

September 9, 2018

Marc K. Woodson

Acting President/
Executive Secretary

Sacramento Central Seventh-day Adventist Church
6045 Camellia Avenue
Sacramento, CA 95819

Dear Sacramento Central Seventh-day Adventist Church,

We received two potential agenda items from your church for the upcoming Northern California Conference (NCC) Constituency Session on September 30, 2018. These items were submitted on time to be included for consideration.

**Original Motions Submitted by
Sacramento Central Church**

Motion One: We move to cease the implementation of the Executive Committee votes of August 22, 2012, and December 3, 2014, pertaining to ordination without regard to gender, in order to be in harmony with the World Church as represented by the General Conference session of July 8, 2015.

Motion Two: We now move to take the following reasonable actions:
1. Recommend to the Pacific Union Conference [PUC] Executive Committee to rescind both the credentials and ordination of the Chico Church pastor who allowed and supported this baptism and the retired ordained minister who actually performed the baptism, *unless* it becomes publicly evident to the constituency that each minister now supports and follows the Church Manual regarding church membership and discipline (refer to GC WP, L 60 25);
2. Recommend that the Chico Church be subjected to the official disciplinary process as outlined in the Church Manual for congregations in apostasy, within one year from this date, should it be unable to satisfactorily demonstrate to the constituency how it has resolved its own internal disciplinary matters in harmony with the membership standards outlined in the Church Manual (refer to Church Manual, 2015, pp. 39-41).

ABOVE ARE THE ACTUAL MOTIONS AS
SUBMITTED. SEE ATTACHED FOR ORIGINAL FILES.

On Tuesday, August 21, the NCC Executive Committee (CEC) met to discuss the items submitted from your church, as well as items submitted by another church.

The first item that your church submitted for the agenda was about a change to our practice of ordaining without regard to gender. The CEC voted unanimously **not to include** this item on the agenda for the constituency session. The reasons for this decision include the following:

- This item has been voted on by the CEC on two previous occasions.
- This issue is not new, but was voted at the NCC Constituency Session in October 2016, which was after the last General Conference session, where the issue was debated.
- This item has been voted on by the Pacific Union Conference at its constituency session, and ordination remains an action item under the Union's jurisdiction.
- **This is not an item that is of concern to the whole of the NCC.**

The second item that your church submitted for the agenda was regarding how the issues surrounding the Chico church have been handled by the conference. The CEC voted unanimously **not to include** this item on the agenda for the constituency session. The reasons for this decision include the following:

- This issue has been and is being dealt with by conference administration.
- The actions of the administration are supported by the CEC.
- The issues at Chico are largely local membership issues and do not affect the conference as a whole.
- Many of the issues raised are not within the scope of the constituency (ordination, local church membership, etc.).
- The case is overstated in the supporting document that the Chico church is in apostasy; **the Chico church is not considered by the CEC nor conference administration to be in apostasy.**

Please know that the committee did spend significant time and energy in considering these agenda items and did not take your submissions lightly.

Sincerely,



Marc K. Woodson, DMin.
Acting President/Executive Secretary

Motion to Cease Ordaining Without Regard to Gender

WHEREAS, on August 22, 2012, the Northern California Conference [NCC] Executive Committee, voted to recommend to the Pacific Union Conference [PUC] candidates for ordination without regard to gender;

WHEREAS, the NCC Executive committee voted on Dec. 3, 2014 to affirm their previous decision of August 22, 2012, to recommend to the PUC candidates for ordination without regard to gender;

WHEREAS, the July 8, 2015, General Conference [GC] Session voted “No” to allow division executive committees, as they may deem it appropriate in their territories to make provision for the ordination of women to the gospel ministry;

WHEREAS, the GC Secretariat has clarified that “each union’s actions regarding ordination must be in accordance with those of the GC since it is the source of the authority” (Unions & Ordination To The Gospel Ministry, August, 2015);

WHEREAS, according to the GC Secretariat, the “church’s policies and practice do not permit women to be ordained...Therefore, no union or any other entity can ordain women to the gospel ministry” (Unions & Ordination To The Gospel Ministry, August, 2015);

WHEREAS, the GC Unity Oversight Committee has begun outlining elements of a compliance process regarding entities currently out of compliance with GC policy that will be considered by world church leaders at the 2018 Autumn Council;

WHEREAS, Article VII, Section 7 of the NCC Constitution states, “The Executive Committee shall have the authority to adopt rules and regulations for the conduct of its affairs and the affairs of the Conference, provided that the same are not in conflict with these Bylaws or those of the Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, or of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists,” and at present Executive Committee votes conflict with General Conference policy;

The Motion: We move to cease the implementation of the Executive Committee votes of August 22, 2012, and December 3, 2014, pertaining to ordination without regard to gender, in order to be in harmony with the World Church as represented by the General Conference session of July 8, 2015.

Motion to Resolve the Chico Church Situation

WHEREAS, the Chico Seventh-day Adventist Church [Chico Church], a church in the Northern California Conference [NCC] accepted into membership a person living in a same-sex marriage in 2016;

WHEREAS, said baptism set up a local standard of membership in violation of the membership standards voted in General Conference [GC] Session and expressed in the Church Manual, 2015, p. 16, 17;

WHEREAS, former NCC President, Jim Pedersen, in response to the Chico Church situation, advised all local congregations to “consider carefully Fundamental Belief #23 (‘Marriage & The Family’) and page 62 of the Church Manual before proceeding with accepting anyone into membership (Jim Pedersen Letter, dated: Oct. 10, 2017);

WHEREAS, the NCC Executive Committee in their May, 2018 meeting voted that they are not in agreement with what took place at the Chico Church, supporting the administration’s response to the Chico Church situation;

WHEREAS, the first reason for which membership should be subject to church discipline is, “Denial of faith in the fundamentals of the gospel and in the fundamental beliefs of the Church or teaching doctrines contrary to the same” (Church Manual 2015, p. 61);

WHEREAS, we are not aware of any change of belief on the part of the NCC hired pastor who allowed the said baptism or the retired minister who actually performed the baptism, or of any efforts they have made to correct the situation over the past two years;

WHEREAS, the local union and conference shares “the responsibility for safeguarding the integrity of the ministry and are required...to assure that credentials issued within their respective territories shall indeed certify that the holders are in good and unquestioned standing” (General Conference Working Policy L 60 65);

WHEREAS, in “problems such as apostasy, refusal to operate in harmony with the Church Manual, or rebellion against the conference persist,” loving efforts should be made to bring the local congregation into harmony with the teachings and practices of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, which may include the use of a disciplinary process to avoid ultimate expulsion from the sisterhood of churches (see Church Manual, 2015, pp. 39-41);

The Motion: We now move to take the following reasonable actions:

1. Recommend to the Pacific Union Conference [PUC] Executive Committee to rescind both the credentials and ordination of the Chico Church pastor who allowed and supported this baptism and the retired ordained minister who actually performed the baptism, *unless* it becomes publicly evident to the constituency that each minister now supports and follows the Church Manual regarding church membership and discipline (refer to GC WP, L 60 25);
2. Recommend that the Chico Church be subjected to the official disciplinary process as outlined in the Church Manual for congregations in apostasy, within one year from this date, should it be unable to satisfactorily demonstrate to the constituency how it has resolved its own internal disciplinary matters in harmony with the membership standards outlined in the Church Manual (refer to Church Manual, 2015, pp. 39-41).