled avenue for justice and peace ministries. Furthermore, ethnic minority local churches offer an opportunity for mutuality in mission with the church universal, which will soon become predominantly colorful, as well as with the human family, which is already overwhelmingly Third World.

At the 1988 General Conference, the Missional Priority Coordinating Committee reported that through the missional priority the entire church had discovered amazing gifts, insights, perspectives and commitments within the household of faith. While many fruits had come with the missional priority, the fullness of the commitments was not yet realized. Ethnic minority local churches still had a variety of needs for program, facilities, and leadership development. Annual conferences were asked to develop comprehensive plans to provide the basis for their ongoing development and strengthening of the ethnic minority local church for witness and mission. Ethnic Local Church Concerns Committees were to be established in each annual conference. GCOM created a unit as part of the Council’s internal structure to deal with Ethnic Minority Local Church concerns with the awareness that the world was increasingly becoming multi-cultural and multi-racial. Furthermore, the resurgence of racist activity around the world calls on the church to be on the forefront, not only to speak out against racism, but also to serve as a model for inclusiveness.

Racial/Ethnic Population Growth

The Racial and Ethnic populations in the United States have continued to grow dramatically. From 1990 to 2000, the total United States population grew by 32.6 million persons, from 250 million to nearly 282 million, an increase of 13%. Seventy-three percent of this growth (23.7 million) was by racial/ethnic group populations. Furthermore, population projections for 2000 to 2015 estimate that the racial and ethnic composition of the United States will see more dramatic change. Although we cannot be absolutely certain about the future, population trends and demographic data can assist the church to better prepare for future ministry.

The General Council on Ministries (GCOM) utilizes demographic information gathered by Woods and Poole Economics, Inc., a respected demographic research firm in Washington, DC. It uses U.S. Census data and applies sophisticated trend analysis to project population changes. The GCOM reviewed 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census population data along with Woods and Poole population projections for the year 2015.

Between 2000 and 2015, the United States population is projected to grow by 44.8 million persons— or a 15.9% increase. The racial and ethnic population in the United States is forecasted to increase by 33.6 million persons, while the European American population will increase by 11.1 million. The percentage growth of racial/ethnic populations will be three times greater than the European American population. This means that **for every four additional persons in the United States, three will be people of color.**

In 1990 the racial/ethnic population composed 24.3% of the total population and by 2000 it was 30%. By 2015 racial/ethnic persons will constitute 36% of the population. This means that persons of color will be one of every three persons. The growth rates of Asian Pacific American, Hispanic American, and Native American populations will be three to eleven times the European American growth rate.

Ethnic/Racial Group	1990 Population (U.S. Census)	2000 Population (U.S. Census)	2015 Projected Population	Percent Growth 2000 – 2015
European American	188,712,065	197,557,101	208,702,000	5.6%
African American	29,422,680	35,215,181	41,708,000	12.1%
Asian/Pacific American	7,096,290	11,442,999	18,583,000	62.4%
Hispanic American	22,587,214	35,654,351	55,187,000	54.8%
Native American	1,804,565	2,354,716	2,817,000	19.6%
TOTALS	249,622,814	282,224,348	326,997,000	15.9%

Source: Woods and Poole Economics, Inc.

There are regional variations in this growth pattern. Some of the expected population changes in each of the five United Methodist jurisdictions are described on the following pages:

North Central Jurisdiction

- From 1990-2000, the population grew from 50.6 million to 54.5 million persons (7.7% growth rate); the 2015 the population forecasted to be 59.8 million persons (9.7% growth rate).
- The African American population grew 17% from 4.9 million in 1990 to 5.8 million persons in 2000. It is projected to increase another 15% for a 2015 population of 6.7 million.
- From 2000-2015, the Asian/Pacific American population is expected to grow by 72% from 1.2 million to nearly 2 million persons.
- From 2000-2015, the Hispanic American population will increase by 54% from 2.7 million to 4.2 million persons.
- From 1990-2000, the Native American population increased by 28% from 271,000 to 348,000. It is expected to grow to 411,000 by 2015.
- Between 2000-2015, the European Americans will comprise 38% of the total population growth.

Northeastern Jurisdiction

- From 1990-2000, the population grew from 58.8 million to 62.1 million persons (5.7% growth rate); the 2015 population forecast is 67 million persons (7.8% growth rate).
- The European American population in this region decreased between 1990-2000 (from 46.2 million to 45.6 million) and will decrease further during the next 15 years (to 45 million).
- The African American population is expected to continue to increase. From 1990-2000 its population increased by 1.1 million persons (from 7 million to 8.1 million). By 2015 its population is expected to be 9.2 million.
- Between 2000 and 2015 the Asian/Pacific American population is expected to grow by 75% from 2.6 million to 4.5 million persons.
- The Native American population grew by 37% between 1990 and 2000 (from 125,000 to 171,000 persons). Its 2015 population is estimated to be 179,000 persons.
- The Hispanic American population continues to be the largest growth group. In 1990 it had just under 4 million persons; in 2000 its population was 5.6 million, and by 2015 is projected to be 8.2 million persons, a 46% increase). It is projected to produce 53% of the region's growth.
- The total racial/ethnic population in the region has grown from 21% in 1990 to 27% in 2000 and is projected to become 33% by 2015.

South Central Jurisdiction

- From 1990-2000, the population grew from 37.5 million to 43.4 million persons (16% growth rate); the 2015 population forecast is 51.6 million persons (18.8% growth rate).
- European Americans will continue to be a majority of the population, however their proportion of the total population decreases (71% in 1990, 65% in 2000, and 58% in 2015).
- From 2000-2015, the African American population is forecast to increase 18% from 5.5 million to 6.1 million persons.
- From 2000-2015, the Asian/Pacific American population is expected to grow by 81% from 913,000 to nearly 1.65 million persons.
- The Hispanic American population increased by 2.9 million persons from 1990-2000 and is projected to become 12.5 million (a 51% increase) by 2015.
- The Native American population will increase by 26% from 667,000 in 2000 to 838,000 persons in 2015.
- European Americans will comprise 25% of the total growth between 2000-2015.

Southeastern Jurisdiction

- From 1990-2000, the total population grew from 51.1 million to 60.5 million persons (18% growth rate); the 2015 population forecast is 73 million persons (21% growth rate).
- The African American population grew by 2.5 millions persons (24% growth rate) from 10.1 million to 12.6 million. By 2015 its projected population will be 15.7 million (25% growth rate).
- From 2000-2015, the Asian/Pacific American population is expected to grow by 90% from 1.1 million to 2.1 million persons. From 1990-2000 its population doubled.
- The Hispanic American population increased by 2.4 million from 1990-2000 and is projected to become 7.5 million persons (a 75% increase) by 2015.
- The Native American population grew by 41% between 1990-2000 from 189,000 to 266,000 persons and is expected to be 302,000 persons (a 13% growth rate) by 2015.
- European Americans will comprise 41% of the total population growth between 2000-2015. Hispanic Americans and African Americans comprise 26% and 25%, respectively.

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Western Jurisdiction

- From 1990-2000, the population grew from 51.6 million to 61.6 million persons (19.5% growth rate); it is the fastest growing region of the nation with a 2015 population forecast of 80.5 million persons. This 30.5% growth rate is double the national growth rate. It will account for 24.6% of the national population.
- While racial/ethnic persons accounted for three out of every four “new” persons between 1990 and 2000, in the next 15 years racial/ethnic persons will account for four out of every five “new” persons.
- From 1990-2000, the African American population increased from 2.7 million to 3.2 million persons, and its 2015 projected population will be 3.8 million persons.
- From 1990-2000, the Asian/Pacific American population increased from 3.9 million to 5.7 million persons and is expected to grow by 63% to 9.3 million persons by 2015, a growth rate of 63%.
- From 1990-2000, the Hispanic American population increased from 9.6 million to 14.7 million persons. This population group is the most rapidly growing population with a 74% growth rate to become a population of 25.6 million persons by 2015. It will compose almost 32% of the region’s population.
- The European American proportion of the population continues to decrease markedly. In 1990 it was two-thirds of the population, and in 2000 it was 60%. By 2015 it is expected to become 50.4%, a slight majority.

Implementation and Process

The GCOM Ethnic Local Church Concerns Committee was composed of 12 GCOM members, one representative from each of the five national racial/ethnic caucuses (Black Methodists for Church Renewal, Methodists Associated Representing the Cause of Hispanic Americans, Native American International Caucus, National Federation of Asian American United Methodists, and Pacific Islander National Caucus United Methodist), one representative from each of the three ethnic language conferences (Oklahoma Indian Missionary, Rio Grande, and Iglesia Metodista de Puerto Rico), and one representative from each of the eight general program-related agencies (General Board of Church and Society, General Board of Discipleship, General Board of Global Ministries, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns, General Commission on Religion and Race, General Commission on the Status and Role of Women, and General Commission on United Methodist Men) plus United Methodist Communications. The Committee was organized in May 2001 and met five times during the quadrennium. It facilitated coordination and communications among the general program-related agencies, the ethnic/language conferences, the national racial/ethnic caucuses, and the general conference approved ethnic initiatives (National Plan for Hispanic Ministries, Native American Comprehensive Plan, Strengthening the Black Church for the 21st Century, Asian American Language Ministry Study, and Advancing Korean American Ministries) as they sought to develop and strengthen ethnic ministries.

GCOM staff provided training and consultations for annual conferences on request. Additionally, several of the general agencies’ staff provided encouragement and support to racial/ethnic constituencies at the annual conference, jurisdictional, and national levels. Ethnic Local Church grants were provided by the four general program boards and through the Minority Group Self-Determination Fund administered by the General Commission on Religion and Race. These grants were made possible through the World Service Fund. The ELCC Committee commends the general agencies for carrying out the process of incorporation

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of ethnic local church concerns.

The Committee also received regular reports and participation from the three ethnic language conferences and the five national ethnic caucuses. These groups relate to racial/ethnic constituencies and provide educational seminars, leadership training, and networking opportunities. They also provide connections with general church, annual conference, and local churches.

Annually the ELCC Committee met with the directors of the five churchwide ethnic initiatives. The following summarizes the work of these initiatives:

Given the major population growth in the Hispanic American community, the **National Plan for Hispanic Ministries** has helped the church to reflect on God's challenge that there are more Hispanic people than ever that need to hear and experience the Good News of Jesus Christ. The National Plan has surveyed the U.S. annual conferences and by the writing of this report 49 had already responded. Seventy-five percent of these conferences (or 75%) reported that their non-Hispanic congregations were reaching out to growing Hispanic communities located near their churches. Many of these conferences were providing training and using the plan workbooks *Partners in the Mighty Works of God* and/or *The Pentecost Journey*. A major emphasis on this growth opportunity and training will be implemented next quadrennium. Twenty-three of the 49 responding conferences provided training to 250 lay missionaries in the past three years and established 140 faith communities. Thirty-five annual conferences reported that 90 new congregations or missions have been developed over a 10-year period. Additionally 50 congregations have been revitalized, 130 outreach ministries developed, and 50 extension church schools have been established. The National Plan Committee provided missional grants to 32 annual conferences and 32 National Plan Missionaries have been commissioned. Seven annual conferences have been involved in the congregational Mobilization Process. The Florida, Rio Grande, New York, and New Jersey Annual Conferences with as many as 35 congregations participated in the pilot project. A bilingual process manual has been developed for training. Twenty-seven annual conferences and one jurisdiction have established Hispanic ministries coordinator positions.

The **Native American Comprehensive Plan** is developed and directed by the Native American Comprehensive Plan Task Force. In the 2005-2008 quadrennium, the Native American Comprehensive Plan will intentionally focus on three areas: Congregational Development (strengthening existing Native congregations, ministries and fellowships and developing new ones), Leadership Development (strengthening and training Native leaders for local churches and conferences), and Denominational Presence (strengthening contributions of Native leaders, congregations and ministries). A key component of each area is the contributions that Native traditional cultures and Native spiritual expressions bring to the whole church.

For nearly 500 years, Native Christians have been expressing their love for God in creative and meaningful ways. Our cultures are distinct, and equally valid. The Native American Comprehensive Plan Task Force seeks continuation of this plan for the 2005-2008 quadrennium.

Strengthening the Black Church for the 21st Century (SBC21) is built on the core value, Christ is our Center for Hope, Healing, and Wholeness. SBC21 has maintained a level of 22 Congregation Resource Centers housed in vital Black Churches located across the five jurisdictions. Trained clergy & lay teams in these vital resource centers have shared their gift of vitality and spiritual learning experiences with over

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400 partner churches in the areas of worship, leadership development, faith formation, outreach, administration and planning for change. The need for such training is to address stagnation and demise in other congregations and communities. The SBC21 plan of action nurtures the building of new vital congregations and revitalizes existing congregations in rural, urban, suburban, and transitional communities experiencing racial and economic transitions. Covenant relationships are formed for the purposes of embracing hope, healing, and wholeness. SBC21 has developed and implemented a follow-up component designed to engage with partner churches on specialized needs at the partner church site. New visions, new life, new beginnings, and new stories of hope and possibilities are emerging from SBC21 training experiences and follow up activities. The Coordinating Committee has provided strong leadership in evaluating, monitoring, and sharing the work of the initiative with the whole church. The Coordinating Committee is recommending continuation of the SBC21 initiative for the next quadrennium.

Asian American Language Ministry Study, under the direction of the General Board of Global Ministries, brought together 10 Asian sub-ethnic groups (i.e. Cambodian, Chinese, Filipino, Formosan, Hmong, Japanese, Korean, Lao, South Asian, and Vietnamese) to share visions and needs for affirmation and resources to empower Asian American language ministries. Grant funds were used to assist Asian-American Language ministry in new church development, community ministries, clergy leadership development, lay leadership training, and language resource development. GBGM will bring a report to the General Conference for further implementation in the next quadrennium.

Advancing United Methodist Ministries Among Korean Americans represents the first comprehensive nationwide mission initiative of The United Methodist Church that seeks to develop and vitalize Korean American ministries in the U.S. Exciting progress has been made towards fulfilling the Plan's goals based on (1) developing leaders; (2) fostering and expanding next generation ministry; and (3) developing and nurturing new congregations. This initiative involved the partnership of Korean churches, annual conferences and general agencies to generate significant financial and staff resources to aid in the further development of Korean American ministries. In 2003, the centennial of Korean immigration and Christian mission in the U.S. was celebrated. The work enabled through this initiative was only begun during the current quadrennium. Next quadrennium, this initiative will seek to upgrade and expand its work by focusing on (1) Servant-Leadership Formation; (2) Next Generation Ministries; and (3) Congregational Development, Nurture and Redevelopment.

The ELCC Committee was acutely aware that annual conferences have various ways to relate with ethnic ministry concerns and respond to Ethnic Local Church concerns. With the rapid growth of racial/ethnic populations in every annual conference in the United States, it will be important for every conference to recognize the changing demographics and develop plans to act on opportunities for ministry. Legislation is being proposed for every annual conference to have a Committee on Ethnic Local Church Concerns or other structure to provide for the functions and maintain the connectional relationships.

In concluding its work for the quadrennium, the General Council on Ministries approved the following recommendations of its ELCC Committee for:

1. The continuation of the Ethnic Local Church Concerns Committee (ELCC Committee) for 2005-2008. It shall be composed of 12 GCOM members, one representative from each of the five national racial/ethnic caucuses, one representative from each of the ethnic language conferences (Oklahoma Indian Missionary and Rio Grande), and one representative from each of the eight general program-related agencies (GBCS,

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GBOD, GBGM, GBHEM, GCCUIC, GCORR, GCOSRW and GCUMM). The membership is to be broadly representative and racially inclusive. GCOM shall cover the expenses of its members, the representatives from the racial/ethnic caucuses, and the ethnic language conferences. The agency representatives will attend at their agencies' expense. The Committee shall be a part of the GCOM's internal structure. It shall maintain a cooperative relationship with GCORR.

The Committee's responsibilities are to assist the GCOM in fulfilling its assignments from the General Conference in ¶906.5 of *The Book of Discipline 2000*, "to coordinate the denomination's efforts to incorporate the contributions and concerns of the ethnic local church into all programs, budgets, agenda, and resources." It is recommended that to carry out the mission the ELCC Committee be organized into three work groups to envision and lead in implementing the following committee assignments: Communications Work Group (to keep the vision of incorporation of the Ethnic Local Church Concerns before the UMC and to assist the General Commission on Communications in the promotion and interpretation of the ELCC); General Agencies Work Group (to provide guidance to and coordination of general agency efforts for the incorporation of ELCC, to develop and coordinate resources and consultative services to assist the church, to ensure a forum for dialogue and coordination among the general program agencies with incorporation of ELCC, and to evaluate and document general agency funding processes for incorporation of ELCC); and, Annual Conferences Work Group (to provide guidance to and coordination of annual conference efforts of ELCC, to provide training for annual conference ELCC chairpersons or their equivalent, and to evaluate and document annual conference funding processes for incorporation of ELCC).

2. That during the 2005-2008 quadrennium, the GCOM convene periodic gatherings of the directors and/or representatives of the ethnic initiatives (e.g. National Plan for Hispanic Ministries, Native American Comprehensive Plan, Strengthening the Black Church for the 21st Century, Asian American Language Ministry, Advancing United Methodist Ministries among Korean Americans, and Pacific Islanders Ministries).

The purposes of these gatherings will be to: 1) facilitate communication and coordination among the initiatives; 2) identify areas of mutual concern and cooperation; 3) assess accomplishments and share stories made possible through the initiatives to be shared with the church at large; 4) examine institutional barriers which have prevented and impeded the full development of ethnic ministries, which is a loss to the whole church; 5) strategize common areas such as new church development, pastoral and lay leadership, resource development, youth ministries, etc.; and, 6) support and give encouragement to the ethnic initiatives and racial/ethnic communities. The GCORR, GBGM, UMCom and other related agencies are invited to be a part of these gatherings.

3. The continuation of \$5.5 million funding of the World Service apportioned fund during the 2005-2008 quadrennium for Ethnic Local Church Concerns to support and enable the process of incorporation of the concerns and contributions of Asian, Pacific Islander, Black, Hispanic, and Native American constituencies.

The funds (approximately \$1,375,000 per year) to be designated annually among the four program boards as follows:

General Board of Global Ministries	45%	\$618,750
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General Board of Discipleship	20%	\$275,000
General Board of Higher Education & Ministry	20%	\$275,000
General Board of Church and Society	15%	\$206,250

These funds are to be used exclusively for grants for the development and strengthening of the ethnic local church for witness and mission.

4. The GCOM ELCC Committee recommends that every annual conference shall have a Committee on Ethnic Local Church concerns or other structure to provide for these functions and to maintain the connectional relationships. The functions of this committee shall include: 1) keeping the vision of ethnic local church concerns before the annual conference; 2) providing guidance and resources to churches of the annual conference, in their opportunities to minister with/to ethnic constituencies; 3) coordinating annual conference strategies related to ethnic local church concerns, including general church emphases and initiatives; 4) providing a forum for dialogue among the ethnic constituencies, as well as with annual conference agencies; 5) providing training for annual conference and congregational leaders; and 6) promoting and interpreting ethnic local church concerns to the annual conference.

Signed _____
Bishop Edward W. Paup, President

Signed _____
Daniel K. Church, General Secretary