

## Bringing Missional Adaptation and Focus

### A Report to General Conference by the Connectional Table

#### Our Purpose

The Connectional Table (CT) is “where ministry and money are brought to the same table to coordinate the mission, ministries, and resources of The United Methodist Church” (*BOD* ¶ 901).

“The purpose of the Connectional Table (CT) is for the discernment and articulation of the vision for the church and the stewardship of the mission, ministries, and resources of The United Methodist Church as determined by the actions of the General Conference and in consultation with the Council of Bishops.” (*BOD* ¶ 904)

#### Bringing Missional Adaptation and Focus

Don't remember the prior things;  
don't ponder ancient history.  
Look! I am doing a new thing;  
now it sprouts up; don't you recognize it?  
I'm making a way in the desert,  
paths in the wilderness. (Isaiah  
43:18-19 CEB)

As The United Methodist Church anticipates great and unprecedented change, the CT is preparing for the new things God is doing. It may be that unity and mission within our connection will be expressed in different ways in the future, and we realize that such changes will take time. The 2021-2024 quadrennium will provide opportunities for exploration, experimentation, and discovery, and the CT will continue its vital work in fostering new, deep conversations between people and groups from around our global connection as we work together to discern what is emerging in the life of our church. During this time, the CT will emphasize key themes—**Vital, Worldwide and Contextual, Affirming and Inclusive, Effective, and Connectional**—and organize our work in specific ways.

#### We Are Vital

“Whenever United Methodism has had a clear sense of mission, God has used our Church to save persons, heal relationships, transform social structures, and spread scriptural holiness, thereby changing the world. In order to be truly alive, we embrace Jesus’

mandate to love God and to love our neighbor and to make disciples of all peoples.” (*BOD* ¶ 121)

The Connectional Table will continue to collaborate with and support the Council of Bishops (COB) and the agencies in bringing vitality and purpose to the connection by strengthening ministries in the Four Areas of Focus.

#### A New Messaging Strategy

To place sustained emphasis on the mission of The United Methodist Church and upon the Four Areas of Focus, our Strategic Team (a collaboration between the Connectional Table and the COB) sought ways to connect the missional strategies of the agencies and the ministries in annual conferences.

The Strategic Team worked closely with United Methodist Communications (UMCOM) to develop a new messaging strategy to lead us into the new quadrennium. The taglines—**Making New Disciples in New Places, Leading Where God Calls, Overcoming Poverty Together, Seeking Health and Wholeness for All**—stay true to the legacy of the Four Areas of Focus while introducing language that is more accessible to people in the pews and the world. A full rollout of the new messaging will be evident during the 2020 annual conference season and will help lead our whole connection into a new era of United Methodist missional work.

#### Connecting Missional Strategies

The Connectional Table also piloted a new connectional assessment tool to gather data and facilitate conversations of mission and ministry that seek to identify areas of mutual accountability and support as we live out our connectional covenant, as stated in ¶ 125 in the *BOD*. The data and conversations centered on strengthening relationships and connecting missional strategies among annual conferences, general church program agencies, the CT, GCFA, and the COB. More specifically, the tool was developed to help us achieve the following four objectives: articulate and celebrate fruitfulness; continuously improve; build capacity; and communicate ministry impact.

After testing the tool in the Arkansas, California-Pacific, Northern Illinois, South Carolina, Upper New York, and Liberia annual conferences, the CT obtained deep knowledge of annual conference activities in the

Four Areas of Focus, strengths in ministries, strategic directions, and opportunities for capacity-building. Our learnings from the tool will inform the state of the denomination as we look to what is emerging.

## We Are Worldwide and Contextual

A key culture shift for our connection that the Connectional Table will increasingly engage is the shift from a U.S.-centered denomination to one that is truly worldwide. As we seek to understand new ways in which United Methodism will express itself in the future, it is important that these conversations continue and include voices and perspectives from all parts of our connection.

Specifically, the CT will continue to engage with the Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters and the Committee on Faith and Order on Chapter 5 (Administrative Order) of a *General Book of Discipline*. In addition, the CT will offer new legislation to create a U.S. Regional Conference to unburden the General Conference from inordinate time spent on U.S.-only matters. And, the CT will continue to look at its own makeup and mandates, in consultation with the COB, so that the CT itself can more effectively reflect the worldwide nature of the church.

## Agency Structure and Mandates for a General Book of Discipline

Throughout the quadrennium, the Connectional Table's Chapter 5 Advisory Group worked alongside the Standing Committee, the Committee on Faith and Order, and the general agencies to draft a new Chapter 5 (Administrative Order) for the *General Book of Discipline*. These chapters in the *BOD* address agency structure and mandates. The intent of the work is to reflect an understanding of agency that is more congruent with a worldwide church.

The Standing Committee will seek a broader mandate from the 2020 General Conference to better facilitate this work and offer legislation for the *General Book of Discipline* in 2024. The CT's Chapter 5 Advisory Group will, therefore, continue this work with the Standing Committee, the Committee on Faith and Order, and the agencies into the next quadrennium as the groups discern together how agency might be expressed in our worldwide connection.

## Creating a U.S. Regional Conference

With the goal of easing the burden of U.S. legislation on the General Conference and giving churches in the U.S. parity with the central conferences, the Connectional

Table began deep work on a U.S. structure as it worked alongside the Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters on the *General Book of Discipline*. As the global church responds to the 2019 Special Session, new legislative proposals for a U.S. structure have been brought forth. None of them predate the CT's work or have the same missional focus.

In April 2019, the CT approved bringing a legislative proposal to the 2020 General Conference to create a United States Regional Conference comprising the current U.S. jurisdictional conferences and the geographical boundaries congruent with the territory of U.S. annual conferences [20722, 20723, 20724, 20725, 20726]. Naming this new structure for U.S. governance a "regional conference" rather than a "central conference" acknowledges the painful, racist history and still existing wound associated with the former Central Jurisdiction in the U.S.

Currently, many General Conference petitions pertain mostly or exclusively to The UMC in the U.S. Yet, the U.S. church currently has no venue other than General Conference for considering this legislation. As a result, these U.S.-specific petitions dominate General Conference time, burden central conference delegates with matters that are outside their purview, and materially impact the efficiency of the legislative process.

Creating a U.S. Regional Conference provides an organizational structure for the U.S. to have parity with existing central conferences for doing work on the adaptable portions of the *Book of Discipline*. Equally important, a regional conference will offer the U.S. the opportunity to develop missional strategies for the church in the U.S. context.

Creating the U.S. Regional Conference will be done in two stages:

- Stage I forms a committee of the General Conference, with legislative function, to deal with a U.S. region—adaptable disciplinary provisions, U.S.-related resolutions, and non-disciplinary petitions concerning U.S. matters.
- Stage II forms the U.S. Regional Conference, after which the Stage I committee will end its work.

Because the regional conference is a new body and different from a central conference, the proposed legislation will add a new ¶ 11. Article IV.—“There shall be a regional conference for the Church in the United States of America, with such powers, duties, privileges, and limitations as are hereinafter set forth.” Also, a new Section VI. Regional Conferences in the Constitution would be added.

It is important to note that this proposal is consistent with and complementary to the work on a *General Book of Discipline*. The *General Book of Discipline* currently in design would allow only General Conference to work on non-adaptable sections, while continuing to allow central conferences to work on adaptable sections. It is also important to note that the U.S. proposal would not change the role and authority of U.S. jurisdictional conferences, including the election of bishops.

Proposals for the U.S. to have a structure similar to a central conference began as early as 1924, with a formal proposal by the Board of Foreign Missions coming to General Conference in 1928. The CT began work on this issue in 2005, when a joint task force on the Global Nature of the Church was established with the COB.

When the work on the *General Book of Discipline* began at General Conference 2012, the need for the churches in the U.S. to have a place to do adaptable work took on a greater sense of urgency. The CT began working alongside the Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters in 2013, when it formed a Worldwide Nature Collaboration Group.

### ***A More Global Leadership Body for the General Church***

The Connectional Table created a General Church Council working group to respond to legislation proposed during the 2013–2016 quadrennium that requested the CT reorganize to better serve our global church (Petition 60815-GA-NonDis-G in the 2016 *ADCA*). The group, led by a CT member and a representative of the COB, grounded its work in the goals expressed in ¶ 125 of the *BOD*:

“Integrally holding connectional unity and local freedom, we seek to proclaim and embody the gospel in ways responsible to our specific cultural and social context while maintaining ‘a vital web of interactive relationships.’”

Working in light of the creation of a *General Book of Discipline*, the group convened conversations and developed a legislative proposal to move the CT toward better global representation, updated mandates, and a new leadership paradigm grounded in trust. However, in light of the outcomes of Special Session 2019 and the Standing Committee’s decision to postpone a *General Book of Discipline*, the group will continue this work into the next quadrennium with the intent of offering legislation at the 2024 General Conference.

## **We Are Affirming and Inclusive**

“Inclusiveness means openness, acceptance, and support that enables all persons to participate in the life of the Church, the community, and the world; therefore, inclusiveness denies every semblance of discrimination.” (*BOD* ¶ 140)

As our church continues to grapple with what it means to be an affirming and inclusive church in terms of gender/ gender identity, race, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, age, culture, and other factors, the Connectional Table will seek to listen, support, and come alongside groups engaging these conversations. The CT will continue its work on giving theological, missiological, and ecclesiological undergirding to such conversations in a variety of ways, including through an online anthology project.

### ***Emerging Anthology Project***

Bishop Christian Alsted, Chair of the CT, and Rev. Kennetha J. Bigham-Tsai, Chief Connectional Ministries Officer of the CT, gave a statement, “For the Sake of the Church,” in April 2019 addressing the outcome of the 2019 Special Session. The statement included a call to action, pleading with the church to enter into reflection, conversation, and prayer about the state of our church. The Emerging project, an online anthology of writings about the state of our denomination, is the natural outcome of this statement.

Emerging is grounded in Isaiah 43:18-19. It raises the questions: What is God doing new in and through God’s people called Methodists? Might we, through our best thinking and reflection, be better able to perceive the new thing God is doing?

This project is helping us explore these questions through an open-ended conversation about what is emerging in Methodism. By creating a highly accessible, web-based dialogue, we are engaging United Methodists with a diversity of perspectives from across our worldwide connection.

Through this forum, we are curating and crowdsourcing our best thinking about theology, ecclesiology, missiology, polity, history, and leadership from scholars, pastors, and lay folk alike. We are asking questions such as: How do we understand what it means to be the church in mission? How are we living out what it means to be church across the world? What does our history have to teach us at this time in the life of our connection? How might our polity inform us, or how does it constrain us? What kinds of leadership do we need to grapple with the challenges we face?

The CT will continue to engage such questions and be a vehicle that enables “the flow of information and communication . . . listen[s] to the expression of needs . . . [and that] address[es] emerging issues” facing our denomination at such a time as this (*BOD* ¶ 905.2, 3). For more information about Emerging, go to [www.emergingmethodism.com](http://www.emergingmethodism.com).

## We Are Effective

The Connectional Table work will build on the foundations laid during the current quadrennium and on the learnings from the budgeting allocations and agency evaluation processes to increase effectiveness and accountability throughout our connection. Toward this end, the CT will continue working with the agencies even as it engages conversations about how “agency” might take new forms.

The CT also will continue and extend its work with agencies and GCFA in shaping a values-based quadrennial budget in ways that are missionally focused, equitable, and sustainable. In addition, the CT will monitor its own effectiveness through active engagement with internal processes of budgeting and evaluation as well as human resource management.

## A Values-Based Quadrennial Budget

For the first time in three quadrennia, the Connectional Table implemented a new values-based process to allocate the denomination’s budget. Facing steep cuts within the connection, the CT sought to allocate the budget according to values that could better focus the budget missionally and help each agency maintain its core mission and continue to thrive.

Our values included:

- a holistic focus on The UMC’s mission,
- an agency’s core mission,
- missional priorities,
- emerging missional priorities,
- stewardship,
- transparency,
- fairness and justice,
- and equity.

Guided by these values and equipped with a full understanding of the agencies’ finances, programming, priorities and capacity, the CT developed a budget proposal to allocate the \$358,579,025 determined by the General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA) and the CT. The CT’s budget proposal was approved by the CT and GCFA jointly at the April 2019 meeting and will be presented by both groups at General Conference 2020.

## Agency Evaluation

Our Agency Evaluation Advisory Group also implemented strategies to help understand and celebrate the ways in which agency work aligns with the Four Areas of Focus. The group began by having each agency complete Logic Model evaluations to demonstrate the relationship between the organization’s resources, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts as it relates to the Four Areas of Focus. Next, the advisory group hosted a series of dialogue sessions: one dialogue with each agency receiving apportioned funds and one for each of the Four Areas of Focus. The sessions were rich learning opportunities and revealed many inspiring examples of the missional faithfulness and fruitfulness of our agencies. It became clear that this approach opened conversations and fostered relationship-building in a new and much-needed way.

## We Are Connectional

In the face of our impasse over how to be in ministry with our LGBTQIA+ siblings and the inevitable changes that will come, the Connectional Table is committed to developing our understanding of connectionalism and how it might look different in varying contexts. The CT is also committed to ensuring that connectionalism remains central to the conversation about what is emerging in our worldwide church. As our *Book of Discipline* notes, “Only when we commit ourselves to interdependent worldwide partnerships in prayer, mission, and worship can connectionalism as the Wesleyan ecclesial vision be fully embodied” (¶ 125). The CT will work with our general agencies, the COB, and others to explore ways in which such worldwide missional partnerships can embody our developing vision of connectionalism, even as those partnerships take different forms.

## Conclusion

The Connectional Table has accomplished much during the 2016-2020 quadrennium, including fulfilling its General Conference mandates, more deeply engaging its purpose, and moving toward a new leadership approach. Grounded in adaptive leadership concepts that challenge us to move beyond technical work and toward adaptive approaches, the CT has worked to build its capacity to deal with the rapid changes facing our connection. The CT will continue to build upon the inroads it has made and clarify its responsibility to the mission of The United Methodist Church. The CT also will continue to seek to increase the capacity of the United Methodist connection by supporting new and improved collaboration, bringing together the abundance of resources within

The UMC, and increasing efficiency as stewards of the resources generously given. As God's emerging work is revealed to us, relationship building and collaboration will be especially important as we deal with the inevitable loss associated with change and as we seek ways forward that are sustainable yet faithful to our mission.

*Bishop Christian Alsted*  
Chair of the Connectional Table

*Rev. Kennetha J. Bigham-Tsai*  
Chief Connectional Ministries Officer

## Proposed Amendments to the *Book of Discipline*

### ¶3.

Petition Number: 20239-GA-¶3-C-G; Coleman, Tami - Crestwood, KY, USA for Kentucky Annual Conference.

#### Add Nicene Creed to Doctrinal Standards

Amend ¶ 3 accordingly:

¶ 3. **Article III.** *Articles of Religion, and the Confession of Faith*, and the Nicene Creed—

The Articles of Religion and the Confession of Faith of The United Methodist Church are those held by The Methodist Church and The Evangelical United Brethren Church, respectively, at the time of their uniting.<sup>3</sup> The Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed that is part of the church's doctrinal standards is the version that is printed under the heading, "The Nicene Creed," in the 1989 edition of *The United Methodist Hymnal*.

#### Rationale:

The Doctrinal Standards affirm the Nicene Creed. Including the creed further strengthens ecumenical conversation, giving a theological framework for dialogue and discernment within United Methodism. Also, it professes our theological connection and heritage with the greater church of Jesus Christ

### ¶4.

Petition Number: 20001-GA-¶4-C; Lopez, Joseph - Seattle, WA, USA.

#### Building a Fully Inclusive Church

Amend ¶ 4. *Article IV*

*Inclusiveness of the Church*—The United Methodist Church is a part of the church universal, which is one body in Christ. The United Methodist Church acknowledges that all persons are of sacred worth and that we are in ministry to all. All persons ~~without regard to race, color, national origin, status, or economic condition,~~ shall be eligible to attend its worship services, participate in its programs, receive the sacraments, and upon baptism be admitted as baptized members, ~~and~~ All persons, upon taking vows declaring the Christian faith and relationship with Jesus Christ, shall be eligible to become professing members in any local church in the connection. In The United Methodist Church no conference or other organizational unit of the church shall be structured so as to exclude any member or any constituent body ~~of the Church~~

~~because of race, color, national origin, status or economic condition.~~

### ¶4.

Petition Number: 20240-GA-¶4-C-G; Hare, Dawn - Chicago, IL, USA for General Commission on the Status and Role of Women.

#### Amend Paragraph 4

Amend ¶ 4. *Article IV*:

¶ 4. *Article IV. Inclusiveness of the Church*—The United Methodist Church is a part of the church universal, which is one body in Christ. The United Methodist Church acknowledges that all persons are of sacred worth. All persons without regard to race, gender, color, national origin, status, or economic condition, shall be eligible to attend its worship services, participate in its programs, receive the sacraments, upon baptism be admitted as baptized members, and upon taking vows declaring the Christian faith, become professing members in any local church in the connection. In The United Methodist Church, no conference or other organizational unit of the church shall be structured so as to exclude any member or any constituent body of the church because of race, color, national origin, status, or economic condition

#### Rationale:

Adding "gender" to the membership portion of the Constitution to match what is already stated in ¶ 16.1. It reinforces The UMC's commitment to gender equity throughout our worldwide connection. It affirms that women cannot be discriminated in membership.

### ¶4.

Petition Number: 20241-GA-¶4-C-G; Henry, Katharine - La Cañada Flintridge, CA, USA. 2 Similar Petitions

#### ALL BELONG: Ensuring Inclusive Welcome

Amend ¶ 4 as follows:

*Article IV. Inclusiveness of the Church*—The United Methodist Church is a part of the church universal, which is one body in Christ. The United Methodist Church acknowledges that all persons are of sacred worth. All persons without regard to race, color, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, relationship, ability, national origin,

status, or economic condition, shall be eligible to attend its worship services, participate in its programs, receive the sacraments, upon baptism be admitted as baptized members, and upon taking vows declaring the Christian faith, become professing members in any local church in the connection. In The United Methodist Church, no conference or other organizational unit of the church shall be structured so as to exclude any member or any constituent body of the church because of race, color, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, relationship, ability, national origin, status, or economic condition, nor shall any member be denied access to an equal place in the life, worship, and governance of the church because of race, color, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, relationship, ability, national origin, status, or economic condition.

**Rationale:**

Because all belong in the body of Christ, the Holy Spirit calls and includes all persons into the life of the church by the power of the Holy Spirit, transcending the limitations of our categories. We are called to overcome the divisions of our human communities.

**¶4.**

Petition Number: 20242-GA-¶4-C-G; Burk, William - Fort Wayne, IN, USA. 2 Similar Petitions

**Inclusiveness of the Church**

Amend ¶ 4 Article IV by deletion such that ¶ 4 will read:

The United Methodist Church is a part of the church universal, which is one body in Christ. The United Methodist Church acknowledges that all persons are of sacred worth.

All persons ~~without regard to race, color, national origin, status, or economic condition,~~ shall be eligible to attend its worship services, participate in its programs, receive the sacraments, upon baptism be admitted as baptized members, and upon taking vows declaring the Christian faith, become professing members in any local church in the connection. In The United Methodist Church no conference or other organizational unit of the church shall be structured so as to exclude any member or any constituent body of the church. ~~because of race, color, national origin, status or economic condition.~~

**Rationale:**

Whereas, the motto of The United Methodist Church “Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors” is intended to indicate that all are welcome, there are many who also

read the *Book of Discipline* and feel that in fact not all are welcome. We believe all should be welcome.

**¶17.**

Petition Number: 20243-GA-¶17-C-G; Brooks, Lonnie - Anchorage, AK, USA.

**Delete Restrictive Rule 1**

Delete ¶ 17.

This amendment will be certifiable if and when the Council of Bishops certifies the amendment of ¶ 59, which removes the requirement of a three-fourths majority of the members of the annual conferences to change Restrictive Rule 1.

**Rationale:**

The Articles of Religion are of tremendous historical significance, but they should be relegated to historical status and not continue to be treated as formal doctrinal statements of the church.

**¶17.**

Petition Number: 20244-GA-¶17-C-G; Coleman, Tami - Crestwood, KY, USA for Kentucky Annual Conference.

**Add Nicene Creed to Doctrinal Standards**

Amend ¶ 17 accordingly:

¶ 17. **Article I**—The General Conference shall not revoke, alter, or change our Articles of Religion or establish any new standards or rules of doctrine contrary to our present existing and established standards of doctrine, except to affirm the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, as printed under the heading, “The Nicene Creed,” in the 1989 edition of *The United Methodist Hymnal*, as a part of our doctrinal standards.<sup>40</sup>

**Rationale:**

The Doctrinal Standards affirm the Nicene Creed. Including the creed further strengthens ecumenical conversation, giving a theological framework for dialogue and discernment within United Methodism. Also, it professes our theological connection and heritage with the greater church of Jesus Christ.

**¶18.**

Petition Number: 20245-GA-¶18-C-G; Brooks, Lonnie - Anchorage, AK, USA.

## Delete Restrictive Rule 2

Delete ¶ 18.

This amendment will be certifiable if and when the Council of Bishops certifies the amendment of ¶ 59, which removes the requirement of a three-fourths majority of the members of the annual conferences to change Restrictive Rule 2.

### Rationale:

The Confession of Faith is of tremendous historical significance, but it should be relegated to historical status and not continue to be treated as a formal doctrinal statement of the church.

## ¶21.

Petition Number: 20246-GA-¶21-C-G; Brooks, Lonnie - Anchorage, AK, USA.

## Delete Restrictive Rule 5

Delete ¶ 21.

### Rationale:

The General Rules are of tremendous historical significance, but they should be relegated to historical status and not continue to be treated as formal doctrinal statements of the church.

## ¶59.

Petition Number: 20247-GA-¶59-C-G; Brooks, Lonnie - Anchorage, AK, USA.

## Revision of Process for Amending Restrictive Rules 1 and 2

Amend ¶ 59 as indicated.

¶ 59. *Article I.*—Amendments to the Constitution shall be made upon a two-thirds majority of the General Conference present and voting and a two-thirds affirmative vote of the aggregate number of members of the several annual conferences present and voting, ~~except in the case of the first and second Restrictive Rules, which shall require a three-fourths majority of all the members of the annual conferences present and voting.~~

### Rationale:

This first step should be taken in providing the church with the ability to keep its doctrine in step with its theology and practice. The next step should be the deletion of Restrictive Rules 1, 2, and 5, which are ¶¶ 17, 18, and 21.

## ¶61.

Petition Number: 20248-GA-¶61-C-G; Brown, Curtis - Springfield, IL, USA.

## Calling a Constituting Conference

Amend the Constitution of The United Methodist Church by adding a new division following ¶ 61 as follows:

### Division Six—Constituting Conference

*Article I.*—A Constituting Conference may be called by a two-thirds majority of the General Conference present and voting. The purpose of the Constituting Conference shall be to draft and propose a new Constitution of The United Methodist Church. Upon ratification, this new Constitution shall supersede all previous petitions, resolutions, or General Conference actions, including all sections of the Book of Discipline.

*Article II.*—The Constituting Conference, possessing the authority and exercising all the powers of the General Conference, shall be organized in such manner as the General Conference will prescribe, to meet at such time and in such place as may be stated in the call. Such a Constituting Conference shall be composed of the delegates to the preceding General Conference or their lawful successors, except that when a particular annual conference or missionary conference shall prefer to have a new election it may do so.

*Article III.*—A two-thirds majority of the Constituting Conference present and voting may propose a new Constitution of The United Methodist Church. The Constitution shall be ratified by a two-thirds majority vote of two-thirds of the annual and missionary conferences. The vote, after being completed, shall be canvassed by the Council of Bishops, and the Constitution shall become effective upon their announcement of its having received the required majority.

*Article IV.*—In the event that the Constituting Conference adopts a new Constitution, the Constituting Conference may immediately adopt enabling legislation that shall be contingent on ratification and contemporaneously with the new Constitution, unless said legislation provides for a later effective date. In the same manner, a central, jurisdictional, provisional, missionary, or annual conference may approve legislation in anticipation of such a change in the Constitution that would likewise become effective upon ratification, unless said legislation provides for a later effective date.

### Rationale:

This petition would add a process for The United Methodist Church to adopt a new constitution as a whole instead of through individual amendments.



**¶262.**

Petition Number: 20249-GA-¶262-G; Moffitt, Stephanie  
- Boulder, CO, USA.

**ALL BELONG: Establish LGTBQI  
Special Sunday**

Amend ¶ 262 and ¶ 263 as follows:

¶ 262:

~~Six~~ Seven churchwide special Sundays provide for churchwide offerings to express our commitment: Human Relations Day, UMCOR Sunday, World Communion Sunday, United Methodist Student Day, Peace with Justice Sunday, ~~and~~ Native American Ministries Sunday, and LGBTQI Sunday. Five special Sundays . . .

¶ 263:

~~Six~~ Seven churchwide special Sundays with offerings shall be celebrated in each United Methodist Church.

Add new ¶ 263.7

7. LGBTQI Sunday—Historically, Pride Month has been celebrated in June. Congregations are to observe LGBTQI Sunday on the first Sunday in June or on another date appropriate to the local church. LGBTQI Sunday recognizes the radical inclusivity of a church “in which all persons are open, welcoming, fully accepting, and supporting of all other persons, enabling them to participate fully in the life of the church, the community, and the world” (¶ 140). LGBTQI Sunday calls the church to affirm that the LGBTQI community (including those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex) have all rights of full membership in our church; to rejoice in the gift of diversity and our efforts toward full inclusion; and to respond to our calling to be faithful to the example of Jesus’ ministry to all persons. The purpose of the day is to increase our ministerial efforts of education and awareness of LGBTQI issues and persons and to actively condemn acts of discrimination, hatred, and violence toward the LGBTQI community.

In connection with LGBTQI Sunday, the General Commission on Communication shall conduct a churchwide appeal. The observance shall be under the general supervision of the General Board of Church and Society.

1. The annual conference treasurer shall retain 50 percent of the receipts for LGBTQI ministries in the annual conference, to be administered by the annual conference Board of Reconciling Ministries, or if no such structure exists, the annual conference board of church and society.

2. The annual conference treasurer shall remit the remaining 50 percent of the receipts to the General Council on Finance and Administration. Net receipts, after payment of promotional expenses, shall be distributed by the treasurer of the General Council on Finance and Admin-

istration to the administering agency for LGBTQI ministries.

**Rationale:**

Because all belong in the body of Christ, establishing this special Sunday will guide efforts to overcome homophobia and transphobia and provide opportunities for awareness, education, celebration, and honoring of LGBTQI persons in the life of the church.

**¶263.4.**

Petition Number: 20250-GA-¶263.4-G; Bergquist, Greg - Nashville, TN, USA for General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.

**Proposed Changes for United Methodist  
Student Day**

Amend ¶ 263.4:

¶ 263.4. United Methodist Student Day

~~4. United Methodist Student Day—Historically, United Methodist Student Day has been celebrated with an offering on the last Sunday in November. Congregations are to observe United Methodist Student Day on any Sunday in the month of May this date or on another date appropriate to the local church to celebrate high school graduates or active students in higher education. United Methodist Student Day calls the church to support students as they prepare for life in uniting faith with knowledge. The offering supports United Methodist scholarships and the United Methodist Student Loan Fund. In connection . . .~~

**Rationale:**

Moving the observation time frame for United Methodist Student Day to May encourages promotional alignment with student graduation celebrations. United Methodist Student Day no longer supports the UM Student Loan Fund.

**¶263.6c.**

Petition Number: 20251-GA-¶263.6c; Bergquist, Greg - Nashville, TN, USA for General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.

**Proposed Changes for Native American  
Ministries Sunday**

Amend ¶ 263.6 c):

¶ 263.6. Native American Ministries Sunday

. . .

c) Net receipts, after payment of promotional expenses, shall be distributed by the treasurer of the General Council on Finance and Administration to the administering agencies: (1) Scholarships for Native Americans attending United Methodist schools of theology and schools of theology approved by the University Senate of The United Methodist Church University Senate-approved theological schools or approved Course of Study programs, or the recruitment and education of Native Americans who are pursuing ordained or licensed ministry: 50 percent (General Board of Higher Education and Ministry). . . .

**Rationale:**

Broadens the support available for Native Americans pursuing licensed or ordained ministry and helps ensure that more students and potential candidates are eligible to be supported by this fund.

**¶265.4.**

Petition Number: 20252-GA-¶265.4-G; Hawkins, Erin - Washington, DC, USA for General Commission on Religion and Race.

**Regarding Disability Awareness Sunday**

Amend the last sentence of ¶ 265.4 as follows:

The observance of Disability Awareness Sunday shall be under the general supervision of the General ~~Board~~ Commission on of Global Ministries Religion and Race.

**Rationale:**

The work of Disabilities Ministries committee of The United Methodist Church is now under the auspices of The General Commission on Religion and Race (GCORR) which is overseeing Disability Awareness Sunday. This amendment will make the work consistent to the current practice.

**¶600.**

Petition Number: 20688-GA-¶600-G; Holbrook, Frank - Martin, TN, USA.

**Plain Grace Plan #8—Creating New Expressions of Methodism through Gracious Affiliation**

**ADD NEW ¶ 673 to the *Discipline* as follows:**

1. Basis—Because of the current deep conflict with in The United Methodist Church, the Plain Grace Plan is adopted. It is the intent of the Plain Grace Plan to multiply new Wesleyan expressions consistent with the common core of The United Methodist Church and to allow

the diverse members of The United Methodist Church to be able to live into their preferred expression of Methodism while offering grace to all of God’s children. It is the further intent of the Plain Grace Plan to create a Full Communion Relationship with such newly created Wesleyan expressions. The Plain Grace Plan consists of the following paragraphs in the *Book of Discipline*: ¶¶ 248A, 431A-F, 673-680, 725, 1510, and 2553-2555.

2. All provisions of Plain Grace Plan shall take effect immediately upon adjournment of the General Conference for 2020. Each provision of the Plain Grace Plan shall set forth its expiration date. The provisions of the Plain Grace Plan adopted as part of the *Book of Discipline* shall take precedence over, and shall not be limited by, any other provisions of the *Book of Discipline* except the provisions of the Constitution.

**Rationale:**

This is one paragraph of the Plain Grace Plan for multiplication of expressions that consists of the 20 total paragraphs to be added to the *Book of Discipline*. The twenty paragraphs are ¶ 248A, ¶¶ 431A-F, ¶¶ 673-680, 725, 1510, and ¶¶ 2553-2555. This paragraph addresses two issues.

**¶600.**

Petition Number: 20689-GA-¶600-G; Holbrook, Frank - Martin, TN, USA.

**Plain Grace Plan #9-Annual Conference Gracious Affiliation and Gracious Reaffiliation Agreements**

**ADD NEW ¶ 674 to the *Discipline* as follows:**

1. On or before January 1, 2022, the Conference Board of Trustees for each annual conference shall adopt a recommended standardized form Gracious Affiliation Agreement to be used in those circumstances where a local church joins a Full Communion Expression. The Conference Board of Trustees may use a standardized form prepared by the General Council on Finance and Administration but shall not be required to do so; however, any form adopted by the annual conference shall incorporate the processes and procedures set forth in ¶¶ 431F, 1510, 2554, and 2555 to the extent those processes and procedures apply to an annual conference or local church. The Gracious Affiliation Agreement shall establish the terms and conditions under which a local church may join a Full Communion Expression. In addition, each standardized Gracious Affiliation Agreement shall include (a) a provision binding the local church to

agree to the arbitration agreement existing between the local church's Full Communion Expression and The United Methodist Church and (b) a provision releasing the Trust Clause pursuant to the terms established by ¶ 2555. Such form agreements shall be submitted to the annual conference on or before December 31, 2022, for approval and adoption by a simple majority. The effect of an annual conference approving and adopting such agreement shall be to approve any local church joining a Full Communion Expression by executing such an approved standardized agreement without further vote or action by the annual conference; however, such affiliation or reaffiliation shall only be effective during the time periods set forth in ¶ 248A.

2. On or before January 1, 2022, the Conference Board of Trustees for each annual conference shall adopt a recommended standardized form Gracious Reaffiliation Agreement to be used in those circumstances where a local church has joined a Full Communion Expression. The Conference Board of Trustees may use a standardized form prepared by the General Council on Finance and Administration but shall not be required to do so; however, any form adopted by the annual conference shall incorporate the processes and procedures set forth in ¶¶ 431F, 1510, 2554, and 2555 to the extent those processes and procedures apply to an annual conference or local church. The Gracious Reaffiliation Agreement shall establish the terms and conditions under which a local church may join or rejoin the annual conference. In addition each standardized Gracious Reaffiliation Agreement shall include (a) a provision binding the local church to agree to the arbitration agreement existing between the local church's Full Communion Expression and The United Methodist Church. Such form agreements shall be submitted to the annual conference on or before December 31, 2022, for approval and adoption by a simple majority. The effect of an annual conference approving and adopting such agreement shall be to approve any local church that was previously a member of The United Methodist Church to join or rejoin the annual conference by executing such an approved agreement without further vote or action by the annual conference; however, such reaffiliation shall only be effective during the time periods set forth in ¶ 248A.

#### **Rationale:**

This is one paragraph of the Plain Grace Plan for multiplication of expressions that consists of the 20 total paragraphs to be added to the *Book of Discipline*. The twenty paragraphs are ¶ 248A, ¶¶ 431A-F, ¶¶ 673-680, 725, 1510, and ¶¶ 2553-2555. This paragraph authorizes and directs

#### **¶600.**

Petition Number: 20690-GA-¶600-G; Holbrook, Frank - Martin, TN, USA.

#### **Plain Grace Plan #10—First Called Special Conference for Gracious Affiliation**

##### **ADD NEW ¶ 675 to the *Discipline* as follows:**

1. Each annual conference shall hold a First Called Special Conference during the time period between August 15 and November 15, 2021, for the sole business purpose of electing representatives to the Organizing Conferences of entities that have become Qualified New Expressions under ¶ 431B. The delegates to the First Called Special Conference shall be those delegates serving as annual conference delegates for 2021. It is the duty of the annual conference to elect representatives eligible to attend Qualified New Expressions' Organizing Conferences. An annual conference may select representatives equal in number to the annual conference's delegates to General Conference to attend each Qualified New Expression's Organizing Conference. No representative may attend more than one Organizing Conference. The annual conference shall exercise autonomous control over the agenda, business, discussion, and vote on the question of considering Qualified New Expressions; however, such control shall be exercised in a procedure that is fair, equitable and consistent with the Constitution and the principle of legality. The procedures set forth in subparagraphs (a) through (d) may be employed by the annual conference and are hereby deemed procedures that are fair and equitable and consistent with the Constitution and the principle of legality.

a) The Called Special Conference shall identify all Qualified New Expressions and by a fair and equitable process, determined solely by the annual conference, provide to the delegates information concerning each Qualified New Expression. Written materials concerning a proposed Qualified New Expression may be submitted to the delegates prior to the Called Special Conference by the annual conference or the Qualified New Expression.

b) After receiving information concerning each Qualified New Expression, each delegate shall self-select no more than one Qualified New Expression caucus in which to participate. Each delegate may participate in one, but only one, caucus. A delegate may choose not to participate in any caucus.

c) Each caucus shall elect persons to serve as qualified representatives at the Qualified New Expression's Organizing Conference. The total number of representatives elected by each caucus shall be equal to the number of General Conference delegates allocated to the annual

conference. There shall be no requirement that the clergy/laity representative be equal in number and it is expressly understood that such result may not occur. Under no circumstances are the persons elected to be considered delegates as that term is used in the Constitution or *Book of Discipline*; such persons are representatives of the caucus and shall perform their duties as representatives of the New Expression, not delegates of The United Methodist Church.

d) If a caucus group has fewer persons participating in the caucus than the number of General Conference delegates allocated to the annual conference, each person participating in the caucus shall be deemed elected; however, no additional persons shall be eligible to serve as caucus representatives from the annual conference. If no delegate chooses to participate in a Qualified New Expression's caucus group, the annual conference shall not select a representative to attend that Qualified New Expression's Organizing Conference.

2. Persons elected as representatives shall be responsible for their own expenses to attend a Qualified New Expression Organizing Conference. No annual conference representative shall be required to attend a Qualified New Expression Organizing Conference; attendance shall be voluntary. No annual conference shall reimburse or pay the expenses for any representative to attend a Qualified New Expression Organizing Conference unless it pays or reimburses expenses for all representatives to each Qualified New Expression Organizing Conference. Nothing in this provision shall prohibit Qualified New Expressions, local churches, or individuals from contributing to, or reimbursing, the actual travel, housing, and per diem meal expenses on behalf of representatives to a Qualified New Expression Organizing Conferences; such reimbursement shall be calculated and paid on the same basis that the annual conference reimburses such expenses in the normal course of its activities.

3. A presiding bishop of an annual conference may attend any Qualified New Expression Organizing Conference and shall not be limited to attending a single Organizing Conference. The presiding bishop's role will be limited to that of a non-voting observer. A Qualified New Expression Organizing Conference may, in its sole discretion, allow a bishop attending an Organizing Conference to participate in any worship service and have a voice during the business sessions of the Organizing Conference. A bishop attending an Organizing Conference may, in their sole discretion, decline to participate in any one or more worship or business activities of the Organizing Conference. An annual conference may reimburse a presiding bishop's actual travel, housing, and per diem meal expenses for attendance at a Qualified New Expression

Organizing Conference; such reimbursement shall be calculated and paid on the same basis that the annual conference reimburses such expenses in the normal course of its activities.

4. On or before December 31, 2021, the annual conference shall notify each Qualified New Expression of the identity of the persons selected by the annual conference to be representatives to its Organizing Conference.

5. All provisions of this paragraph shall take effect immediately upon adjournment of the General Conference for 2020 and shall expire December 31, 2022. The provisions of this paragraph shall take precedence over, and shall not be limited by, any other provisions of the *Book of Discipline* except the provisions of the Constitution.

#### **Rationale:**

This is one paragraph of the Plain Grace Plan for multiplication of expressions which consists of the 20 total paragraphs to be added to the *Book of Discipline*. The twenty paragraphs are ¶ 248A, ¶¶ 431A-F, ¶¶ 673-680, 725, 1510, and ¶¶ 2553-2555. This paragraph outlines the procedure

#### **¶600.**

Petition Number: 20691-GA-¶600-G; Holbrook, Frank - Martin, TN, USA.

#### **Plain Grace Plan #11—Full Communion Expression's Invitation to Annual Conferences**

##### **ADD NEW ¶ 676 to the *Discipline* as follows:**

Between August 15, 2022, and September 15, 2022, a Full Communion Expression may invite any annual conference of The United Methodist Church to join it. A Full Communion Expression's invitation may be in simple form, signed by an authorized representative of the Full Communion Expression with no additional formalities required. A Full Communion Expression shall not be required to issue an invitation for any annual conference to join; however, failure to invite an annual conference to join it before September 15, 2022, shall bar that Full Communion Expression from submitting an invitation to that annual conference before January 1, 2026. A Full Communion Expression may issue an invitation for a local church to join it even within the time frames outlined in ¶¶ 678-680 even if it has not invited the annual conference to join it. The invitation shall be delivered to the office of the presiding bishop for the annual conference with a copy delivered to the office of the executive sec-

retary for the Council of Bishops. The invitation may be delivered in person, by mail, or by electronic means. All provisions of this paragraph shall take effect immediately upon adjournment of the General Conference for 2020 and shall expire December 31, 2023. The provisions of this paragraph shall take precedence over, and shall not be limited by, any other provisions of the *Book of Discipline* except the provisions of the Constitution.

**Rationale:**

This is one paragraph of the Plain Grace Plan for multiplication of expressions that consists of the 20 total paragraphs to be added to the *Book of Discipline*. The twenty paragraphs are ¶ 248A, ¶¶ 431A-F, ¶¶ 673-680, 725, 1510, and ¶¶ 2553-2555. This paragraph establishes a simple

**¶600.**

Petition Number: 20692-GA-¶600-G; Holbrook, Frank - Martin, TN, USA.

**Plain Grace Plan #12—Second Called Special Conference for Gracious Affiliation**

**ADD NEW ¶ 677 to the *Discipline* as follows:**

1. An annual conference that has not received a timely invitation from any Full Communion Expression shall not hold a Second Called Special Conference.

2. If an annual conference has received an invitation from a Full Communion Expression, the annual conference shall hold a Second Called Special Conference during the time period between October 15 and November 15, 2022, for the sole business purpose of considering whether to affiliate with each Full Communion Expression that has issued a timely invitation to the annual conference in compliance with ¶ 676. The delegates to the Second Called Special Conference shall be those delegates serving as annual conference delegates for 2022. The annual conference may determine fair and equitable procedures for each inviting Full Communion Expression to present itself as a candidate for affiliation. The annual conference shall exercise autonomous control over the agenda, business, discussion, and vote on the question of joining a Full Communion Expression but such control shall be exercised in a procedure that is fair, equitable, and consistent with the Constitution and the principle of legality. The procedures set forth in subparagraphs a) and b) may be employed by the annual conference and are deemed procedures that are fair and equitable and consistent with the Constitution and the principle of legality.

a) An annual conference's Second Called Special Conference will determine, as an initial matter, whether one-third of the delegates desire to consider the question of affiliating with one or more Full Communion Expressions. If a one-third favorable vote is not received, the annual conference shall take no further action on the question of joining a Full Communion Expression before 2026. If one third of the delegates vote to consider the question of affiliating with one or more Full Communion Expressions, the annual conference shall vote to determine its Preferred Full Communion Expression. All Full Communion Expressions that have issued a timely invitation to the annual conference shall be included on the initial preference ballot. Any Full Communion Expression receiving a simple majority of the delegates voting on the preference ballot shall be considered the annual conference's preferred Full Communion Expression. In the event no Full Communion Expression receives a simple majority in the first preference ballot, the Full Communion Expression receiving the fewest votes shall be eliminated, and an additional ballot shall be taken that includes the remaining Full Communion Expressions. Additional preference ballots shall be taken following this procedure until one Full Communion Expression receives a simple majority of the delegates voting on the preference ballot.

b) After selecting a preferred Full Communion Expression, the annual conference shall vote on whether to join the preferred Full Communion Expression. An annual conference may choose to join a Full Communion Expression by a simple majority.

3. An annual conference shall notify the president of its College of Bishops of its decision within thirty (30) days of adjournment of its called special conference. If an annual conference votes to join a Full Communion Expression, the jurisdictional or central conference shall reallocate the territory of the former annual conference among the remaining annual conferences or create a new annual conference.

4. After November 15, 2022, no annual conference may conduct an additional vote to join a Full Communion Expression on or before December 31, 2025.

5. All provisions of this paragraph shall take effect immediately upon adjournment of the General Conference for 2020 and shall expire December 31, 2028. The provisions of this paragraph shall take precedence over, and shall not be limited by, any other provisions of the *Book of Discipline* except the provisions of the Constitution.

**Rationale:**

This is one paragraph of the Plain Grace Plan for multiplication of expressions that consists of the 20 total para-

graphs to be added to the *Book of Discipline*. The twenty paragraphs are ¶ 248A, ¶¶ 431A-F, ¶¶ 673-680, 725, 1510, and ¶¶ 2553-2555. This paragraph outlines the procedure for the

## ¶600.

Petition Number: 20693-GA-¶600-G; Holbrook, Frank - Martin, TN, USA.

### **Plain Grace Plan #13—Procedure where Annual Conference Remains in Connection with the United Methodist Church**

#### **ADD NEW ¶ 678 to the *Discipline* as follows:**

1. If a Second Called Special Conference is not held or if an annual conference declines to join a Full Communion Expression during the period from November 15, 2022, through March 31, 2023, local churches, clergy, and bishops may join a Full Communion Expression by following the procedures set forth in this paragraph.

2. After a church conference vote taken in compliance with ¶ 248A, a local church may join any Full Communion Expression by executing the Gracious Affiliation Agreement and Dispute Resolution Agreement approved by the annual conference. An Affiliation Agreement will authorize a local church to affiliate with any Full Communion Expression in those circumstances where the local church's annual conference did not vote, as an annual conference, to join the Full Communion Expression selected by the local church.

3. Clergy of an annual conference may transfer to a Full Communion Expression on terms and conditions established by the Full Communion Expression by executing an Affiliation Agreement in a form provided by the Full Communion Expression after an invitation to join has been issued by the Full Communion Expression. Promptly upon executing such agreement the clergy person shall provide a copy of the agreement to the clergy person's United Methodist Church district superintendent. Such notice shall transfer the clergy person's membership from The United Methodist Church to the Full Communion Expression. A Full Communion Expression is under no obligation to issue an invitation to join to any clergy person. The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits is directed by the General Conference to amend the Clergy Retirement Security Program such that an active clergy participant who transfers to a Full Communion Expression under ¶¶ 678 or 680 of the *Book of Discipline* will be treated as a terminated vested participant under the Clergy Retirement Security Program. The transferring clergy's accrued pension benefits shall be secured and

protected from future disruptions by converting such benefits to an actuarially equivalent account balance, using factors corresponding to those used when determining annual conference plan sponsor contributions to the Clergy Retirement Security Program. Such converted benefits, along with all other retirement account balances, shall be transferred to the United Methodist Personal Investment Plan, a voluntary defined contribution plan maintained by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits under ¶ 1504.2. The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits is directed, authorized, and empowered to amend the Clergy Retirement Security Program, effective as of the close of the 2020 General Conference and in the manner described above. The transfer shall not otherwise affect the clergy person's vested pension rights under any plan of the Clergy Retirement Security Program.

4. A presiding bishop of an annual conference may transfer to a Full Communion Expression on terms and conditions established by the Full Communion Expression by executing an Affiliation Agreement in a form provided by the Full Communion Expression after an invitation to join has been issued by the Full Communion Expression. Promptly upon executing such agreement the bishop shall provide a copy of the agreement to the Council of Bishops. Such notice shall transfer the bishop's membership from The United Methodist Church to the Full Communion Expression. A Full Communion Expression is under no obligation to issue an invitation to join to any bishop. The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits is directed by the General Conference to amend the Clergy Retirement Security Program such that an active bishop who transfers to a Full Communion Expression under ¶¶ 678 or 680 of the *Book of Discipline* will be treated as a terminated vested participant under the Clergy Retirement Security Program. The transferring bishop's accrued pension benefits shall be secured and protected from future disruptions by converting such benefits to an actuarially equivalent account balance, using factors corresponding to those used when determining annual conference plan sponsor contributions to the Clergy Retirement Security Program. Such converted benefits, along with all other retirement account balances, shall be transferred to the United Methodist Personal Investment Plan, a voluntary defined contribution plan maintained by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits under ¶ 1504.2. The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits is directed, authorized, and empowered to amend the Clergy Retirement Security Program, effective as of the close of the 2020 General Conference and in the manner described above. The transfer shall not otherwise affect the clergy person's vested pension rights under any plan of the Clergy Retirement Security Program. The transfer shall not otherwise

affect the bishop's vested pension rights under any plan of the Clergy Retirement Security Program or other pension plan sponsored by The United Methodist Church.

5. All provisions of this paragraph shall take effect immediately upon adjournment of the General Conference for 2020 and shall expire December 31, 2028. The provisions of this paragraph shall take precedence over, and shall not be limited by, any other provisions of the *Book of Discipline* except the provisions of the Constitution.

#### **Rationale:**

This is one paragraph of the Plain Grace Plan for multiplication of expressions that consists of the 20 total paragraphs to be added to the *Book of Discipline*. The twenty paragraphs are ¶ 248A, ¶¶ 431A-F, ¶¶ 673-680, 725, 1510, and ¶¶ 2553-2555. This paragraph establishes procedures for

#### **¶600.**

Petition Number: 20694-GA-¶600-G; Holbrook, Frank - Martin, TN, USA.

### **Plain Grace Plan #14—Procedure where an Annual Conference Joins a Full Communion Expression**

#### **ADD NEW ¶ 679 to the *Discipline* as follows:**

1. The decision by an annual conference to join a Full Communion Expression shall not transfer clergy or a presiding bishop to the Full Communion Expression. The presiding bishop, district superintendents, and clergy shall continue to serve until such time as replacements are appointed by the Full Communion Expression. The Full Communion Expression shall be responsible for reimbursing The United Methodist Church for actual salary, benefits, and reasonable and necessary expenses paid to bishops by The United Methodist Church until a replacement is appointed. Reimbursement payments shall be made within sixty (60) days of The United Methodist Church invoicing the Full Communion Expression. Salary, pension, and insurance payments to clergy made by local churches of Full Communion Expressions or the annual conference shall be treated as payments by the Full Communion Expression and shall not be invoiced to, nor reimbursed by, the Full Communion Expression.

2. In those circumstances where an annual conference joins a Full Communion Expression, all property, except cash and cash equivalent property, owned by the annual conference shall continue to be held in trust for The United Methodist Church pursuant to ¶ 2501 until the

property is released by operation of ¶¶ 2554 and 2555. All cash and cash equivalent property shall be retained by the annual conference for use as a Full Communion Expression; however, such cash or cash equivalents shall be used to satisfy the annual conference's per diem apportionment liability for 2022. Such cash or cash equivalents may be used to reimburse The United Methodist Church for actual salary, benefits, and reasonable and necessary expenses paid to bishops and clergy until a replacement is appointed.

3. In this circumstance where an annual conference joins a Full Communion Expression, and cash and cash equivalents are transferred to the Full Communion Expression annual conference, the Full Communion Expression annual conference shall pay to The United Methodist Church a *per diem* amount to satisfy its unpaid apportionment obligations for 2022 based on a per diem calculation; the total amount of this liability is referred to as the "unpaid per diem apportionment liability." The unpaid per diem apportionment liability shall equal the conference's actual total of 2022 apportionments paid before joining the Full Communion Expression, divided by the number of days in 2022 before the annual conference joined the Full Communion Expression. The unpaid apportionment liability shall equal three hundred sixty-five minus the number of days in 2022 before the annual conference joined the Full Communion Expression, multiplied by the per diem amount, with such unpaid apportionment liability being capped at the annual conference's total apportionment amount for 2022. If the total apportionments paid by the annual conference to The United Methodist Church for fiscal year 2022 (calculated by adding the annual conference's apportionments paid plus the unpaid per diem apportionment liability) are less than the apportionments paid in the prior fiscal year, then the difference shall be added to the unpaid *per diem* apportionment liability and become a 2022 apportionment liability of the annual conference. All fiscal year 2022 apportionment liabilities of an annual conference owing to The United Methodist Church shall be paid no later than January 31, 2023.

4. In those circumstances where an annual conference joins a Full Communion Expression as a result of action taken at the Second Special Called Conference, during the period from November 15, 2022, through March 31, 2023, a local church may reaffiliate with The United Methodist Church or join a Full Communion Expression other than the Full Communion Expression joined by its annual conference by following the procedures set forth in this paragraph.

5. In those circumstances where an annual conference joins a Full Communion Expression, after a church conference vote taken in compliance with ¶ 248A, a lo-

cal church may reaffiliate with The United Methodist Church by notifying the College of Bishops for its jurisdiction or central conference. If such reaffiliation occurs in the time period between November 15, 2022, and March 31, 2023, the reaffiliation shall relate back to the date of the annual conference vote at the Second Special Called Conference and the local church shall be deemed to have been a member of The United Methodist Church continuously and shall not be considered to have joined a Full Communion Expression. If such reaffiliation occurs after March 31, 2023, the local church will be treated as having been a member of the Full Communion Expression until the date of such reaffiliation and the local church's professing membership shall be included in the calculation of the Missional Resource Allocation Formula during the time it was a member of the Full Communion Expression.

6. In those circumstances where an annual conference joins a Full Communion Expression, during the period from November 15, 2022, through March 31, 2023, after a church conference vote taken in compliance with ¶ 248A, a local church may join any Full Communion Expression other than the one joined by its annual conference by executing the Gracious Affiliation Agreement and Dispute Resolution Agreement approved by the annual conference.

7. In those circumstances where an annual conference joins a Full Communion Expression, clergy of an annual conference may transfer to a Full Communion Expression on terms and conditions established by the Full Communion Expression by executing an Affiliation Agreement in a form provided by the Full Communion Expression after an invitation to join has been issued by the Full Communion Expression. Promptly upon executing such agreement the clergy person shall provide a copy of the agreement to the clergy person's United Methodist Church district superintendent. Such notice shall transfer the clergy person's membership from The United Methodist Church to the Full Communion Expression. A Full Communion Expression is under no obligation to issue an invitation to join to any clergy person. The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits is directed by the General Conference to amend the Clergy Retirement Security Program such that an active clergy participant who transfers to a Full Communion Expression under ¶¶ 679 or 680 of the *Book of Discipline* will be treated as a terminated vested participant under the Clergy Retirement Security Program. The transferring clergy's accrued pension benefits shall be secured and protected from future disruptions by converting such benefits to an actuarially equivalent account balance, using factors corresponding to those used when determining annual conference plan sponsor contri-

butions to the Clergy Retirement Security Program. Such converted benefits, along with all other retirement account balances, shall be transferred to the United Methodist Personal Investment Plan, a voluntary defined contribution plan maintained by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits under ¶ 1504.2. The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits is directed, authorized, and empowered to amend the Clergy Retirement Security Program, effective as of the close of the 2020 General Conference and in the manner described above. The transfer shall not otherwise affect the clergypersons vested pension rights under any plan of the Clergy Retirement Security Program.

8. In those circumstances where an annual conference joins a Full Communion Expression, a presiding bishop of an annual conference may transfer to a Full Communion Expression on terms and conditions established by the Full Communion Expression by executing an Affiliation Agreement in a form provided by the Full Communion Expression after an invitation to join has been issued by the Full Communion Expression. Promptly upon executing such agreement the bishop shall provide a copy of the agreement to the Council of Bishops. Such notice shall transfer the bishop's membership from The United Methodist Church to the Full Communion Expression. A Full Communion Expression is under no obligation to issue an invitation to join to any bishop. The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits is directed by the General Conference to amend the Clergy Retirement Security Program such that an active bishop who transfers to a Full Communion Expression under ¶¶ 679 or 680 of the *Book of Discipline* will be treated as a terminated vested participant under the Clergy Retirement Security Program. The transferring Bishop's accrued pension benefits shall be secured and protected from future disruptions by converting such benefits to an actuarially equivalent account balance, using factors corresponding to those used when determining annual conference plan sponsor contributions to the Clergy Retirement Security Program. Such converted benefits, along with all other retirement account balances, shall be transferred to the United Methodist Personal Investment Plan, a voluntary defined contribution plan maintained by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits under ¶ 1504.2. The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits is directed, authorized, and empowered to amend the Clergy Retirement Security Program, effective as of the close of the 2020 General Conference and in the manner described above. The transfer shall not otherwise affect the clergypersons vested pension rights under any plan of the Clergy Retirement Security Program. The transfer shall not otherwise affect the bishop's vested pension rights under any plan of the Clergy Retirement Security Program.



ment Security Program or other pension plan sponsored by The United Methodist Church.

9. All provisions of this paragraph shall take effect immediately upon adjournment of the General Conference for 2020 and shall expire December 31, 2028. The provisions of this paragraph shall take precedence over, and shall not be limited by, any other provisions of the *Book of Discipline* except the provisions of the Constitution.

#### **Rationale:**

This is one paragraph of the Plain Grace Plan for multiplication of expressions that consists of the 20 total paragraphs to be added to the *Book of Discipline*. The twenty paragraphs are ¶¶ 248A, ¶¶ 431A-F, ¶¶ 673-680, 725, 1510, and ¶¶ 2553-2555. This paragraph is similar to

#### **¶600.**

Petition Number: 20695-GA-¶600-G; Holbrook, Frank - Martin, TN, USA.

### **Plain Grace Plan #15—Additional Time Periods for Joining a Full Communion Expression or Reaffiliating with the United Methodist Church**

#### **ADD NEW ¶ 680 to the *Discipline* as follows:**

1. The following procedures for joining a Full Communion Expression or Reaffiliating with The United Methodist Church shall be available for local churches during the periods from (a) January 1, 2026, to March 31, 2026, and (b) January 1, 2027, through March 31, 2027.

2. A Full Communion Expression may invite any annual conference of The United Methodist Church or another Full Communion Expression wholly or partially within its geographic boundaries to join it. An invitation to join may be issued during the periods from (a) January 1, 2026, to March 31, 2026, and (b) January 1, 2027, through March 31, 2027. A Full Communion Expression's invitation may be in simple form, signed by an authorized representative of the Full Communion Expression with no additional formalities required. A Full Communion Expression shall not be required to issue an invitation for any annual conference to join. The invitation shall be delivered to the office of the presiding bishop for the annual conference with a copy delivered to the office of the executive secretary for the Council of Bishops. If an invitation is issued during either of the time periods set forth in this subparagraph, the question of joining a Full Communion Expression shall be taken up as a regular item of business at the annual conference's next regularly scheduled an-

nual conference. If an invitation is issued, the processes set forth in ¶ 677 may be used to vote upon joining a Full Communion Expression.

3. An annual conference of The United Methodist Church may invite any annual conference of any Full Communion Expression to reaffiliate with it. An invitation to join may be issued during the periods from (a) January 1, 2026, to March 31, 2026, and (b) January 1, 2027, through March 31, 2027. An annual conference's invitation may be in simple form, signed by an authorized representative of the annual conference with no additional formalities required. An annual conference shall not be required to issue an invitation for an annual conference of a Full Communion Expression to reaffiliate. The invitation shall be delivered to the office of bishop, or its equivalent, for the annual conference for the Full Communion Expression with a copy delivered to the office of the executive secretary for the Council of Bishops. If an invitation is issued during the time periods set forth in this subparagraph, the question of an annual conference reaffiliating with The United Methodist Church shall be taken up as a regular item of business at the Full Communion Expression's annual conference's next regularly scheduled annual conference. If an invitation is issued, the processes set forth in ¶ 677 shall be used by the Full Communion Expression's annual conference to decide upon reaffiliation.

4. During the periods from (a) January 1, 2026, to March 31, 2026, and (b) January 1, 2027, through March 31, 2027, after a church conference vote taken in compliance with ¶ 248A, a local church of an annual conference of The United Methodist Church may join any Full Communion Expression by executing the Gracious Affiliation Agreement and Dispute Resolution Agreement approved by its annual conference.

5. During the periods from (a) January 1, 2026, to March 31, 2026, and (b) January 1, 2027, through March 31, 2027, after a church conference vote taken in compliance with ¶ 248A, a local church of a Full Communion Expression may reaffiliate with an annual conference of The United Methodist Church by executing the Gracious Reaffiliation Agreement prepared by the annual conference board of trustees and previously approved by the annual conference. A local church reaffiliating with The United Methodist Church shall remain bound by its previously executed Dispute Resolution Agreement.

6. Clergy of a Full Communion Expression who were previously clergy in The United Methodist Church may transfer to an annual conference of The United Methodist Church on terms and conditions established by an annual conference of The United Methodist Church by executing an Affiliation Agreement in a form provided by the annual conference after an invitation to join has been is-

sued by the annual conference. Any such invitation, including the terms and conditions of such invitation, shall be approved in advance by a three-fourths majority of the annual conference Board of Ordained Ministry. Promptly upon executing such agreement, the clergyperson shall provide a copy of the agreement to the presiding bishop of the annual conference. Such notice shall transfer the clergyperson's membership from the Full Communion Expression to The United Methodist Church, subject to the terms and conditions established by the annual conference. The terms and conditions established by the annual conference shall be consistent with the terms of the *Book of Discipline*. No annual conference of The United Methodist Church is under any obligation to issue such an invitation to any clergyperson.

7. Clergy of an annual conference may transfer to a Full Communion Expression on terms and conditions established by the Full Communion Expression by executing an Affiliation Agreement in a form provided by the Full Communion Expression after an invitation to join has been issued by the Full Communion Expression. Promptly upon executing such agreement, the clergyperson shall provide a copy of the agreement to the clergyperson's United Methodist Church district superintendent. Such notice shall transfer the clergyperson's membership from The United Methodist Church to the Full Communion Expression. A Full Communion Expression is under no obligation to issue an invitation to join to any clergyperson.

8. A bishop of an annual conference may transfer to a Full Communion Expression on terms and conditions established by the Full Communion Expression by executing an Affiliation Agreement in a form provided by the Full Communion Expression after an invitation to join has been issued by the Full Communion Expression. Promptly upon executing such agreement the bishop shall provide a copy of the agreement to the Council of Bishops. Such notice shall transfer the bishop's membership from The United Methodist Church to the Full Communion Expression. A Full Communion Expression is under no obligation to issue an invitation to join to any bishop. The transfer shall not affect the bishop's vested pension rights under any plan of the Clergy Retirement Security Program or other pension plan sponsored by The United Methodist Church; however, if provided in the benefit plan, transfer may terminate the bishop's rights to continued contributions under the plan. In the event of any conflict between an applicable plan of the Clergy Retirement Security Program or other pension plan sponsored by The United Methodist Church and this paragraph, the terms of the plan shall govern.

9. All provisions of this paragraph shall take effect immediately upon adjournment of the General Confer-

ence for 2020 and shall expire December 31, 2028. The provisions of this paragraph shall take precedence over, and shall not be limited by, any other provisions of the *Book of Discipline* except the provisions of the Constitution.

#### **Rationale:**

This is one paragraph of the Plain Grace Plan for multiplication of expressions that consists of the 20 total paragraphs to be added to the *Book of Discipline*. The twenty paragraphs are ¶¶ 248A, ¶¶ 431A-F, ¶¶ 673-680, 725, 1510, and ¶¶ 2553-2555. This paragraph allows two additional

#### **¶700.**

Petition Number: 20696-GA-¶700-G; Holbrook, Frank - Martin, TN, USA.

### **Plain Grace Plan #16—Proposed Operational Plans for Agencies and Institutions**

#### **ADD NEW ¶ 725 to the *Discipline* as follows:**

1. No later than May 1, 2023, the General Board of Church and Society, General Board of Discipleship, General Board of Global Ministries, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, General Commission on Communication, United Methodist Women, General Commission on Religion and Race, General Commission on the Status and Role of Women, General Commission on United Methodist Men shall prepare and publicly disseminate a proposed operational plan to be submitted for review and action by the General Conference in 2024. Each operational plan shall evaluate any and all structural and financial changes necessary for effective ministry and service through December 31, 2028. Such plans may include proposed structural or governance changes. Such plans may include a proposal for the board or commission to transfer to a Full Communion Expression and establish the proposed financial terms for such transfer. Such plans may include proposed methods to provide services to Full Communion Expressions and to denominations in the Wesleyan tradition. Such operational plans may include proposed disposition of assets, merger, or cessation as an ongoing entity. Such proposed operational plan shall identify any contemplated disposition of assets reasonably anticipated to occur before December 31, 2028. Such operational plan shall also identify any assets that the entity proposes to accept from The United Methodist Church by means of purchase or other transfer and the estimated fair market value of such assets. Any petitions required to implement the proposed operational plan shall be submit-

ted on behalf of the agency in time for consideration by General Conference in 2024.

2. No later than May 1, 2023, those agencies and institutions of The United Methodist Church other than those listed in subparagraph 1 may prepare and publicly disseminate a proposed operational plan to be submitted for review and action by the General Conference in 2024. Each operational plan shall evaluate any and all structural and financial changes necessary for effective ministry and service through December 31, 2028. Such plans may include proposed structural or governance changes. Such plans may include a proposal for the institution to transfer to a Full Communion Expression and establish the proposed financial terms for such transfer. Any petitions required to implement the proposed operational plan shall be submitted on behalf of the institution in time for consideration by General Conference in 2024. For purposes of this subparagraph, the phrase “agencies and institutions” shall refer to those agencies and institutions identified in ¶ 2501 of the *Book of Discipline*.

3. All provisions of this paragraph shall take effect immediately upon adjournment of the General Conference for 2020 and shall expire December 31, 2024. The provisions of this paragraph shall take precedence over, and shall not be limited by, any other provisions of the *Book of Discipline* except the provisions of the Constitution.

#### Rationale:

This is one paragraph of the Plain Grace Plan for multiplication of expressions that consists of the 20 total paragraphs to be added to the *Book of Discipline*. The twenty paragraphs are ¶ 248A, ¶¶ 431A-F, ¶¶ 673-680, 725, 1510, and ¶¶ 2553-2555. This paragraph requires those agencies

#### ¶701.

Petition Number: 20253-GA-¶701; Allen, Emily - Mountain View, CA, USA.

### General Agency Relationships with Formerly United Methodist Bodies

Amend ¶ 701.2:

¶ 701. 2. We experience this connection in many ways, including our systems of episcopacy, itineracy, property, and mutual cooperation and support. Our connectional system performs at least three essential tasks: embracing God’s mission for the church as making disciples for Jesus Christ; organizing our whole church to enable local congregations, the primary arena for mission, faithfully and fruitfully to make disciples for Jesus Christ;

and ensuring that all components in the connection carry out their appropriate responsibilities in ways that enable The ~~whole~~ United Methodist Church and other offshoot or successor expressions of Methodism to be faithful in ~~its~~ their mission. General agencies may form relationships with formerly United Methodist churches and organizations to provide services and engage in common ministry while maintaining commitment to the agencies’ missions. The term *agency*, wherever it appears in the *Book of Discipline*, is a term used to describe the various councils, boards, commissions, committees, divisions, or other units constituted within the various levels of church organization (general, jurisdictional, central, annual, district, and charge conferences) under authority granted by the *Book of Discipline*; the term does not and is not meant to imply a master-servant or principal-agent relationship between these bodies and the conference or other body that creates them, except where the authority is specifically granted.

#### Rationale:

This amendment enhances the value of connectionalism stated in ¶ 701.1 by giving explicit permission to general agencies to work with churches and other bodies that separate from The United Methodist Church, if such work is appropriate to the mission of the general agency.

#### ¶702.

Petition Number: 20254-GA-¶702; Evans, Cashar - Kitty Hawk, NC, USA.

### Administrative Agency

¶ 702. *Amenability and Program Accountability*—

1. All the general agencies of The United Methodist Church that have been constituted by the General Conference are amenable to the General Conference, except as otherwise provided. . . .

3. Between sessions of the General Conference, the following general agencies are accountable to the Connectional Table for those functions that are outlined in the 900 ¶¶s: the General Board of Church and Society, the General Board of Discipleship, the General Board of Global Ministries, the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, the General Commission on Religion and Race, the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women, the General Commission on Archives and History, the General Commission on United Methodist Men.; ~~and the General Commission on Communication in matters pertaining to their program responsibilities.~~

**Rationale:**

This revision aligns this paragraph with ¶ 703.5, which identifies the program-related general agencies. UCom is included in ¶ 703.6 as an administrative agency.

**¶702.1.**

Petition Number: 20255-GA-¶702.1-G; Allen, Emily - Mountain View, CA, USA.

### General Agency Financial Relationships with Formerly United Methodist Bodies

Add a new subparagraph after ¶ 702.1:

¶ 702. *Amenability and Program Accountability*—1. All the general agencies of The United Methodist Church that have been constituted by the General Conference are amenable to the General Conference, except as otherwise provided.

2. All general agencies shall be permitted to engage with formerly United Methodist bodies and organizations in order to provide their services, resources, and leadership to churches and organizations that wish to continue a relationship with one or more general agencies. These services may be provided on a fee-for-service basis, apportionment basis, or other financial model, as determined by the agency's directors or general secretary. Funds generated from these relationships must still be accounted for and reported under the provisions of ¶ 704.

**Rationale:**

This new subparagraph provides for the financial relationship between general agencies and new offshoot or successor bodies from The United Methodist Church, as well as for the accountability of any generated funds through the regular oversight process for general agencies.

**¶703.**

Petition Number: 20256-GA-¶703; Evans, Cashar - Kitty Hawk, NC, USA.

### Administrative Agency

#### ¶ 703. Definitions, Structures, and Titles

6. *Administrative General Agencies*—The general boards and commissions that have primarily administrative and service functions shall be designated as administrative general agencies. These agencies are the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits, The United Methodist Publishing House, the General Commission on Communication, and the General Commission on Archives and History, ~~and General Commission on Commu-~~

nication, the last two of which also carries program-related responsibilities for which ~~they are~~ it is accountable to the Connectional Table.

**Rationale:**

This more clearly identifies UCom as an administrative agency distinct from the program agencies listed in ¶ 703.5. The work of communications enables the ministry, mission, and programming of the church at every level.

**¶705.**

Petition Number: 20258-GA-¶705-G; Lopez, Joseph - Seattle, WA, USA.

### Building a Fully Inclusive Church

Amend ¶ 705:

*General Agency and Connectional Table Membership*—The people of God are called to faithful discipleship in the name of Jesus Christ. “He gave some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers. His purpose was to equip God’s people for the work of serving and building up the body of Christ” (Ephesians 4:11-12). In response to God’s call, some are called forth from local congregations to fulfill the common mission of The United Methodist Church as an expression of the church made visible in the world. This call includes the invitation to some to be in ministry with others who together seek to fulfill the vision for the church as members of general church bodies. Such persons come to this ministry as servants of the whole church.

The following provisions shall govern the nomination and election of the voting membership of those general church bodies to which the jurisdictional conferences elect and central conferences nominate members. All lay voting members of general agencies and the Connectional Table shall be professing members of The United Methodist Church and active in local churches unless otherwise specified by the *Book of Discipline*. All provisions pertaining to the nomination and election of general agency and Connectional Table members shall take effect immediately upon the adjournment of the General Conference that enacts them. The secretary of the General Conference shall coordinate the processes pertaining to nominations and elections of general agency and Connectional Table members.

1. *Nominations by Conferences*—a) Each annual and missionary conference in the United States, upon recommendation from a committee composed of the bishop and the General and jurisdictional conference delegation,

and having allowed opportunity for nominations from the floor, shall elect persons to be submitted to a jurisdictional pool. The jurisdictional nominating committee shall select persons for election to the following general church bodies: Connectional Table; General Board of Church and Society; General Board of Discipleship; General Board of Global Ministries; General Board of Higher Education and Ministry; General Board of Pension and Health Benefits; The United Methodist Publishing House; Office of Christian Unity and Interreligious Relationships; General Commission on Communication; General Commission on Religion and Race; and the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women. Jurisdictional conferences may decide that persons elected by the annual and missionary conferences in the United States for inclusion in the jurisdictional pool shall not serve as members of the jurisdictional nominating committee.

b) Each annual and missionary conference in the United States shall nominate the persons most recently elected as delegates to the General Conference to the jurisdictional pool. In addition, it may nominate at least fifteen and not more than forty-five persons to the jurisdictional pool, including, where available, at least two racial and ethnic persons from each of the ethnic groups Asian American, African American, Hispanic American, Native American, Pacific Islanders; and where available at least one and not more than five persons in each of the following ~~seven~~ eight categories: (1) clergy (including at least one woman), (2) laywomen, (3) laymen, (4) youth (§ 710.3), (5) young adults (§ 710.3), (6) older adults, ~~and~~ (7) persons with disabilities, ~~(8) LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer) persons~~. Elected members of General and jurisdictional delegations, and others nominated by their annual conference shall list all of the categories for which they qualify, i.e., nationality, age, gender, ethnicity ~~origin~~, etc., and shall be eligible to be nominated by the jurisdictional nominating committee to a general church body in any one of the categories for which a delegate is qualified.

c) Each central conference or a body authorized by it shall nominate to each general program board membership at least one person from each of the following three categories: (1) clergy, (2) laymen, and (3) laywomen to form a pool from which each board is to elect the additional members that are to come from the central conferences pursuant to § 705.4c. These lists shall be sent to the Connectional Table for use by the general agencies in electing additional members.

d) All nominees shall list one to three preferences for membership. In addition all nominees shall prepare an up to one-hundred-word biographical statement listing experience, gifts, training, and other qualifications for gen-

eral agency membership. Biographical statements for all persons in the central and jurisdictional conference pools shall be available to the nominating committee members in the meeting at which they make their nominations. Names and biographical data of all persons nominated by the annual and missionary conferences in the United States or the central conferences, but not elected, shall be forwarded by the jurisdictional or central conference secretary to the Connectional Table to be used by the general agencies as a pool from which additional members may be elected (§§ 4e, 5b).

2. *Additional Nominations*—In addition to the foregoing provisions (§ 705.1), the Division on Ministries with Young People of the General Board of Discipleship shall nominate ten youth and ten young adults (§ 710.3) to each jurisdictional pool, inclusive of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, size of church, and persons with disabilities.

3. Members of the general agencies and the Connectional Table shall be elected using the following provisions:

a) Each jurisdiction shall elect members of the general agencies and the Connectional Table as provided in §§ 705.4, 705.5, and 906.1. Persons within any jurisdiction elected by the United Methodist Women's national organization to serve as members of the General Board of Global Ministries (§ 1906) shall be counted in, and not be additional to, the total number of members allocated to each jurisdiction for purposes of determining proportional distribution, but United Methodist Women members are additional to the membership prescribed in § 1311.1. The secretary of the General Conference shall offer to each jurisdiction a suggested fair and equitable allocation of members to the annual and missionary conferences within each jurisdiction; however, each jurisdiction shall determine for itself how members will be allocated among the annual and missionary conferences of the jurisdiction.

b) Each general agency may elect at least one member with vote and voice from among the member churches of the Pan-Methodist Commission. In addition, each general agency is permitted to elect at least one member with voice but not vote from among our Full Communion Ecumenical Partners. These members would be in addition to those otherwise specified in § 705.3a above. The Council of Bishops shall assist general agencies if they choose to elect such representatives.

c) It is recommended that, to the extent possible, at least 10 percent of the voting membership of each general agency be youth and young adults (§ 256.3), and that the number of youth be equal to the number of young adults. Youth and young adult members of general agencies shall serve with vote except when local laws prohibit them

from voting on corporate matters under consideration (see ¶ 2506.1) in which case and for which purpose youth and young adult members shall serve as non-director representatives with voice, but not vote, until they reach the legal age to serve as voting members for this purpose, at which time they shall become voting members for all purposes. The youth and young adult membership of each general board, agency, and the Connectional Table shall be inclusive (consistent with ¶¶ 705.3d and 2506.1).

d) It is recommended that the membership of each of the general agencies seeks to be inclusive based on gender, sexual orientation, racial and ethnic persons, age, persons with disabilities, economic condition, and size of church. In order to ensure adequate representation of racial and ethnic persons (Asian American, African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, Pacific Islanders), it is recommended that a jurisdiction's membership on each general agency be at least 30 percent racial and ethnic persons and incorporate one-third clergy, one-third laymen, and one-third laywomen (except as provided in ¶¶ 1105, 1311). The episcopal members shall not be counted in the computation of the clergy membership.

e) The membership of the General Commission on United Methodist Men shall be elected in accordance with ¶ 537 and ¶ 2303.3. Other paragraphs of the *Discipline* notwithstanding, members of the commission holding membership by virtue of office may serve a maximum of three consecutive terms.

4. *General Program Board Membership*—a) Each general program board shall have the number of members specified in ¶¶ 1006, 1105, 1311, and 1407.

b) *Jurisdictional Membership*—Each jurisdiction shall elect the number of persons listed in the specific legislation for membership on each of the four general program boards. In the jurisdictional nominating process for membership on those boards, special attention shall be given to the inclusion of clergywomen, youth (¶ 256.3), young adults, older adults, people with disabilities, LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer) persons, and persons from small membership churches. In order to ensure adequate representation of racial and ethnic persons (Asian Americans, African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, Pacific Islanders), it is recommended that at least 30 percent of a jurisdiction's membership on each general program board be racial and ethnic persons. It is further recommended that the jurisdiction membership on each program board incorporate one-third clergy, one-third laymen, and one-third laywomen (except as provided in ¶¶ 1105.1, 1311.2; see also ¶¶ 1311.6, 1407). The episcopal members shall not be counted in the computation of the clergy membership.

c) *Central Conference Membership*—The total central conference membership, including central conference bishops, in general church bodies shall be allocated as follows: four members on the General Commission on Religion and Race; three each (one from each region: Philippines, Europe, Africa) on the General Commission on Archives and History, the General Commission on Communication, the General Commission on United Methodist Men, and The United Methodist Publishing House; three each on the General Council on Finance and Administration; seven each (one from each central conference) on the Connectional Table, and the General Board of Church and Society; three on the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry; four (at least one from each region from the Philippines, Europe, and Africa) on the General Board of Discipleship and the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women; and eleven on the General Board of Global Ministries, only two of whom shall be bishops. It is recommended that the aggregate central conference membership on the program boards be composed of one-third clergy (half of whom shall be women), one-third laymen, and one-third laywomen. The central conference membership, excluding episcopal members, shall be elected by the Council of Bishops, except that central conference membership (except bishops) to the Global Ministries board of directors shall be nominated and elected by the central conferences as provided in ¶¶ 1311.1 and 1311.5b).

d) *Episcopal Membership*—The episcopal membership of the general program boards shall be nominated by the Council of Bishops and elected by the General Conference. At least one of the episcopal members of each general agency, with the exception of the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits, shall be a central conference bishop and, in the case of the General Board of Global Ministries, two central conference bishops (from two of three regions: Africa, Europe, Philippines). (See ¶ 1311.6.)

e) *Additional Membership*—Additional members shall be elected by each general program board in order to bring into the board persons with special knowledge or background that will aid in the work of the agency, to consider differing theological perspectives, and to perfect the representation of racial and ethnic persons, youth (¶ 710.3), young adults (¶ 710.3), older adults, women and men, people with disabilities, LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer) persons, and persons from small-membership churches. After the election of central conference members as provided in ¶ 705.4c, and with the exception of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (¶ 2104.1b), the remaining number of additional members shall be allocated by the secretary of the

General Conference so as to insure to the extent possible that membership of each board reflects the proportionate membership of the jurisdictions based upon the combined clergy and lay membership, excluding episcopal members. In the determination of proportionate allocation, minor fractions shall be rounded down and major fractions rounded up to the nearest integer, and there shall be no minimum number of additional members assigned to any jurisdiction. Insofar as possible, the nominating committee shall select from the jurisdictional nominating pool for the election of persons to fill the additional membership positions from their jurisdictions insuring diversity as otherwise provided in the *Book of Discipline* (§ 705.4b). Each general program board shall elect additional members as specified in general program board membership paragraphs. Insofar as possible, no more than one person shall be elected from each episcopal area. It is recommended that such additional membership shall maintain the one-third laymen, one-third laywomen, and one-third clergy balance.

f) *Liaison Representatives*—The Methodist Church of Puerto Rico (Iglesia Metodista Autónoma Afiliada de Puerto Rico) will have one liaison representative, at its own expense, to each of the general program agencies of The United Methodist Church.

g) *Status of Liaison Representatives*—Because of the special nature of the relationship between the Methodist Church of Puerto Rico and the general agencies of The United Methodist Church as established in the concordat between the two churches, the liaison representatives of the Methodist Church of Puerto Rico to the general agencies of The United Methodist Church will serve with voice and vote and be afforded the same status on those agencies as though they were members, except as provided in § 705.4f).

2. *Other General Agencies*—a) Each jurisdictional conference shall elect members from the jurisdictional pool nominated by the annual and missionary conferences in the United States (§ 705.1) in accordance with the specific membership provisions of those agencies as set forth in the *Book of Discipline*: General Board of Pension and Health Benefits (§ 1502.1a), The United Methodist Publishing House (§ 1602), Office of Christian Unity and Interreligious Relationships (§ 437), General Commission on Communication (§ 1807), General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (§ 2104), and General Commission on Religion and Race (§ 2003). With the exception of the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits (§ 1502.1) and The United Methodist Publishing House (§ 1602.1) the number of additional members to be elected shall be allocated by the secretary of the General Conference so as to insure to the extent possible that membership

of each agency reflects the proportionate membership of the jurisdictions based upon the combined clergy and lay membership, excluding episcopal members. In the determination of proportionate allocation, minor fractions shall be rounded down and major fractions rounded up to the nearest integer, and there shall be no minimum number of additional members assigned to any jurisdiction. Insofar as possible the nominating committee shall select from the jurisdictional nominating pool for the election of persons to fill the additional membership positions from their jurisdictions insuring diversity as otherwise provided in the *Book of Discipline* (§ 705.4b).

b) Episcopal and additional members, if any, of the general agencies listed in § 705.5a shall be nominated and elected by the procedures specified in the paragraphs listed in §§ 705.1b, 705.1d, and 705.4e. The agencies shall consider names forwarded to them by the Connectional Table as having been nominated by the annual and missionary conferences in the United States or in the central conferences, but not elected by these conferences to general agency membership. Additional names may be considered in order to perfect the representation as provided in § 705.4e.

#### **Rationale:**

This petition seeks to create continuity through the *Book of Discipline* in the spirit of § 4 Article IV of the Constitution of The United Methodist Church. Given the recent response to the General Conference, this petition includes sexual orientation. May we continue to build a church that

#### **¶705.**

Petition Number: 20263-GA-¶705-G; Nelson, Muriel - Monrovia, Liberia.

#### **Fair Selection of Central Conference Members for COSROW**

Amend § 705.3 as follows:

¶ 705. . . .

4. *General Program Board Membership*— . . .

c) *Central Conference Membership*—The total central conference membership, including central conference bishops, in general church bodies shall be allocated as follows: four members on the General Commission on Religion and Race; three each (one from each region: Philippines, Europe, Africa) on the General Commission on Archives and History, the General Commission on Communication, the General Commission on United Methodist Men, and The United Methodist Publishing House;

three each on the General Council on Finance and Administration; seven each (one from each central conference) on the Connectional Table, the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women, and the General Board of Church and Society; three on the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry; four (at least one from each region from the Philippines, Europe, and Africa) on the General Board of Discipleship ~~and the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women~~; and eleven on the General Board of Global Ministries, only one of whom shall be a bishop. It is recommended that the aggregate central conference membership on the program boards be composed of one-third clergy (half of whom shall be women), one-third laymen, and one-third laywomen. The central conference membership, excluding episcopal members, shall be ~~elected by the Council of Bishops~~ selected by the bishops of the central conferences, except that central conference membership (except bishops) to the Global Ministries board of directors shall be nominated and elected by the central conferences as provided in ¶¶ 1311.1 and 1311.5b).

#### **Rationale:**

We must ensure that gender issues in central conferences are given the attention they need. And the central conferences' own leaders should select their representatives, as Americans pick their own. Having a USA-majority Council of Bishops select central conference representatives is unfair. Central conference leaders best understand their members.

#### **¶705.1.**

Petition Number: 20260-GA-¶705.1-G; Brooks, Lonnie - Anchorage, AK, USA.

### **Conflict of Interest in Jurisdictional Nominations**

Amend ¶ 705 as follows:

¶ 705.1. *Nominations by Conferences—*a) . . . Jurisdictional conferences may decide that persons elected by the annual and missionary conferences in the United States for inclusion in the jurisdictional pool shall not serve as members of the jurisdictional nominating committee.

b) Each annual and missionary conference in the United States shall nominate the persons most recently elected as delegates to the General Conference to the jurisdictional pool, however this provision conveys no right to serve as a member of the jurisdictional nominating committee if the jurisdictional conference has exercised

its authority to exclude persons included in the jurisdictional pool from service on the nominating committee as provided in ¶ 705.1.a) above.

#### **Rationale:**

This will preserve the right of a jurisdictional conference to preclude conflicts of interest in the nominations process and reverse the effect of Judicial Council Decision 1095.

#### **¶705.3.**

Petition Number: 20257-GA-¶705.3-G; Vetter, Molly - Los Angeles, CA, USA.

### **ALL BELONG: Seeking Inclusive Representation**

Amend ¶ 705.3.d as follows:

¶ 705.3.d) "It is recommended that the membership of each of the general agencies seeks to be inclusive based on gender, racial and ethnic persons, age, sexual orientation, persons with disabilities, and size of church. In order to ensure adequate representation of racial and ethnic persons (Asian American, African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, Pacific Islanders), it is recommended that a jurisdiction's membership on each general agency be at least 30 percent racial and ethnic persons."

#### **Rationale:**

Because all belong in the body of Christ, this petition seeks to reflect this value by including all persons in the membership of general agencies

#### **¶705.3.**

Petition Number: 20262-GA-¶705.3-G; Masamba, Remember - Harare, Zimbabwe.

### **GBCS Membership**

Amend ¶ 705.3 as follows:

**¶ 705. . . .**

4. *General Program Board Membership—*. . .

c) *Central Conference Membership—*The total central conference membership, including central conference bishops, in general church bodies shall be allocated as follows: four members on the General Commission on Religion and Race; three each (one from each region: Philippines, Europe, Africa) on the General Commission on Archives and History, the General Commission on Communication, the General Commission on United



Methodist Men, and The United Methodist Publishing House; three each on the General Council on Finance and Administration; seven each (one from each central conference) on the Connectional Table; ~~and the General Board of Church and Society; members on the General Board of Church and Society whose number will be in accordance with ¶ 1006;~~ three on the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry; four (at least one from each region from the Philippines, Europe, and Africa) on the General Board of Discipleship and the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women; and eleven on the General Board of Global Ministries, only one of whom shall be a bishop. It is recommended that the aggregate central conference membership on the program boards be composed of one-third clergy (half of whom shall be women), one-third laymen, and one-third laywomen. The central conference membership, excluding episcopal members, shall be elected by the Council of Bishops, except that central conference membership (except bishops) to the Global Ministries board of directors shall be nominated and elected by the central conferences as provided in ¶¶ 1311.1 and 1311.5b).

...

#### **Rationale:**

This helps ensure consistency, as well as a greater degree of clarity and simplicity, in adjustments to the membership of the General Board of Church and Society.

#### **¶705.3b.**

Petition Number: 20259-GA-¶705.3b-G; Allen, Emily - Mountain View, CA, USA.

#### **General Agency Representation from Formerly United Methodist Bodies**

Amend ¶ 705.3b:

¶ 705. 3. b) Each general agency may elect at least one member with vote and voice from among the member churches of the Pan-Methodist Commission. Each general agency may also elect at least one member with vote and voice from among the member churches of an offshoot or successor denomination that has left The United Methodist Church, if the new denomination contains at least fifty (50) churches and provides regular funding to the agency; the travel expenses of such members will be funded by the sending denomination. In addition, each general agency is permitted to elect at least one member with voice but not vote from among our Full Communion Ecumenical Partners. These members would be in addition to those otherwise specified in ¶ 705.3a above. The Council of Bishops

shall assist general agencies if they choose to elect such representatives.

#### **Rationale:**

This amendment allows the election of general agency board members from new offshoot or successor bodies of The United Methodist Church that establish a funding relationship with the general agency.

#### **¶705.4c.**

Petition Number: 20261-GA-¶705.4c-\$-G; Francisco, Ciriaco - Manila, Philippines for Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters.

#### **General Agency and Connectional Table Central Conference**

Amend ¶ 705.4.c as follows:

¶ 705. *General Agency and Connectional Table Membership*— . . .

4.c. *Central Conference*

*Membership*—The total central conference membership, including central conference bishops, in general church bodies shall be allocated as follows: four members on the General Commission on Religion and Race; three each (one from each region:

Philippines, Europe, Africa) on the General Commission on Archives and History, the General Commission on Communication, the General Commission on United Methodist Men, and The United Methodist Publishing House; three each on the General Council on Finance and Administration; ~~seven~~ eight each (one from each central conference) on the Connectional Table, and the General Board of Church and Society; . . .

#### **Rationale:**

The amendment adjusts membership based on the addition of a central conference in Africa. It is dependent upon the creation of an additional central conference in Africa.

#### **¶715.**

Petition Number: 20264-GA-¶715-G; Baumgardner, Karl - Huntington Beach, CA, USA.

#### **Avoid Conflicts of Interests**

Amend *Discipline* ¶ 715, *Provisions Pertaining to Staff*, by ADDING a new Section #10 as follows:

10. All elected staff persons of general councils, general boards, and general agencies shall agree, as long as

they hold their positions, to not serve as delegates to the General, jurisdictional, or central conferences.

**Rationale:**

This is commonsense good governance. Accountability of agencies to General Conference is undermined, and conflicts of interest are created, if the most senior staff simultaneously can serve as full voting members of General Conference and of jurisdictional nominating committees. Separating senior staff from divisive elections is key for fostering trust.

**¶715.4d.**

Petition Number: 20265-GA-¶715.4d; Boigegrain, Barbara - Glenview, IL, USA for General Board of Pension and Health Benefits.

**General Agency Benefit Funding Plan Reporting**

Amend ¶ 715.4.d) as follows:

~~d) On or before December 31, 2013, and then annually thereafter,~~ each general agency must develop and implement a formal comprehensive funding plan for funding its ~~annual benefit obligations relating to its annual retirement, welfare and health plan obligations~~ employee benefit plans obligations (including those obligations of the General Council on Finance and Administration [GCFA] for bishops), ~~including, but not limited to, as well as its projected pension and retiree medical liabilities (including those obligations of GCFA for bishops).~~ The funding plan or plans shall be submitted to the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits for review ~~and be published along with a favorable written opinion of the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits in an addendum to the agency's annual financial report.~~ In addition, the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits shall include general agency benefits and benefits for bishops in its quadrennial report to General Conference concerning the long-term benefit liabilities of the denomination. Therefore, annually each general agency shall provide its comprehensive benefit funding plan to the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits ~~information periodically requested.~~ Each general agency shall document in writing its policy regarding the portability of retiree health care eligibility, coverage, cost-sharing, and benefits and communicate the policy to its clergy and lay employees and incoming clergy and lay employees from annual conferences or other general agencies. For the purpose of this paragraph, portability encompasses credit given for service outside the general agency within the denomination to clergy and lay employ-

ees toward (i) eligibility for health care coverage in retirement and (ii) accrual of employer subsidies toward or employer cost-sharing of the cost of health care coverage.

**Rationale:**

Because many general agencies do not publish annual financial reports, remove the requirement that agencies publish benefit funding plans in financial reports; also make clarifying and technical corrections, e.g., that funding plans are submitted annually and that they apply to total obligations not only to annual costs.

**¶717.**

Petition Number: 20266-GA-¶717; Boigegrain, Barbara - Glenview, IL, USA for General Board of Pension and Health Benefits.

**Sustainable and Socially Responsible Investments**

Amend ¶ 717 as follows:

~~¶ 717. Sustainable and Socially Responsible Investments—~~In the investment of money, it shall be the policy of The United Methodist Church that all general boards and agencies, including the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits, and all administrative agencies and institutions, including hospitals, homes, educational institutions, annual conferences, foundations, and local churches, make a conscious effort to invest in the securities of institutions, companies, corporations, or in funds with policies and practices that are socially responsible, consistent with the goals outlined in the Social Principles. All United Methodist institutions shall endeavor to seek investments in the securities of institutions, companies, corporations, or in funds that promote racial and gender justice, protect human rights, prevent the use of sweatshop or forced labor, avoid human suffering, and preserve the natural world, including mitigating the effects of climate change. In addition, United Methodist institutions shall endeavor to avoid investments in companies engaged in core business activities that are not aligned with the Social Principles through their direct or indirect involvement with the production of anti-personnel weapons and armaments (both nuclear and conventional weapons), alcoholic beverages or tobacco; or that are involved in privately operated correctional facilities, gambling, pornography or other forms of exploitative adult entertainment. The boards and agencies are to give careful consideration to environmental, social, and governance factors when making investment decisions and actively exercise their responsibility as owners of the companies and sovereign

securities in which they invest. This includes engaging with companies, governments (to the extent reasonable, safe, and permitted by law), intergovernmental organizations, nongovernmental organization, and other policymakers, to create positive change and hold companies and governments them accountable for their actions, while also considering exclusion if companies and governments fail to act responsibly.

#### **Rationale:**

UMC investors that hold government issued securities should engage governmental bodies, to the extent reasonable and legal, and policymakers in supporting and improving sustainability and social responsibility, just as they are encouraged to engage similarly with companies whose securities they hold; and consider risk-justified exclusion only as a last resort.

#### **¶717.**

Petition Number: 20267-GA-¶717-G; Blackadar, John - Bow, NH, USA for New England Annual Conference. Taylor, Deborah Tinsley - Riverside, IL, USA for Northern Illinois Annual Conference. 1 Similar Petition

### **Sustainable and Socially Responsible Investment**

Amend ¶ 717:

In the investment of money, it shall be the policy of The United Methodist Church that all general boards and agencies, including the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits, and all administrative agencies and institutions, including hospitals, homes, educational institutions, annual conferences, foundations, and local churches, make a conscious effort to invest in institutions, companies, corporations, governments, or funds with policies and practices that are socially responsible, consistent with the goals outlined in the Social Principles. All United Methodist institutions shall endeavor to seek investments in institutions, companies, corporations, governments, or funds that promote racial and gender justice, protect human rights, prevent the use of sweatshop or forced labor, avoid human suffering, and preserve the natural world, including mitigating the effects of climate change. In addition, United Methodist institutions shall endeavor to avoid investments in companies engaged in core business activities that are not aligned with the Social Principles through their direct or indirect involvement with the production of anti-personnel weapons and armaments (both nuclear and conventional weapons), alcoholic beverages or tobacco; or that are involved in privately operated correctional facilities, gambling, pornography or other forms of exploit-

ative adult entertainment. United Methodist institutions should similarly not hold sovereign or government debt in states conducting prolonged military occupations as they violate international law and human rights standards. The boards and agencies are to give careful consideration to environmental, social, and governance factors when making investment decisions and actively exercise their responsibility as owners of the companies in which they invest. This includes engaging with companies to create positive change and hold them accountable for their actions, while also considering exclusion if companies fail to act responsibly.

#### **Rationale:**

When we buy sovereign debt (government bonds) we are lending our funds to governments without any formal mechanism for advocacy. Governments conducting prolonged military occupations are violating international law and human rights standards. Such investments are morally wrong and financially risky.

#### **¶718.**

Petition Number: 20647-GA-¶718; Boige grain, Barbara - Glenview, IL, USA for General Board of Pension and Health Benefits.

### **Investment Management Services**

Insert a new ¶ 718 and renumber subsequent paragraphs as necessary:

¶ 718. *Investment Management Services*—To help assure transparency, availability of timely information for investors, and compliance with applicable laws and regulations, agencies (and their related corporations) that make investment funds available to United Methodist or United Methodist-related entities shall, for the benefit of investors and prospective investors:

1. publish and update annually a prospectus or similar formal disclosure document that provides material information regarding the investment funds, including, but not limited to, fund objectives, benchmarks, risks, management, and purchase and redemption rights; fees, and performance;

2. publish, within 30 days of the close of each quarter, the investment performance of funds relative to their benchmarks;

3. publish, within six months of the close of each fiscal year, the report of an independent audit firm for the financial audit of the agency and its funds for fiscal year just ended; and

4. publish monthly reports of fund performance, or provide timely on-demand investor access to such information.

Nothing in this paragraph shall require the public disclosure of the agency's confidential proprietary information or processes.

**Rationale:**

To help assure transparency, availability of information for potential and current investors, and compliance with applicable laws and regulations, Wespath and GCFA, and their related companies, are encouraged, as church fiduciaries, to strive to meet investment adviser best practices in disclosure and reporting to the extent practicable.

**¶905.**

Petition Number: 20268-GA-¶905-G; Brewer, Scott - Topeka, KS, USA.

**Focus Essential Functions of Connectional Table**

Amend ¶ 905

¶ 905. *Objectives*—The essential functions of the Connectional Table are:

1. ~~To provide a forum for the understanding and implementation of the vision, mission, and ministries of the global church as determined in consultation with the Council of Bishops and/or the actions of the General Conference.~~

2. ~~To enable the flow of information and communication among annual conferences, jurisdictions, central conferences, general agencies, and the Council of Bishops.~~

3. ~~Consistent with actions of the General Conference, to coordinate the program life of the church with the mandates of the gospel, the mission of the church, and the needs of the global community by listening to the expression of needs, addressing emerging issues, and determining the most effective, cooperative, and efficient way to provide optimum stewardship of ministries, personnel, and resources.~~

4. To review and evaluate the missional effectiveness of general program-related agencies and connectional structures of the church as they collectively seek to aid annual conferences and local churches as they fulfill the mission of The United Methodist Church to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

5. To recommend to the General Conference such changes and implementing legislation as may be appropriate to ensure effectiveness of the general agencies.

~~6. To provide leadership in planning and research, assisting all levels of the church to evaluate needs and plan strategies to carry out the mission of the church.~~

7. In order to be accountable, along with the General Council on Finance and Administration, to The United Methodist Church through the General Conference, the Connectional Table shall have the authority and responsibility in the following matters:

a) To collaborate with the General Council on Finance and Administration in the preparation of budgets for the apportioned funds as provided for in ¶¶ 806.1 and 810.1.

b) To receive from the General Council on Finance and Administration and approve all general agency budget reviews.

c) To review and approve special offerings and churchwide appeals.

**Rationale:**

The church needs a group to focus primarily on the evaluation of agencies. As denominational structure develops, other groups will be responsible for communicating and implementing the church's mission and vision. This deletion keeps general church funds from being spent on work duplicated elsewhere and reduces Connectional Table expenses.

**¶906.**

Petition Number: 20269-GA-¶906-\$-G; Thomas, Wilton Odongo - Nairobi, Kenya for Nairobi, Kenya-Ethiopia Conference.

**Fair Representation at Connectional Table**

¶ 906. *Organization of the Connectional Table*—

1. *Membership*—The voting members of the Connectional Table shall consist of 49 persons as follows:

a) Twenty-eight persons elected through jurisdictional and central conferences, ~~one from each of the central conferences by their own nomination processes and 21 from the jurisdictional conferences elected by the jurisdictional nomination process.~~ who shall be chosen in the following manner, other provisions of the *Discipline* notwithstanding: Jurisdictional membership These members shall include one person from each jurisdiction and central conference, and the balance of the jurisdictional and central members shall be allocated by the Secretary of the General Conference so as to insure to the extent possible that the members represent the proportionate membership of the jurisdictions global church based upon the combined clergy and lay membership.

Members from the jurisdictional conferences shall be elected by the jurisdictional nomination process. Members from the central conferences shall be elected by each central conference's own nomination process. It is recommended that for every Connectional Table member to which a central conference is entitled under this paragraph, the central conference shall elect at least two alternates, in designated priority order, who shall be available to replace any of that central conference's Connectional Table members who in the course of the quadrennial may become unable to participate in meetings due to visa challenges or other reasons.

...

h) Except as otherwise provided for in this paragraph, vacancies vacancies of members elected from central and jurisdictional conferences occurring between sessions of the general conference shall be filled by the College of Bishops where the vacancy occurred, in so far as possible from the same Annual conference.

#### **Rationale:**

The seven central conferences make up 45 percent of our global membership. The current distribution of 21 out of 28 members of the Connectional Table to the five jurisdictions while one member is allotted to each of the seven central conferences is not a just and fair distribution.

#### **¶906.**

Petition Number: 20270-GA-¶906-G; Kulah, Jerry - Monrovia, Liberia.

#### **Justice in CT Membership**

Amend *Discipline* ¶ 906.1 as follows:

**¶ 906. Organization of the Connectional Table—1. Membership**—The voting members of the Connectional Table shall consist of 49 persons as follows:

a) Twenty-eight persons elected through jurisdictional and central conferences, ~~one from each of the central conferences by their own nomination processes and 21 from the jurisdictional conferences elected by the jurisdictional nomination process, who shall be chosen in the following manner, other provisions of the *Discipline* notwithstanding: Jurisdictional membership~~ These members shall include one person from each jurisdiction ~~and central conference~~, and the balance of the jurisdictional ~~and central~~ members shall be allocated by the secretary of the General Conference so as to insure to the extent possible that the members represent the proportionate membership of the ~~jurisdictions~~ global church based upon the combined clergy and lay membership. Members from

the jurisdictional conferences shall be elected by the jurisdictional nomination process. Members from the central conferences shall be elected by each central conference's own nomination process. It is recommended that for every Connectional Table member to which a central conference is entitled under this paragraph, the central conference shall elect at least two alternates, in designated priority order, who shall be available to replace any of that central conference's Connectional Table members who in the course of the quadrennium may become unable to participate in meetings due to visa challenges or other reasons.

b) An effective bishop, selected by the Council of Bishops, serves as the chair of the Connectional Table.

c) The ecumenical officer of the Council of Bishops and the presidents of the following agencies: General Board of Church and Society, General Board of Discipleship, General Board of Global Ministries, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, General Commission on Religion and Race, General Commission on Status and Role of Women, General Commission on United Methodist Men, General Commission on Communication, and General Commission on Archives and History, program-related agencies that are accountable to the Connectional Table (as expressed in ¶ 702.3). The chairperson of the Commission on the General Conference, the chairperson of the Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters, and the president of the General Council on Finance and Administration shall also sit with voice and vote on the Connectional Table.

d) One youth and one young adult elected by the Connectional Table upon nomination by the membership of the Division on Ministries with Young People from among its members shall serve on the Connectional Table.

e) One member from each of the racial/ethnic caucuses as elected by the Connectional Table upon nomination from: Black Methodists for Church Renewal, Methodists Associated to Represent Hispanic Americans, Native American International Caucus, National Federation of Asian American United Methodists, and Pacific Islanders National Caucus United Methodist.

f) The general secretaries of the above-named agencies and the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits, the United Methodist Women, the publisher of The United Methodist Publishing House, and the secretary of General Conference shall sit at the Table and have the right of voice but no vote.

g) Jurisdictional, central conferences, and other groups involved in the nominating and election of persons to the Connectional Table shall ensure the diversity objectives of, insofar as possible, 50 percent clergy, 50 percent laity, 50 percent female, 50 percent male, not less than 30 percent members of racial/ethnic groups (excluding cen-

tral conference members), and not less than 10 percent youth and young adults, ensuring diversity as otherwise provided in ¶ 705.4b.

*h) Except as otherwise provided for in this paragraph, ~~Vacancies~~ vacancies of members elected from central and jurisdictional conferences occurring between sessions of the general conference shall be filled by the College of Bishops where the vacancy occurred, in so far as possible from the same annual conference.*

*i) Members shall meet all the membership qualifications as expressed in ¶ 710.*

**Rationale:**

The seven central conferences make up 45 percent of our global membership. The current distribution of 21 out of 28 members of the Connectional Table to the five jurisdictions while one member is allotted to each of the seven central conferences is not a just and fair distribution.

**¶906.1.**

Petition Number: 20271-GA-¶906.1-G; Francisco, Ciriaco - Manila, Philippines for Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters.

**Connectional Table Membership Amendment**

Amend ¶ 906.1 as follows:

¶ 906 *Organization of the Connectional Table—*

1. *Membership—*The voting members of the Connectional Table shall consist of 49 persons as follows: *a) Twenty-eight persons elected through jurisdictional and central conferences, one from each of the central conferences by their own nomination processes and ~~21~~ 20 from the jurisdictional conferences elected by the jurisdictional nomination process. Jurisdictional membership shall include one person from each jurisdiction and the balance of the jurisdictional members shall be allocated by the secretary of the General Conference so as to insure to the extent possible that the members represent the proportionate membership of the jurisdictions based upon the combined clergy and lay membership.*

**Rationale:**

With the addition of a central conference member, the number of members from jurisdictional conferences is reduced from 21 to 20. The budget increase is the difference in airfare for one international vs one U.S. airfare. This petition is dependent upon the petition adding one central conference in