

PRE-CONFERENCE *Journal* 2025

ADDENDUM



Reflecting God's Character in the World



2025 TRINITY ANNUAL CONFERENCE
GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

THE WOODLANDS METHODIST CHURCH | THE WOODLANDS, TX



GREETINGS FROM THE STAFF AND SUPERINTENDENCY RELATIONS COMMITTEE (SSRC)

Dear Trinity Conference Colleagues and Friends,

During our Pre-Conference webinar, we received several good questions and feedback regarding the proposal for Equipping Elders. Thank you for your interest in this vital position!

To summarize our discussion, we have developed a report outlining the need and opportunity for Equipping Elders in our Conference. We also look forward to sharing this with you in person during the Ministry Session of our Annual Conference.

Joyfully His,



Heather

Pastor Heather Sims

Chair, Staff and Superintendency Relations Committee (SSRC)





REPORT OF THE STAFF AND SUPERINTENDENCY RELATIONS COMMITTEE (SSRC)

Proposal for Equipping Elders

Executive Summary

The Staff and Superintendency Relations Committee (SSRC) of the Trinity Conference of the Global Methodist Church recommends the creation of three new staff positions, each with the title of *Equipping Elder*. These positions, if approved, will begin in an initial “Pilot Phase” as three, one-third (1/3) time staff roles in September 2025, with clearly identified benchmarks for evaluation. Pending affirmation by the 2026 Annual Conference, the positions would transition to full-time roles in September 2026.

This recommendation aligns with our strategic framework and is a response to both urgent needs and promising opportunities within the Trinity Conference. It fits within the current budgeted income for 2025 and 2026 and will not require any change in the current connectional funding rate into the future. It has received full support from the SSRC, the Finance and Administration Committee, and the Connectional Council.

Alignment of Need and Opportunity

IDENTIFIED NEEDS

The Trinity Conference is experiencing both exciting growth and pressing organizational challenges. The following needs have emerged as critical areas where expanded staff capacity is essential:

1. **Coaching for Increased Fruitfulness**

Local churches are seeking guidance and support to grow in fruitfulness—spiritually, missionally, and numerically. More staff are needed to actively coach these churches toward vitality.

2. **Resource Development**

Reflecting the expressed needs of our local churches: pastors and laity need contextualized resources to foster growth in key areas: such as discipleship, leadership development, evangelism, outreach, and much more. More staff are needed to develop and share these resources across the conference to support the ministries of local churches.

3. **Mission Field Assessment and Church Planting**

Underserved mission fields exist in every Area of the Trinity Conference. More staff are needed to identify and prioritize locations throughout our vast geographic area where the conference should focus our resources for church planting and multiplication.



4. **Decentralized Leadership and Increased Accessibility**

The Conference staff is currently centralized, which limits accessibility for many local churches. More staff are needed to offer relational support and to respond in a timely basis to issues throughout the Conference.

5. **Strained Capacity Among Existing Staff and Volunteers**

The Conference staff is currently stretched thin, and our volunteer Presiding Elders and Connecting Elders are overextended. As the Trinity Conference expands geographically and numerically, the current model is untenable, so more staff are needed to ensure sustainability and prevent the burnout of our leaders.

PRESENT OPPORTUNITIES

Our Conference is well-positioned to respond proactively to combat these challenges due to several converging opportunities:

1. **Available Financial Resources**

The conference currently has adequate funding to support three 1/3-time Equipping Elder positions within the existing budget and connectional funding rate. In addition, the existing funding rate supports expansion to full time compensation for these positions in September 2026 if confirmed by the 2026 Annual Conference. This minimizes financial risk while enabling strategic experimentation.

2. **Strategic Framework Implementation**

The conference's approved strategic framework identifies its core role as *equipping the local church*. This staff role allows us to act on that priority more intentionally and operationally.

3. **Growth Momentum**

With churches continuing to join and affiliate with the Global Methodist Church, now is a timely moment to solidify infrastructure and provide needed leadership development and ministry alignment.

Role Description: Equipping Elder

Each Equipping Elder will focus on:

- Coaching pastors and lay leaders in local churches toward greater fruitfulness.
- Developing and disseminating strategic resources tailored to the unique needs of churches in the Trinity Conference.
- Evaluating area assessments from the Director of Missional Development to identify and cultivate mission fields for future church plants.
- Serving as a bridge between the conference leadership and local churches to enhance accessibility and decentralize leadership support.

Implementation Plan

- **Pilot Phase Start Date (1/3 Time):** September 2025
- **Pilot Phase Evaluation Period:** September 2025 – May 2026
- **Benchmarks:** To be clearly identified by the SSRC and used as the basis for a progress report at the 2026 Annual Conference.
- **Potential Transition to Full-Time:** September 2026 (pending affirmation from the 2026 Annual Conference)

Conclusion

The creation of the Equipping Elder position represents a strategic alignment of the conference's needs and opportunities. It is a faithful and financially responsible step toward embodying our call to equip the local church for mission and ministry. The SSRC strongly recommends the adoption of the budget, which includes this proposal with full confidence in its alignment with our mission and vision.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Heather Sims
Staff and Superintendency Relations Committee Chair

