

**Recommendation for Discontinuation of
Green Korean United Methodist Church**

Submitted By: DS Staci Current

Fiscal Impact: There is no projected fiscal impact to the Annual Conference.

Background:

Green Korean United Methodist Church was established as First Korean United Methodist Church in 1998. It was a new church start that experienced vitality and growth in its early years. First Korean UMC voted on February 24, 2010 to change its name to Green Korean United Methodist Church. After a difficult period of pastoral changes, moving locations, as well as internal leadership challenges, Green Korean United Methodist Church has earnestly sought to recapture the momentum they enjoyed in earlier days. Unfortunately, this recovery has not come to fruition. In recent years, the church has experienced consistent decreases in attendance and giving, has amassed delinquencies of near \$90,000, and has demonstrated an inability to cooperate with the appointed pastoral leadership. To this end, it has been prayerfully determined that Green Korean United Methodist Church no longer serves the purpose for which it was organized and incorporated and is recommended for discontinuation at a date to be determined by the Bishop and the Cabinet.

The following steps were taken in the discernment process:

1. March 3, 2016: D.S. Staci Current met with the Pastor to discuss the growing concerns regarding the debt load of the church as well as the challenges he was encountering in his efforts to bring the local congregation practices in alignment with the United Methodist discipline. It was determined that a meeting between D.S. Current, the Pastor, and the key leaders of Green Korean United Methodist Church was in order.
2. March 12, 2016 D. S. Current, the Pastor, met with the Administrative Council Chair, SPRC Chair, and Finance Chair to discuss the current financial realities of Green Korean United Methodist Church. At this time the congregation found itself unable to pay the salary of their pastor and was behind on many of their financial obligations. The three church leaders present repeatedly articulated that the church was bankrupt. A line of credit was established with Wells Fargo and is now delinquent in the amount of \$22,000. The outstanding pension debt for current and former pastors totaling \$30,000.
3. The key leaders present shared their concerns over the trend of decreasing attendance and giving. The Sunday worship attendance has decreased from 293 in 2013 to 38 in 2016. Morning prayer attendance has decreased from 65 in 2014 to 16 in 2016. The giving per Sunday has decreased from \$3,625 in 2014 to \$1,773 in 2016.

- 1 4. The inability to meet their financial obligations, decline in membership, as well as an
2 inability to work in cooperation with the appointed pastor led D.S. Current to call for a
3 meeting with the entire Green congregation to discuss these issues and begin to discern a way
4 forward with the input of the entire congregation.
- 5 5. April 10, 2016: D.S. Current met with the congregation of Green Korean United Methodist
6 Church and shared her concerns regarding the finances and future of the church and the need
7 to plan a way forward. She proposed an assessment to explore church viability found in
8 Paragraph 213 of the Book Discipline. While a few members were amenable to this idea, it
9 was met with opposition. The meeting exemplified the general disrespect for the pastor and a
10 refusal to comply with the requests of the District Superintendent. Subsequent efforts to
11 secure a list of those who would be willing to participate in the Paragraph 213 process or felt
12 that the church should participate in the process were hindered by several church leaders.
- 13 6. April 19, 2016: A letter was sent by the Staff Parish Relations Chair on behalf of the Church
14 Council to the District Superintendent rejecting the Paragraph 213 process.
- 15 7. March 12, 2016/May 16, 2016/May 29, 2016: DS Current requested financial reporting on
16 their current debt load and bank statements. As of June 3, 2016 only a portion of info
17 requested has been received.

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20 The following steps were taken in the approval process:

- 21 1. May 27, 2016: The Bishop and Cabinet unanimously consented (8-0-0) for the
22 discontinuation of Green Korean United Methodist Church as it no longer serves the purpose
23 for which it was organized and incorporated.
- 24 2. June 3, 2016: The Chair of the Board of Church Location and Building was notified that
25 Green Korean United Methodist Church is being recommended for discontinuation. There is
26 no property involved.

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28 Whereas, Green Korean United Methodist Church has amassed close to \$90,000 in debt of which
29 it has no foreseeable capacity to repay. This includes;

- 30 • \$13,000 in unpaid pastoral compensation
- 31 • \$22,000 Wells Fargo delinquent line of credit
- 32 • \$30,000 unpaid pastoral pension delinquency
- 33 • \$25,000 unpaid miscellaneous bills

34 Whereas, Green Korean United Methodist Church has not participated in connectional giving
35 through paying anything toward the tithe in three years,

36 Whereas, the Annual Conference must assume the cost for underpayment of the Pastor's
37 scheduled compensation and previous unpaid pension benefit,

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2 Whereas, Green Korean United Methodist Church has been evicted by Warm Springs Baptist
3 Church (their host for several years,)

4 Whereas, the District Superintendent's proposal of assessment of church viability was rejected by
5 the church leadership,

6 Whereas, there are indications of disrespect toward the pastor in refusal to cooperate with his
7 efforts to address the current situation,

8 Whereas, the church leaders have not been accountable to financial oversight evidenced by their
9 inability to produce complete financial information upon repeated request,

10 Whereas, the church continues to experience a sharp downward trend in attendance and giving,

11 Whereas, while the Cabinet appreciates the desire of the members of Green Korean UMC to
12 remain together, they are no longer financially viable,

13 Whereas, there are two United Methodist Churches in close proximity to provide the
14 membership of Green Korean UMC the opportunity to be in relationship to one another and to
15 the United Methodist Church,

16 Whereas, Green Korean United Methodist Church is no longer fulfilling the purpose for which it
17 was organized,

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19 **Therefore, be it resolved** as follows that:

- 20 1. In accordance with the provisions of ¶ 2549.2 The 2012 Book of Discipline, Green Korean
21 United Methodist Church in Fremont, CA be discontinued at a date to be determined by the
22 Bishop and the Cabinet.
- 23 2. The membership of Green Korean United Methodist Church will be transferred to either
24 Jesus Love Korean Church or Korean United Methodist Church of Santa Clara Valley at the
25 discretion of the individual member.
- 26 3. All relevant, current and historic records of the congregation shall be retained in consultation
27 with the Conference Commission on Archives and History.