

February 14, 2022

## **Several Updates on the Boy Scouts Child Sexual Abuse Lawsuit**

There have been several notable recent developments on the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) child sexual abuse bankruptcy case.

The BSA has reached an agreement with the Torts Claim Committee, an organization which represents 16,000 survivors. Related to this, the judge presiding over the case has delayed the start of a court proceeding to determine whether a settlement should proceed to March 9, 2022 from February 22, 2022. These are both positive developments.

The UMC BSA Leadership Team has entered into an agreement with the BSA that will extend existing charter agreements and facilities use agreements until June 30, 2022. Although no local church should sign any document that has charter or facilities use language right now, it is appropriate for local churches to proceed with the annual membership renewal process for scouting activities at this time. The membership renewal process should be a simple document without obligating the local church to anything associated with training or liability issues.

A joint letter explaining these matters from Bishop John Schol, the UMC Leadership Team Chair, and Roger Mosby, Chief Scout Executive with the BSA, is below. A related news release from United Methodist Communications was shared this morning [at this link](#).

The registration process should be simple and straightforward. It is important, though, that you be vigilant as you review documents. There are likely to be some attempts by the Boy Scouts to confuse issues and get some of our churches to inadvertently sign charter extension agreements that transfer liability to UMC churches from the Boy Scouts. Simply put, when in doubt, do not sign.

Pastors with questions on these matters should contact their District Superintendent, or the Rev. Dr. Steve Summers, Assistant to the Bishop and Director of Connectional Ministries.

The Virginia Conference BSA Leadership team appreciates your attention to these important matters. We realize that the BSA bankruptcy lawsuit creates issues that can be tiring and lead to weariness. There are always major twists and turns with any large class action lawsuit and the BSA bankruptcy is one of the largest cases to be litigated in the Delaware courts. It is important that we carry on and pray for the more than 80,000 survivors.

Thank you for your attention to these important matters. The joint letter from Bishop Schol and Roger Mosby follows, in bold and italic.

*Dear United Methodist Church and BSA Scouting Community,*

*The United Methodist Church and the Boy Scouts of America have worked together to develop the character and values of youth through a more than 100-year relationship. The young people have become leaders in communities, education, industry, and public service. Building on the foundation of the Scout Oath and Law, young people have also grown in their duty to God, country, and self. On behalf of the Boy Scouts of America and The United Methodist Church, we thank you, the leaders who serve to further the aims of Scouting and support and develop young people.*

*Charter Renewal Is Now Extended Through June 30, 2022*

*The UMC and the BSA are continuing to develop a long-term solution regarding the church's relationship with Scouting in service to youth. As we move forward, we recognize that changes are needed. We are thankful that we are working together to improve the program and safety of Scouting for future generations of young people.*

*To plan for and carry out the new relationship agreements, the leadership of BSA and the UMC have agreed that it is best for all, and especially Scouts, to extend the effectiveness of all existing charters from March 31, 2022, through June 30, 2022. This will provide for uninterrupted ministry with young people through Scouting.*

*Membership Renewal Should Be Moving Forward*

*We are also reaching out jointly today for an additional and very important reason: namely, to be clear that the annual membership renewal process for all youth and adults who participate in Scouting programs should be moving forward, notwithstanding our agreement to continue the pause on charter renewal through June 2022. Charter renewal and membership renewal are related but distinct processes. Charter renewal focuses on the organization-to-organization relationship. This relationship is extended without any action required. Membership renewal involves the relationship between individual Scouts and volunteers and the BSA.*

*It is critically important that all present Scout units and local councils continue forward with membership renewal. Maintaining active membership registrations for all Scouts and volunteers is critical for a number of reasons, including the following:*

- *Membership ensures that the Scouts and volunteers are covered by the insurance BSA maintains.*
- *Membership entitles Scouts and volunteers to receive literature and communications from the BSA.*

- **Membership renewal for adult volunteers ensures that they have complied with the BSA Youth Protection training requirements, that their background checks are current, and that they can otherwise safely support our youth in the program.**

*In short, annual membership renewal is a vital step in allowing Scouting to continue, without interruption and safely, while we continue to address how best to structure the UMC's relationship with Scouting over the longer term. Consequently, every pack, troop, and crew should renew their memberships immediately by working with local council representatives to re-register all active participants. Local council representatives stand ready to support and help streamline the process, so that Scouting activities may continue without interruption.*

*If you have any questions, please contact Steven Scheid at The United Methodist Church at [sscheid@gcumm.org](mailto:sscheid@gcumm.org) or your local council representative. Thank you for your support of Scouting and your attention to this important matter. We look forward to our continued ministry to the youth of our nation.*

*Keep the faith!  
Bishop John Schol  
UMC Leadership Team Chair*

*Yours in Scouting,  
Roger C. Mosby  
Chief Scout Executive*