

Motion to Revise the RJF
911th Presbytery Meeting
May 14, 2026

The Commission on Reconciliation recommends that the Presbytery of Baltimore:
Add Mt. Paran Presbyterian Church to the list of prioritized Baltimore
Presbytery congregations to benefit from the Reparative Justice Fund.

Rationale

The history of New Imani, a new church development begun in 2000, was lifted up in the original proposal to create the Reparative Justice Fund highlighting the subsequent broken trust between the Presbytery, pastoral leadership and individual members. After the sudden death of the organizing pastor, Rev. K. Aaron Lee, New Imani was renamed Living Faith Fellowship under the pastoral leadership of Anita Bishop-Johnson and Donna Lea. Living Faith eventually relocated to Mt. Paran Presbyterian Church where the faithful few that remained finally found a church home. Living Faith Fellowship was dissolved and Anita Bishop-Johnson and Donna Lea now serve as pastors of Mt Paran. Mt. Paran, therefore, is the appropriate place to address the repair of this particular harm.

In the motions approved by the Presbytery on September 13, 2025 we designated a portion of the Reparative Justice Funds to be specifically earmarked for the Black churches in the Presbytery with the following language:

The fund will prioritize the six historically and majority Black churches of the Presbytery of Baltimore, while also extending to Black neighborhoods and communities within the geographic boundaries of the Presbytery of Baltimore. At least 25% and up to one third of the Fund will be designated in support of the six PCUSA congregations.

In order to be clear, we included a list of the 6 churches in a footnote:

Cherry Hill Community Presbyterian, Grace Presbyterian, Knox Presbyterian, Locheam Presbyterian, Madison Avenue Presbyterian, and Trinity Presbyterian.

At the same September Presbytery meeting, we heard a passionate plea from Pastor Anita Bishop-Johnson to acknowledge the more recent history of harm that continued beyond the 6 churches. After careful consideration and further consultation, the Dismantling Racism Team agreed with the call for repair of the broken trust of New Imani/Living Faith be carried out through Mt. Paran Presbyterian Church.