



A Statement for Equity, Human Dignity, and Justice in Appointment Making

June 5, 2021

We, the New Federation of Asian American United Methodists (NFAAUM) stand in solidarity with our Asian American clergy, laity, and congregations across the theological spectrum.

In the Spirit of Pentecost and as Asian American United Methodists, we affirm a diversity of convictions that are each grounded in our rich United Methodist tradition. We recognize that Asian Americans and Asian American congregations are not of one mind on a number of urgent issues facing our church. We may identify as conservative, traditional, liberal, and progressive.

No one theological category may adequately describe any one of our United Methodist congregations. We celebrate this broad spectrum of theological convictions based on our particular contexts as the gift of Asian Americans to the whole church, as well as to our global society.

In this light, we are moved to express our deep concern regarding the rationale of several recent decisions by our Episcopal leaders and their Cabinets. These decisions create a strong public perception that the cultural and theological contexts of Asian American congregations were not taken into account in the process of making several recent appointments: case in point, include the decisions to move the Rev. Jae Duk Lew from Valley Korean United Methodist in Granada Hills, California; the Rev. Sunghyun Jonathan Lee from Korean United Methodist Church in San Diego; the Rev. Nak In Kim from Bell Memorial United Methodist Church in Rowland Heights, California; and the Rev. James Lee, from Bethany Korean United Methodist Church in Wayne, New Jersey (cf. <https://www.umnews.org/en/news/protests-mount-against-cal-pac-bishop>)

We earnestly pray that these recent decisions do not reflect a growing desire to institute any single theological litmus test into the appointment of our clergy colleagues and especially our Asian American clergy colleagues.

To this end, we affirm the importance of an appointment-making system and process that reflects our gift of theological and cultural diversity within the United Methodist Church and our ethical commitment to secure equity, safeguard human dignity, and pursue justice through a transparent and consultative process of making clergy appointments.

We pledge to speak in boldness as we continue to advocate on behalf of our Asian American clergy and congregations and commit to hold in fervent prayer all our Episcopal leaders and their cabinets during these transitional months.

END OF THE STATEMENT

SIGNED AND ENDORSED BY:

Rev. Scott Christy, President - NFAAUM

Rev. Dr. Zaki Labib Zaki, Vice President for Advocacy and Programs - NFAAUM
President - Middle Eastern United Methodist Caucus and Arabic Language Ministry Centers

Rev. Edgar De Jesus, Vice President for Membership - NFAAUM
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Dr. Christina Lee, Secretary - NFAAUM

Rev. Vathanak Heang, Director - NFAAUM
President - Cambodian National Caucus

Mr. Puong Ong Lau, Director - NFAAUM
President – National Chinese Caucus UMC

Rev. Nathan N. Vang
President - National Hmong Caucus of the United Methodist Church

Rev. Timothy Rathod, Director – NFAAUM
President - Indian National Caucus of the United Methodist Church

Rev. Sean Chanthasone, Director - NFAAUM
President - Lao and Thai National Caucus of the United Methodist Church

Rev. Ayla Samson, Director – NFAAUM
President - Pakistani United Methodist Caucus

Rev. Dr. Peter Lau, Immediate Past President – NFAAUM
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ADDITIONAL ENDORSEMENTS BY:

Rev. Chul Goo Lee
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