

# U.M. Daily

## Saturday, June 15, 2024

40th Annual Session of the California-Pacific Annual Conference  
Morning Worship  
8:30 am (PDT)

The worship theme for this morning's worship is "Creation and Care for the World."

The Harmony Worship Band led us in movement, joy, thanksgiving, and musical praise with these songs:

*Echo*

*God Our Ally* - an original number

Jillian Edwards, *Flourishing / Thriving*

Ovie Agbani, *Flourish (Theme Song)*

*I Thank God*

*So Will I*

*Send Me*

The lead singer from The Harmony Worship Band, Gattison, shared his Church journey.

Gattison, Worship Leader: I am so grateful for the love of God. I want to tell you, if I can, why I am so grateful. I grew up in the Church and there were so many beautiful things about it: Singing, dancing and learning about God. But I also grew up in a church that condemned homosexuality, and I grew up learning that my attraction to anything other than a heterosexual sexuality was an abomination. I can't tell you how isolating it was. I can't tell you how much shame and guilt I felt, and I didn't know what to do. I've always loved God with all of my heart, mind and soul, but I felt like there was something wrong with me, something that I could never express or explore. I'm saying this because I am thankful for the love of God that broke through the well-meaning but harmful theology. I am grateful to God that I get to stand here as my truest self. I am so thankful to God for people like you, who make space for people in my community. Sometimes you don't fully understand how much impact it has on a life to just make space and love. It is so radical to be in a space with love. I am so thankful to see my husband sitting here while I get the opportunity to do what I love: Worship and creating an atmosphere for all of us to be able to connect with God. Thank you for making that space for us and not judging. I want to say that I know there has been a hard relationship between the LGBTQ+ community in the Church. I ask that we all be patient and gentle. I want to believe that people want love, they're searching for it. If we can just express and give that love, and give people time, we can connect. I love you, thank you so much. I am so grateful.

## Morning Prayer

Morning prayer was offered by Rev. Kalesita Tu'ifua from the North District. She warmly greeted the entire gathering and led us in prayer in Tongan.

## **40th Annual Session of the California-Pacific Annual Conference Session 6 9:00 am (PDT)**

Call to Order - Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank called the plenary session to order.

Bishop Escobedo-Frank offered her thanks to the band for the ways they bring our bodies and souls closer to Christ.

Bishop Escobedo-Frank: Before I ask for the orders of the day, I'd like to start us out in my prayer. I have also been thinking about the things we collect – in America, we have lots of collections. I collect coffee from South and Central America, tea from anywhere, and wine from California. I was thinking how the Church has been known for the things and people we prohibit. What if we all chose to have our collections be friends? What if we start collecting friends and stop collecting enemies? Stop making enemies of people. It's easy to judge, but my mother taught me that there is good in everybody. It's easy to get upset, but it's more harmful to harbor those feelings. I release those feelings and I remember that God's creations are mysterious, including me, and I decide to see other peoples' value and collect friends. Let's start to look for the good in one another, so we will be known for our love. We are a White Church, so we have work to do to become a more diverse Church. One of the best parts about Cal-Pac is what a diverse church we are compared to the other parts of the U.S. I am proud of us as a General Church that we are finding a way to open the table and stop causing harm through exclusionary language. We are on our way. Collect friends, not enemies. Let us pray.

Bishop Escobedo-Frank led us in the opening prayer.

Orders of the Day - Rev. Cathie Capp, Agenda Chair

Rev. Capp presented the Orders of the Day and moved the Orders of the Day.

**Bishop Escobedo-Frank called for a vote. It was supported.**

Announcements - Rev. Won-Seok Yuh

Rev. Yuh greeted the body. He invited the body to turn to those around them and say, "I thank God you are here." Rev. Yuh shared that there has been an uptick in the translation services in Korean, Spanish, and German, and that [calpacumc.org/AC2024](http://calpacumc.org/AC2024) provides all information about the Conference, and that tips can be found on the basic Parliamentary page. If the body would like to provide feedback on the Flourish panels that spoke on Friday, there is a QR code available to do so. The committee on investigation is meeting in the Executive Boardroom at 10 am.

Rev. Yuh waved a warm Aloha to the body.

Bishop Escobedo-Frank invited Bishop Rev. Dr. President Grant Hagiya to come forward.

## Spotlight CST - Rev. Dr. Grant Hagiya and Alumni

Rev. Dr. Hagiya: We are so blessed to be with you today. We have some folks who are going to help me with the presentation on CST.

As we are still basking in the light of all the positive changes for the UMC at our latest General Conference, I have to pinch myself to make sure it's real and not just a dream. We have been working for these dramatic changes for all of my adult life, and it's hard to believe that it's finally here. I think with regret of our Saints who were not able to witness this. I think of my own episcopal mentor, Bishop Jack Tuell, who used to tell me regularly that the one thing he would like to witness before he died was the repeal of the oppressive language against our LGBTQ+ siblings. We didn't finish that before you left us, Jack, but as you look upon us today, we did it. That goes for all of our Saints who are with you now. The saints of the UMC are rejoicing today.

Before I join them, there is one thing I would like to see: A sustainable Claremont School of Theology, where we have the financial resources to exist for future generations to be transformed. Folks, our mission has never been clearer. We are promoting compassion, justice and belonging to a world that desperately needs these things. We exist to transform our students into spiritual leaders, where Jesus's message of life-giving abundance is given to all who come to our churches and communities.

There are so many great things happening at Claremont. We are expanding our programs to the training of Lay ministers, working with the British Methodist Cliff College, who have already developed a robust Lay training. We are developing a Doctor of Ministry degree that will focus on spirituality, leadership, innovation, and creativity. We are expanding our global reach by training indigenous leaders in their own countries, rather than the brain drain that takes them away from their own cultures and contexts.

For this dynamic vision that we have, we need all of your help. Please support us by offering scholarships, especially to our students. Every student at CST receives a significant scholarship, and we need you and your church to give to help our students. We would be glad to come out and share our vision, and to work with you to make sure that this dream stays alive.

Thank you for your past and continuing support of CST. We are your school and we hope to make you proud of all that you give us to support the students that we love and share.

I would now like to introduce our COO, Rev. Steve Horswill-Johnston, who will tell you a little bit more about this giving.

Rev. Horswill-Johnston: There are a couple of ways you can give to CST, and one of them is to visit [CST.edu/specialappeal](https://www.cst.edu/specialappeal). That's it. You can also get a free t-shirt, and you can share your love for the school that is transforming lives across the world and making a difference in our churches, non-profits, and places that need the redemptive power of Christ, God, and all of us working together.

Rev. Dr. Hagiya: We also want to introduce two of our distinguished Alumni, Rev. Molly Vetter and Rev. Jeri Okamoto-Tanaka.

Rev. Vetter shared her history and experience of CST, and that her first four classes there were taught by women. She shared what a gift it is to have people who can help you connect to what you can imagine and aspire to become.

Rev. Vetter: It is such a joy to reconnect with what is happening at CST and see the more diverse faculty that has joined the school, and the ways the school is helping us not only prepare leaders, but form ourselves as humans in a way that prepares us for living into the unique gift that each of us can bring to the Church and to the world. The values that the school has articulated are its present mission statement of compassion, justice and belonging resonate so beautifully with what my congregation is doing and what we are doing as a church. It has been an occasion for me to reinvest myself not only in giving to CST, but also with my time, prayer and energy, and I encourage you to do the same.

Rev. Jeri Okamoto-Tanaka, Co-Lay Leader of the West Los Angeles UMC, an historic Japanese-American church, shared that she is a Deaconess candidate and a proud graduate of the 2023 program! Rev. Okamoto-Tanaka reflected on her experience at CST.

Rev. Okamoto-Tanaka: I want to thank Rev. Dr. Hagiya for the invitation to reflect on my time at CST. I would like to share a proverb that came to me after thinking about our theme of flourishing and after Bishop Escobedo-Frank shared about finding shade in the desert, and it goes something like this: Blessed are those who plant the tree under whose shade they will never sit, and whose fruit they will never enjoy.

In thinking of Claremont as that tree, I will add, “Blessed are those who nurture that tree and sustain it through the generations through abundant rain, drought, winter storms, and back into the sunlight. Blessed are those who teach others to plant trees so there are more trees that serve and nourish all of the land.”

The seeds that were planted at Claremont were planted by visionaries, but many of you in this room have nurtured those seeds. I would ask how many of you have partaken of the fruit of this tree? Perhaps, like me, you are a graduate, or perhaps you have been led by a graduate. Every person in this room should raise their hand, because the Bishops that have served you, past and present, are Claremont graduates. Claremont has educated missionaries, priests, chaplains, deaconesses, and lay persons who have gone out into the world. The Theological Academy is also enriched by the research done by the Claremont students and faculty. I speak as a grateful beneficiary of all of that nurturing that has happened long before I attended Claremont. I also had the privilege of studying with Professor Frank Rogers, who so powerfully addressed this body yesterday. He emphasized the importance of our spiritual development and formation, restorative justice, and the importance of trauma-informed ministry. Understanding the trauma that the world is going through is the core of so many of our classes, and how we can go out into the world with compassion.

The Claremont saying is that it is a seminary for such a time as this, and it truly is. It is a seminary sending forth the fruit that is going to help change toward compassion, love, and belonging. Claremont needs our extra care and attention right now as it has been uprooted to Westwood. I invite you to be a part of that. Blessed are those who planted and cared for the tree whose shade we enjoy and whose fruit nourishes us, and let us be the ones who sustain this tree long into the future. Thank you.

Bishop Escobedo-Frank thanked them all for the report and invited Michael Mitchell to proceed with the Nominations.

**Nominations** - Michael Mitchell, South District Lay Leader and Interim Chairperson of the Conference's Nominations Committee

Michael Mitchell recognized Joyce Zirkle and her faithful work, dedication and leadership. He also thanked District Superintendent Rev. Moonyoung Lee, Rev. Catie Coots, Erin Hawkins, Jennifer Gaylord, and Mele Maka for their assistance in leading this committee over the past few months.

Michael Mitchell: I am pleased to welcome Rev. Sunyoung Lee and Lynn Owan, who will be the new Co-Chairpersons of the Conference Nominations Committee starting on July 1, 2024. Hopefully you have reviewed the Nominations report on the Annual Conference 2024 webpage – specifically Recommendation 24.07 This report is a living document reflecting the ongoing changes as members transition off of committee for several reasons. If you are interested in serving on a Conference board or committee, please complete a Nominations profile at [www.calpac.umc.org/nominations](http://www.calpac.umc.org/nominations).

This profile provides us with the necessary information and background to ensure we adhere to the Conference rules and balance representation. If you have already submitted a form, please know that we retain these forms for up to three years for future consideration as openings arise. If you have any questions, please email us at [nominations@calpacumc.org](mailto:nominations@calpacumc.org).

This is an open invitation to Laity and Clergy to serve and be in connection with our Conference to share your gifts and talents in an innovative way. I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to all the members of the Nominations committee for their hard work.

Special thanks to Jennifer Gaylord for her diligent efforts to maintain the Nominations database alongside me.

Today we present this slate for your approval: REC 24-07.

Bishop Escobedo-Frank: The Recommendation is before us.  
**Bishop Escobedo-Frank called for a vote. It was supported.**

**Certified Lay Minister Blessing** - Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank  
Bishop Escobedo-Frank and Mele Maka, Lay Leader, offered the Certified Lay Minister Blessing. The six Certified Lay Ministers are:

Khan Dohn, East District  
Arthur Richardson, East District  
Kimberly Eileen Brush, North District  
Donna T. Edmundson, North District  
Carolyn Ingram, South District  
Susan Youngblood, West District

Bishop Escobedo-Frank blessed the Certified Lay Ministers.

**Legislation** - Rev. Lea Booth  
RES 24-15 - Living Out the Big Table Theology  
Rev. Booth moved RES 24-15

Bishop Escobedo-Frank called for discussion or questions.

Maikolo Brown, Communications Coordinator for Young People Council at First UMC San Gabriel and First UMC Alhambra: As a 17 year old Tongan-American born in the UMC, we as the PI community accept that these new results of the General Conference have allowed our church to be inclusive and standing in solidarity for our LGBT community. I understand that these new results have made some of our brothers and sisters leave, but for those who have stayed, we will continue to do our work to spread the word of our Lord and Savior. I am aware of the traditional normalities and the societal expectations from the Pacific Island culture and some other cultures, but we are a society now where everyone's voice counts and matters. How is it that we want to flourish, but each of our souls are not properly nourished? I just wanted to speak on behalf of the PI community that we will continue to do our work to welcome everyone at God's table.

Bishop Escobedo-Frank: Thank you. That is a speech in favor.

Rev. Kalesita Tu'ifua, Clergy, Norwood UMC: I am standing here to speak in support of this Resolution on behalf of the Pacific Islanders Commission to affirm our commitment to journey together with the Bishop, Cabinet and Conference. In spite of our differences in theological beliefs, typical understanding and context of ministry, our Pacific Islander's Commission has been in our midst for more than fifty years - in fact, six decades. When our parents and grandparents landed in this land, they were welcomed to the United Methodist churches in their community. The United Methodist Church has extended the table for our Tongan, Samoan, Fijian, and all the Pacific Islanders who moved to America, and we thank you for your love and compassion. I stand before you and affirm by faith our commitment to support the vision and leadership of the Bishop and the Cabinet. Out of the General Conference 2024 decisions to remove the harmful language, we believe the UMC table is still big enough for all of us, even though we may be a small group of people from the South Pacific, but we are here to stay and will continue to journey together. As the Bishop said, "Let us continue to extend our inviting each other and being together in our journey. We believe that our different backgrounds, culture, perspectives, and our diversity will enrich our community and our church together to go deeper and flourish together and we have so much hope for the future. Please, I urge all of you to please support this Resolution. It represents our collective dedication to unity, inclusiveness, and to live with care and compassion, knowing that God is with us. Thank you.

Bishop Escobedo-Frank: Another speech in favor.

Liz Roark, East District, Jurisdictional Delegate: I come here conflicted on this one because I see this Resolution putting handcuffs on the Spirit that flows through the Cabinet and the Bishop in appointing clergy. There have been many times when I have not agreed with what the Bishop and clergy have sent my way for appointments, but I have found that the Spirit has worked within the church and myself to be able to work through whatever it was that was a conflict. And I want everybody to be at the table and we all have areas that we are conflicted about and are struggling with, but as long as we are all at the table together, to love one another, and to be open and honest with one another, that's what I want. So I'm not sure how I'm voting on this one.

Bishop Escobedo-Frank: Before you leave, is that a speech in favor or against?

Liz: I don't know.

Bishop Escobedo-Frank: Thank you.

Mary Andrea Miller, Laity, Westwood UMC: I would like to propose a small amendment. On the first paragraph, lines 43-46 I would like to change it so that it reads:

“Be it further resolved that the California-Pacific Annual Conference Bishop and her Cabinet will carry out their work in responsible ways that will ensure that Pacific Islanders and other faith communities continue to authentically carry out their mission;”

I want to remove the words “more traditional” and the word “context.”

Bishop Escobedo-Frank: Please bring your amendment to Rev. Won-Seok Yuh. Are we ready to discuss this? We will put it on the screen so we can look at it. We need a second.

Suanne Ware-Diaz, Laity, Native American of Southern California: I have a question to those who are submitting this Resolution and the word, “traditional.” I think that our understanding of “traditional” may be different. As an Indigenous Person, and I am reading “traditional,” I’m thinking of my traditional cultural ways of being, where some folks may be reading this as “traditional” as being, for lack of a better expression, very “right” rather than progressive. If someone could clarify that for me, I would appreciate it.

Bishop Escobedo-Frank: Okay. The comment I’m hearing is that traditional is not in the amendment, the word, and you have a question about that. Are you withdrawing your question? No?

Suanne Ware-Diaz: What was the intent by those submitting the Resolution what “traditional” means because I think that it may be interpreted differently by folks that are here, depending on their backgrounds.

Bishop Escobedo-Frank: Can someone who submitted the Resolution answer the question for her?

Rev. Dr. Siosaia Tu’itahi, Clergy, West District Superintendent: When we put the word “tradition” in this Resolution, it was an open interpretation so that you could use your own tradition. I don’t have any idea about yours. We put the word “tradition” so that it is open to everybody, so that they can have their own interpretation. We are free to do that. That’s why the word “tradition” was put in the Resolution. It’s for everybody when we say “tradition.”

Bishop Escobedo-Frank: So you would be against this Amendment?

Rev. Dr. Tu’itahi: Yes. I am against this Amendment. I was answering the question Bishop, but I can speak against the Amendment itself.

Bishop Escobedo-Frank: Thank you. You did both.

Manu Tu'uholoaki-Murrin, Laity, Inglewood First UMC: I am speaking against the Amendment. As a Tongan born in Tonga, as your clarification earlier, tradition means in Tonga that we wear three hundred years as the only Polynesian Kingdom in the world, we will go back. We were polytheistic, no “one” god. But Christianity come to the land, and “one” God. So if you asked for tradition, it would go back to when we worshiped many gods - god of the sun and god of the harvest and the ocean. So clarifying this is to understand that we are sharing in the table as all, not only Asian, but Pacific Islander, Hispanic, and every

culture is being welcomed to the table. That's why I'm against this Amendment. It's changing ... we are together as one people. Thank you.

Bishop Escobedo-Frank: Thank you. So we have one in favor, and two against the Amendment.

Bishop Escobedo-Frank: The Amendment is before us.

Bishop Escobedo-Frank called for a vote. **The Amendment was not supported.**

Bishop Escobedo-Frank: Let us now move back to the original Resolution. Does anyone want to speak on the original Resolution?

Jeania Ree Moore, Clergy, Deacon appointed to my Ph.D. program across the country but glad to be home again in California. I'm affiliated with Scott UMC: I served before my Doctoral Program as Director of Civil and Human Rights at the General Board of Church and Society from 2016 to 2020, and during that time, I saw a lot of the tensions that I think this Resolution is addressing. I'm speaking in support of the Resolution as originally written. I don't think you can affirm the distinctive diversity of Cal-Pac without affirming the big table theology that this Resolution uplifts. And I say that as someone who served at the general agency level, and saw the Whiteness of the church play out particularly on this issue of human sexuality. I also say that as someone who is doing a Ph.D. in African American studies and Religious studies right now. This Resolution speaks to more than just one particular ethnic group. It speaks to the entire reality of our church. It also speaks to Queer People of Color, and Queer Christians of Color, and so in the spirit of unity and affirmation, I implore all of my siblings here, clergy and laity, to affirm the Resolution and stand with our Pacific Islander brothers and sisters and siblings in Christ. Thank you.

Bishop Escobedo-Frank: A speech in favor.

Suanne Ware-Diaz, Laity, Native American UMC of Southern California: I too speak in favor of this Resolution, and I wish to also impart my very deep gratitude to my brothers and sisters of the Pacific Islander grouping. You are close to my heart and close to many of our hearts because as you spoke up and something that has left many of us, while we may be diverse in this particular Annual Conference and we have that blessing, we by no means are fully inclusive. This is taking us one step further to deepen understanding and have deeper conversations of relationships. To understand a deeper meaning of who we are in the world and whose we are. I speak in favor as this Resolution was submitted. Thank you.

Bishop Escobedo-Frank: We have had four speeches in favor, is there anyone else who wishes to speak?

The Resolution is before us.

**Bishop Escobedo-Frank called for a vote. It was supported.**

Alison Mark, Clergy Faith UMC, West District: The hat I'm wearing today is the head-of-delegation hat with a report from the Western Jurisdiction Committee on Episcopacy. Bishop, I move to suspend Rule IV.C for this Annual Conference session. If I have a second, I'll speak to it.

Bishop Escobedo-Frank: Go ahead.

Rev. Mark: Friends, the General Conference received and approved the Interjurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy, IJCOE, recommendation for the number of Bishops and assignment of Bishops for the 2024 to

2028 Quadrennium. This action was challenged through a Declaratory Judgment resulting in Judicial Decision 1502, which affirmed the IJCOE's authority by finding that the IJCOE has the authority to recommend the number of bishops in all jurisdictions. Moving with that authority, the IJCOE also recommended that there will be no new election of Bishops due to the wholistic state of the Denomination fiscally as well as structurally. Pursuant to that, currently there are no plans for election. But in a perfect world, that would work out just fine. Because an inherent part of the IJCOE report that was approved at General Conference is that the Western Jurisdiction will receive two transfers of loans of Bishops from other Jurisdictions. That process is not entirely smooth and there are emerging realities that may lead to an election, so depending on all other movements in all the other Jurisdictions, your Western Jurisdiction COE is prepared to step in and administer an election; but we are seeking to unify such an emergency process if needed: one that unites us and doesn't divide us. So we would be suspending the rules to not vote today on Episcopal nominations.

Bishop Escobedo-Frank: Does anyone want to speak to that? We would be suspending the rules, which takes a 2/3 vote. Are you ready to vote?

The suspension of Rule IV.C is before us.

**Bishop Escobedo-Frank called for a vote. It was supported.**

Bishop: The rule is suspended. Rev. Rhodes has something for us to work through next.

Rev. Rhodes: Thank you Bishop. According to paragraph 705.1 of the Book of Discipline, Annual Conferences have the opportunity to nominate from the floor persons to serve at the jurisdictional and general conference level. We have a process for that. If you wish to lift up a name from the floor, this would be your opportunity. However, that nomination is not completed until filling out an online form. We will post an QR code for you to find that online form, and we can include it in future emails. I also want to state clearly that if you don't come to the microphone to lift up a name, but still fill out that form, that nomination is completed. So, you can come to the microphone and lift up names, you must still fill out that form. Or you can just fill out that form. The choice is up to you. Now is the time.

Liz Roark, Western Jurisdiction Delegate: I nominate Suanne Ware-Diaz.

Rev. Rhodes: Thank you. I've taken note, but please fill out the form.

Dan Lewis, Clergy, Grace Long Beach: I have a question based on my memories of serving in your chair. Does the Conference have to have a certain number of forms or candidates before the whole thing is sent in? Are you familiar with what I'm talking about?

Rev. Rhodes: Yes, I am. The number is between 15 to 45 if I'm remembering correctly. This is an on-going process under the responsibility of the delegation in consultation with the Bishop who will ensure that the minimum number is reached. It is okay if not everyone comes to the microphone. That's great, however, please make sure you fill out the form.

Bishop Escobedo-Frank: Okay. Let's move on to the COSROW report. I invite Rev. Stephanie Rice to come forward.

Julie Elkins, Clergy, Chapel of the Valley and Chapel of the Hills: Clarification - you are asking us to fill out the QR code form or nominate people to be on committees, and boards and agencies of General Conference and Western Jurisdiction, is that correct?

Rev. Rhodes: That is correct.

**COSROW** - Rev. Stephanie Rice, Commission on the Status and Role of Women

I am here as one of your co-chairs of the California-Pacific Commission on the Status and Role of Women. This is a follow up to our previous presentation to talk a little bit more about monitoring. You may have seen people walking around or sitting down with these forms all through Annual Conference. What “monitoring” is - one, it’s a mandate for the Commission on the Status and Role of Women in the Book of Discipline that asks us to keep track of who is speaking and how much they are speaking, how we are talking to and with one another during Annual Conference, to look at whether or not people are being included, whether or not their voices are heard, and how we are working together to create this beloved community.

I don’t have any final numbers for you now because we are still tallying and of course, we are still in the middle of a session and still have another worship service after this. But what we will do with this information is prepare a report that we will give to the Bishop, and to the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women, and then our COSROW group will meet to discuss recommendations to give to the Bishop, to the Cabinet, and Sessions on the different ways that we can continue to improve our inclusivity during Annual Conference to help make sure that all voices are not just allowed to speak, but actually heard. I can tell you that so far in the data that we have collected, we do have great parity among male and female, who have been able to speak, but we have a significantly high proportion of people who are White who have been speaking as opposed to People of Color. That will be part of our report. We will be happy to share it with people of the Annual Conference. I do want to put the word out that if you are interested in being a part of the work that COSROW does, please let me know. We would be happy to have you involved in the work that we are doing as we continue to work to build a more inclusive and more beloved community, where people not just included, but heard, and are in the position of making decisions and in leading this Conference forward in the times to come. This concludes our COSROW report.

**Retirement Videos** - Media Team

Rev. Frank Schaefer

Rev. Wayne Walters

Bishop Escobedo-Frank: Before we move to microphone 2, Rev. Rhodes has some things to explain.

Rev. Rhodes: Clarification - some folks scanned that QR code expecting to find Episcopal Nominations. No. That’s why we suspended the Rule. We suspended the rule to say that we are not going to do Episcopal nominations. The QR code is to nominate persons to serve on boards, agencies, at the Jurisdictional and General Church level. Are we clear about the distinction? Please use that QR code to fill out the form for Jurisdictional and General Church agencies. Thank you.

Burt Roark, Laity, New Beginnings UMC, Chair of Rules Committee: My Committee has alerted me to a ruling of law that we need call in our 24-15, the Resolution. There is a phrase that we want to alert you to. It is the phrase, “will carry out,” which is a mandatory phrase, and according to paragraph 54, that should not exist. With the mandatory language - we’ve done a lot of great work here and I want to make sure that we have it cleaned up properly.

Bishop Escobedo-Frank: Thank you for your information. I do appreciate it. We will now take a five minute break to reset the stage.

**Connectional Ministries Programming** - Erin Hawkins

Good afternoon, my name is Erin Hawkins. I am a lay person. We are nearing the end of our time here at AC and I here to remind us of the journey that we have been on.

When gathered for last year's Annual Conference, our theme was Nourish.

It was Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank's first annual conference with us and as she started the process of getting to know us and leading us, she encouraged us to find ways to nourish ourselves. She highlighted the challenges of ministry and championed rest ...

I shared about our Conference vision of Ending Spiritual and Physical Hunger and together we explored the leading causes of hunger in our world and in our church:

- Poverty
- Oppression
- Climate Change
- War and Conflict
- Food Insecurity

Since then, you have done the faithful work of ministry of meeting the needs of the community. You are building affordable housing and community centers, feeding the hungry and providing asylum and support to migrant and refugee families. On behalf of the leadership of this Annual Conference I want to say thank you ...

And now we have gathered again as an Annual Conference ... here in Burbank.

We began with our Bishop who talked about the ways in which we are shackled. Historical shackles, cultural shackles, personal shackles, ministry shackles. She celebrated the ways in which recent decisions of the General Conference have unshackled us to take the next faithful steps in being a church for all people.

Our first panel and our delegation report reminded us that the work of making the church truly inclusive did not just begin at this last Annual Conference.

It is the result of generations of social justice activism, prayer and struggle ... people like Bishop Melvin Talbert, Rev. Lawson, Theresa Nancy Self, Marc and Cynthia Abrams, Richard Bentley ... our Acts of Repentance Task Force now embarks on a journey to once again teach the church what it means to acknowledge its troubled history and to set historical harms right.

Our second day we heard about climate change and the work that we each can do to address the risk and vulnerability in our communities.

- We engaged in holy conferencing discerning and voting on matters that bring greater justice into the world.

- We welcomed our new interim treasurer Christy Drenner who laid out the process of creating a budget for 2024 that will be approved at a special called session of Annual Conference on October 5, 2024.

And then there was a panel discussion about our need for greater thinking on how to create greater sustainability, equity and transparency.

We honored the lives and legacies of the saints: clergy, spouses and laity who have joined the church triumphant.

Yesterday we heard a wonderful heart opening presentation from Dr. Frank Rodgers about flourishing after trauma. He shared three things that we should be doing: becoming trauma informed, preaching and teaching trauma sensitive theology and have spiritual counseling and other forms of accompaniment available for survivors.

The panel on the local church encouraged us to recognize that the power of the spirit is amplified in the gathered community, to think about how we use our physical buildings to offer new people to engage in bite sized pieces.

We voted on more important matters like peace, and our young people lifted our hearts with that fantastic worship service.

And today on our final day, we finish our work and prepare to celebrate the incredible humans who are being commissioned and ordained later today.

We have worshiped, we have fellowshiped, we have engaged in holy conferencing, we have learned together and soon we will be returning home. But this is not the end, this is the beginning ...  
I have a little dirt and a pot and small plant. We've talked a lot about flourishing this week - talk about soil, seed, roots, growth ... leads to words of encouragement and things to do.

**Sessions Committee** - Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank

The 41st session of the California Pacific Annual Conference will take place June 11-14, 2025 in the East District. Our theme word for 2025 is "Cherish." We have gone from Nourish to Flourish and now to Cherish.

I wish to offer a personal word of appreciation for Richard Bentley.

I would like to thank the Marriott Hotel and the staff of the Daily Grill. I would like to thank Dr. Erin Hawkins and the 2024 Sessions Team. Worship Team, Rev. Julie Elkins, worship chair, and anyone on the worship team. I thank our Conference Secretary Rev. Bob Rhodes; our Legislation Chair Rev. Lea Booth; Jennifer Scott and Rev. Won-Soek Yuh; Rev. Cathie Capp, Agenda Chair, and the entire Team. Bishop Escobedo-Frank thanked Rev. Sunyoung Lee, and the Board of Ministry Team for their work on the Ordination and Commissioning Service. Bishop Escobedo-Frank thanked by name the Media Production Team; Stage Team; Logistics and Hotel Liaison, Sandee Furuta; Jennifer Gaylord, Registration Team; and Communication Team including Mia Kim and Alyssa Fisher; Rev. Diane Rehfield and Cathy Wilson and the entire Board of Ordained Ministry; Mele Maka and Rev. Dr. Denyse Barnes; the Connectional Ministries Staff; Treasurer Office Staff; HR & Pension Staff; Jason Moore of Midnight Oil Productions; all

the guest presenters and panel participants; Rev. Preston Price; the Dean of Cabinet, and the Cabinet; and all the hardworking volunteers and ushers. Thank you to all clergy and laity for being here. We would also like to thank the UM Daily and the online monitors as well.

Rev. Richard Bentley was called up on stage. Bishop Escobedo-Frank shared that there is a lot of work that has been done behind the scenes that most people aren't aware of. Rev. Richard Bentley has been a significant leader in the movement of Regionalization in this church, which is why I wish to honor you in this moment. He wrote the draft of what would be known as the Christmas Covenant Plan, and working through connections in his global relations work through the Love Your Neighbor Coalition. He gathered people from around the world, offering fundraising and logistical support. Because of his leadership, Cal-Pac made a significant financial contribution to this advocacy work, making it a top giver in the denomination. He worked tirelessly behind the scenes to help make introductions and connections between leaders around the world, to gain consensus on what regionalization needs to cover. He selflessly offered up his knowledge of the Book of Discipline to help perfect the Regionalization Plan. I know, because I used to be on this team, he worked on the WJMJ committee. The Bishop asked all members of the WJMJ Committee to stand for recognition. I want you to know that sometimes we forget the hours and hours and hours people put into helping something change our system so our system can survive, and then live and grow and thrive. Richard has done that behind the scenes for a long time. We just want to say that we are so very grateful for Richard. Thank you. Richard says that he doesn't know what to say, but he will say something later!

#### **Closing Video** - Media Team

A closing video with this Annual Conference's theme of Flourish was shown. The 41st Session of the California Pacific Annual Conference will take place June 11-14, 2025 in the East District.

Bishop Escobedo-Frank: Before I ask Rev. Rhodes to close us, I wish to say that I so grateful that I showed up to the Youth Service last night and watched the youth lead. As I saw them singing and leading, I thought of that dream of our average age being 35 ... it can happen. These young people have it. Let's pass it off to them. Don't hold the baton. Pass it forward to the next generation. While I was there, I also had the privilege of baptizing Zoey and Chloe and it was beautiful. Bishop shared a meaningful moment from the baptism reflecting on how much she loves children's responses to baptism ... a child reaching out to touch the water, a child wanting to wave and say "hi" to everyone during the liturgy. The Bishop shared that that is a beautiful representation of what this body is about.

This morning, I got up and for the first time, put on my collar. It's not my favorite look, and it hurts my neck, so I had this flashback of when I went to the dentist during COVID and I was going to go to a Black Lives Matter event, and I had my collar on. I had the kind that goes all the way around. I walked into my dentist and she looked at me and said, "Oh! Did you hurt your neck?" I said, "You don't go to church, do you?" She didn't know what that thing was about. Little children have called it that "flea and tick" collar for humans. As I get ready to meet you at the Ordination service, I would like to say that I am Dottie Esbobedo-Frank, I am from the California Pacific Conference, I'm a sinner moving on to perfection, I am "she/her," I am your Bishop. See you soon.

#### **Closing Business** - Rev. Bob Rhodes

First of all, "Queen" Mele Maka asked me to invite the body to thank Bishop Dottie's husband Jim for his on-going support.

Bishop, thank you for your words, your clear, compassionate and capable leadership. We do have one more task to ask of you. Bishop, I move that we adjourn the 40th Session of the Cal-Pac Annual Conference at the end of the Commissioning and Ordination Service.

Bishop Escobedo-Frank: There is a second.

**Bishop Escobedo-Frank called for a vote. It was supported.**

**40th Annual Session of the California-Pacific Annual Conference**  
**The Service of Word and Table for the Ordination of Elders, the Commissioning of Provisional Members, and**  
**Recognition of Orders**  
**1:30 PM (PST)**

Anthony Lopez played the Prelude. The candidates were escorted to line up.

Processional Hymn

*Go Make of All Disciples*

UMH #571

Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank offered a word of greeting and the Opening Prayer.

Bishop Escobedo-Frank offered the litany of the Recognition of Common Ministry and Reaffirmation of Baptism.

Bishop Escobedo-Frank presented the Persons to be Ordained, Commissioned or Recognized.

Mele Maka, Conference Lay Leader, recognized and offered support of the Candidates.

The Board of Ordained Ministry all stood and shared that they have examined the Candidates and support them in their calling and ministry.

Rev. Amy Aitken, Full Conference Registrar, presented these persons for Ordination as Deacon: Christy Ann Clark; Hyon Shim Hong; Margaret Mazvita Machinga; Kristin Marie Sutrave.

Deacons in Full Connection affirmed them with prayers and support.

Rev. Amy Aitken, Full Conference Registrar, presented these persons for Ordination as Elder: Michelle Rene Andrews; Jonathan David Gentry; Eric Masahiro Iki; Jae Hong Jeon; Eric Otto Schmidt; Kitione Holameimuli Tu'itupou; Hongyun Won

Elders in Full Connection affirmed them with prayers and support.

Rev. Karl Stuckenberg, Provisional Registrar, presented these persons for commissioning as Provisional Elders preparing for Ordained Ministry as Elders: Ki Hyun Cho, Sylina Ann Kidd, Hyun Seob Kwon, Jonggoo Lee, Sejin Oh, Mary Ann Pickard, Joshua Edward Zulueta. The Board of Ordained Ministry affirmed them with prayers and support.

Rev. Amy Aitken presented this person for Recognition of Orders in the United Methodist Church as Deacon: Heather Marie KinKennon. The Board of Ordained Ministry affirmed her with prayers and support.

Rev. Amy Aitken presented these persons for Recognition of Orders in the United Methodist Church as Elders: Molly Elizabeth Lorden; Kimberly Christine Ports. The Board of Ordained Ministry affirmed them with prayers and support.

Rev. Amy Aitken also presented these persons for Recognition of Orders in the United Methodist Church as Elders: Paul Edward Capetz (from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) received as a provisional member by the 2022 Clergy Session of the California Pacific Annual Conference Under ¶347.3 of the Book of Discipline; Alexandro Elandelino Vilches (From Iglesia Metodista en Cuba, received as a provisional member by the 2022 Clergy Session of the California Pacific Annual Conference Under ¶347.3 of the Book of Discipline.

The Board of Ordained Ministry affirmed them with prayers and support.

Bishop Escobedo-Frank asked the congregation to declare their assent for the ordination and commissioning of the candidates. Bishop Escobedo-Frank then examined the candidates for commissioning and ordination.

Lay Leader Mele Maka led all in the Apostles Creed.

Rev. Ed Hansen led all in the Litany for a New Day

Special Music

*Child of God*

Dr. Dawn Brooks  
Anthony Lopez

Molly Elizabeth Lorden read the Scripture Reading from Matthew 11:2-6

Bishop Escobedo-Frank introduced and welcomed Bishop Mary Ann Swenson, Retired, who preached the Sermon.

#### COMMISSIONING OF PROVISIONAL ELDERS

Bishop Mary Ann Swenson, Bishop Brenda Bos and Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank commissioned and offered prayer and a laying on of hands over the Candidates for Commissioning as Provisional Elders. Ordained clergy and the candidates' support persons prayed for and participated in the laying on of hands over the Candidates.

#### LAYING ON OF HANDS AND PRAYERS FOR DEACONS

As the Candidates for Ordination as Elders stood, Bishop Mary Ann Swenson, Bishop Brenda Bos and Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank examined them for Ordination as an Elder, then they prayed over them. Candidates for Ordination as an Elder were invited to kneel before the Bishops one at a time. Family members and friends were invited to stand where they were for silent prayer during the laying on of hands for Ordinands.

All three Bishops laid hands on the head of each Ordinand and prayed. The Ordinand then placed his/her hands on the Bible, while Bishop Escobedo-Frank charged them to take their authority as an Elder. Each person ordained then received a stole to represent the mantle they took up.

Candidates for Ordination as Deacon: Christy Ann Clark; Hyon Shim Hong; Margaret Mazvia Machinga; Kristin Marie Sutrave.

#### RECOGNITION OF ORDERS

As the Candidates for Recognition of Orders stood, Bishop Escobedo-Frank, Bishop Mary Ann Swenson and Bishop Benda Bos examined them for Recognition of Orders and prayed over them. Christy Ann Clark; Hyon Shim Hong; Margaret Mazvia Machinga; Kristin Marie Sutrave were recognized as Elders in Full Connection in the United Methodist Church.

#### LAYING ON OF HANDS AND PRAYERS FOR ELDERS

As the Candidates for Ordination as Elders stood, Bishop Mary Ann Swenson, Bishop Brenda Bos and Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank examined them for Ordination as an Elder, then they prayed over them. Candidates for Ordination as an Elder were invited to kneel before the Bishops one at a time. Family members and friends were invited to stand where they were for silent prayer during the laying on of hands for Ordinands.

All three Bishops laid hands on the head of each Ordinand and prayed. The Ordinand then placed his/her hands on the Bible, while Bishop Escobedo-Frank charged them to take their authority as an Elder. Each person ordained then received a stole to represent the mantle they took up.

Candidates for Ordination as Elders: Michelle Rene Andrews; Jonathan David Gentry; Eric Masahiro Iki; Jae Hong Jeon; Eric Otto Schmidt; Kitione Holameimuli Tu'itupou; Hongyun Won.

#### RECOGNITION OF ORDERS

As the Candidates for Recognition of Orders stood, Bishop Escobedo-Frank, Bishop Mary Ann Swenson and Bishop Benda Bos examined them for Recognition of Orders and prayed over them. Michelle Rene Andrews; Jonathan David Gentry; Eric Masahiro Iki; Jae Hong Jeon; Eric Otto Schmidt; Kitione Holameimuli Tu'itupou; Hongyun Won were recognized as Elders in Full Connection in the United Methodist Church.

Candidates for Recognition of Orders in the United Methodist Church as an elder: Paul Edward Capetz; Alexandro Elandelino Vilches.

The hymn "Draw the Circle Wide" in the Worship & Song hymnal, #3154 was sung as the Invitation to the Offering was presented by Rev. Kitione Holameimuli Tu'itupou..

Rev. Tu'itupou called for a special offering to support SWCC, a Honolulu non-profit serving Kalihi-Palama for over 125 years, empowers youths, adults, and immigrants facing social and economic challenges toward self-sufficiency. SWCC's mission is to help those most in need thrive, regardless of language or cultural background. It provides high-quality social services to meet the community's needs and remains a supportive neighbor. Giving may take place in the following ways:

- Give online via registration or at: [www.calpacumc.org/donate](http://www.calpacumc.org/donate)

- Mail your check payable to the California Pacific Conference to: Jennifer Gaylord, PO Box 6006, Pasadena, CA 91102-6066
- In person attendees of the 40th Annual Cal-Pac Conference may give by utilizing designated baskets with cash or check payable to the California Pacific Conference as they enter or exit worship services.

Dr. Dawn Brooks and Anthony Lopenz presented the Offertory, “Amazing Grace” arranged by Jack Schrader.

The Doxology, “Halle, Halle, Hallelujah!” from the Faith We Sing hymnal, #2026 was sung.

Rev. Kitione Holameimuli Tu’itupou presented the Offertory Prayer.

Bishop Escobedo-Frank invited the body to the time of Thanksgiving and Communion. Bishop Swenson, Bishop Bos and Bishop Escobedo-Frank officiated the Eucharist.

Bishop Escobedo-Frank offered the Prayer after the Great Thanksgiving.

#### SENDING FORTH

Bishop Mary Ann Swenson offered the Dismissal with Blessing.

The closing hymn, “We Are Called” from the Faith We Sing hymnal, #2172, was sung.

The Postlude was performed by Anthony Lopez.