



Ohio West Area
THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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To the brothers and sisters of the United Methodist Church in Burundi,

Grace and peace in Jesus Christ! We write to share with you good news of how God is working reconciliation in our midst!

Today a group of United Methodist Leaders from around the world met with representatives of the two groups of the United Methodist Church in Burundi and the Bishop of the East Africa Episcopal Area. We were overjoyed and deeply encouraged to hear how, after a long and painful separation, God has been working to bring unity. There is renewed hope today that the United Methodist church in Burundi can come together for common mission and a bright future.

We were impressed with the amount of conversation that has already taken place and the openness with which the representatives came to this meeting. In our time together, we witnessed the clear commitment of both groups to reconciliation. Everyone desires and is ready to do the work to help create one strong and vital United Methodist Church in Burundi. The Burundian representatives of the two groups expressed their great appreciation to the Council of Bishops, the General Board of Global Ministries, and the Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters for making this meeting possible

We affirm the leadership of Bishop Daniel Wandabula and Legal Representative Rev. Jean Ntahoturi and ask them, along with the leadership of the church in Burundi, to begin immediate work on the next steps needed to have one United Methodist Church in Burundi. This work will culminate in a special session of the Burundi annual conference convened by Bishop Wandabula and Legal Representative Rev. Jean Ntahoturi on February 6-8, 2018 in Gitega. The special session will be led by Bishop Wandabula with assistance from a representative from the Council of Bishops.

Your United Methodist leadership in Burundi, in preparation for the special session of annual conference, will be doing everything possible to bring the church together on the local, district and conference level. We invite you to pray for them in the months ahead and to join them in this work of reconciliation in your own churches, towns, and villages.

Today is an historic day for the church in Burundi. Thanks be to God!
In Christ's peace,



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Bishop Gregory V. Palmer, Chairperson, Standing Committee on Central
Conference Matters, Comprehensive Africa Task Force

Bishop Eben Nhwatiwa, Zimbabwe Episcopal Area

Bishop Daniel Wandabula, East Africa Episcopal Area

Thomas Kemper, General Secretary, General Board of Global Ministries

Rev. Jean Ntahoturi, Legal Representative of UMC in Burundi

Rev. Lazare Bankurunaze, Assistant to the Bishop, East Africa Episcopal Area

Hon. Georges Nshimirimana, Conference lay leader and member of Burundi
Parliament

Zephirin Ndikumana, Conference lay leader, Burundi Annual Conference

Rev Amy Lippoldt, Secretary, Standing Committee on Central Conference
Matters, Comprehensive Africa Task Force