

Proposed Legislation from the Commission on a Way Forward

Printed in order of petition number.

¶105.

Petition Number: 90001-¶105-G; Berlin, Thomas M. - Herndon, VA, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - One Church Plan #1 - Our Theological Task - Par. 105

Amend ¶ 105 by adding new sub-paragraph as follows:

We agree that we are not of one mind regarding human sexuality. As we continue to faithfully explore issues of sexuality, we will honor the theological guidelines of Scripture, reason, tradition, and experience, acknowledging that God's revelation of truth and God's extension of grace as expressed in Jesus Christ (John 1:14) may cause persons of good conscience to interpret and decide issues of sexuality differently. We also acknowledge that the Church is called through Christ to unity even amidst complexity. We affirm those who continue to maintain that the scriptural witness does not condone the practice of homosexuality. We believe that their conscience should be protected in the Church and throughout society under basic principles of religious liberty. We also affirm those who believe the witness of Scripture calls us to reconsider the teaching of the Church with respect to monogamous homosexual relationships.

Rationale:

This addition acknowledges the common theological guidelines that are the sources of the diverse views in our global church regarding human sexuality. It recognizes the desire of the church to fulfill Christ's call to unity while holding a convicted humility toward one another as we honor religious liberty for all.

¶161.C.

Petition Number: 90002-¶161.C-G; Berlin, Thomas M. - Herndon, VA, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - One Church Plan #2 - Social Principles - Par. 161C

Amend ¶ 161.C as follows:

C) *Marriage*—We affirm the sanctity of the monogamous marriage covenant that is expressed in love, mutual support, personal commitment, and shared fidelity, traditionally understood as a union of one man and one woman between a man and a woman. We believe that God's blessing rests upon such marriage, whether or not there

are children of the union. We reject social norms that assume different standards for women than for men in marriage. Where laws in civil society define marriage as union between two adults, no United Methodist clergy shall be required to celebrate or bless a same-sex union. We support laws in civil society that define marriage as the union of one man and one woman.

Rationale:

The traditional understanding of marriage is honored. Religious liberty is intentionally protected for those whose consciences would be impinged if they celebrated a same-sex union in societies where it is allowed.

¶161.G.

Petition Number: 90003-¶161.G-G; Berlin, Thomas M. - Herndon, VA, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.
3 Similar Petitions

CoWF - One Church Plan #3 - Social Principles - Par. 161G

Amend ¶ 161.G as follows:

G) *Human Sexuality*—We affirm that sexuality is God's good gift to all persons. We call everyone to responsible stewardship of this sacred gift. Although all persons are sexual beings whether or not they are married, sexual relations are affirmed only with the covenant of monogamous ~~heterosexual~~ marriage between two adults. We deplore all forms of the commercialization, abuse, and exploitation of sex. We call for strict global enforcement of laws prohibiting the sexual exploitation of children and for adequate protection, guidance, and counseling for abused children. All persons, regardless of age, gender, marital status, or sexual orientation, are entitled to have their human and civil rights ensured and to be protected against violence. The Church should support the family in providing age-appropriate education regarding sexuality to children, youth, and adults. We affirm that all persons are individuals of sacred worth, created in the image of God. All persons need the ministry of the Church in their struggles for human fulfillment, as well as the spiritual and emotional care of a fellowship that enables reconciling relationships with God, with others, and with self. ~~The United Methodist Church does not condone the practice of homosexuality and considers this practice incompatible with Christian teaching.~~ We affirm that God's grace is available to all. We will seek to live together in Christian

community, welcoming, forgiving, and loving one another, as Christ has loved and accepted us. We implore families and churches not to reject or condemn lesbian and gay members and friends. We commit ourselves to be in ministry for and with all persons.

Rationale:

Sexuality is affirmed as a good gift to all people. Sexual relations are bound by the covenant of monogamous marriage between two adults. The elimination of this language is in recognition that we are not of one mind.

¶304.3.

Petition Number: 90004-¶304.3-G; Berlin, Thomas M. - Herndon, VA, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - One Church Plan #4 - Qualifications for Ordination - Par. 304.3

Amend ¶ 304.3 as follows:

3. While persons set apart by the Church for ordained ministry are subject to all the frailties of the human condition and the pressures of society, they are required to maintain the highest standards of holy living in the world. The responsibility for determining how standards, including standards related to human sexuality, may apply to certification or ordination in a given annual conference falls to the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry and the clergy session of the annual conference. The bishop may choose to seek the non-binding advice of an annual conference session on standards relating to human sexuality for ordination to inform the Board of Ordained Ministry in its work. The practice of homosexuality incompatible with Christian teaching. Therefore self-avowed practicing homosexual persons are not to be certified as candidates, ordained as minister or appointed to serve in the United Methodist Church.

Rationale:

The Conference Board of Ordained Ministry and the clergy session of the annual conference set standards of holy living for clergy. By expanding this responsibility to include standards of human sexuality, they can best serve their missional context. Bishops can seek the non-binding input of the annual conference session.

¶310.2d.

Petition Number: 90005-¶310.2d-G; Berlin, Thomas M. - Herndon, VA, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - One Church Plan #5 - Candidacy - Par. 310.2.d footnote

Amend ¶ 310.2.d footnote as follows.

The General Conference, ~~in response to expressions throughout the Church regarding homosexuality and ordination~~, reaffirms the present language of the *Discipline* regarding the character and commitment of persons seeking ordination and affirms its high standards. . . .

~~In The Social Principles the General Conference has said that we “do not condone the practice of homosexuality and consider this practice incompatible with Christian teaching.” Furthermore, the Principles state that “we affirm the sanctity of the marriage covenant that is expressed in love, mutual support, personal commitment, and shared fidelity between two adults, between a man and a woman.~~

Rationale:

This footnote is adjusted to reflect proposed changes in ¶ 161.C and ¶ 161.G.

¶329.

Petition Number: 90006-¶329-G; Berlin, Thomas M. - Herndon, VA, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - One Church Plan #6 - Ministry of Deacons - Par. 329

Amend ¶ 329 by adding new sub-paragraph after ¶ 329.3

¶ 329.4 In conferences where civil law permits a pastor to perform a same-sex marriage service, no deacon in full connection shall at any time be required or compelled to perform, or prohibited from performing, any marriage, union, or blessing of same-sex couples, or of any couples. Each deacon shall have the right to exercise his or her conscience to refuse or agree when requested to perform any marriages, unions, or blessing as a matter of his or her individual religious liberty.

Rationale:

Deacons currently have the ability to decide whether or not to perform a marriage, union, or blessing of heterosexual couples. This ability would be extended to these services for same-sex couples where legal. The right to refuse such a service due to conscience is expressly protected.

¶334.

Petition Number: 90007-¶334-G; Berlin, Thomas M. - Herndon, VA, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - One Church Plan #7 - Ministry of an Elder - Par. 334

Amend ¶ 334 by adding new sub-paragraph after ¶ 334.5

¶ 334.6. In conferences where civil law permits a pastor to perform same-sex marriage services, no elder shall at any time be required or compelled to perform, or prohibited from performing, any marriage, union, or blessing of same-sex couples, or of any couples. Each elder shall have the right to exercise his or her conscience to refuse or agree when requested to perform such marriages, unions, or blessing as a matter of his or her individual religious liberty.

Rationale:

Elders currently have the ability to decide whether or not to perform a marriage, union, or blessing of heterosexual couples. This ability would be extended to these services for same-sex couples where legal. The right to refuse such a service due to conscience is expressly protected.

¶340.

Petition Number: 90008-¶340-G; Berlin, Thomas M. - Herndon, VA, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - One Church Plan #8 - Responsibilities of Elders and Licensed Pastors - Par. 340

Amend ¶ 340 by adding new sub-paragraph after ¶ 340.2

¶ 340.3 a. Each clergy shall have the right to exercise his or her conscience when requested to perform such marriages, unions, or blessing as a matter of his or her individual religious liberty.

b. In conferences where civil law permits a pastor to perform same-sex marriage services, no clergy shall at any time be required or compelled to perform, or prohibited from performing, any marriage, union, or blessing of same-sex couples, or of any couples.

c. Clergy who cannot in good conscience continue to serve in a conference based upon that conference's standards for ordination regarding practicing homosexuals, may seek to transfer under ¶ 347, and shall be supported and assisted in that process. Similarly, clergy who cannot in good conscience continue to serve a particular church based on unresolved disagreements over same-sex mar-

riage as communicated by the pastor and Staff-Parish Relations Committee to the district superintendent, shall be reassigned. All clergy with security of appointment shall continue under appointment by the bishop of the annual conference.

Rationale:

Clergy would be allowed to perform or not perform a marriage, union, or blessing of same-sex couples where legal. Clergy who desire transfer from conferences that ordain gay persons could transfer. Continued security of appointment for clergy is affirmed.

¶341.6.

Petition Number: 90009-¶341.6-G; Berlin, Thomas M. - Herndon, VA, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - One Church Plan #9 - Unauthorized Conduct - Par. 341.6

Amend ¶ 341.6 as follows:

6. Ceremonies that celebrate ~~homosexual unions~~ same-sex marriage shall not be performed conducted by clergy our ministers and shall not be conducted in our churches on church-owned property unless the church decides by a majority vote of a Church Conference to adopt a policy to celebrate same-sex marriage on church property.

Rationale:

This provision allows local church members to decide what is best for their congregational and missional context related to ceremonies of same-sex marriage on church property. A called Church Conference requires due notification of the meeting and invites all members to participate.

¶415.6.

Petition Number: 90010-¶415.6-G; Berlin, Thomas M. - Herndon, VA, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - One Church Plan #10 - Ordination by Bishops - Par. 415.6

Amend ¶ 415.6 at its conclusion as follows:

No bishop shall be required to ordain an elder or deacon, commission a deaconess, home missionary, or missionary, or license a local pastor who is a self-avowed practicing homosexual. The jurisdictional College of Bishops shall provide for the ordination, commissioning, and licensing of all persons recommended by the

Board of Ordained Ministry and the clergy session of the annual conference in the bounds of its jurisdiction. All clergy with security of appointment shall continue under appointment by the bishop of the annual conference.

Rationale:

The religious liberty of bishops who cannot in good conscience commission, license or ordain self-avowed practicing homosexuals is protected. Provision is made for such persons in annual conferences where they are deemed to be duly qualified and approved candidates. Security of appointment for appointed clergy is continued.

¶416.

Petition Number: 90011-¶416-G; Berlin, Thomas M. - Herndon, VA, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - One Church Plan #11 - Responsibilities of Bishops - Par. 416

Amend ¶ 416 by adding new sub-paragraphs after 416.7:

8. The bishop shall neither require any pastor to perform nor prohibit any pastor from performing any marriage, union, or blessing of same-sex couples.

9. The bishop shall neither require any church to hold nor prohibit any church from holding a same-sex marriage service on church property.

Rationale:

Clarity related to the boundaries of authority for bishops related to marriage, union, or blessing of same-sex couples enables clergy and congregations to know that their religious liberty will be affirmed in the future without penalty or unforeseen consequence.

¶419.

Petition Number: 90012-¶419-G; Berlin, Thomas M. - Herndon, VA, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - One Church Plan #12 - Responsibilities of District Superintendents - Par. 419

Amend ¶ 419 by adding new sub-paragraphs after 419.12:

13. The superintendent shall neither require any pastor to perform nor prohibit any pastor from performing any marriage, union, or blessing of same-sex couples.

14. The superintendent shall neither require any church to hold nor prohibit any church from holding a

same-sex marriage service on church property or otherwise coerce, threaten, or retaliate against any pastor who exercises his or her conscience to perform or refuse to perform a same-sex marriage.

Rationale:

Clarity related to the boundaries of authority for district superintendents related to marriage, union, or blessing of same-sex couples enables clergy and congregations to know that their religious liberty will be affirmed in the future without penalty or consequence.

¶605.

Petition Number: 90013-¶605-G; Berlin, Thomas M. - Herndon, VA, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - One Church Plan #13 - Business of the Conference - Par. 605

Amend ¶ 605 by adding new sub-paragraph after 605.9 as follows:

10. At any clergy session of an annual conference, the chairperson of the Board of Ordained Ministry shall, if directed by a vote of the Board of Ordained Ministry, present a motion regarding certification, ordination, and appointment of self-avowed practicing homosexuals. Provided, however, that any clergy session of an annual conference that votes on such matters shall not, without the consent of the presiding bishop, take up any subsequent motion on that issue during any called or special session of annual conference held within 30 full calendar months from the date of such vote regardless of the outcome.

Rationale:

After receiving a motion from the Board of Ordained Ministry related to the ordination of self-avowed practicing homosexuals, the clergy session will not re-address this matter unless the bishop sees a critical need to re-address the question sooner.

¶2702.1.

Petition Number: 90014-¶2702.1-G; Berlin, Thomas M. - Herndon, VA, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - One Church Plan #14 - Chargeable Offenses - Par. 2702.1

Amend ¶ 2702.1 as follows:

¶ 2702. 1. A bishop, clergy member of an annual conference (¶ 370), local pastor, clergy on honorable or administrative location, or diaconal minister may be tried

when charged (subject to the statute of limitations in ¶ 2702.4) with one or more of the following offenses: (a) immorality including, but not limited to, not being celibate in singleness or not faithful in a ~~heterosexual~~ monogamous marriage; (b) practices declared by The United Methodist Church to be incompatible with Christian teachings ~~including but not limited to: being a self-avowed practicing homosexual; or conducting ceremonies which celebrate homosexual unions; or performing same-sex wedding ceremonies;~~ (c) crime; (d) disobedience to the order and discipline of The United Methodist Church; (e) dissemination of doctrines contrary to the established standards of doctrine of The United Methodist Church; (f) relationships and/or behavior that undermines the ministry of another pastor; (g) child abuse; (h) sexual abuse; (i) sexual misconduct including the use or possession of pornography, (j) harassment, including, but not limited to, racial and/or sexual harassment; (k) racial or gender discrimination; or (l) fiscal malfeasance.

Rationale:

The language is adjusted to reflect proposed changes in ¶¶ 161.C, 161.G, 304.3, and 341.6.

¶543.17.

Petition Number: 90015-¶543.17-G; Berlin, Thomas M. - Herndon, VA, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - One Church Plan #15 - Central Conference Implementation Time - Par. 543.17

Amend ¶ 543.17 as follows:

17. In a central conference or provisional central conference using a language other than English, legislation passed by a General Conference shall not take effect until ~~twelve~~ 18 months after the close of that General Conference in order to afford the necessary time to make adaptations and to publish a translation of the legislation that has been enacted . . .

Rationale:

An additional six months give the central conferences the appropriate time to meet, translate the legislation, and consider whether they want to make adaptations.

¶1504.

Petition Number: 90016-¶1504; Berlin, Thomas M. - Herndon, VA, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - One Church Plan #16 - Pension Liabilities - Par. 1504

Amend ¶ 1504, effective as of the close of the 2019 General Conference, by adding a new subparagraph 23 to read as follows:

If a local church or charge in the United States changes its relationship to The United Methodist Church through closure, abandonment, or release from the trust clause pursuant to ¶ 2548, ¶ 2549, or otherwise, notwithstanding whether property with title held by the local church is subject to the trust (under the terms of ¶ 2501), the local church shall contribute a withdrawal liability in an amount equal to its pro rata share of any aggregate unfunded pension obligations to the annual conference. The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits shall determine the aggregate funding obligations of the annual conference using market factors similar to a commercial annuity provider, from which the annual conference will determine the local church's share.

Rationale:

Local churches that change the nature of their connection to the Church must pay a proportional fair share of the annual conference's aggregate unfunded pension liability using market factors similar to a commercial annuity provider to account for the investment, longevity, and other risks they leave to the Church.

¶1504.

Petition Number: 90017-¶1504; Berlin, Thomas M. - Herndon, VA, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - One Church Plan #17 - CRSP Amendment - Par. 1504

Revise the Clergy Retirement Security Program ("CRSP"), which is incorporated by reference in ¶ 1504.1 of the *Book of Discipline*, including any needed revisions to CRSP section numbering, formatting, pagination, or Table of Contents, effective as of the close of the 2019 General Conference as follows:

The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits is directed by the General Conference to amend the Clergy Retirement Security Program such that active clergy participants who terminate their annual conference relationship under ¶ 360 of the *Book of Discipline* will be treated as terminated vested participants under the Clergy Retirement Security Program. The terminated vested participant'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 2019 General Conference and in the manner described above.

Rationale:

The Clergy Retirement Security Program should be amended so active clergy who change their covenant are removed from the defined benefit and annuity risk pools for their former annual conference and the Church, and are provided an actuarially equivalent account balance benefit.

¶101.

Petition Number: 90018-¶101-G; Miller, Patricia - Indianapolis, IN, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - Connectional Conference Plan #1 - General BOD - Par. 101

Amend Par. 101 as follows:

¶ 101. The *General Book of Discipline* reflects our Wesleyan way of serving Christ through doctrine and disciplined Christian life. We are a worldwide denomination united by doctrine, discipline, and mission through our connectional covenant. The *General Book of Discipline* expresses that unity. Each central connectional conference may make changes and adaptations to the *General Book of Discipline* to more fruitfully accomplish our mission in various contexts. However, some portions of the *General Book of Discipline* are not subject to adaptation. The following parts and paragraphs are not subject to change or adaptation except by action of the General Conference. The Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters has primary responsibility for proposing to General Conference revisions to this paragraph:

Parts I - V

I. Constitution ¶¶ 1-61

II. *General Book of Discipline* ¶ 101

III. Doctrinal Standards and Our Theological Task ¶¶ 102-105

IV. The Ministry of All Christians ¶¶ 120-143

V. Social Principles Preface, Preamble, and ¶¶ 160-

166 (as replaced by the Global Social Principles to be adopted by the 2020 General Conference)

Part VI. General Organization and Administration ¶¶ 201-204, 260-261, 301-303, 305-308, 401-403, 421-423, 431-450, 501-523, 525-528, 570-575, 601, 701-702, 703.1-4, 703.7-12, 704, 801-809, 1501-1712, 2201, 2501-2502, 2504-2511, 2552, 2601-2612, 2701, 2703-2719, 2801-2802 (All references in these paragraphs referring to jurisdictional or central conferences shall be modified to refer to connectional conferences. Where provisions between jurisdictional and central conferences conflict, they shall continue to apply differently within the United States and outside the U.S., but the Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters shall lead a process in consultation with the Connectional Table to reconcile the differences and rewrite paragraphs containing conflicts to be proposed to the 2025 General Conference.)

Part VII. Additional Organization and Administration (All other paragraphs in the *Discipline*, as amended by General Conference 2020, shall remain in effect through December 31, 2025, unless adapted by a connectional conference. Based on decisions by connectional conferences during 2022-25, the 2025 General Conference may add or subtract paragraphs to Part VI. All references in these paragraphs referring to jurisdictional or central conferences shall be modified to refer to connectional conferences. These paragraphs shall be subject to adaptation by the central conferences beginning in 2020 and the connectional conferences beginning in 2022.)

The Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters, in consultation with the Committee on Faith and Order, will bring legislation to the 2020 General Conference to change the structure of the *General Book of Discipline* to include a Part VI, General Organization and Administration not subject to change or adaptation by central conferences, and a Part VII, Additional Organization and Administration, adaptable by central conferences according to ¶ 31.5. The content of Part VI of the 2016 *Book of Discipline* will be included in either Part VI or Part VII of the *General Book of Discipline*.

For the work on Part VI, Chapter 2 (The Ministry of the Ordained) and Chapter 3 (The Superintendency) of the 2016 *Book of Discipline*, the Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters will work in consultation with the Commission for the Study of Ministry, and for Part VI, Chapter 5 (Administrative Order) of the 2016 *Book of Discipline*, the Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters will work in consultation with the Connectional Table.

The Commission on the General Conference is directed to set aside adequate time in the first three days of the 2020 2025 General Conference for plenary consideration

and action on Part VI, General Administration and Organization, submitted by the Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters, and revisions to what constitutes Part VI, based on decisions made by the connectional conferences. Subsequent changes to Part VI shall be reviewed by the Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters for submission to General Conference.

Rationale:

These changes define what portions of the *Discipline* apply to the whole Church and what portions are adaptable. Provisions pertaining to homosexuality (except regarding funding) are moved to the adaptable section. The 2025 General Conference is able to make changes based on the decisions of the connectional conferences.

¶2800.

Petition Number: 90019-¶2800-!-G; Miller, Patricia - Indianapolis, IN, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - Connectional Conference Plan #2 - Implementation of Plan - NEW Par. 2801

Add a new ¶ 2801 as follows:

¶ 2801 – Implementation of the Connectional Conference Plan

This paragraph contains the process for implementing the Connectional Conference Plan and takes precedence over all other paragraphs in the *Book of Discipline* not in the Constitution. The processes contained in this paragraph substitute for any processes in other parts of the *Discipline*, and those other processes and approvals are preempted by this paragraph.

1. As soon as possible after the adjournment of the 2019 General Conference, and no later than March 31, 2019, the General Conference secretary shall forward to the annual conferences the constitutional amendments approved by General Conference for the Connectional Conference Plan. Annual conferences shall be responsible to vote on ratification of these amendments by April 15, 2020, forwarding the results of this vote to the Council of Bishops immediately at the conclusion of each annual conference. Any annual conference that has not forwarded the results of its ratification ballot to the Council of Bishops by April 30, 2020, shall be deemed not present and voting under ¶ 59. The ratification percentage for the amendments shall be counted based on the ballots received, and ballots not received shall not count as part of the total (of which a two-thirds affirmative vote is required for ratification).

2. Upon the announcement by the Council of Bishops that all constitutional amendments have been ratified, the 2020 sessions of the jurisdictional conferences shall choose by simple majority vote of the delegates present and voting as to which of the three connectional conferences that jurisdiction desires to affiliate. All jurisdictionally owned assets and liabilities shall belong to the connectional conference with which that jurisdiction affiliates when the connectional conference becomes effective. All annual conferences of that jurisdiction shall have the status chosen by their jurisdictional conference, unless an annual conference desires to choose a different option (¶ 2801.4). The decision of each jurisdictional conference shall be immediately communicated to the president of the Council of Bishops and the Transition Team.

3. Upon the announcement by the Council of Bishops that the constitutional amendments have been ratified, each 2020-21 session of a central conference shall choose whether it wants to be constituted as a connectional conference (either by itself or joined with other central conferences) or to join one of the three theologically-based connectional conferences (making it a global connectional conference). The option chosen (own connectional conference or affiliation with another connectional conference) shall require a majority vote by the delegates present and voting.

All central conference owned assets and liabilities shall belong to the connectional conference with which that central conference affiliates when the connectional conference becomes effective.

All annual conferences of that central conference shall have the status chosen by their central conference, unless an annual conference desires to choose a different option (¶ 2801.4). The decision of each central conference shall be immediately communicated to the president of the Council of Bishops and the Transition Team.

4. Following the decision of each jurisdictional or central conference but no later than July 31, 2021, any annual conference inside or outside the United States that disagrees with the decision of its jurisdictional or central conference may vote to join a different connectional conference by a majority vote by the conference members present and voting. The proposal for an annual conference to affiliate with a different connectional conference shall originate either from the cabinet, the annual conference Connectional Table (or equivalent structure), or a petition signed by a minimum of 10 percent of the annual conference members (clergy or lay). The proposal would then be handled in accordance with the annual conference rules. All annual conference owned assets and liabilities shall remain with the annual conference, no matter which connectional conference it affiliates with. The decision of

each annual conference shall be immediately communicated to the president of the Council of Bishops and the Transition Team.

5. After January 1, 2026, an annual conference may by a 60 percent majority vote of its members present and voting decide to switch its affiliation from one connectional conference to another. Such a switch in affiliation shall require the majority approval of the receiving connectional conference. An annual conference shall not consider a switch in its affiliation within less than four years from a previous vote on the question.

6. Between August 1, 2021, and July 1, 2022, any local church (charge) inside or outside the United States that disagrees with the decision of its annual conference (whether the annual conference chose by vote or by acquiescing to the decision of the jurisdictional or central conference) may vote to join a different connectional conference by a simple majority vote of the church's professing members present and voting at a duly called regular or special church conference. The proposal to affiliate with a different connectional conference shall originate either from the church council (or equivalent structure) or from a petition signed by a minimum of 10 percent of the congregation's professing members.

The bishop and cabinet, along with other appropriate individuals of the annual conference, shall facilitate the orderly and timely administration of this process. The decision of each local congregation shall be immediately communicated to the president of the Council of Bishops and the Transition Team. After July 1, 2022, any local congregation desiring to switch its affiliation from one connectional conference to another shall follow the requirements of ¶ 41. A local church shall not consider a switch in its affiliation within less than four years from a previous church conference vote on the question.

7. Past and current pension and annuity liabilities under the Clergy Retirement Security Program shall remain the legal obligations of the annual conferences. Clergy affiliating with a different connectional conference from their original annual conference shall have their associated past and current pension and annuity liabilities and related assets calculated, assigned, and transferred as appropriate, by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits to the annual/connectional conference to which the clergy participant transfers.

8. By August 31, 2021, each active or retired bishop shall register with the president of the Council of Bishops and the Transition Team with which connectional conference he or she desires to affiliate.

9. During this transition, to provide continuity and avoid a mismatch of the number of bishops for each connectional conference, the mandatory retirement provi-

sions of ¶ 408.1 shall be waived for all bishops. Bishops in the United States may continue serving their current appointments past the mandatory retirement age until the organizing conferences of the connectional conferences in 2022, at which time new bishops shall be elected as needed in each connectional conference. The retirement date would be December 31, 2022, and the effective date for new bishops January 1, 2023. Bishops unwilling to continue serving may take retirement, and the Council of Bishops shall appoint another retired bishop as interim bishop to serve through 2022. No new bishops would then be elected at the 2020 jurisdictional conferences, but election of members to the general boards and agencies would still need to occur. The 2020 jurisdictional conferences may be shortened to account for the reduced business to be conducted, or each College of Bishops may decide to conduct the necessary business via e-mail and/or video conference. The central conferences shall meet and elect bishops as usual in 2020, unless the central conference College of Bishops determines that a realignment of the central conference may reduce the number of bishops needed. A central conference experiencing realignment, either by changing annual conference boundaries or joining another connectional conference, shall meet for organizational purposes prior to July 1, 2023, and elect any required new or replacement bishops at that time. In such a case, a central conference bishop shall not be subject to mandatory retirement until 60 days following the organizational conference (see ¶ 2801.14).

10. Each active or retired clergy person (ordained or licensed or in process) shall have until July 1, 2022, to register with his or her bishop and the Transition Team a desire to affiliate with a different connectional conference than that chosen by his or her annual conference. Any clergy person not registering a choice shall by default remain a member of that person's annual conference and affiliate with the connectional conference chosen by that annual conference.

11. Clergy appointments taking effect July 1, 2022, shall be made as much as possible by matching the desired affiliation of clergy and congregation. Clergy credentials of ordination, commissioning, and licensing shall be recognized by all connectional conferences and shall not be repeated, no matter which conference granted the credential, but the ability to serve in a particular annual conference shall be determined by the qualifications and expectations set by that annual conference. All clergy with security of appointment shall continue under appointment.

a. Transitional Appointments. Clergy may make themselves temporarily available to serve in an annual conference/connectional conference different from their preferred one, either by continuing a current appointment

or in an interim appointment. In order to serve in an annual/connectional conference different from their preferred one, a clergyperson shall agree to meet the qualifications of the different annual/connectional conference and maintain the standards of conduct as set forth by the annual/connectional conference they are serving. Failure to abide by this agreement shall constitute grounds for the bishop to revoke the appointment. Such transitional appointments are designed to be temporary until a place of service is found in the clergyperson's preferred annual conference.

b. Service in Other Connectional Conferences. Clergypersons may make themselves available to serve in more than one annual/connectional conference. Such clergyperson shall designate one annual conference for their primary conference membership. They shall indicate to their bishop a willingness to serve in other annual/connectional conferences. In order to serve in an annual/connectional conference different from the one where his or her membership is lodged, a clergyperson shall agree to meet the qualifications of the different annual/connectional conference and maintain the standards of conduct as set forth by the annual/connectional conference they are serving. Failure to abide by this agreement shall constitute grounds for the bishop to revoke the appointment. Such a clergyperson shall maintain membership in his or her designated annual/connectional conference, but shall be eligible for appointment to a different annual/connectional conference with the approval of the receiving annual conference bishop and clergy session.

12. Beginning September 1, 2021, the bishops of each new connectional conference may begin meeting to plan the transition into the new structure, in conjunction with the Transition Team.

13. The organizing conferences of each of the three theological connectional conferences shall take place between September 1 and November 30, 2022, on a date and in a place set by each conference's College of Bishops in consultation with the Transition Team. The organizing conferences of any new connectional conferences formed outside the United States shall take place on a date set by the connectional conference College of Bishops, but prior to July 1, 2023. Notwithstanding other provisions in the *Discipline* or in jurisdictional or central conference rules, materials proposed to be adopted by the organizing conference shall be in the hands of the delegates no later than sixty (60) days prior to the date of the meeting.

14. Delegates to the organizing conferences from annual conferences that choose to affiliate with that connectional conference shall be the General and Jurisdictional Conference delegates of that annual conference or their duly elected successors according to the provisions for election of delegates (¶¶ 15, 34-36, 316.6, 321.2, 327.2-3,

334.1, 344.4, 346.2, 353.7, 355.8, 514-15, 586.3, 602.1). Congregations and clergy who desire to affiliate with a connectional conference different from their annual conference shall be represented at the organizing conference of their chosen connectional conference by one clergy and one lay delegate who qualify as proper delegates under the provisions for election of delegates to jurisdictional conference cited in this paragraph. Clergy delegates from areas not covered by an annual conference related to that connectional conference shall be elected by and from the clergy who desire to affiliate with that connectional conference. Lay delegates from areas not covered by an annual conference related to that connectional conference shall be elected by and from the lay members of the annual conference of those congregations that desire to affiliate with the connectional conference. The bishop of that area shall call a special meeting of the clergy and lay members of annual conferences desiring to affiliate with a different connectional conference for the purpose of electing the one clergy and one lay delegate to the organizing conference. This meeting shall take place between July 1 and August 15, 2022.

15. The new connectional conference structure, annual conference boundaries, and episcopal supervisory relationships inside the United States shall take effect on January 1, 2023. The new connectional conference structure, annual conference boundaries, and episcopal supervisory relationships for newly formed connectional conferences outside the United States shall take effect on the date set by the organizing conferences. A central conference choosing to become its own connectional conference where no annual conferences are added or subtracted or boundaries changed shall not be considered "newly formed" or "new" and shall not be subject to requirements of newly formed or new connectional conferences in this paragraph (¶ 2801).

16. Connectional conferences at the organizing conference shall redraw the boundaries of their annual conferences in order to encompass all their territory and congregations. Any new annual conferences formed shall have their organizing meeting between January 1 and June 30, 2023, or on another date set by the connectional conference College of Bishops.

17. During the 2020-2025 period, the General Commission on Religion and Race and the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women shall engage all branches of the church to identify general principles and benchmarks that would foster accountability in the whole Church for combatting racism and sexism. They shall synthesize that work and propose to the 2025 General Conference general principles and benchmarks for adoption by the conference. Subsequently each connectional con-

ference shall be responsible to provide the resources and accountability necessary to abide by the principles and achieve the benchmarks and shall report on its compliance to the Standing Committee on Connectional Conferences at least 240 days prior to each General Conference.

18. During the period 2020-2025, the General Council on Finance and Administration and General Board of Global Ministries shall continue to facilitate and support the financial underwriting of bishops, annual conferences, and mission work outside the United States through the general apportionment and Advance giving.

19. The general agencies shall continue in the structure and funding level established by the 2020 General Conference through 2025, with the possibility of using reserve funds to supplement apportionments for those agencies not included in the *General Book of Discipline* for the years 2023-2025. Other general Church funds shall be budgeted through the normal process for this period, with plans to accommodate the potential loss of apportionment income through the transition. Each connectional conference shall elect five representatives to a task force to evaluate the general agency structure and propose a new model to the 2025 General Conference. In that new model, agencies shall serve only those connectional conferences that desire to participate in each agency, and funding shall come only from participating connectional conferences. The following agencies shall continue to serve the whole Church and be part of the *General Book of Discipline*: Wespath, the Publishing House, Archives and History, General Council on Finance and Administration, Faith and Order, and United Methodist Committee on Relief. The above-named task force shall determine which aspects of the General Board of Global Ministries are to be included in the *General Book of Discipline* supported by the whole Church.

Rationale:

This new paragraph outlines the process for implementation and of transitioning into the new structure. The principles outlined in the summary of the plan are codified in this legislation.

¶2800.

Petition Number: 90020-¶2800-!-G; Miller, Patricia - Indianapolis, IN, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - Connectional Conference Plan #3 - Transition Team - NEW Par. 2802

Adopt a new ¶ 2802 as follows:

¶ 2802. Transition Team—1. The Council of Bishops

shall appoint a Transition Team of approximately 30 persons chosen for skill and expertise, with attention to representing all constituencies. The Team shall work with the Council and be amenable to the Council, with necessary funds to be provided by the General Council on Finance and Administration.

2. The Team shall be responsible for administering and overseeing the transition process moving from GC2019 to the organizing conferences in 2022, working with existing groups and agencies where possible and appropriate. Its term of service shall expire as of December 31, 2025. The responsibilities of the Team shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

a. assist in implementing the process for electing delegates to the organizing conferences (¶ 2801.14)

b. working with appropriate leaders in each connectional conference to set up the organizing conferences of the connectional conferences

c. ensuring that candidates in the ministry process know how to transition into the new processes

d. tracking decisions by jurisdictional and central conferences, annual conferences, and local churches about connectional conference affiliation, and communicating with the developing leadership teams of each connectional conference with up-to-date information

e. working with the bishops to develop the process for communicating with the connectional conferences regarding moving and assigning clergy and transitioning churches to a connectional conference different from their annual conference

f. writing legislation to be submitted to the 2020 General Conference for a Standing Committee on Connectional Conferences to foster cooperation between the conferences, monitor compliance with efforts to combat racism and sexism, and deal with issues of conflict between the conferences

g. working with the General Council on Finance and Administration to handle legal, financial, and administrative changes and with Wespath to handle pension changes necessary in the transition

h. other responsibilities assigned by the Council of Bishops not in conflict with the Constitution.

3. As approved by the Council of Bishops, the Team shall have a project manager hired by and responsible to the Team and other paid staff or contracted services hired by and responsible to the project manager.

Rationale:

This paragraph describes the creation and work of a Transition Team to assist the Council of Bishops with overseeing the transition and caring for the many details that will arise.

¶422.

Petition Number: 90021-¶422-G; Miller, Patricia - Indianapolis, IN, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

**CoWF - Connectional Conference Plan #4 -
Council and College of Bishops - Par. 422**

Amend ¶ 422 as follows:

¶ 422. Council and College of Bishops—1. Bishops ~~although are elected by jurisdictional or central connectional conferences are elected general superintendents of the whole Church and exercise their authority primarily within the connectional conference~~ College of Bishops. As all ordained ministers are first elected into membership of an annual conference and subsequently appointed to pastoral charges, so bishops become through their election members first of the ~~Council~~ College of Bishops before they are subsequently assigned to areas of service. By virtue of their election and consecration, bishops are members of the Council of Bishops and of their college and are bound in special covenant with all other bishops. In keeping with this covenant, bishops fulfill their servant leadership and express their mutual accountability. The Council of Bishops and the colleges are ~~is~~ a faith communities of mutual trust and concern responsible for the faith development and continuing well-being of ~~its~~ their members.

2. The Council of Bishops and the colleges are ~~is~~ thus the collegial expressions of episcopal leadership in the Church and through the Church into the world. The Church expects the Council of Bishops and the Colleges of Bishops to speak to the Church and from the Church to the world and to give leadership in the quest for Christian unity and interreligious relationships.

3. In order to exercise meaningful leadership, the Council of Bishops is to meet at stated intervals. The Council of Bishops is charged with the oversight of the spiritual and temporal affairs ~~of~~ shared by the whole Church, to be executed in regularized consultation and cooperation with other councils and service agencies of the Church. The role of the Council of Bishops is to serve as a missional body that helps gather and distribute best practices for church vitality; is a learning, equipping, and nurturing community; acts as connectors to the jointly-shared ministries; guides the Wesleyan DNA emphases around justice, fairness, and inclusiveness, with special concern around the elimination of racism and sexism; handles ecumenical relations; mediates accountability challenges; and ensures the carrying into effect of the rules, regulations, and responsibilities prescribed and enjoined by the General Conference.

4. The bishops of each connectional conference shall constitute a College of Bishops, and such College of Bishops shall arrange the plan of episcopal supervision of the annual conferences, missionary conferences, and missions within their respective territories. Each college shall meet at least once a year and plan for the general oversight and promotion of the temporal and spiritual interests of the Church within their connectional conference and for carrying into effect the rules, regulations, and responsibilities prescribed and enjoined by the connectional conference. Each college shall also nurture and support its members and hold them accountable to the highest standards of United Methodist leadership and discipleship.

4 ~~5.~~ The Council of Bishops may assign one of its members to visit another episcopal area or Methodist-related church, subject to the consent of that area's College of Bishops or that church's leadership. When so assigned, the bishop shall be recognized as the accredited representative of the Council of Bishops, and when requested by the resident bishop or president in that area or church, may exercise therein the functions of episcopacy.

Rationale:

This paragraph reconfigures the Council of Bishops as more of a learning community that cares for our ecumenical relationships, while transitioning the oversight and accountability functions to the respective connectional conference Colleges of Bishops. It implements the constitutional amendments related to bishops included in this plan.

¶2602.

Petition Number: 90022-¶2602-G; Miller, Patricia - Indianapolis, IN, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

**CoWF - Connectional Conference Plan #5 -
Judicial Council - Par. 2602**

Amend ¶ 2602, incorporating ¶¶ 2602-2606 and a portion of ¶ 2608.2, and renumber succeeding paragraphs as follows:

¶ 2602. Effective January 1, 2023, delete the existing ¶¶ 2602-2606 and replace with the following:

Composition—1. Members—The Judicial Council shall be composed of two members, one clergy and one lay, from each connectional conference, elected in such a manner as each conference shall determine. In the same manner, each connectional conference shall elect two alternates, one clergy and one lay. All the laypersons shall be professing members of The United Methodist Church. A member's term of office shall be eight years. The term

of the alternates shall be for four years. A member may serve a maximum of two consecutive eight-year terms, with a minimum of four years off before reelection to the council. The terms of the two members of a connectional conference shall be staggered, so that both terms shall not expire in the same quadrennium. The secretary of the General Conference in 2022 shall randomly determine which member (clergy or lay) in each connectional conference shall be elected to a three-year term (serving 2023-2025), so that the number of clergy and lay members whose terms expire in a given quadrennium are equal or nearly so. Members elected to a three-year term in 2022 shall be eligible to be elected to two additional consecutive eight-year terms. Members elected in 2022 to a seven-year term (serving 2023-2029) shall be eligible to be elected to one additional consecutive eight-year term.

2. Vacancies—a. If a vacancy in the membership of the council occurs during the interim between sessions of the connectional conference, the vacancy shall be filled by the respective clergy or lay alternate. The alternate filling such vacancy shall hold office as a member of the Judicial Council for the unexpired term of the member whom the alternate succeeds. In the event of any vacancy, it shall be the duty of the president and secretary of the council to notify the alternate entitled to fill it. When an alternate becomes a member of the council, the connectional conference College of Bishops shall appoint a replacement alternate to fill out the unexpired term of the promoted alternate.

b. In the event of an absence of one or more members of the council during a session of the Judicial Council, such temporary vacancy shall be filled by the respective clergy or lay alternate.

If the appropriate alternate is unable to be present, the other alternate from that connectional conference shall fill the temporary vacancy. Inability or failure to fill a vacancy does not affect the validity of any action of the council so long as a quorum is present.

3. Expiration of Term—The term of office of the members of the council and of the alternates shall expire upon the adjournment of the connectional conference at which their successors are elected.

4. Ineligibility of Members—Members of the council shall be ineligible to serve as delegates to the General or connectional conference or to serve in any General or connectional conference board or agency.

5. Quorum—Eighty percent of the council members shall constitute a quorum except on questions of the constitutionality of acts of General Conference, in which case a quorum shall be all members or their alternates duly seated according to the rules established by the Judicial Council. An affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the

members of the council shall be necessary to declare any act of the General Conference unconstitutional. On other matters, a majority vote of the entire council shall be sufficient. The council may decline to entertain an appeal or a petition for a declaratory decision in any instance in which it determines that it does not have jurisdiction to decide the matter.

~~¶ 2608.2. *Time and Place*—The council shall meet at the time and place of the meeting of the General Conference and shall continue in session until the adjournment of that body, and at least one other time in each calendar year and at such other times as it may deem appropriate, at such places as it may select from time to time. Seven members shall constitute a quorum except on questions of the constitutionality of acts of General Conference in which case a quorum shall be nine members or alternates duly seated according to the rules established by the Judicial Council. An affirmative vote of at least six members of the council shall be necessary to declare any act of the General Conference unconstitutional. On other matters, a majority vote of the entire council shall be sufficient. The council may decline to entertain an appeal or a petition for a declaratory decision in any instance in which it determines that it does not have jurisdiction to decide the matter.~~

Rationale:

These changes reconfigure the Judicial Council as a representative body of the connectional conferences, ensuring equal representation. It designs the council to cope with the reality of potentially as many as ten connectional conferences, each with a different *Book of Discipline* that would need to consider cases regarding those *Disciplines*.

¶9.

Petition Number: 90023-¶9-C-G; Miller, Patricia - Indianapolis, IN, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - Connectional Conference Plan #6 - Jurisdictional and Central Conferences - Par. 9

Amend ¶ 9 and delete ¶ 10 and renumber succeeding paragraphs as follows:

~~¶ 9. Article II.—There shall be jurisdictional-connectional conferences for the Church in the United States of America, with such powers, duties, and privileges as are hereinafter set forth, provided that in The United Methodist Church there shall be no jurisdictional or central connectional conference based on any ground other than geographical and regional division race or ethnicity.~~

Such duties, powers, and privileges shall be the same, whether the connectional conference is within or outside the United States, except as otherwise stated in the Constitution.

¶ 10. Article III.—~~There shall be central conferences for the Church outside the United States of America and, if necessary, provisional central conferences, all with such powers, duties, and privileges as are hereinafter set forth.~~

Rationale:

This amendment makes jurisdictions and central conferences equal, changing the name to connectional conferences. It also allows the creation of connectional conferences based on theology, rather than geography.

¶14.

Petition Number: 90024-¶14-C-\$-G; Miller, Patricia - Indianapolis, IN, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - Connectional Conference Plan #7 - General Conference Year - Par. 14

Amend ¶ 14 as follows:

¶ 14. Article II.—The General Conference shall meet once in four years at such time and in such place as shall be determined by the General Conference or by its duly authorized committees. The change in the preceding sentence shall become effective at the close of General Conference in 2016. The 2024 General Conference shall be moved to 2025, shifting the four-year cycle to odd-numbered years.

A special session of the General Conference . . .

Rationale:

This amendment provides an extra year for transition to the new structure and ensures that General Conference will not be held in a United States election year.

¶16.

Petition Number: 90025-¶16-C-G; Miller, Patricia - Indianapolis, IN, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - Connectional Conference Plan #8 - Connectional Conference adaptation - Par. 16

Amend ¶ 16 as follows:

¶ 16. Article IV.—The General Conference shall have full legislative power over all matters distinctively connectional, and in the exercise of this power shall have authority as follows:

1. To define and fix the conditions, privileges, and

duties of Church membership, which shall in every case be without reference to race, gender, or status.

2. To define and fix the powers and duties of elders, deacons, supply preachers, local preachers, exhorters, deaconesses, and home missionaries, with adaptation by the connectional conferences except as otherwise precluded by the Constitution, including ¶ 20.

3. To define and fix the powers and duties of annual conferences, provisional annual conferences, missionary conferences and missions, and of ~~central~~ connectional conferences, district conferences, charge conferences, and congregational meetings.

4. To provide for the organization, promotion, and administration of the work of the Church outside the United States of America.

5. To define and fix the powers, duties, and privileges of the episcopacy, to adopt a plan for the support of the bishops, to provide a uniform rule for their retirement, and to provide for the discontinuance of a bishop because of inefficiency or unacceptability, with adaptation by the connectional conferences except as otherwise precluded by the Constitution, including ¶ 45.

6. To provide and revise the hymnal and ritual of the Church and to regulate all matters relating to the form and mode of worship, subject to the limitations of the first and second Restrictive Rules, with adaptation by the connectional conferences.

7. To provide a judicial system and a method of judicial procedure for the Church, except as herein otherwise prescribed.

8. To initiate and to direct all connectional enterprises of the Church and to provide boards for their promotion and administration.

9. To determine and provide for raising and distributing funds necessary to carry on the work of the Church.

~~10. To fix a uniform basis upon which bishops shall be elected by the jurisdictional conferences and to determine the number of bishops that may be elected by central conferences.~~

11. To select its presiding officers from the bishops, through a committee, provided that the bishops shall select from their own number the presiding officer of the opening session.

~~12. To change the number and the boundaries of jurisdictional conferences upon the consent of a majority of the annual conferences in each jurisdictional conference involved.~~

13. To establish such commissions for the general work of the Church as may be deemed advisable.

14. To secure the rights and privileges of membership in all agencies, programs, and institutions in The United Methodist Church regardless of race, gender, or status.

15. To allow the connectional and annual conferences to utilize structures unique to their mission, other mandated structures notwithstanding.

16. To enact such other legislation as may be necessary, subject to the limitations and restrictions of the Constitution of the Church.

Rationale:

This amendment allows connectional conferences to adapt various structures to the context in which they do ministry, including: powers and duties of various ministry leadership offices, number of bishops needed, the responsibilities of bishops, their support and retirement, worship and liturgy of the Church, and the requirement for jurisdictional conferences.

¶19.

Petition Number: 90026-¶19-C-G; Miller, Patricia - Indianapolis, IN, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - Connectional Conference Plan #9 - General Superintendency - Par. 19

Amend ¶ 19 as follows

¶ 19. Article III.—The General Conference shall not change or alter any part or rule of our government so as to do away with episcopacy or destroy the plan of our itinerant ~~general~~ superintendency.

Rationale:

This amendment allows episcopacy to be adapted and tailored to the theological and geographical context within each connectional conference. It eliminates the expectation that a bishop in one part of the church should be expected to serve as a bishop in other parts of the church.

¶23.

Petition Number: 90027-¶23-C-G; Miller, Patricia - Indianapolis, IN, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - Connectional Conference Plan #10 - Standardize Connectional Conferences - Par. 23

Amend ¶ 23 as follows, incorporating ¶¶ 24-28, and deleting Section V., ¶¶ 28-31 renumbering the following sections and paragraphs as appropriate.

Section IV. ~~Jurisdictional-Connectional~~ Conferences

¶ 23.1 Article I.—The ~~jurisdictional~~ connectional conferences shall be composed of as many representatives

from the annual conferences and missionary conferences as shall be determined by a uniform basis established by the General Conference, provided that no ~~jurisdictional~~ connectional conference shall have fewer than 100 delegates. The delegates shall be clergy and lay in equal numbers. The missionary conferences shall be considered as annual conferences for the purpose of this article.

¶ 2423.2 Article II.—All ~~jurisdictional~~ connectional conferences shall have the same status and the same privileges of action within the limits fixed by the Constitution. The ratio of representation of the annual conferences and missionary conferences in the General Conference shall be the same for all ~~jurisdictional~~ connectional conferences.

~~¶ 25. Article III.—The General Conferences shall fix the basis of representation in the jurisdictional conferences, provided that the jurisdictional conferences shall be composed of an equal number of clergy and lay delegates to be elected by the annual conferences, the missionary conferences⁴⁷ and the provisional annual conferences.~~

~~¶ 2623.3 Article IVIII.—Each jurisdictional conference shall meet at the time determined by the Council of Bishops or its delegated committee, each jurisdictional conference convening on the same date as the others and at a place selected by the jurisdictional committee on entertainment, appointed by its College of Bishops unless such a committee has been appointed by the preceding jurisdictional conference. The connectional conferences shall meet within the year succeeding the meeting of the General Conference at such times and places as shall have been determined by the preceding respective connectional conferences or by commissions appointed by them or by the connectional College of Bishops.~~

~~¶ 27-23.4 Article V-IV.—The ~~jurisdictional~~ connectional conferences shall have the following powers and duties and such others as may be conferred by the General Conferences:~~

~~1. a. To promote the evangelistic, educational, missionary, and benevolent interests of the Church and to provide for interests and institutions within their boundaries.~~

~~2. b. To determine the number of bishops that may be elected, to elect bishops, and to cooperate in carrying out such plans for their support, as may be determined by the General Conference. Each connectional conference shall provide the entire financial support for its bishops, including salary, housing, benefits, travel, and office expenses, unless supplemental funds are approved by the General Conference with the consent of the other connectional conferences.~~

~~3. c. To establish and constitute ~~jurisdictional~~ connectional conference boards as auxiliary to the general boards of the Church as the need may appear and to choose their~~

representatives on the general boards in such manner as the General Conference connectional conference may determine.

4. d. To determine the boundaries of their annual conferences, provided that there shall be no annual conference with a membership of fewer than fifty clergy in full connection, except by the consent of the General Conference.

5. e. To make rules and regulations for the administration of the work of the Church within the jurisdiction connectional conference, including such changes and adaptations of the *General Book of Discipline* as the conditions in the respective conferences may require, subject to such powers as have been or shall be vested in the General Conference and subject to the Constitution.

6. f. To appoint if desired a judicial court to determine legal questions arising on the rules, regulations, and such revised, adapted, or new sections of the connectional conference *Discipline* enacted by the connectional conference. There shall be a right of appeal of the decisions of such a court to the Judicial Council. To appoint a committee on appeals to hear and determine the appeal of a traveling preacher of that jurisdiction connectional conference from the decision of a trial committee.

Rationale:

This amendment combines powers of jurisdictional and central conferences and standardizes them for connectional conferences, including a connectional judicial court. It requires each connectional conference in the U.S. to support its own bishops. It gives all connectional conferences the power to adapt the *Discipline* now enjoyed by central conferences.

¶37.

Petition Number: 90028-¶37-C-G; Miller, Patricia - Indianapolis, IN, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - Connectional Conference Plan #11 - Establishes New Connectional Conferences - Par. 37

Amend ¶ 37, incorporating ¶¶ 38-41, and renumbering the following paragraphs as appropriate:

Section VH VI. Boundaries

¶ 37.1 Article I.—The United Methodist Church shall have jurisdictional connectional conferences, each covering the entire United States and its territories, made up as follows:

~~Northeastern—Bermuda, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts,~~

~~New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, the Virgin Islands, West Virginia.~~

~~Southeastern—Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia.~~

~~North Central—Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin.~~

~~South Central—Arkansas, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas.~~

~~Western—Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon,~~

~~Utah, Washington, and Wyoming and the territory of the United States in the Pacific region.~~

a. Traditional Connectional Conference, in which marriage shall continue to be defined as between one man and one woman, same-sex weddings cannot be performed, and those practicing homosexuality cannot be ordained, along with a covenantal commitment to a more traditional understanding of the doctrinal and moral standards of the Church with enhanced accountability.

b. Unity Connectional Conference, which acknowledges that members are not of one mind regarding biblical interpretations related to human sexuality, in which pastors are allowed but not required to perform same-sex weddings, annual conferences are allowed but not required to ordain those practicing homosexuality, local churches are allowed but not required to receive an LGBT person as pastor, and in which no bishop, pastor, or congregation is compelled to act against conscience in these matters.

c. Progressive Connectional Conference, in which same-sex weddings are performed by all clergy, all annual conferences ordain qualified LGBT persons, and all local churches welcome LGBT pastors who match the needs of the congregation and its ministry.

d. Each of these three connectional conferences is empowered to choose its own name and insignia, which may or may not include the use of the cross and flame and the name “United Methodist.” When such names are chosen by a connectional conference, the names in this paragraph shall automatically be replaced with the new name without the need for additional constitutional amendment.

e. The process of realignment from the geographical jurisdictions to the new connectional conferences shall not require the approval of the various annual conferences as specified in ¶¶ 16.12 and 37.3.

f. No connectional conference shall adopt policies that are inconsistent with or violate ¶ 4 of the Constitution, either expressly or by practice.

¶ 38-37.2 Article II.—The work of the Church outside the United States of America may be formed into central

~~connectional conferences, the number and boundaries of which shall be determined by the Uniting Conference those in effect as of January 1, 2020, the General Conference having authority subsequently to make changes in the number and boundaries. Connectional conferences outside the United States may, by majority vote, elect to join one of the connectional conferences described in ¶ 37.1, in which case the connectional conference it joins shall become global.~~

~~¶ 39-37.3 Article III.—Changes in the number, names, and boundaries of the jurisdictional-connectional conferences may be effected by the General Conference upon the consent of a majority vote by two-thirds of the annual conferences of each of the jurisdictional connectional conferences involved. This article shall not preclude the process established by the 2019 General Conference to allow for a transition to non-geographic connectional conferences in the United States.~~

~~¶ 40 37.4 Article IV.—The number, names, and boundaries of the annual conferences and episcopal areas shall be determined by the jurisdictional connectional conferences. in the United States of America and by the central conferences outside the United States of America according to the provisions under the respective powers and pursuant to the respective structures of the jurisdictional and the central conferences. The authority of jurisdictional and central connectional conferences provided herein is not circumscribed or limited by the authority provided to the College of Bishops to arrange a plan of episcopal supervision. This article shall not preclude the process established by the 2019 General Conference to allow for a transition to non-geographic connectional conferences in the United States.~~

~~¶ 41-37.5 Article V. Transfer of Local Churches—~~

~~1. a. A local church may be transferred from one annual conference to another in which it is geographically located upon approval by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting in each of the following:~~

- ~~a) i) the charge conference;~~
- ~~b) ii) the congregational meeting of the local church;~~
- ~~e) iii) each of the two annual conferences involved.~~

~~The vote shall be certified by the secretaries of the specified conferences or meetings to the bishops having supervision of the annual conferences involved, and upon their announcement of the required majorities the transfer shall immediately be effective.~~

~~2. b. The vote on approval of transfer shall be taken by each annual conference at its first session after the matter is submitted to it.~~

~~3. c. Transfers under the provisions of this article shall not be governed or restricted by other provisions of this Constitution relating to changes of boundaries of conferences.~~

d. This article shall not preclude the process established by the 2019 General Conference to allow for a transition to non-geographic connectional and annual conferences in the United States.

Rationale:

This amendment is the heart of the Connectional Conference Plan, establishing the new non-geographic connectional conferences and defining the primary values of each. It adopts language that makes this paragraph consistent with other amendments. It ensures that the Constitution allows the transition to the new structure with a fair process.

¶45.

Petition Number: 90029-¶45-C-G; Miller, Patricia - Indianapolis, IN, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - Connectional Conference Plan #12 - Episcopacy - Par. 45

Amend ¶ 45, as follows, incorporating ¶¶ 46-54 and renumbering the following paragraphs as appropriate:

DIVISION THREE—EPISCOPAL SUPERVISION

~~¶ 45.1 Article I.—There shall be a continuance of an episcopacy in The United Methodist Church of like plan, powers, privileges, and duties as now exist in The Methodist Church and in The Evangelical United Brethren Church in all those matters in which they agree and may be considered identical; and the differences between these historic episcopacies are deemed to be reconciled and harmonized by and in this Plan of Union and Constitution of The United Methodist Church and actions taken pursuant thereto so that a unified superintendency and episcopacy is hereby created and established of, in, and by those who now are and shall be bishops of The United Methodist Church; and the said episcopacy shall further have such powers, privileges, and duties as are herein set forth.~~

~~¶ 46 45.2 Article II.—The bishops shall be elected by the respective jurisdictional and central connectional conferences and consecrated in the historic manner at such time and place as may be fixed by the General Conference for those elected by the jurisdictions and by each central connectional conference, for those elected by such central conference; provided that episcopal elections in central conferences shall be held at a regular, not an extra, session of the central conference, except in the case where an unexpected vacancy must be filled.~~

¶ 47 ~~45.3~~ Article III.—There shall be a Council of Bishops composed of all the bishops of The United Methodist Church. The council shall meet at least once a year and ~~shall serve as a missional body that helps gather and distribute best practices for church vitality; is a learning, equipping, and nurturing community; acts as connectors to the jointly-shared ministries; guides the Wesleyan DNA emphases around justice, fairness, and inclusiveness, with special concern around our historic efforts to combat racism and sexism; handles ecumenical relations; mediates accountability challenges; plan for the general oversight and promotion of the temporal and spiritual interests of the entire Church and for and ensures the carrying into effect of the rules, regulations, and responsibilities prescribed and enjoined by the General Conference. and in accord with the provisions set forth in this Plan of Union.~~

¶ 48 ~~45.4~~ Article IV.—The bishops of each ~~jurisdictional and central~~ connectional conference shall constitute a College of Bishops, and such College of Bishops shall arrange the plan of episcopal supervision of the annual conferences, missionary conferences, and missions within their respective territories. ~~Each college shall meet at least once a year and plan for the general oversight and promotion of the temporal and spiritual interests of the Church within their connectional conference and for carrying into effect the rules, regulations, and responsibilities prescribed and enjoined by the connectional conference. Each college shall also nurture and support its members and hold them accountable to the highest standards of United Methodist leadership and discipleship.~~

¶ 49 ~~45.5~~ Article V.—The bishops shall have residential and presidential supervision in the ~~jurisdictional or central~~ connectional conferences in which they are elected or to which they are transferred. Bishops may be transferred from one ~~jurisdiction~~ connectional conference to another ~~jurisdiction~~ for presidential and residential supervision under the following conditions: (1) The transfer of bishops may be on either of two bases: (a) a jurisdiction connectional conference that receives a bishop by transfer from another jurisdiction connectional conference may transfer to that jurisdiction connectional conference or to a third jurisdiction connectional conference one of its own bishops eligible for transfer, so that the number transferred in by each jurisdiction connectional conference shall be balanced by the number transferred out; or (b) a jurisdiction connectional conference may receive a bishop from another jurisdiction connectional conference and not transfer out a member of its own College of Bishops. (2) No bishop shall be transferred unless that bishop shall have specifically consented. (3) No bishop shall be eligible for transfer unless the bishop shall have

~~jurisdictional~~ connectional conference that elected the bishop to the episcopacy. (4) All such transfers shall require the approval by a majority vote of the members present and voting of the ~~jurisdictional~~ connectional conference committees on episcopacy of the ~~jurisdictions~~ connectional conferences that are involved. After the above procedures have been followed, the transferring bishop shall become a member of the receiving College of Bishops and shall be subject to residential assignment by that ~~jurisdictional~~ connectional conference.

A bishop may be assigned by the Council of Bishops for presidential service or other temporary service in another ~~jurisdiction~~ connectional conference than that which elected the bishop, provided that the request is made by a majority of the bishops in the ~~jurisdiction~~ connectional conference of the proposed service.

In the case of an emergency in any ~~jurisdiction or central~~ connectional conference through the death or disability of a bishop or other cause, the Council of Bishops may assign a bishop from another ~~jurisdiction or central~~ connectional conference to the work of the said ~~jurisdiction or central~~ connectional conference, with the consent of a majority of the bishops of that ~~jurisdiction or central~~ connectional conference.

¶ 50. ~~45.6~~ Article VI.—The bishops, both active and retired, of The Evangelical United Brethren Church and of The Methodist Church at the time union is consummated shall be bishops of The United Methodist Church.

The bishops of The Methodist Church elected by the jurisdictions, the active bishops of The Evangelical United Brethren Church at the time of union, and bishops elected prior to 2021 by the jurisdictions of The United Methodist Church shall have life tenure. Each bishop elected by a central conference of The Methodist Church prior to 2021 shall have such tenure as the central conference electing him/her shall have determined. Bishops elected after 2020 shall have such tenure as the connectional conference electing him/her shall have determined.

The ~~jurisdictional~~ connectional conference shall elect a standing committee on episcopacy to consist of one clergy and one lay delegate from each annual conference, on nomination of the annual conference delegation. The committee shall review the work of the bishops, pass on their character and official administration, and report to the ~~jurisdictional~~ connectional conference its findings for such action as the conference may deem appropriate within its constitutional warrant of power. The committee shall recommend the assignments of the bishops to their respective residences for final action by the ~~jurisdictional~~ connectional conference.

These provisions shall not preclude the adoption by the General Conference of provisions for the Council of Bishops to hold its individual members accountable for their work, both as general superintendents and as presidents and residents in episcopal areas.

¶ 51.45.7 Article VII.—A bishop presiding over an annual, ~~central, or jurisdictional~~ or connectional conference shall decide all questions of law coming before the bishop in the regular business of a session, provided that such questions be presented in writing and that the decisions be recorded in the journal of the conference.

Such an episcopal decision shall not be authoritative except for the pending case until it shall have been passed upon by the Judicial Council for matters related to the *General Book of Discipline* and by the connectional conference judicial court (if any ¶ 23.4) for matters related to the connectional conference *Book of Discipline*. All decisions of law made by each bishop shall be reported in writing annually, with a syllabus of the same, to the Judicial Council or connectional conference judicial court as appropriate, which shall affirm, modify, or reverse them.

¶ 52 45.8. Article VIII.—The bishops of the several ~~jurisdictional and central~~ connectional conferences shall preside in the sessions of their respective conferences.

¶ 53. 45.9 Article IX.—In each annual conference there shall be one or more district superintendents who shall assist the bishop in the administration of the annual conference and shall have such responsibilities and term of office as the ~~General Conference~~ connectional conference may determine.

¶ 54-45.10. Article X.—The bishops shall appoint, after consultation with the district superintendents, ministers to the charges; and they shall have such responsibilities and authorities as the General Conference shall prescribe, with adaptation by connectional conferences except as precluded by the Constitution, including ¶ 20.

Rationale:

This amendment re-envisioned the Council of Bishops as a different type of body, while shifting authority to the connectional Colleges of Bishops. It makes language consistent with other amendments. It allows each connectional conference to determine its bishops' tenure and otherwise equalizes powers currently held by jurisdictional and central conferences.

¶56.3.

Petition Number: 90030-¶56.3-C-G; Miller, Patricia - Indianapolis, IN, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - Connectional Conference Plan #13 - Connectional Conference Judicial court - Par. 56.3

Amend ¶ 56.3 as follows:

¶ 56. Article II.—The Judicial Council shall have authority:

3. To pass upon decisions of law made by bishops in annual conferences regarding the *General Book of Discipline* or on appeal of a decision of law from a connectional conference judicial court regarding a connectional conference *Book of Discipline*.

Rationale:

This amendment conforms this paragraph with the new ¶¶ 23.4f and 45.7, which allow for a connectional conference judicial court to rule on questions of law related to the connectional conference *Book of Discipline*, which may be appealed to the Judicial Council.

¶32.

Petition Number: 90031-¶32-C-G; Miller, Patricia - Indianapolis, IN, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - Connectional Conference Plan #14 - Name Change - Par. 32

Name Change: In ¶¶ 32-36, 56, and 61 the names “jurisdiction,” “jurisdictional conference,” or “central conference” should be replaced by “connectional conference,” and the phrase “of the central conferences” replaced by “outside the United States.”

¶ 32. Article I.—The annual conference shall be composed of clergy and lay members. The clergy membership shall consist of . . . The lay membership shall consist of . . . In the annual conferences of the central conferences outside the United States, the four-year participation and the two-year membership requirements may be waived by the annual conference for young persons under thirty (30) years of age. Such persons must be professing members of The United Methodist Church . . .

¶ 33. Article II.—The annual conference is the basic body in the Church and as such shall have reserved to it the right to vote on all constitutional amendments, on the election of clergy and lay delegates to the General and the ~~jurisdictional or central~~ connectional conferences, on all matters relating to the character . . .

¶ 34. Article III.—The annual conference shall elect clergy and lay delegates to the General Conference and to its ~~jurisdictional or central~~ connectional conference in the manner provided in this section, Articles IV and V. Such elections shall include open nominations from the floor by

the annual conference, and delegates shall be elected by a minimum of a simple majority of the ballots cast. The persons first elected up to the number determined by the ratio for representation in the General Conference shall be representatives in that body. Additional delegates shall be elected to complete the number determined by the ratio for representation in the ~~jurisdictional or central~~ connectional conference, who, together with those first elected as above, shall be delegates in the ~~jurisdictional or central~~ connectional conference. The additional delegates to the ~~jurisdictional or central~~ connectional conference shall in the order of their election be the reserve delegates to the General Conference. The annual conference shall also elect reserve clergy and lay delegates to the ~~jurisdictional or central~~ connectional conference as it may deem desirable. These reserve clergy and lay delegates to the ~~jurisdictional or central~~ connectional conferences may act as reserve delegates to the General Conference when it is evident that not enough reserve delegates are in attendance at the General Conference.

¶ 35. Article IV.—The clergy delegates to the General Conference and to the ~~jurisdictional or central~~ connectional conference shall be elected from the clergy members . . .

¶ 36. Article V.—The lay delegates to the General and ~~jurisdictional or central~~ connectional conferences shall be elected by the lay members of the annual conference or provisional annual conference without regard to age, provided such delegates shall have been professing members of The United Methodist Church for at least two years next preceding their election, and shall have been active participants in The United Methodist Church for at least four years next preceding their election, and are members thereof within the annual conference electing them at the time of holding the General and ~~jurisdictional or central~~ connectional conferences.

¶ 56. 1. To determine the constitutionality of any act of the General Conference upon an appeal of a majority of the Council of Bishops or one-fifth of the members of the General Conference and to determine the constitutionality of any act of a ~~jurisdictional or central~~ connectional conference upon an appeal of a majority of the bishops of that ~~jurisdictional or central~~ connectional conference or upon the appeal of one-fifth of the members of that ~~jurisdictional or central~~ connectional conference.

¶ 56. 4. To hear and determine the legality of any action taken therein by any General Conference board or ~~jurisdictional or central~~ connectional conference board or body, upon appeal by one-third of the members thereof, or upon request of the Council of Bishops or a majority of the bishops of a ~~jurisdictional or a central~~ connectional conference.

¶ 61. Article III.—A ~~jurisdictional or central~~ connectional conference may by a majority vote propose changes in the Constitution of the Church . . .

Rationale:

This amendment changes the names “jurisdiction,” “jurisdictional conference,” or “central conference” to “connectional conference,” and the phrase “of the central conferences” to “outside the United States” in order to create consistency of names throughout the Constitution.

¶304.3.

Petition Number: 90032-¶304.3-G; Lambrecht, Thomas A. - Spring, TX, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - Traditional Plan #1 - Footnote 1 Qualifications for Ministry - Par. 304.3

Amend by addition footnote 1 attached to ¶ 304.3:

“*Self-avowed practicing homosexual*” is understood to mean that a person openly acknowledges to a bishop, district superintendent, district committee of ordained ministry, Board of Ordained Ministry, or clergy session that the person is a practicing homosexual; or is living in a same-sex marriage, domestic partnership or civil union, or is a person who publicly states she or he is a practicing homosexual. See Judicial Council Decisions 702, 708, 722, 725, 764, 844, 984, 1020, 1341.

Rationale:

The current wording has sometimes allowed practicing homosexuals to serve, even while being public about their practice, defeating the purpose of the requirement in ¶ 304.3. The added language identifies other means by which an individual openly acknowledges that they are engaged in the practice of homosexuality and can be. . .

¶408.3.

Petition Number: 90033-¶408.3-G; Lambrecht, Thomas A. - Spring, TX, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - Traditional Plan #2 - Episcopal Accountability - Par. 408.3

Amend by addition ¶ 408.3.c:

By a majority vote of those present and voting, the members of the Council of Bishops may place any bishop in the retired relation with or without their consent and irrespective of their age if such a relation is recommend-

ed by the council relations committee. The procedures for fair process in administrative hearings shall be followed in any involuntary retirement procedure (§ 422.5). Written notice also should be given to the chairperson of the administrative review committee (§ 422.6).

Rationale:

Additions to §§ 408, 410, and 422 go together and create a process by which the Council of Bishops may hold one another accountable, based on the constitutional amendment to § 50 that was ratified in 2017. This proposal includes assurances of Fair Process and enables greater consistency and uniformity. . .

§410.

Petition Number: 90034-§410-G; Lambrecht, Thomas A. - Spring, TX, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - Traditional Plan #3 - Episcopal Accountability - Par. 410

Amend by addition § 410.5:

§ 410.5 Involuntary Leave of Absence—a) By a majority vote of those present and voting, the members of the Council of Bishops may place any bishop in an involuntary leave status if such a relation is recommended by the council relations committee. The procedures for fair process in administrative hearings shall be followed in any involuntary leave of absence procedure (§ 422.5). Written notice also should be given to the chairperson of the administrative review committee (§ 422.6).

b) Involuntary leave of absence shall be approved annually by the Council of Bishops after review and recommendation of the council relations committee.

c) During the period for which the leave is granted, the bishop shall be released from all episcopal responsibilities, and another bishop chosen by the College of Bishops shall preside in the episcopal area. Salary and other benefits may be continued through the Episcopal Fund for a maximum of six months.

Rationale:

Additions to §§ 408, 410, and 422 go together and create a process by which the Council of Bishops may hold one another accountable, based on the constitutional amendment to § 50 that was ratified in 2017. This proposal includes assurances of Fair Process and enables greater consistency and uniformity. . .

§422.

Petition Number: 90035-§422-G; Lambrecht, Thomas A. - Spring, TX, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - Traditional Plan #4 - Episcopal Accountability - Par. 422

Amend by addition § 422:

§ 422.2. The Council of Bishops is thus the collegial and corporate expression of episcopal leadership in the Church and through the Church into the world. The Church expects the Council of Bishops to speak to the Church and from the Church to the world and to give leadership in the quest for Christian unity and interreligious relationships. The Council of Bishops is also a body in which its individual members are held accountable for their work, both as general superintendents and as presidents and residents in episcopal areas.

§ 422.5. The Council of Bishops shall establish from its membership a council relations committee of at least three persons to hear requests for involuntary leave of absence, involuntary retirement, as may be referred to it by the Council of Bishops or any seven active bishops.

a) When there is a recommendation for an involuntary status change to be referred to the council relations committee, the council relations committee shall conduct an administrative hearing following the provisions of fair process. The Council of Bishops shall designate the person to present the recommendation to the committee. The respondent shall be given an opportunity to address the recommendation in person, in writing, and with the assistance of a clergy person in full connection, who shall have voice. Once the committee has heard the person designated to represent the recommendation, the respondent, and others as determined by the chairperson of the committee, it shall report its decision to the Council of Bishops. The Council of Bishops may affirm or reverse the decision of the committee. The Council of Bishops shall refer to the council relations committee any bishop who is unwilling to certify that he or she is willing to uphold, enforce, and maintain the *Book of Discipline* relative to self-avowed practicing homosexuals. When the council relations committee reaches a positive finding of fact that the bishop has not so certified, the council relations committee shall recommend either involuntary leave or involuntary retirement to the Council of Bishops after conducting a fair process hearing.

b) Fair Process Hearings--As a part of the holy covenant that exists within the membership and organization of The United Methodist Church, the following procedures are presented for the protection of the rights of individuals and for the protection of the Church in administrative

headings. The process set forth in this paragraph shall be followed whenever the council relations committee meets to process an administrative request by the Council of Bishops.

1) In any administrative proceeding the representative of the Council of Bishops and the respondent (the person against whom involuntary action is directed) shall have a right to be heard before any final action is taken.

2) Notice of any hearing shall advise the respondent of the reason for the proposed procedures with sufficient detail to allow the respondent to prepare a response. Notice shall be given not less than twenty days prior to the hearing.

3) The respondent shall have a right to be accompanied to any hearing by a clergyperson in full connection, in accordance with the appropriate disciplinary provisions. The clergyperson accompanying the respondent shall have the right to voice.

4) In any administrative hearing, under no circumstances shall one party, in the absence of the other party, discuss substantive issues with members of the pending hearing body. Questions of procedure may be raised with the presiding officer of the hearing body.

5) The respondent shall have access, at least seven days prior to the hearing, to all records relied upon in the determination of the outcome of the administrative process.

6) In the event that a respondent fails to appear for supervisory interviews, refuses mail, refuses to communicate personally with the bishop, or otherwise fails to respond to supervisory requests or requests from official administrative committees, such actions or inactions shall not be used as an excuse to avoid or delay any Church processes, and such processes may continue without the participation of such individual.

¶ 422.6 The Council of Bishops shall establish from its membership an administrative review committee of at least three persons who are not members of the executive committee or the council relations committee. Its only purpose shall be to ensure that the disciplinary procedures for any involuntary action recommended by the council relations committee are properly followed. The entire administrative process leading to the action for change of status of the bishop shall be reviewed by the administrative review committee, and it shall report its findings to the Council of Bishops prior to any action by the Council of Bishops. The administrative review committee shall notify the parties of the review process. The administrative fair process hearing procedures (¶ 422.5) should be followed by the administrative review committee. Prior to its report, if the committee determines that any error has occurred, it may recommend to the appro-

priate person or body that action be taken promptly to remedy the error, decide the error is harmless, or take other action.

Rationale:

Additions to ¶¶ 408, 410, and 422 go together and create a process by which the Council of Bishops may hold one another accountable, based on the constitutional amendment to ¶ 50 that was ratified in 2017. This proposal includes assurances of Fair Process and enables greater consistency and uniformity . . .

¶415.6.

Petition Number: 90036-¶415.6-G; Lambrecht, Thomas A. - Spring, TX, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - Traditional Plan #5 - Episcopal Responsibilities - Par. 415.6

Amend by addition ¶ 415.6:

To consecrate bishops; to ordain elders and deacons; to commission deaconesses, home missionaries, and missionaries; and to see that the names of the persons commissioned and consecrated are entered on the journals of the conference and that proper credentials are furnished to these persons. Bishops are prohibited from consecrating bishops who are self-avowed homosexuals, even if they have been duly elected by the jurisdictional or central conference. Bishops are prohibited from commissioning those on the deacon or elder track if the Board of Ministry has determined the individual is a self-avowed homosexual or has failed to certify it carried out the disciplinarily mandated examination, even if the individual has been recommended by the Board of Ordained Ministry and approved by the clergy session of the annual conference. Bishops are prohibited from ordaining deacons or elders if the Board of Ministry has determined the individual is a self-avowed homosexual or has failed to certify it carried out the disciplinarily mandated examination, even if the individual has been recommended by the Board of Ordained Ministry and approved by the clergy session of the annual conference.

Rationale:

Clarifies that bishops are not allowed to consecrate, ordain, or commission persons who are not qualified under ¶ 304.3, even if they are elected or approved by the relevant jurisdictional conference or clergy session. This enhances the bishop's role in upholding the *Discipline* and makes him/her individually responsible to . . .

¶635.1a.

Petition Number: 90037-¶635.1a-G; Lambrecht, Thomas A. - Spring, TX, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - Traditional Plan #6 - Composition of Board of Ordained Ministry - Par. 635.1a

Amend by addition ¶ 635.1.a:

Members shall be nominated by the presiding bishop after consultation with the chairperson of the board, the executive committee, or a committee elected by the board of the previous quadrennium, and with the cabinet. Prior to being nominated for membership on the Board of Ministry by the bishop, any individual must certify that he or she will uphold, enforce, and maintain the *Book of Discipline* related to commissioning, ordination, and marriage of self-avowed practicing homosexuals. Additionally, the bishop must certify that he or she only has nominated individuals who will uphold, enforce, and maintain the *Book of Discipline* related to ordination and marriage of self-avowed practicing homosexuals. To ensure adequate board membership . . .

Rationale:

Guarding against non-conforming boards of ordained ministry, this provision ensures that members of the board commit to upholding the requirements of the *Discipline* and makes the bishop responsible for nominating only such persons. Permitting boards to not conform to the *Discipline* tears the unity of the church.

¶635.2h.

Petition Number: 90038-¶635.2h-G; Lambrecht, Thomas A. - Spring, TX, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - Traditional Plan #7— Full Examination—Par. 635.2h

Amend by addition ¶ 635.2.h:

To examine all applicants as to their fitness for the ordained ministry and make full inquiry as to the fitness of the candidate for: (1) annual election as local pastor; (2) election to associate membership; (3) election to provisional membership; and (4) election to full conference membership. The Board of Ministry shall conduct an examination to ascertain whether an individual is a practicing homosexual, including information on social media, as defined by the *Book of Discipline*. The board shall certify that such an examination has occurred and its results. If it is determined as a matter of fact that an individual is

a practicing homosexual, the board shall not recommend the individual to the clergy session of the annual conference for commissioning or ordination.

Rationale:

Incorporates Judicial Council Decisions 1343, 1344, and 1352 in the *Discipline*, requiring boards of ordained ministry to fully examine candidates' qualifications under ¶ 304.3. Guarding against non-conforming boards of ordained ministry, this forbids boards from recommending persons found to be unqualified under that paragraph to the clergy session.

¶806.9.

Petition Number: 90039-¶806.9-G; Lambrecht, Thomas A. - Spring, TX, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - Traditional Plan #8 - Composition of Board of Ordained Ministry - Par. 806.9

Amend ¶ 806.9 at its conclusion to state:

Every annual conference shall certify that the bishop has nominated only members of the Board of Ministry who will uphold, enforce, and maintain the *Book of Discipline* related to ordination and marriage of practicing homosexuals. Failure to do so shall result in the General Council on Finance and Administration withholding all funds from The United Methodist Church and withdrawing the annual conference's ability to use the denominational cross and flame logo.

Rationale:

Guarding against non-conforming boards of ordained ministry, this provides that the annual conference ensures that the bishop has complied with the requirement to nominate only persons who are committed to upholding the *Discipline* to the board of ordained ministry, adding accountability for the annual conference as well.

¶613.19.

Petition Number: 90040-¶613.19-G; Lambrecht, Thomas A. - Spring, TX, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - Traditional Plan #9 - Composition of Board of Ordained Ministry - Par. 613.19

Amend ¶ 613.19 at its conclusion to state:

Every annual conference shall certify that the bishop has nominated only members of the Board of Minis-

try who will uphold, enforce, and maintain the *Book of Discipline* related to ordination and marriage of practicing homosexuals. Failure to do so shall result in the General Council on Finance and Administration withholding all funds from The United Methodist Church and withdrawing the annual conference's ability to use the denominational cross and flame logo.

Rationale:

Guarding against non-conforming boards of ordained ministry, this provides that the annual conference ensures that the bishop has complied with the requirement to nominate only persons who are committed to upholding the *Discipline* to the board of ordained ministry, adding accountability for the annual conference as well.

¶2800.

Petition Number: 90041-¶2800-G; Lambrecht, Thomas A. - Spring, TX, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - Traditional Plan #10 - Traditional Plan Implementation Process - NEW Par. 2801

Add a new ¶ 2801

¶ 2801. Implementing Gracious Accountability

Because of the current deep conflict over The United Methodist Church's position on marriage and sexuality, a local church or annual conference may indicate its desire to form or join a self-governing church under this paragraph based upon its declaration that it is in irreconcilable conflict for reasons of conscience with the doctrine or moral teachings and requirements of *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church* on the issues of human sexuality, or with the way such requirements are being enforced, or with the resolution of those matters adopted by the 2019 General Conference.

1. Before March 31, 2020, each **annual conference** shall vote to approve one of the following two statements:

a. "The annual conference and its subsidiary units will support, uphold, and maintain accountability to the United Methodist standards found in ¶ 304.3 'Qualifications for Ordination,' ¶ 341.6 'Unauthorized Conduct,' ¶ 613.19 'Responsibilities of the Council on Finance and Administration,' and ¶ 2702.1a-b 'Chargeable Offenses' of *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, 2016* in their entirety."

b. "The annual conference and its subsidiary units will not support, uphold, and maintain accountability to the standards of The United Methodist Church found in ¶ 304.3 'Qualifications for Ordination,' ¶ 341.6 'Unautho-

rized Conduct,' ¶ 613.19 'Responsibilities of the Council on Finance and Administration,' and ¶ 2702.1a-b 'Chargeable Offenses' of *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, 2016* in their entirety."

2. In extreme cases in which an annual conference outside of the United States is unable, due to extraordinary circumstances, to take a vote by this deadline, its resident bishop may request a one-time, one-year extension of this deadline, which would also be a one-year extension of the deadlines in ¶ 2801.3-4 below, to be granted by the General Council on Finance and Administration. Such requests for extensions must be submitted by April 1, 2020.

3. The General Council on Finance and Administration shall canvass the votes of each annual conference. Those returning a majority vote for the second option, failing to respond, unclear in their response, or qualifying their commitment to the first option in any way shall be placed on a list of conferences ideally suited for the self-governing status. This list shall be made available to the Council of Bishops and released to the public no later than May 1, 2020.

4. Beginning January 1, 2021, the General Council on Finance and Administration shall neither receive funds from nor send funds to the annual conferences listed under ¶ 2801.3 except as a self-governing Methodist church formed under this paragraph. The General Council on Finance and Administration shall also prohibit the use of the United Methodist name and insignia by these annual conferences except under the terms of a concordat agreement.

Allegations that an annual conference has not fulfilled its commitment under ¶ 2801.1a shall be addressed to the Council of Bishops council relations committee as evidence of possible misconduct by the conference's residential bishop.

5. Annual conferences who are not placed on the list in ¶ 2801.3 may nonetheless vote to enter the self-governing status.

6. The General Council on Finance and Administration shall offer and facilitate a time line allowing annual conferences moving into the self-governing status to continue uninterrupted financial participation in the connective ministries of The United Methodist Church under the terms of this paragraph and may grant a one-time delay to the restrictions in ¶ 2801.4 of up to twelve months upon request by an annual conference that has voted to enter the self-governing status to allow for the transition.

7. By June 30, 2020, each **bishop** of The United Methodist Church shall return one of the following two statements to the president of the Council of Bishops and the General Council on Finance and Administration:

a. I, (*Name*), certify that I will uphold United Methodist standards on marriage and sexuality in their entirety

(¶ 414.5). I will enforce the requirements of the *Book of Discipline* forbidding same-sex weddings and the ordination of self-avowed practicing homosexuals (¶¶ 304.3, 341.6, 2702.1a-b, 414.9). I will further hold all those under my supervision accountable to those standards (¶¶ 415.2, 613.19).

b. I, (*Name*), certify that for reasons of conscience, I cannot uphold United Methodist standards on marriage and sexuality in their entirety (¶ 414.5). I am unwilling or unable to enforce the requirements of the *Book of Discipline* forbidding same-sex weddings and the ordination of self-avowed practicing homosexuals (¶¶ 304.3, 341.6, 2702.1a-b, 414.9), or to hold all those under my supervision accountable to those standards (¶¶ 415.2, 613.19).

Bishops who submit the second option (in whole or in part), fail to respond, are unclear in their response, or qualify their commitment to the first option in any way shall be subject to review by the Council of Bishops' council relations committee for possible action.

Complaints against bishops who are alleged to have not fulfilled their commitment under ¶ 2801.7a above, or who are alleged to have committed one of the chargeable offenses under ¶ 2702.1a-b, shall be automatically and immediately forwarded to the Council of Bishops council relations committee, which shall administer the complaint.

8. **Clergy** who find themselves for reasons of conscience unable to live within the boundaries of ¶¶ 304.3, 341.6, 613.19, and 2702.1a-b are encouraged to transfer to a self-governing church formed under this paragraph. Clergy who remain United Methodist but do not maintain their conduct within the boundaries established by the *Book of Discipline* shall be subject to chargeable offenses.

9. ***Annual conferences becoming self-governing Methodist churches.***

a. Any annual conference may become a self-governing church or join an existing one when that annual conference votes by simple majority to seek this status under the terms of this paragraph. The annual conference shall notify the president of its College of Bishops of its decision at least 30 days before a regular or specially called session of its jurisdictional or central conference. 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. It shall be the new self-governing church's own responsibility to develop its *Book of Discipline* and establish itself as a legal entity. The existence of the self-governing church shall be effective upon the adjournment of the jurisdictional or central conference or upon the effective date established by the annual conference in its request, whichever is later. An annual conference shall not consider a switch in its af-

filiation within less than four years from a previous annual conference vote on the question.

b. If a U.S. annual conference ceases to be a part of The United Methodist Church through becoming a self-governing Methodist church, or otherwise, it should contribute to the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits any amount necessary to fully fund its obligations under the Clergy Retirement Security Program. The former annual conference's sponsorship of and legal responsibilities under the Clergy Retirement Security Program will continue as a self-governing Methodist church. However, accruals and benefit improvements under the Clergy Retirement Security Program shall cease. The sponsorship and administration of the Clergy Retirement Security Program for the self-governing Methodist church will be sequestered and treated separately from all other annual conferences that remain part of The United Methodist Church. For purposes of administering the Clergy Retirement Security Program in this manner, the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits is authorized and empowered to:

(1) Identify which of the self-governing Methodist church's (former annual conference's) plan participants have chosen to remain with The United Methodist Church, and those who are members of the former annual conference (whether the former annual conference becomes a self-governing Methodist church or otherwise disaffiliates) based on records of service and membership of the annual conferences; non-clergy participants, e.g., surviving spouses, contingent annuitants, and alternate payees, will be deemed to remain associated with The United Methodist Church;

(2) Calculate and sequester the former annual conference's share of defined benefit plan assets and liabilities for all participants of the former annual conference using factors corresponding to those used when determining annual conference plan sponsor contributions to the Clergy Retirement Security Program; and to the extent and at any time that certain participants, whether active or inactive, become the responsibility of The United Methodist Church, retain for The United Methodist Church from such calculated share an amount necessary to fully fund the liabilities of such participants using factors similar to a commercial annuity provider;

(3) Calculate the amount of any plan contributions required to be made by the former annual conference in the future, as part of the self-governing Methodist church's ongoing sponsorship of its separate frozen part of the Clergy Retirement Security Program;

(4) Collaborate with the self-governing Methodist church (former annual conference) to determine how plan design changes may be requested by the self-governing

Methodist church, and the scope and administrative reasonableness of amendments that may be made to the separate frozen part of the Clergy Retirement Security Program; and

(5) Amend the Clergy Retirement Security Program effective as of the close of the 2019 General Conference to conform with this paragraph of the *Book of Discipline*.

If the self-governing Methodist church (former annual conference) does not satisfy any required ongoing contributions within a reasonable time under this paragraph or the terms of the Clergy Retirement Security Program, as determined by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits, or the self-governing Methodist church elects not to, refuses to, or fails to satisfy its legal sponsorship of the Clergy Retirement Security Program, the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits shall convert all accrued pension benefits of the self-governing Methodist church's (former annual conference's) assigned participants to an actuarially equivalent account balance, adjusted, as necessary, to take into account the former annual conference's funding level of the Clergy Retirement Security Program. Such account balances, and all other retirement account balances, will be transferred to the United Methodist Personal Investment Plan. The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits may also take such actions if the Clergy Retirement Security Program is amended to require an account balance conversion for similar classes of participants, or if continuing administration for the self-governing Methodist church is no longer administratively reasonable.

c. Institutions owned by or affiliated with the annual conference shall continue that relationship unless, under their own bylaws and in conjunction with the annual conference, they establish a change of affiliation.

d. The newly created body shall continue under the supervision of the College of Bishops of the jurisdiction until supervisory leadership is in place under its constitution.

e. Any local church or charge of the annual conference becoming or joining a self-governing church shall have the right to remain in the existing jurisdiction of The United Methodist Church by a simple majority vote of a church conference before or during the first two years of the self-governing church's existence and shall have the right to hold a church conference to vote on this matter within no more than 120 days of notifying the relevant leadership of the annual conference or of the self-governing church. After the first two years, release of a congregation from a self-governing church shall be according to that church's governing documents. Supervision of the congregation shall transfer to the cabinet of the annual conference assigned to cover their location by the juris-

ditional or central conference upon written acknowledgment to the self-governing body by the receiving cabinet.

Local churches electing to remain United Methodist by exiting an annual conference that is forming or joining a self-governing Methodist church shall not owe any payment to the annual conference they are departing, except for the local church's proportional share of the annual conference's aggregate unfunded pension liability, as determined by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits. The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits shall determine the aggregate funding obligations of the annual conference using market factors similar to a commercial annuity provider, from which the annual conference will determine the local church's share. The local church payment of pension liabilities shall be made prior to the effective date of exit.

f. Clergy members of the departing annual conference shall by default remain members of that annual conference unless they request to remain in The United Methodist Church. They shall communicate such a request before or within 90 days after the annual conference exit effective date to the bishop of the departing annual conference and to the jurisdictional or central College of Bishops, but may, at the discretion of the bishop of the departing annual conference, continue serving the current appointment for up to one year from the date of such request until a suitable appointment is found. The United Methodist jurisdictional or central College of Bishops shall work together to provide an appointment for any clergy member subject to security of appointment (and may do so for clergy members not subject to security of appointment) in the area of his/her former annual conference or in another annual conference in the jurisdiction, unless the clergy member agrees to transfer to an annual conference out of the jurisdiction.

10. *Groups of local churches forming new self-governing Methodist churches in the United States.* Any fifty or more United Methodist local churches may form a self-governing Methodist church by the following procedure:

a. Those organizing the self-governing church shall develop a vision and mission statement describing the nature and work of the body.

b. Local churches seeking to form the self-governing church shall vote to do so by a 55 percent majority vote of a church conference. Such vote shall indicate the desire of the congregation to join the forming group, but the congregation remains part of The United Methodist Church until the self-governing church becomes established and the other provisions for exit under this paragraph are satisfied. The bishop and district superintendent shall facilitate the change of affiliation and shall preside over a church

conference within 120 days when requested by the local church's pastor or church council (§§ 246, 248). A local church shall not consider a switch in its affiliation within less than four years from a previous church conference vote on the question.

c. The organizers shall select a United Methodist College of Bishops to supervise the church until such time as supervisory leadership is in place under its own constitution. If no selection is made, the College of Bishops supervising the territory where most of the local churches are located shall provide supervision. Notice shall be given to the president of the College of Bishops and the College shall include the church in its plan of oversight. The bishop placed in charge of the group of congregations shall have the right to assemble a transitional cabinet should the bishop deem that necessary.

d. Once a group of fifty or more congregations has been formed under § 2801.10b, an organizing conference shall be held, at which time the Constitution, *Book of Discipline*, and provisional leadership for the newly organized church shall be approved. It shall be the new church's own responsibility to develop its *Book of Discipline* and establish itself as a legal entity. Existence of a self-governing church shall become effective at the adjournment of the organizing conference or upon an effective date established by that conference, provided that all the provisions for exit under this paragraph are satisfied.

e. The local church shall retain all property, assets, and liabilities, except as provided under § 2801.12. On the effective date the provisions of the trust clause (§ 2501) shall be released to the new church, and its provisions administered according to the governing documents of the new church. Congregations leaving United Methodist annual conferences shall not have claim or be entitled to a share of the assets or non-pension liabilities of the annual conference they are exiting.

11. *Local churches seeking to join any existing self-governing church* formed under this paragraph shall be granted a change of affiliation upon a 55 percent majority vote of a church conference. The bishop and district superintendent shall facilitate the change of affiliation and shall preside over a church conference within 120 days when requested by the congregation's pastor or church council (§§ 246, 248). Such a request to join an existing self-governing church shall also require the approval of the receiving self-governing church by whatever means are provided in its governing documents. A local church shall not consider a switch in its affiliation within less than four years from a previous church conference vote on the question.

Transfer of the affiliation of a local church under § 2801.11 shall be effective upon written acknowledgment

to the cabinet of the annual conference from the supervisory leadership of the receiving church that the transfer to them is accepted. On the effective date of the congregation's joining a self-governing church, the provisions of the trust clause (§ 2501) shall be released to the self-governing church and its provisions administered according to the governing documents of the new church. The local church shall retain all property, assets, and liabilities, except as provided under § 2801.12. Congregations leaving United Methodist annual conferences shall not have claim or be entitled to a share of the assets or non-pension liabilities of the annual conference they are exiting.

12. *Conditions.* A local church electing to join a new or existing self-governing church through the provision of § 2801.10-11 shall enter into a written agreement with the bishop setting an effective date and resolving any financial obligations to The United Methodist Church.

a. On the effective date, the local church shall assume all liabilities, and the local church (and any of its affiliates) shall cease participation in and cease to be eligible to participate in all programs and operations of The United Methodist Church, except as provided in § 2801.19. The local church shall immediately remove all references to the words "United Methodist" as well as all United Methodist symbols and insignia, except as provided in § 2801.15, although it may continue to use the word "Methodist." The local church shall retain all its property, assets, and liabilities not specifically accounted for in the agreement. Such agreement shall be in writing and signed and approved by the duly qualified and authorized representatives of the annual conference and the local church.

b. Local churches electing to join a new or existing self-governing Methodist church through the provisions of § 2801.10-11 shall not owe any payment to the annual conference they are departing, except for the local church's proportional share of the annual conference's aggregate unfunded pension liability, as determined by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits. The Board shall determine the aggregate funding obligations of the annual conference using market factors similar to a commercial annuity provider, from which the annual conference will determine the local church's share. The local church payment of pension liabilities shall be made prior to the effective date of exit.

c. Upon receipt of any payment required and fulfillment of all other provisions of this paragraph, the district superintendent shall deliver a signed letter waiving all rights the conference trustees or annual conference may have in the local church's real estate or other property and assets, as of the exit effective date.

13. *Annual conferences or local churches outside the United States* may join a self-governing Method-

ist church formed under this paragraph under the same terms as are spelled out in this paragraph. In such case, the self-governing church becomes a global body.

14. When one or more annual conferences vote to become a self-governing body after the adjournment of the jurisdictional or central conference, the jurisdictional or central College of Bishops shall call a special jurisdictional or central conference within 180 days of being notified of the annual conference's action. The jurisdictional or central conference shall adjust its annual conference boundaries at the special conference as necessary to provide coverage for the geographic territory of the withdrawing annual conference(s). The Interjurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy (§ 512) shall monitor the changing landscape of United States annual conferences and bring recommendation to General Conference related to reorganization of the jurisdictional conferences that may be warranted based on the effects of this paragraph.

15. Self-governing Methodist churches formed under this paragraph may use an *insignia or logo* that utilizes a form of the United Methodist cross and flame, so long as such logo is noticeably distinguishable from the United Methodist cross and flame. Any self-governing church logo that utilizes the cross and flame shall be subject to the approval of the General Council on Finance and Administration, which shall make its decision in such a way as to protect the United Methodist brand while acknowledging the historical connection of the self-governing church with United Methodism.

16. Other disciplinary provisions notwithstanding, a *clergy member* (active or retired) may transfer to any self-governing Methodist church formed under this paragraph upon the clergy member's request and upon acceptance by the self-governing church. Release by the United Methodist bishop shall not be required for these transfers.

17. Other disciplinary provisions notwithstanding, a United Methodist **bishop** (active or retired) may transfer to a self-governing Methodist church formed under this paragraph upon request by the bishop and approval by the receiving church.

18. *Institutions* related to The United Methodist Church may choose to develop missional ties with self-governing churches, so long as governing control remains vested with The United Methodist Church. If such an institution vests its governing control with a self-governing church or churches, the relationship with The United Methodist Church shall be renegotiated in a spirit of common mission and shared religious bonds and convictions. Such institutions may also request to change their affiliation to a self-governing Methodist church under the provisions of their own bylaws. Institutions related to an annual conference that forms or joins a self-governing

Methodist church may likewise develop missional ties with The United Methodist Church and may petition the United Methodist jurisdiction or successor annual conference to remain in The United Methodist Church through processes established in their bylaws.

19. No self-governing church is required to participate in any programs or services of The United Methodist Church, nor is such official participation permitted without the agreement of the sponsoring United Methodist agency. Each self-governing church may negotiate participation in and receipt of fee-based services from any United Methodist general board or agency, including sponsorship and participation in health, welfare, or retirement plans with the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits. The self-governing church, its annual conferences, and/or local congregations are permitted to engage in or continue partnerships in mission, including financial support, with United Methodist annual conferences, institutions, or local congregations, with the agreement of the United Methodist entity involved and may channel such support and partnership through United Methodist general agencies, such as the General Council on Finance and Administration or General Board of Global Ministries.

20. The self-governing church shall set its own geographic borders, which may overlap those of United Methodist annual conferences and other self-governing churches organized under this paragraph of *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church* and may include territory outside the United States.

21. Self-governing churches may organize themselves together with other self-governing churches under a common *Discipline* or unite to form one self-governing church.

22. The self-governing church shall be fully financially self-supporting, including funding its own bishop(s).

23. The provisions of this paragraph shall take effect immediately upon the adjournment of the 2019 General Conference.

Rationale:

The heart of the Traditional Plan, this paragraph provides a mechanism for ensuring that annual conferences and bishops will uphold the *Discipline*, while also providing for a gracious exit for those conscience-bound not to do so. Definitively resolving the impasse requires releasing from the church those unwilling to . . .

¶2711.3.

Petition Number: 90042-¶2711.3-G; Lambrecht, Thomas A. - Spring, TX, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - Traditional Plan #11 - Minimum Penalty - Par. 2711.3

Amend ¶ 2711.3, *Penalties* as follows.

¶ 2711. Power of the Trial Court

3. *Penalties - If the Trial Results in Conviction.* Further testimony may be heard and arguments by counsel presented regarding what the penalty should be. The trial court shall determine the penalty, which shall require a vote of at least seven members. The trial court shall have the power to remove the respondent from professing membership, terminate the conference membership and/or revoke the credentials of conference membership and/or ordination or consecration of the respondent, suspend the respondent from the exercise of the functions of office, or to fix a lesser penalty. Except, where the conviction is for conducting ceremonies which celebrate homosexual unions, or performing same-sex wedding ceremonies under ¶ 2702.1(b) or (d), the trial court does not have the power to and may not fix a penalty less than the following:

a) First (1st) offense – One (1) year’s suspension without pay.

b) Second (2nd) offense – Not less than termination of conference membership and revocation of credentials of licensing, ordination, or consecration.

The penalty fixed by the trial court shall take effect immediately unless otherwise indicated by the trial court.

Rationale:

Assigning a penalty of less than a suspension for a first offense or less than termination of conference membership and/or revocation of conference membership and ordination or consecration in such circumstances encourages open defiance of the order and discipline of The United Methodist Church.

¶304.5.

Petition Number: 90043-¶304.5-G; Lambrecht, Thomas A. - Spring, TX, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - Traditional Plan #12 - Qualifications for Ministry - Par. 304.5

Amend ¶ 304.5 as follows:

5. In all votes regarding license, ordination, or conference membership, the requirements set forth herein are minimum requirements. Each person voting is expected to vote prayerfully based on personal judgment of the applicant’s gifts, evidence of God’s grace, and promise of future usefulness for the mission of the Church. The District Committee on Ordained Ministry and the Board of

Ordained Ministry shall not approve or recommend any person for candidacy, licensing, commissioning, or ordination who does not meet the qualifications of ¶ 304.1-3, based on the full examination and thorough inquiry into the person’s fitness by the committee and board (see Judicial Council Decisions 1343 and 1344). The bishop presiding in the clergy session shall rule any such unqualified candidate out of order and not eligible to be acted upon.

Rationale:

Incorporates Judicial Council Decisions 1343, 1344, and 1352 in the *Discipline*, requiring district committees and boards of ordained ministry to fully examine candidates’ qualifications under ¶ 304.3. Guarding against non-conforming committees and boards of ordained ministry, this forbids them from approving or recommending persons found to be unqualified . . .

¶362.1e.

Petition Number: 90044-¶362.1e-G; Lambrecht, Thomas A. - Spring, TX, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - Traditional Plan #13 - Complaint Process - Par. 362.1e

Amend the complaint process ¶ 362.1e and ¶ 413.3d as follows:

¶ 362.1 e) *Referral or Dismissal of a Complaint*— Upon receiving a written and signed complaint, the bishop shall, within 90 days, carry out the supervisory response process outlined above. If within 90 days after the receipt of the complaint resolution is not achieved, the bishop shall either:

(1) Dismiss the complaint as having no basis in law or fact, with the consent of the cabinet, giving the reasons therefore in writing, copies of which shall be placed in the clergy person’s file and shared with the complainant; or

(2) Refer the matter to the counsel for the Church as a complaint.

¶ 413.3 d) (i) If the supervisory response results in the resolution of the matter, the bishop in charge of the supervisory response and the two episcopacy committee members appointed to the supervisory process (¶ 413.3) shall monitor the fulfillment of the terms of the resolution. If the supervisory response does not result in resolution of the matter, the president or secretary of the College of Bishops may either dismiss the complaint as having no basis in law or fact, with the consent of the College of Bishops and the committee on episcopacy, giving the reasons therefore in writing, copies of which shall be placed

in the bishop's file and shared with the complainant, refer the matter to the committee on episcopacy as an administrative complaint pursuant to ¶ 413.3e, or refer the matter to counsel for the Church pursuant to ¶ 2704.1 to prepare a complaint to forward to the committee on investigation.

Rationale:

This petition restores language from 2008, guarding against the arbitrary dismissal of complaints. Prevents a bishop from deciding which parts of Church law should be upheld in a given conference. Unreasonable dismissal can deprive the Church and complainants of the ability to hold persons accountable and repair harm done to . . .

¶2701.5.

Petition Number: 90045-¶2701.5-G; Lambrecht, Thomas A. - Spring, TX, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - Traditional Plan #14 - Just Resolution - Par. 2701.5

Amend Just Resolution in ¶¶ 362.1, 413.3c, 2701.5, 2706.5.c.3 as follows:

¶ 362. *Complaint Procedures*—1. Ordination and membership in an annual conference in The United Methodist Church is . . .

This review shall have as its primary purpose a just resolution of any violations of this sacred trust, in the hope that God's work . . .

A just resolution is one that focuses on repairing any harm to people and communities, achieving real accountability by making things right insofar as possible and bringing healing to all the parties. Just resolutions shall state all identified harms and how they shall be addressed by the Church and other parties to the complaint. In cases where the respondent acknowledges action(s) that are a clear violation of the provisions of the Discipline, a just resolution shall include, but not be limited to, a commitment not to repeat the action(s) that were a violation. In appropriate situations, processes seeking a just resolution as defined in ¶ 362.1c may be pursued. Special attention should be given to ensuring that cultural, racial, ethnic, and gender contexts are valued throughout the process in terms of their understandings of fairness, justice, and restoration.

A complaint is a written and signed statement claiming misconduct as defined in ¶ 2702.1. When . . .

¶ 413. *Complaints Against Bishops*—

3. c) The supervisory response may include a process seeking a just resolution in which the parties are assisted

by a trained, impartial third party facilitator(s) or mediator(s) in reaching an agreement satisfactory to all parties. (See ¶ 362.1b, c.) The appropriate persons, including the president of the College of Bishops, or the secretary if the complaint concerns the president, should enter into a written agreement outlining such process, including an agreement as to confidentiality. If resolution is achieved, a written statement of resolution, including terms and conditions, shall be signed by the parties and the parties shall agree on any matters to be disclosed to third parties. Such written statement of resolution shall be given to the person in charge of that stage of the process for further action consistent with the agreement. Just resolutions shall state all identified harms and how they shall be addressed by the Church and other parties to the complaint. In cases where the respondent acknowledges action(s) that are a clear violation of the provisions of the Discipline, a just resolution shall include, but not be limited to, a commitment not to repeat the action(s) that were a violation.

¶ 2701.5. *A Just Resolution in Judicial Proceedings*—A just resolution is one that focuses on repairing any harm to people and communities, achieving real accountability by making things right insofar as possible and bringing healing to all the parties. Just resolutions shall state all identified harms and how they shall be addressed by the Church and other parties to the complaint. In cases where the respondent acknowledges action(s) that are a clear violation of the provisions of the Discipline, a just resolution shall include, but not be limited to, a commitment not to repeat the action(s) that were a violation. Special attention should be given to ensuring that cultural, racial, ethnic, age, and gender contexts are valued throughout the process in terms of their understandings of fairness, justice, and restoration. During the just resolution process, the parties . . .

¶ 2706.5 c) Findings other than reasonable grounds by committee or other actions

(3) Upon recommendation of the counsel for the Church and the counsel for the respondent, the committee may refer the matter to the resident bishop as deemed appropriate for a process seeking a just resolution. The bishop shall institute such a process and may use the assistance of a trained, impartial third party facilitator(s) or mediator(s). Such referral will not constitute a dismissal or double jeopardy under ¶ 2701.2d. The appropriate persons, including the counsel for the Church and counsel for the respondent, should enter into a written agreement outlining the process, including any agreements on confidentiality. If resolution is achieved, a written statement, affirming such resolution, including any terms and conditions, shall be signed by the same persons who signed the written agreement outlining the process, and they shall

agree on any matters to be disclosed to third parties. Just resolutions shall state all identified harms and how they shall be addressed by the Church and other parties to the complaint. In cases where the respondent acknowledges action(s) that are a clear violation of the provisions of the Discipline, a just resolution shall include, but not be limited to, a commitment not to repeat the action(s) that were a violation. If the resolution results in a change of ministerial status, the disclosure agreement shall not prevent the disciplinary disclosures . . .

Rationale:

The purpose of a just resolution is to repair harm and achieve accountability, both of which are enhanced by the respondent's willingness to change future behavior, as witnessed by a commitment not to repeat the offense. Refusal to make such a commitment increases the likelihood of future offenses and complaints.

¶2701.5.

Petition Number: 90046-¶2701.5-G; Lambrecht, Thomas A. - Spring, TX, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - Traditional Plan #15 - Just Resolution - Par. 2701.5

Amend ¶¶ 362.1c), 413.3c), 2701.5, and 2706.5.c.3 by adding the same sentence to all four as follows: No matter where in the process a just resolution is achieved, the complainant(s) shall be a party to the resolution process and every effort shall be made to have the complainant(s) agree to the resolution before it may take effect. Also add the complainant, in ¶¶ 2701.5 and 2706.5(c)3.

¶ 362. Complaint Procedures—1. Ordination and membership in an annual conference in The United Methodist Church is a sacred trust. . .

. . .

c) Just Resolution—The supervisory response may include a process that seeks a just resolution in which the parties are assisted by a trained, impartial third party facilitator(s) or mediator(s), in reaching an agreement satisfactory to all parties.⁶⁹ If the bishop chooses to initiate a mediated attempt to produce a just resolution, then the bishop, the person filing the complaint, the respondent, and other appropriate persons shall enter into a written agreement outlining the process, including any agreements on confidentiality. A process seeking a just resolution may begin at any time in the supervisory, complaint, or trial process. No matter where in the process a just resolution is achieved, the complainant(s) shall be a party to

the resolution process and every effort shall be made to have the complainant(s) agree to the resolution before it may take effect. If resolution is achieved, a written statement of resolution, including any terms and conditions, shall be signed by the parties and the parties shall agree on any matters to be disclosed to third parties. A just resolution agreed to by all parties shall be a final disposition of the related complaint.

¶ 413. Complaints Against Bishops

. . .

3. After receiving a complaint as provided in ¶ 413.2,

. . .

. . .

c) The supervisory response may include a process seeking a just resolution in which the parties are assisted by a trained, impartial third party facilitator(s) or mediator(s) in reaching an agreement satisfactory to all parties. (See ¶ 363.1b, c.) The appropriate persons, including the president of the College of Bishops, or the secretary if the complaint concerns the president, should enter into a written agreement outlining such process, including an agreement as to confidentiality. No matter where in the process a just resolution is achieved, the complainant(s) shall be a party to the resolution process and every effort shall be made to have the complainant(s) agree to the resolution before it may take effect. If resolution is achieved, a written statement of resolution, including terms and conditions, shall be signed by the parties and the parties shall agree on any matters to be disclosed to third parties. Such written statement of resolution shall be given to the person in charge of that stage of the process for further action consistent with the agreement.

¶ 2701.5. A Just Resolution in Judicial Proceedings—A just resolution is one that focuses on repairing any harm to people and communities, achieving real accountability by making things right insofar as possible and bringing healing to all the parties. Special attention should be given to ensuring that cultural, racial, ethnic, age, and gender contexts are valued throughout the process in terms of their understandings of fairness, justice, and restoration. During the just resolution process, the parties may be assisted by a trained, impartial third party facilitator(s) or mediator(s) in reaching an agreement satisfactory to all parties. Processes that seek a just resolution are encouraged at any time, including through the judicial proceedings. After the referral of a matter as a judicial complaint from counsel for the Church to the committee on investigation, if a process seeking a just resolution is used, the appropriate persons, including the counsel for the Church, the complainant, and the counsel for the respondent, should enter into a written agreement outlining such process, including any agreement on confidentiality. No matter where in the process a just

resolution is achieved, the complainant(s) shall be a party to the resolution process and every effort shall be made to have the complainant(s) agree to the resolution before it may take effect. If resolution is achieved, a written statement of resolution, including terms and conditions, shall be signed by the same persons who signed the written agreement outlining the process, and they shall agree on any matters to be disclosed to third parties. If the resolution results in a change of ministerial status, the disclosure agreement shall not prevent the disciplinary disclosures required for possible readmission.

¶ 2706.5. Bill of Charges and Specifications, Deliberations, Vote, and Referral

c) Findings other than reasonable grounds by committee or other actions

(1) If the committee on investigation determines . . .

(2) If the committee on investigation determines . . .

(3) Upon recommendation of the counsel for the Church and the counsel for the respondent, the committee may refer the matter to the resident bishop as deemed appropriate for a process seeking a just resolution. The bishop shall institute such a process and may use the assistance of a trained, impartial third party facilitator(s) or mediator(s). Such referral will not constitute a dismissal or double jeopardy under ¶ 2701.5. The appropriate persons, including the counsel for the Church, the complainant, and counsel for the respondent, should enter into a written agreement outlining the process, including any agreements on confidentiality. No matter where in the process a just resolution is achieved, the complainant(s) shall be a party to the resolution process and every effort shall be made to have the complainant(s) agree to the resolution before it may take effect. If resolution is achieved, a written statement, affirming such resolution, including any terms and conditions, shall be signed by the same persons who signed the written agreement outlining the process, and they shall agree on any matters to be disclosed to third parties. If the resolution results in a change of ministerial status, the disclosure agreement shall not prevent the disciplinary disclosures required for readmission. The written statement affirming such resolution shall be given to the bishop for further action(s) to implement the agreement, if any. If the process does not result in resolution, the matter shall be returned to the committee.

Rationale:

The current practice of allowing the counsel for the Church to enter into a just resolution without the participation or agreement of the complainant is unjust and circumvents the goal of restoration of relationship. In order for justice to be done and healing to take place, the complainants must be . . .

¶2715.10.

Petition Number: 90047-¶2715.10-G; Lambrecht, Thomas A. - Spring, TX, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - Traditional Plan #16 - Church Appeal - Par. 2715.10

Amend ¶ 2715.10 Appeal Procedures as follows:

¶ 2715. Appeal Procedures—General

. . .

10. The Church shall have no right of appeal from findings of fact of the trial court. The Church shall have a right of appeal to the committee on appeals and then to the Judicial Council from findings of the trial court based on egregious errors of Church law or administration that could reasonably have affected the findings of the trial court. When the committee on appeals or the Judicial Council shall find egregious errors of Church law or administration under this part, it may remand the case for a new trial, along with a statement of the grounds of its action. This is not to be double jeopardy. In regard to cases where there is an investigation under ¶ 2702, but no trial is held, egregious errors of Church law or administration may be appealed to the jurisdictional or central conference committee on appeals and then to the Judicial Council by counsel for the Church. The committee on investigation's decision not to certify a bill of charges does not alone constitute an egregious error of Church law or administration. When the committee on appeals or the Judicial Council shall find egregious errors of Church law or administration under this part, it may remand the case for a new hearing, in which event it shall return to the chair of the committee on investigation a statement of the grounds of its action. This is not to be double jeopardy.

Rationale:

Enables the Church to correct errors in the trial process that prejudice the results of the trial. Disallowing appeals by the Church fails to protect the rights of the complainant and closes off one avenue to work for justice. Levels the playing field for the Church/complainant and the respondent with . . .

¶570.

Petition Number: 90048-¶570-\$-G; Lambrecht, Thomas A. - Spring, TX, USA for Commission on a Way Forward.

CoWF - Traditional Plan #17 - Concordat Churches - Par. 570

Amend §§ 570 and 574.1 to create the option of concordat churches in the United States. The changes in these paragraphs shall take effect immediately upon the adjournment of the 2019 General Conference.

¶ 570. Churches located outside the boundaries of the jurisdictional conferences and churches formed through the provisions of ¶ 2801 and which have entered into relationship with or have agreements with The United Methodist Church, including that of sending representatives to General Conference of The United Methodist Church are described as follows:

¶ 574. Concordat Agreements-

1. With the exception of The Methodist Church of Great Britain and churches formed through the provisions of ¶ 2801, such concordats may be established by the following procedure:

Rationale:

This opens the possibility for concordat churches in the United States, allowing negotiated covenants and relationships between self-governing Methodist churches formed under ¶ 2801 and The United Methodist Church. This allows a continuing connection with those congregations departing from the denomination because of conscience.