

**HAYNSWORTH
SINKLER BOYD**

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April 23, 2025

Via Email and Hand Delivery

Honorable Patricia A. Howard
Clerk of the South Carolina Supreme Court
1231 Gervais Street
Columbia, SC 29201
suptfilings@sccourts.org

RECEIVED

APR 23 2025

S.C. SUPREME COURT

Re: *The Methodist Church of Simpsonville et al v. The South Carolina Conference of
The United Methodist Church et al.*
Petition for Original Jurisdiction filed April 14, 2025

Dear Ms. Howard:

This firm represents the Respondents The South Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church (the "Conference"), Bishop Leonard E. Fairley, Rev. Cathy Mitchell, Rev. Fran Elrod, Rev. Steve Brown, Rev. Terry Fleming, Rev. Telley Gadson, Rev. Anthony Hodge, Rev. Chris Lollis, Rev. Ken Nelson, Rev. Steve Patterson, Jr., and Rev. Jeffrey Salley in the above-referenced matter. Respondents are in receipt of the Petitioners' Petition for Original Jurisdiction ("Petition"), submitted on Monday night, April 14, 2025. Pursuant to Rule 245, SCACR, Respondents' current deadline to file a Return to the Petition is Monday, May 5, 2025.

The Conference respectfully requests a 30-day extension of time to submit its Return to the Petition, thus making the new deadline Wednesday, June 4, 2025. The grounds for this request are that the Petition is extensive, containing 419 pages (including exhibits), and that Respondents' counsel have intervening professional and personal obligations, including previously scheduled court proceedings and depositions, as well as planned vacations for which secure leave has been granted. In addition, the 30-day requested extension equals the total days for which Petitioners' counsel requested and received extensions to respond to the Conference's pending Motion for Assignment to a Single Trial Judge in related matter Appellate Case No. 2025-000432. Counsel for the Petitioners, who are copied below, have graciously consented to this 30-day extension request. We also ask that the Court hold the current deadline in abeyance pending the consideration of this request.

Enclosed with the hand delivery is a check in the amount of \$50.00 for the associated filing fee and an additional copy of this letter. Please file-stamp the additional copy and return it to my

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courier. Thank you for your attention to this matter, and please let me know if you have any questions or need anything further.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth H. Black

Enclosure (check)

cc: Miles Coleman, Esq.
James Bannister, Esq.
David Gibbs, Esq.
James Y. Becker, Esq.
Costa Pleicones, Esq.
Ronald T. Scott, Esq.
Sarah J. Reisinger, Esq.
Kathleen C. McKinney, Esq.
William A. Coates, Esq.
V. Clark Price, Esq.
(all via email only)

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