

Plan of Organization and Rules of Order for the 2019 General Conference

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1 **Plan of Organization and Rules of Order for the General Conference**

2 **PREAMBLE**

3 From the days of John Wesley, the “People called Methodist” have gathered and
4 continue to gather for Christian conferencing as a means of grace. The early
5 Methodists, even as they attended to practical needs of the movement, focused
6 primarily on spiritual matters. The spiritual affairs of the Church and its mission
7 are always before the body whether or not they are apparent in the passions of
8 debate on temporal concerns. Through Christian conferencing the Church comes
9 together, seeking unity in the midst of diversity, always desiring to know the
10 mind of Christ. The General Conference is the representative, deliberative body
11 for The United Methodist Church. It has developed an orderly, rational, and fair
12 process for making majority decisions in the practical affairs of the Church; yet,
13 it also protects the rights of minority positions. The delegates come together in
14 firm conviction that the unity of United Methodism is God’s will and the best
15 way to “spread scriptural holiness” in this global movement of the Church.

16 The purpose of the Plan of Organization and Rules of Order is to help the
17 General Conference be a means of grace, discerning God’s will and striving for
18 Christ-like wisdom in all of our decisions. In the midst of deliberation, we may
19 pause, listen in silence, pray together, and refocus our vision on where the Spirit
20 is leading the Church. These times of silence, prayer, and discernment may be
21 varied and surprising. While they are not substitutes for respectful and orderly
22 debate, they do serve to hold our temporal affairs up to the light of the larger,
23 common mission of The United Methodist Church to make disciples of Jesus
24 Christ for the transformation of the world. Trusting that God is at work
25 throughout all of life, the General Conference invites the Church and others to
26 observe our deliberations by conducting our business in open meetings
27 (consistent with ¶ 722 of the *Book of Discipline*).

28 **PLAN OF ORGANIZATION**

29 **I. Opening Session and Organization**

30 The General Conference will assemble at the set time and place beginning with
31 worship. The opening business session of the Conference shall be called to
32 order by the bishop designated, as provided in the *Book of Discipline* ¶ 16.11.

33 The following order of business shall be observed:

34 A. Roll Call. The record of attendance shall be made in writing to the Secretary
35 of the General Conference by:

- 36 1) The Secretary of the Council of Bishops for the bishops,
37 2) The Secretary of the Judicial Council for that body,
38 3) The Executive Secretary of the Connectional Table for all general
39 secretaries,
40 4) The chairperson of each annual conference delegation for its
41 membership (See Rule 5), and
42 5) The chairperson of each delegation for Concordat, Affiliated
43 Autonomous Methodist and United Churches.

44 B. Establish the bar of the conference.

45 C. Report of the Commission on the General Conference.

- 46 1) Adoption of the Plan of Organization and Rules of Order

47 D. Elections

- 48 1) Coordinator of Calendar (See IV.C)

49 E. Report of Committee on Agenda.

50 F. Miscellaneous Business.

51 G. Adjournment.

52 **II. Episcopal, Laity, and Young People Addresses**

53 The Quadrennial Addresses shall be delivered early in the Conference, at such
54 hour as determined by the Commission on the General Conference. The Council
55 of Bishops shall coordinate the preparation and presentation of the Quadrennial
56 Episcopal Address. The Association of Annual Conference Lay Leaders shall
57 coordinate the preparation and presentation of the Quadrennial Lay Address.

58 This opportunity shall be open to all annual conference lay leaders. The United

59 Methodist Division of Ministries with Young People shall coordinate the
60 preparation and presentation of the Quadrennial Young People Address. This
61 opportunity shall be open to all young people.

62 **III. Presiding Officers**

63 The presiding officers for the plenaries of the Conference, the opening plenary
64 excepted (See Section I), shall be chosen from among the effective bishops by
65 the Committee on Presiding Officers (See Section VII.A.6).

66 **IV. Secretary of the General Conference**

67 A. The Secretary of the General Conference shall be responsible for all
68 functions of the office assigned by ¶ 504.3 in preparation for the session of the
69 General Conference, and shall be accountable to the Commission on the General
70 Conference.

71 B. The Secretary of the General Conference shall select persons from the clergy
72 and lay membership of The United Methodist Church to serve on the secretarial
73 support staff.

74 C. The Conference shall elect, upon nomination by the Secretary of the General
75 Conference, a Coordinator of Calendar, who shall assist the Committee on
76 Agenda and Calendar in presenting reports in such order as to expedite the
77 business of the Conference, and in other responsibilities of the committee (See
78 I.D.1 and VII.A.1).

79 D. The Secretary of the General Conference shall appoint a Petitions Secretary
80 who shall prepare the petitions, resolutions, and reports that meet the
81 requirements of *Book of Discipline* ¶ 507 for reference to the appropriate
82 legislative committee, subject to review by the Committee on Reference (See
83 Section VII.A.7).

84 E. A budget for the work of the Secretary of the General Conference shall be
85 presented by the Commission on the General Conference to the General Council
86 on Finance and Administration. Such budget shall be paid out of the General
87 Administration Fund.

88 F. If in the interim of the quadrennial sessions of the General Conference the
89 office of the Secretary of the General Conference shall be vacated for any
90 reason, the Council of Bishops shall elect a successor to serve until the next
91 session.

92 **V. Nominations and Elections**

93 The Secretary of the General Conference shall develop a timeline for the
94 submission of nominations, elections and appointments by the Council of
95 Bishops. In making these nominations, elections and appointments, attention
96 shall be given to ensuring continuity of membership from the previous
97 quadrennium. It shall be the responsibility of the Council of Bishops to present
98 nominations for the Commission on the General Conference, Standing
99 Committee on Central Conference Matters, General Conference administrative
100 committees, and secretary-designate of the General Conference. These
101 nominations shall be presented to the General Conference for election.

102 Disciplinary provisions shall govern the nomination and election procedures for:

103 General Council on Finance and Administration (§ 805.1)

104 General Board of Pension and Health Benefits (§ 1502.1)

105 General Commission on Archives and History (§ 1704.2)

106 The University Senate (§ 1414.2)

107 The Judicial Council (§§ 2602, 2603, 2604.1)

108 and Episcopal membership on:

109 General Board of Church and Society (§ 705.4d)

110 General Board of Discipleship (§ 705.4d)

111 General Board of Global Ministries (§§ 705.4d, 1311.6)

112 General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (§ 705.4d)

113 The *Daily Christian Advocate* shall publish the list of nominees for election to
114 the Judicial Council and the University Senate. Biographical sketches not to
115 exceed 100 words in length shall be submitted by each nominee and shall be
116 published as submitted.

117 **VI. Commission on the General Conference**

118 A. There shall be a Commission on the General Conference comprised of lay
 119 and clergy membership as defined by ¶ 511 of the *Book of Discipline*. They
 120 shall have oversight responsibility for all arrangements necessary for the
 121 meeting of the General Conference.

122 1. Languages of the General Conference: The *Daily Christian Advocate*
 123 will be published in English.¹ Simultaneous and/or one-on-one
 124 interpretation of plenary and legislative committee sessions will be
 125 offered in French, Portuguese, Spanish, Kiswahili, German, Russian,
 126 Korean, and American Sign Language and/or others as determined by
 127 the Commission on the General Conference in consultation with the
 128 Multilingual Resources of the General Board of Global Ministries.

129 2. Duly credentialed interpreters or other personal assistants for persons
 130 with special needs may be seated when necessary with voting delegates
 131 in all committee and plenary sessions.

132 **VII. Committees**

133 The General Conference shall have standing committees and special committees
 134 as it may order, with such functions, responsibilities, and limitations as
 135 assigned.

136 **A. Administrative Committees**

137 The members of the following committees shall be appointed by the Council of
 138 Bishops at its fall meeting preceding the General Conference. All except the
 139 Committee on Correlation and Editorial Revision shall be from the elected
 140 delegates to the General Conference (See Section V). Members of
 141 administrative committees that meet prior to the day on which the General
 142 Conference convenes shall receive the delegate per diem for each additional day
 143 on which their attendance is required. Delegates who are appointed to such

¹ *The Book of Discipline 2016* ¶ 511.4.c requires that daily schedules, petition lists, nominations information, and other high-importance information in the *DCA* must also be made available in French, Portuguese, and Kiswahili. These will be provided electronically.

144 committees less than 60 days prior to the opening session of General
145 Conference shall be entitled to reimbursement for any additional transportation
146 costs.

147 *1) Agenda and Calendar*

148 (a) There shall be a Committee on Agenda and Calendar composed of fifteen
149 members, one from each central conference and jurisdiction, at least six of
150 whom shall be laypersons; the Coordinator of the Calendar; the Chairperson of
151 the Program Committee of the Commission on the General Conference or
152 designee; and the Chairperson of the Commission on the General Conference or
153 designee.

154 No member of the committee shall be chairperson of a legislative committee or
155 a staff person of any general agency. The committee shall be convened, for the
156 purpose of organization, by the Secretary of the General Conference, or
157 designee, at least the day before the opening of the General Conference.
158 Following the presentation and adoption of the report of the Commission on the
159 General Conference at the opening session of the General Conference, the
160 Committee on Agenda and Calendar shall immediately become responsible for
161 guiding the order of business of the Conference.

162 (b) The Committee on Agenda and Calendar shall:

163 (1) Present calendar reports in such an order as to expedite the business
164 of the Conference,

165 (2) Inform the bishop presiding as soon as possible of the agenda items,
166 including order of priority, to be considered,

167 (3) Keep an overview of calendar progress;

168 (4) Report recommendations to each session of the General Conference
169 concerning business agenda, including time allocation and order in
170 which legislative committee reports shall be presented;

171 (5) Give priority in plenary for legislative consideration as calendar
172 items become available: first to items affecting the global church,

- 173 second to items with financial implications, and third to items with
174 minority reports;
- 175 (6) Announce, at the last plenary session of each day, a tentative agenda
176 for the next day;
- 177 (7) Consult daily with the legislative committee chairpersons to
178 expedite the business of the General Conference; and
- 179 (8) Receive all requests for special orders of the day, except those in the
180 report of the Commission on the General Conference on the first day of
181 the Conference.

182 (c) Proposals, questions, communications, resolutions, and other matters not
183 included in the regular business of the General Conference shall be referred to
184 the Committee on Agenda and Calendar without motion or debate. This
185 committee shall determine whether the matter presented shall be considered by
186 the General Conference. A decision of this committee may be appealed by
187 submitting to the Conference the signatures of ten delegates. The item shall be
188 presented to the Conference if the appeal is supported by a one-third vote.

189 *2) Correlation and Editorial Revision*

190 There shall be a Committee on Correlation and Editorial Revision of eight
191 persons and two alternates not delegates to the General Conference, and the
192 Book Editor or designee, who shall be an ex-officio member. They shall be
193 entitled to reimbursement of expenses for attendance at meetings of the
194 committee. The Book Editor or designee shall convene the committee for the
195 purpose of organization. During the session of General Conference and
196 following its adjournment, the function of this committee shall be:

- 197 (a) To review all proposed legislation reported in the *Daily Christian Advocate*
198 or presented in special reports to the General Conference. The committee shall
199 report to the committees concerned, or to the General Conference as the
200 situation may warrant, all contradictions, duplications, and inconsistencies
201 discovered.

202 (b) To assure that, when a calendar item approved on the Consent Calendar or
203 under an omnibus vote is found to be in conflict with parts of another calendar
204 item discussed and voted upon at a plenary session, the item discussed and
205 voted shall prevail.

206 (c) To edit the *Book of Discipline* in accordance with Section X.B.

207 3) *Courtesies and Privileges*

208 There shall be a Committee on Courtesies and Privileges composed of twelve
209 members, one from each central conference and jurisdiction, at least six of
210 whom shall be laypersons. The committee shall be convened by a bishop for the
211 purpose of organization. The committee has the following duties and
212 responsibilities:

213 (a) To consider all matters of privilege and, if they are such, to recommend to
214 the Conference that they be heard.

215 (b) To consider resolutions of commendation, courtesy, appreciation, etc.,
216 submitted in writing by delegates. The committee may initiate similar
217 resolutions and may edit and amend those submitted to it. Resolutions approved
218 by the committee shall be published in the *Daily Christian Advocate* and
219 brought to the floor if the committee considers them of unusual importance or
220 urgency.

221 (c) To arrange for extending appropriate courtesies of the Conference.

222 (d) To limit its report, including the statement of the chairperson and the hearing
223 of such persons as may be presented, to a maximum of ten minutes in any one
224 business day. No person or persons shall be presented whose request has been
225 denied by the Commission on the General Conference, nor after the sixth day
226 unless approved by a two-thirds vote of the Conference (See Rule 31.6).

227 4) *Credentials*

228 There shall be a Committee on Credentials composed of twelve members, one
229 from each central conference and jurisdiction, at least six of whom shall be
230 laypersons. The committee shall be convened by a bishop for the purpose of
231 organization. The committee shall provide guidance to the Secretary of the

232 General Conference regarding the approval of credentials of delegates, and may
233 review decisions regarding the seating of delegates, including reserve delegates.
234 The committee shall report to the General Conference its decisions and
235 recommendations regarding challenges to the seating of any delegates.

236 *5) Journal*

237 There shall be a Committee on the Journal of three delegates to approve daily
238 the record of Proceedings of the General Conference prepared by the Secretary
239 of the General Conference and assistant(s). The committee shall be convened by
240 a bishop for the purpose of organization.

241 *6) Presiding Officers*

242 There shall be a Committee on Presiding Officers composed of twelve
243 members, one from each central conference and jurisdiction, six of whom shall
244 be clergy and six of whom shall be laypersons. The committee shall be
245 convened by a bishop for the purpose of organization. The committee shall
246 select and notify the presiding officer(s) of each plenary session at least 24
247 hours in advance, insofar as possible. The committee shall be free to select a
248 bishop for more than one session and to change the presiding officer during the
249 session, whenever it seems advisable (See Section III).

250 *7) Reference*

251 There shall be a Committee on Reference composed of twenty-four members,
252 one clergy and one lay person from each central conference and jurisdiction.
253 The membership of this committee shall include at least one member from each
254 legislative committee who will be designated as petition coordinator for their
255 legislative committee. If possible, petition coordinators should have served
256 previously on a General Conference legislative committee. These petition
257 coordinators shall serve as advisors to the officers of the legislative committee
258 of which they are members. Additional members from the Committee on
259 Reference shall assist the petition coordinator in the legislative committee of
260 which they are members. This committee shall be convened, for the purpose of
261 organization, by the Secretary of the General Conference, or designee, the day
262 prior to the opening of the General Conference.

263 (a) After reviewing the proposed assignments by the Secretary of the General
264 Conference of the petitions, resolutions, and similar communications dealing
265 with the regular business of the Conference to legislative committees, this
266 committee shall refer the same to the appropriate legislative committees (See
267 Section IV.D). This committee shall also be responsible for reviewing the
268 assignment, by the Secretary of the General Conference, of all reports,
269 recommendations, and resolutions from general agencies, standing or special
270 commissions and committees, and all other communications which are
271 submitted to the Secretary of the General Conference after the convening of the
272 General Conference, all of which shall be referred directly to appropriate
273 legislative committees without presentation to a plenary session of the General
274 Conference.

275 (b) The Committee on Reference may withdraw an item that has been assigned
276 to a committee, either upon a request or upon its own motion. It may also
277 withhold from reference or publication any document it shall deem improper.

278 (c) The Secretary of the General Conference, or the Petitions Secretary, may
279 withhold from publication any petitions deemed defamatory to a private
280 individual or obscene. The Committee on Reference shall review all such
281 decisions.

282 (d) Where the committee finds two or more substantially identical petitions, it
283 may group them under one title and number, indicating the total number of
284 petitions.

285 (e) No petitions shall be assigned by the Committee on Reference to any
286 General Conference committee unless they meet the requirements of the *Book of*
287 *Discipline*.

288 **B. Advance Legislative Research Panel**

289 (a) There shall be an Advance Legislative Research Panel chosen by the
290 Executive Committee of the Commission on the General Conference, composed
291 of a number of members equal to the number of legislative committees.

292 (b) Panel members shall be chosen based on their comprehensive knowledge of
293 the *Book of Discipline* as evidenced by their previous participation in the life of
294 the general church through service on the Judicial Council, the Committee on
295 Correlation and Editorial Revision, or as a conference chancellor. Panel
296 members must be willing to volunteer significant hours prior to General
297 Conference.

298 (c) All petitions received, after being compiled by Disciplinary paragraphs, shall
299 be assigned by legislative committee among the panel members. The panel
300 members, in turn, will review all the petitions they have been assigned and
301 locate any other paragraphs of the *Book of Discipline*, including the
302 Constitution, which are closely related to the subject matter of the petition, as
303 well as closely related Judicial Council decisions and memoranda. The panel
304 member shall then record the related paragraph, decision, or memoranda with
305 each petition.

306 (d) No judgment or editorial comment about any petition shall be included.

307 (e) The notation of related paragraphs shall become a permanent attachment to
308 the petition as it goes through the General Conference legislative committee
309 process.

310 (f) The legislative committees will consider how related paragraphs would
311 impact or be impacted by adopting such a petition.

312 (g) The Advance Legislative Research Panel's work shall be coordinated by the
313 Petitions Secretary.

314 (h) A panel member is not precluded from being a delegate to General
315 Conference.

316 **C. Committee on Ethics**

317 There shall be a Committee on Ethics, comprised of the members of the
318 Committee of the Plan of Organization and Rules of Order of the General
319 Conference. Individual delegates may report their concerns about alleged
320 violations of the rules to the Secretary of the General Conference who shall

321 investigate, attempt to resolve all such claims, and report the resolution to the
 322 Committee on Ethics and to the delegate(s) who raised the concern. Based on
 323 the severity of the concerns, the Secretary of the General Conference may refer
 324 the matter to the Committee on Ethics. Alleged violations of the rules may also
 325 be referred directly to the Committee on Ethics by a one-fifth vote of the
 326 Plenary. The Committee on Ethics shall review all matters referred to it and
 327 report its findings to the Plenary with recommended action.

328 **D. Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters**

329 (For membership, see *Book of Discipline* ¶ 2201.)

330 To this committee shall be referred all petitions, resolutions, etc., relating to the
 331 Central Conferences, Autonomous Methodist Churches, Affiliated Autonomous
 332 Methodist Churches, Affiliated United Churches and Concordat relationships.

333 *Book of Discipline* paragraphs

- 334 28-31.....Constitution: Central Conferences
- 335 423.....Conference of Methodist Bishops
- 336 540-548.....Central Conferences
- 337 560-567.....Provisional Central Conferences
- 338 570-575.....Autonomous Methodist, Affiliated Autonomous
- 339 Methodist, Affiliated United, Covenanting, and Concordat Churches
- 340 2201.....Standing Committee on Central Conference
- 341 Matters

342 The Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters shall submit its report
 343 and any legislative proposals related to the paragraphs assigned to it directly to
 344 the General Conference. If the Standing Committee on Central Conference
 345 Matters has a concern for any paragraphs assigned to one of the legislative
 346 committees, the Committee shall offer its recommendation to the appropriate
 347 legislative committee for consideration and recommendation to the General
 348 Conference.

349 **E. Legislative Committees**

350 There shall be legislative committees to whom all properly submitted petitions
 351 and reports shall be assigned. The Commission on the General Conference shall
 352 set the number of legislative committees and the assignment of Disciplinary
 353 paragraphs and topics to those committees in consultation with the Secretary of
 354 the General Conference and the Business Manager of the General Conference (§
 355 511.4.f). Any legislative committee considering legislation affecting the
 356 responsibilities assigned to the Standing Committee on Central Conference
 357 Matters shall consult with the committee before submitting its proposed
 358 legislation to the Conference.

359 **F. Membership of Legislative Committees**

360 1) Within the annual conference delegation, each delegate shall choose one
 361 legislative committee on which to serve, the choice being made in order of
 362 election.

363 In 2016, the laity first elected, shall be entitled to the first choice, the clergy
 364 delegate first elected, the second choice, and thus the right of choice shall
 365 continue to alternate between lay and clergy delegates in the order of their
 366 election. For subsequent General Conferences, first choice shall alternate
 367 between the clergy and lay delegates according to the following schedule:

368	2020	clergy
369	2024	laity
370	2028	clergy
371	2032	laity
372	2036	clergy
373	2040	laity

374 Two members of a delegation may not serve on the same legislative committee
 375 unless the said delegation is represented on all of them. Whenever a delegation
 376 has more than one delegate on a legislative committee, its delegates shall be
 377 divided as equally as possible between lay and clergy. Thus, if there are three
 378 delegates on a committee, they shall be two clergy and one lay or vice versa.
 379 The Secretary of the General Conference shall provide these instructions and

380 examples with the election of delegate instructions sent to each annual
381 conference secretary.

382 2) If a matter is under consideration in any legislative committee which in the
383 judgment of any annual conference delegation vitally affects the interests of its
384 constituency, and if the said annual conference is not represented in the
385 membership of said committee, then the delegation may choose one of its
386 delegates to represent its annual conference in the committee when the
387 aforementioned matter is under consideration. This delegate shall be entitled to
388 sit with the committee while this particular matter is being considered and shall
389 have voice, but not vote (See Section VII.G.3.(e)).

390 3) Each person seated in the General Conference with voice but not vote may
391 submit to the Secretary of the General Conference a choice of a legislative
392 committee and shall have the same right in that committee to voice but not vote.

393 **G. Meetings of Committees**

394 1) Organization and Quorum of Committees. All legislative and administrative
395 committees shall meet for organization at a time determined by the Commission
396 on the General Conference. A majority of the members shall constitute a
397 quorum for the transaction of business in all committees.

398 Consistent with the spirit of ¶ 722 in the *Book of Discipline*, meetings of
399 General Conference committees and subcommittees shall be open.

400 2) Administrative Committees

401 (a) A bishop appointed by the Council of Bishops and an organizing secretary
402 appointed by the Secretary of the General Conference shall serve, respectively
403 as chairperson and secretary, to organize the committees, except where other
404 provision is specified.

405 (b) The election of chairperson, vice-chairperson and secretary of each
406 administrative committee shall be by separate sequential written ballot for each
407 position. Due consideration shall be given for inclusiveness that reflects the

408 global nature of the church, including gender, age, ethnicity, geography, young
409 people, clergy, and lay.

410 3) Legislative Committees

411 All legislative committees shall meet for organization at such time as the
412 Commission on the General Conference shall determine. A bishop appointed by
413 the Council of Bishops and an organizing secretary appointed by the Secretary
414 of the General Conference shall serve, respectively, as chairperson and
415 secretary, to organize each of the several committees. The first meeting of the
416 legislative committees shall be held as soon as possible following the first
417 plenary session of the General Conference. The orientation of the committee,
418 followed by the election of officers, shall be the order of business of the first
419 meeting of the committee.

420 (a) Election of Officers. The chairperson, vice-chairperson, secretary, and sub-
421 committee chairpersons of each committee shall be elected by separate
422 sequential written ballot for each position. Due consideration shall be given for
423 inclusiveness that reflects the global nature of the church, including gender, age,
424 ethnicity, geography, young people, clergy, and lay. If no election by simple
425 majority vote of those voting has occurred after three (3) consecutive ballots,
426 the floor will be reopened for nominations.

427 (b) Training. The Secretary of the General Conference shall be responsible for
428 training all chairpersons, vice-chairpersons, secretaries, and sub-committee
429 chairpersons of legislative committees. The training shall include instruction in
430 their duties, all procedures in the handling of petitions, the times of the daily
431 deadline for publishing reports, and other information to expedite the work of
432 the committees. The Commission on the General Conference shall arrange for a
433 time and place for such a training session. No officer shall serve without
434 completing this training.

435 (c) Parliamentarians. Each legislative committee shall be assigned a
436 parliamentarian by the Secretary of the General Conference. Retired bishops
437 nominated by the Council of Bishops shall be included in the pool of
438 parliamentarians. It shall be the responsibility of the Business Manager of the

439 General Conference to develop a pool of other people not currently delegates to
440 serve as parliamentarians. It is preferred that these persons be members of The
441 United Methodist Church, have knowledge of the Rules of the General
442 Conference, and have training in parliamentary procedure. The retired bishops
443 shall be given priority in being assigned to legislative committees. At the
444 invitation of the presiding officer, the parliamentarian advises on matters of
445 parliamentary procedure.

446 (d) Regular Meetings. The legislative committees shall meet for business as
447 scheduled by the Agenda and Calendar Committee unless otherwise ordered by
448 the Conference, and at such other times as the committees may determine
449 provided that no legislative committee shall meet at times that conflict with
450 plenary sessions. Any legislation not completed by the legislative committee at
451 the time of the Saturday evening adjournment of the first week of General
452 Conference shall remain unfinished and legislative committees shall be
453 adjourned (See Rule 37).²

454 (e) Voting Area. Each legislative committee and sub-committee shall establish
455 an area in which only voting committee members and their properly
456 credentialed assistant or translator will be seated. The Business Manager of the
457 General Conference shall provide four designated seats in each legislative
458 committee for the monitors from the General Commission on Religion and Race
459 and the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women. An area shall
460 also be established for those present with voice but not vote (See Section
461 VII.F.2). Staff members of the Secretary of General Conference and Business
462 Manager of General Conference may speak in the performance of their duties.
463 General agency staff, other resource persons, and visitors may speak only when
464 authorized, in each instance by vote of 1/3 of the committee or sub-committee
465 or by invitation of the chair (See Rule 31.3).

² *The Book of Discipline 2016* ¶ 507.11 requires that all petitions submitted to the General Conference shall receive a vote of a legislative committee. The disciplinary requirement takes precedence over this sentence and Rule 37.

466 (f) Minority Reports. Minority reports allow for the expression of differing
467 views held by a significant portion of a legislative committee and may be
468 offered in accordance with Rules 29, 38, and 39.

469 (g) Reports. Legislative Committee Reports should be submitted as soon as
470 possible following the action of the committee. All Legislative Committee
471 Reports shall be submitted prior to 5 P.M. on Monday of the second week.

472 **H. Function and Authority of Committees**

473 1) The administrative committees, without specific instruction or direction from
474 the Conference, shall assume responsibility for considering and reporting to the
475 Conference upon all matters that fall within their respective responsibilities (See
476 Section VII.A).

477 2) The legislative committees shall consider and report upon that which is
478 referred to them by the Committee on Reference or which has been referred to
479 them directly by the Conference (See Rule 36).

480 **VIII. Proposal Involving Expenditure of Unbudgeted Funds**

481 A. Any action proposed to the General Conference plenary to establish an
482 interim or continuing board, commission, committee, or task force shall be
483 referred to the General Council on Finance and Administration and the
484 Connectional Table or their executive committees or their expenditure review
485 group for a report and recommendation before final action is taken. The General
486 Council on Finance and Administration and the Connectional Table or their
487 executive committees or their expenditure review group shall provide the
488 General Conference with the following before action is taken:

489 1) an estimated budget for the proposed board, commission, committee or task
490 force for the next quadrennium; and

491 2) a statement explaining how the creation of the proposed board, commission,
492 committee, or task force will affect the budget or budgets for existing boards,
493 commissions, committees and task forces already presented by the General
494 Council on Finance and Administration.

495 B. Any action proposed to the General Conference plenary that involves the
496 expenditure of funds shall be referred to the General Council on Finance and
497 Administration and the Connectional Table or their executive committees or
498 their expenditure review group for advice and recommendation before final
499 action is taken. Any general agency requests for supplemental funds shall be
500 identified as such; otherwise, they shall be considered as having been included
501 within the agency budget.

502 C. Any proposal falling under the provisions of this section shall be referred to
503 the General Council on Finance and Administration and the Connectional Table
504 or their executive committees or their expenditure review group at least seventy-
505 two hours prior to the scheduled adjournment of the General Conference.

506 **IX. Delegate Expenses**

507 A. Full travel expenses and per diem shall be paid for the number of allotted
508 voting delegates from each conference according to the report of the chairperson
509 of each annual conference delegation. If during the conference, a reserve
510 delegate is seated for a principal delegate for one or more full days, the principal
511 delegate shall adjust the per diem with such reserve based on the time served by
512 each.

513 B. Air travel shall be by the most economical round-trip coach airfare directly to
514 and from the site of the General Conference. Special excursion and promotional
515 fares shall be utilized whenever possible. Additional expenses may be allowed
516 delegates from conferences outside the United States for arrival and departure
517 not to exceed two days before or after General Conference. The per diem
518 expense allowance for all such days before and after General Conference shall
519 be at the same rate as granted delegates during General Conference. Exceptions
520 to these limitations must be approved by the Business Manager of the General
521 Conference.

522 C. When one or more delegates come in the same automobile, the owner will be
523 reimbursed for the actual cost of travel (parking, en route mileage and tolls, en
524 route meals and lodging). Mileage shall be reimbursed at the business rate
525 established by the IRS and will be measured from point of origin to the site of

526 General Conference and return. Meals and lodging shall be reimbursed up to the
 527 established General Conference per diem. When the round trip exceeds 1,000
 528 miles for any one round trip, the cost of transportation shall be paid either on the
 529 actual costs as defined above or at the most economical airfare available plus
 530 airport-related ground transportation cost, whichever is less. Passengers who are
 531 the principal voting delegates to the General Conference shall submit only the
 532 cost of room and meals en route up to the established General Conference per
 533 diem rate.

534 D. For the dates General Conference is in session, no General Conference
 535 delegate shall receive expense money from the general Church or any of its
 536 boards and agencies other than approved per diem and travel expenses available
 537 to all delegates. This provision is not to restrict official assistance to delegates
 538 from their own annual conferences.

539 **X. Material to Be Included in the *Book of Discipline***

540 A. Non-legislative material (Pages 1-22, 2012 *Book of Discipline*)³ shall be
 541 referred to the Committee on Correlation and Editorial Revision for
 542 consideration and possible consultation with the General Commission on
 543 Archives and History or referral to the Committee on Reference.

544 B. The Book Editor, the Secretary of the General Conference, the Publisher of
 545 The United Methodist Church, and the Committee on Correlation and Editorial
 546 Revision shall be charged with editing the *Book of Discipline*. Any Disciplinary
 547 amendments that are not dependent on constitutional amendments for their
 548 effective date will be incorporated in the appropriate paragraphs of the *Book of*
 549 *Discipline* in the order of their adoption.

550 The editors, in the exercise of their judgment, shall have the authority to make
 551 changes in wording as may be necessary to harmonize legislation without
 552 changing its substance. The editors, in consultation with the Judicial Council,
 553 shall also have authority to delete provisions of the *Book of Discipline* that have
 554 been ruled unconstitutional by the Judicial Council. Any challenge of a decision
 555 made by the Committee on Correlation and Editorial Revision shall be in

³ This is equivalent to pages 1-24 in the 2016 *Book of Discipline*.

556 writing. If the matter should go to the Judicial Council, the appealing party shall
557 give notice thereof to the committee. Any established errata in the *Book of*
558 *Discipline* shall be forwarded by The United Methodist Publishing House to the
559 Council of Bishops, the Secretary of the General Conference, Annual
560 Conference Secretaries, and Annual Conference Directors of Connectional
561 Ministries, and shall be published by the Book Editor on The United Methodist
562 Publishing House website.

563 Constitutional amendments certified in accordance with ¶ 59 and enabling
564 legislation adopted in anticipation of the constitutional amendments shall be
565 published by the Book Editor on the United Methodist Publishing House
566 website following certification. They shall be published in the subsequent *Book*
567 *of Discipline*. The constitutional amendments take effect at the time of
568 certification. The enabling legislation will be effective on January 1, of the year
569 following the certification of the constitutional amendments and will be given
570 effect as if it had been adopted after all other Disciplinary changes affecting a
571 particular paragraph.

572 **XI. Distribution of Materials within the Bar of the Conference**

573 After the first day, only the *Daily Christian Advocate* and materials related to
574 General Conference presentations and produced by official bodies of The
575 United Methodist Church approved by the Secretary of the General Conference
576 shall be distributed by the pages. Pages will distribute communications to
577 individual delegates provided the communication bears the name and location of
578 both the recipient and the sender.

579 **XII. Distribution of Materials Outside of the Plenary or Committee Room**

580 Newsletters or any special interest material from United Methodist boards,
581 agencies, and related United Methodist groups may be distributed under the
582 following conditions:

583 A. One copy of each item shall be submitted to the office of the Commission on
584 the General Conference in advance of distribution.

585 B. Material distributed shall be relevant to the General Conference and not for
586 soliciting membership in an organization.

587 C. No distributor shall be allowed to distribute within the convention center
588 unless they have obtained written approval from the Business Manager of the
589 General Conference. Each group shall have one contact person who shall
590 register all group members and receive identification for each member.

591 D. Distribution shall be at least 30 feet outside any entrance door to the plenary
592 or committee meeting room.

593 E. Distribution shall be done by representatives of the above named groups. It is
594 the responsibility of the distributors not to impede or interfere with the entrance
595 or exit of persons or to hamper the general flow of pedestrian traffic.

596 F. Distributors are responsible for the disposal of unused or unclaimed
597 materials.

598 G. Distributors violating these regulations will be prohibited from future
599 distributions.

600 **XIII. Reports to Be Mailed Before General Conference**

601 The reports, recommendations, and resolutions requiring action by the General
602 Conference, as well as petitions submitted in accordance with the *Book of*
603 *Discipline* ¶ 507.7, shall first be assigned a Petition Number by the Secretary of
604 the General Conference or the Petitions Secretary and then shall be published in
605 an Advance Edition of the *Daily Christian Advocate* and distributed to all
606 delegates and to the first clergy and first lay reserve delegates at least ninety
607 days prior to the opening of the General Conference. Reports shall be published
608 in the same style as the *Daily Christian Advocate*. In order to accomplish this,
609 the finished copy of all such reports and recommendations shall be submitted to
610 the editor of the *Daily Christian Advocate* at least 210 days prior to the opening
611 of the General Conference.⁴ Reports and recommendations not published in an

⁴ *The Book of Discipline 2016* ¶ 507.6-7 requires that petitions be submitted to the petitions secretary at least 230 days prior to the opening session of the General Conference. The disciplinary requirement takes precedence over this sentence.

612 Advance Edition of the *Daily Christian Advocate* may be received by the
613 General Conference only upon three-fourths vote of the General Conference.
614 The General Council on Finance and Administration shall be exempt from this
615 requirement to the extent necessary to allow inclusion of general funds receipts
616 information for the first three years of the quadrennium. The General Council
617 on Finance and Administration will provide data including the third year of the
618 quadrennium and other appropriate information to delegates prior to the
619 convening of the General Conference.

620 **RULES OF ORDER**

621 **I. Daily Schedule**

622 *Rule 1. Hours of Meetings*

623 The following shall be the daily order for the General Conference, Sundays
624 excepted:

- 625 (1) 8:00 A.M. Morning Praise and Prayer
626 (2) 8:20 A.M. to 12:30 P.M. Christian conferencing through plenary or
627 committee meetings
628 (3) 1:30 or 2:30 P.M. (as specified by the daily schedule) to 5:00 P.M.
629 Christian conferencing through plenary or committee meetings
630 (4) During a Memorial Service, the names of the bishops, bishops'
631 spouses, and delegates-elect who have died since the adjournment
632 of the previous General Conference shall be called.
633 (5) Recess may be called during any plenary session at a time deemed
634 appropriate by the presiding officer.
635 (6) Daily adjournment shall be called by 6:30 P.M. each evening, except
636 for the day when leader training is scheduled and Saturday when
637 adjournment shall be called by 9:30 P.M. Adjournment shall be an
638 order of the day.

639 *Rule 2. Order of Christian Conferencing*

640 The daily sessions of the Conference shall be conducted as follows:

- 641 (1) Reports of administrative and special committees
642 (2) Agenda and calendar items
643 (3) Consent calendar (See Rule 33.5)
644 (4) Miscellaneous business

645 **II. Presiding Officers**

646 *Rule 3. Authority of the Presiding Officer*

647 (1) The presiding officer (plenary, administrative committees, legislative
648 committees, and sub-committees) shall decide and rule on points of order. A
649 delegate may appeal the ruling to the body without debate, except that the
650 presiding officer and the appellant, in the order here named, shall each have

651 three minutes for a statement in support of their respective positions. A tie vote
652 in the case of appeal shall sustain the presiding officer (See Rule 31.5). Any
653 delegate who raises a point of order shall cite the rule believed to have been
654 violated.

655 (2) At the discretion of the presiding officer, a time for prayerful discernment
656 may be taken during deliberation. Such a time should be for group meditation
657 and prayer and shall end at the call of the presiding officer, at which time
658 deliberation shall be resumed.

659 (3) The presiding officer shall have the right to recess a session of the body at
660 any time at the presiding officer's discretion and to reconvene at such time as
661 the presiding officer shall propose. Consistent with the spirit of ¶ 722 of the
662 *Book of Discipline*, in rare circumstances the presiding officer shall also have
663 the right to stipulate that the session shall reconvene in closed session with only
664 delegates, authorized personnel, and authorized guests permitted to attend such
665 a session following recess (See Section VII.G.1).

666 *Rule 4. Calling the Conference to Order*

667 When the presiding officer calls the body to order, no delegate shall speak,
668 address the chair, or stand.

669 **III. Rights and Duties of Delegates**

670 *Rule 5. Attendance and Seating Reserves*

671 The chairperson of each delegation shall be provided with a form on which to
672 report daily the attendance of its delegates. Any reserve seated in the place of a
673 regular delegate shall have been duly elected as a reserve delegate by the annual
674 conference and shall meet the requirements set forth in the *Book of Discipline* ¶¶
675 34-36. Delegates, including reserves when the latter are substituted for a
676 delegate or delegates, shall be seated in the order of their election, except when
677 a reserve is seated temporarily or in case of special need as determined by the
678 delegation chairperson. The reserve shall occupy the seat of the delegate for
679 whom the substitution is made. Reserves shall not be seated for delegates
680 presenting on the platform. All delegates arriving after the opening roll call shall
681 be reported by the chairperson of the delegation to the Secretary of the General

682 Conference or designee. No delegate who is duly registered, unless hindered by
683 sickness or other emergency, shall be absent from the sessions of the
684 Conference without permission of the Conference. All absences shall be
685 reported by the chairpersons of the delegations to the Secretary of the General
686 Conference or designee on a form provided for this purpose. Reserve delegates
687 are to function within the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference (See
688 Rules 29 and 33). A reserve delegate may be seated upon authority of the
689 chairperson of the delegation who shall report the substitution in writing to the
690 Secretary of the General Conference or designee on a form provided for this
691 purpose. Reserves are chosen to be seated:

692 (1) by reason of being of the same order as the absent delegate,

693 (2) in order of their election as reserve delegates.

694 If the substitution is challenged, the Committee on Credentials after consultation
695 with the chairperson of the delegation may report its recommendation to the
696 General Conference.

697 *Rule 6. Directions for Securing the Plenary Floor*

698 A delegate desiring to speak to the Conference shall use the tablet at the table to
699 register and make a request to speak. The presiding bishop shall choose from the
700 requests and direct the speaker to the appropriate microphone. Unless raising a
701 point of order or parliamentary inquiry, the delegate shall not speak until given
702 the floor. The bishop presiding shall consider the various sections of the
703 auditorium in rotation. The delegate recognized shall first announce her or his
704 name and the name of the conference represented and their reason for speaking.
705 A delegate recognized by the presiding bishop may not yield the floor to another
706 delegate. In the event of tablet failure, a delegate desiring to speak to the
707 Conference shall hold up the appropriate placard to be recognized by the bishop
708 presiding.

709 *Rule 7. Plenary Speakers For and Against*

710 (1) When the report of a committee is under consideration, it shall be the duty of
711 the bishop presiding to ascertain, when recognizing a delegate to the
712 Conference, on which side the delegate proposes to speak; the bishop presiding

713 shall not assign the floor to any delegate proposing to speak on the same side of
714 the pending question as the speaker immediately preceding if any delegate
715 desires to speak on the other side.

716 (2) Except for non-debatable motions (Rule 23), no report shall be adopted or
717 question relating to the same decided, without opportunity having been given
718 for at least two speeches for and two against the said proposal.

719 (3) The motion to call for the previous question, which is itself non-debatable, is
720 not in order without opportunity having been given for at least two speeches for
721 and two against the proposal. Any delegate who moves the previous question
722 (that is, that the vote be now taken on the motion or motions pending) shall also
723 indicate to what it is intended to apply, if any secondary motion or motions are
724 also pending. If said delegate does not so indicate, it shall be regarded as
725 applying only to the immediately pending question. This motion shall be taken
726 without debate and shall require a two-thirds vote of those present and voting
727 for its adoption. If it is adopted, the vote shall be taken on the motion or motions
728 to which it applies without further debate (See Rule 23). After three speeches
729 for and three against and provided no secondary motions come before the floor,
730 the questions shall be put automatically. However, the chairperson and/or duly
731 authorized delegate or delegates presenting the committee's report, and if there
732 is a minority report, the presenter shall be entitled to speak before the vote is
733 taken (See Rule 29). These speeches shall be limited to three (3) minutes (See
734 Rule 9).

735 *Rule 8. Interrupting the Speaker*

736 No delegate who has the floor may be interrupted except for a point of order, a
737 parliamentary inquiry, a point of information, to challenge a misrepresentation,
738 or to call attention that the time has arrived for an order of the day.

739 *Rule 9. Speaking More Than Once; Length of Speech*

740 (1) No delegate shall speak a second time on the same question if any delegate
741 who has not previously spoken on the question desires the floor.

742 (2) No delegate shall speak more than twice on the same subject under the same
743 motion, except as provided in Rule 7.2

744 (3) No delegate shall speak longer than three minutes unless that time is
745 extended by the body (See Rule 7.3). Time of translation shall not count against
746 the three-minute limit.

747 (4) The three-minute limit on delegate speeches may be amended by a majority
748 vote of the body at any time and for any period of duration.

749 *Rule 10. Point of Order*

750 A delegate wishing to raise a point of order shall use the tablet at the table to
751 register and make a request to speak. The presiding bishop shall choose from the
752 requests, interrupt the proceedings, and direct the speaker to the appropriate
753 microphone. In the event of tablet failure, a delegate wishing to raise a point of
754 order shall address the presiding officer and say, "I rise to a point of order." The
755 presiding officer shall interrupt the proceeding. If a delegate is speaking, that
756 one shall immediately yield the floor. The presiding officer shall then direct the
757 delegate raising the point of order to first cite the rule involved and then state
758 the point as briefly and concisely as possible. The delegate shall not presume to
759 decide the question or argue the point. A point of order is decided by the
760 presiding officer without debate unless in doubtful cases the presiding officer
761 submits the question to the body for advice or decision. When the presiding
762 officer rules on a point, debate is closed, but the decision may be appealed (See
763 Rule 3).

764 *Rule 11. Bar of the Conference*

765 The bar of the conference shall provide for the integrity of the General
766 Conference. It is for delegates, pages, and others who have been granted access
767 to the area for General Conference business as provided through the Rules or
768 through the suspension of the Rules.

769 *Rule 12. Distracting Behavior*

770 A spirit of Christian conferencing is expected. Delegates are not to distract
771 others. Audible cell-phone use is not permitted in the plenary hall or the
772 legislative committee rooms. All electronic devices shall be muted or turned off.
773 In addition, the use of electronic devices should be in a manner that does not
774 disturb other participants. Respect should be shown in the use of social media at
775 all times. Verbal and non-verbal distractions are prohibited. The presiding

776 officer or members of the General Conference staff may ask individuals to leave
777 the plenary hall or the legislative committee room if they persist in behavior that
778 interferes with the participation of other delegates.

779 *Rule 13. Electronic Recording*

780 No electronic recording by either video or audio may be made of any portion of
781 the General Conference unless specifically authorized by the Business Manager
782 of the General Conference in order to maintain the integrity of all performance
783 licenses.

784 *Rule 14. Right to Make Motions*

785 Only voting delegates have the right to make or second motions in accordance
786 with the rules and upon recognition by the presiding officer.

787 *Rule 15. Plenary Voting Procedure*

788 (1) Voting shall be by electronic means unless otherwise ordered by the
789 Conference, provided, however, that in elections, voting may be by written
790 ballot. Electronic voting devices shall be available on the platform for delegates
791 making a presentation to the Conference.

792 (2) When electronic voting is not in use or operating, a standing count vote or
793 vote by written ballot may be ordered on call of any delegate, supported by one-
794 third of the delegates present and voting, with pages serving as tellers.

795 (3) Only delegates within the bar of the Conference when the vote is taken shall
796 be entitled to vote. No delegate shall cast a vote in place of any other delegate.

797 (4) No other business shall be in order when a vote is being taken or when the
798 previous question has been called until the process is completed, except such as
799 relates to the vote itself or such business as the presiding officer may deem
800 appropriate.

801 *Rule 16. Elections*

802 For any election requiring balloting by the plenary, an election shall occur when
803 the number of ballots cast for a nominee meets or exceeds the required
804 percentage of the total valid ballots cast.

805 A ballot is valid if it meets the following standards:

806 (1) It is cast by a voting delegate or properly seated reserve delegate.

807 (2) It contains votes for the same number of nominees, as there are
808 vacancies to be filled.

809 (3) Every name receiving a vote has been properly nominated according
810 to the provisions.

811 (4) No more than one vote is cast for the same nominee.

812 (5) No vote is cast for a person who has already been elected.

813 *Rule 17. Division of Question*

814 Before a vote is taken, any delegate shall have the right to call for a division of
815 any question, if it is subject to such division as the delegate indicates. If no
816 delegate objects, the division shall be made; but if there is objection, the
817 presiding officer shall put the question of division to vote, not waiting for a
818 second.

819 **IV. Behavior of Guests and Observers**

820 *Rule 18. Distracting Behavior*

821 A spirit of Christian conferencing is expected. Guests and observers are not to
822 distract others. Audible cell-phone use is not permitted in the plenary hall or the
823 legislative committee rooms. All electronic devices shall be muted or turned off.
824 In addition, the use of electronic devices should be in a manner that does not
825 disturb other participants. Respect should be shown in the use of social media at
826 all times. Verbal and non-verbal distractions are prohibited. The presiding
827 officer or members of the General Conference staff may ask individuals to leave
828 the plenary hall or the legislative committee room if they persist in behavior that
829 interferes with the participation of delegates. Guests and observers are not to
830 enter the bar of the conference except as provided in Rule 11.

831 *Rule 19. Electronic Recording*

832 No electronic recording by either video or audio may be made of any portion of
833 the General Conference unless specifically authorized by the Business Manager
834 of the General Conference in order to maintain the integrity of all performance
835 licenses.

836 **V. Business Procedure**

837 *Rule 20. Motion for Adoption of Legislative and Administrative Committee*
838 *Reports*

839 Whenever a report of a legislative committee or an administrative committee is
840 presented to the Conference for action, it shall be deemed in proper order for
841 consideration by the Conference without the formality of a second.

842 *Rule 21. Required Forms for Reports, Resolutions, Motions, Amendments*

843 All resolutions and committee reports shall be prepared in accordance with
844 instructions from the Secretary of the General Conference; and all motions,
845 including amendments, shall be presented in writing (See Rules 33.2, 34.3, 36.2,
846 38).

847 *Rule 22. Alterations of Motions*

848 When a motion is made and seconded, a resolution is introduced and seconded,
849 or a committee report is read or published in the *Daily Christian Advocate*, it
850 shall be deemed to be in the possession of the Conference and may not be
851 altered except by action of the Conference (See Rule 39).

852 *Rule 23. Non-Debatable Motions*

853 The following motions shall be acted upon without debate:

854 (1) To adjourn, when unqualified, except for final adjournment.

855 (2) To suspend the rules.

856 (3) To lay on the table.

857 No motion, which adheres to another motion or has another motion
858 adhering to it, can be laid on the table by itself. Such motions, if laid
859 on the table, carry with them the motions to which they adhere or
860 which adhere to them.

861 (4) To take from the table.

862 (5) To call for the previous questions, when in order (See Rules 7 and
863 24).

864 (6) To reconsider a non-debatable motion (See Rule 32).

865 (7) To limit or extend the limits of debate.

866 (8) To take time for prayerful discernment at the immediate moment.

867 *Rule 24. Rights of the Main Question*

868 The main question may be opened to debate under the following motions: to
869 adopt, to refer, to substitute, to postpone, or to reconsider. No new motion,
870 resolution, or subject shall be entertained until the one under consideration shall
871 have been disposed of except as provided in Rule 15.4. This rule does not apply
872 to secondary motions if otherwise allowable.

873 *Rule 25. Precedence of Secondary Motions*

874 If any one or more of the following motions shall be made when one or more
875 other motions are pending, the order of their precedence in relation to one
876 another shall be the same as the order of their listing below:

- 877 (1) To fix the time the conference shall adjourn (This motion is subject
878 to amendment, or it may be laid on the table.);
- 879 (2) To adjourn;
- 880 (3) To take a recess;
- 881 (4) To lay on the table;
- 882 (5) To order the previous question (See Rules 23.5, 28);
- 883 (6) To limit or extend the limits of debate;
- 884 (7) To postpone to a given time;
- 885 (8) To refer;
- 886 (9) To amend or to amend by substitution (one amendment being
887 allowed to an amendment);
- 888 (10) To postpone indefinitely.

889 *Rule 26. Motion to Adjourn*

890 The motion to adjourn, when unqualified, shall be taken without debate and
891 shall always be in order, except:

- 892 (1) When a delegate has the floor;
- 893 (2) When a question is actually put or a vote is being taken and before it
894 is finally decided;
- 895 (3) When the previous question has been ordered and action is pending;
- 896 (4) When a motion to adjourn has been lost and no business or debate
897 has intervened;

898 (5) When the motion to fix the time to which the Conference shall
899 adjourn is pending.

900 This rule does not apply to a motion for final adjournment of the Conference.

901 *Rule 27. Final Adjournment*

902 At final adjournment all unfinished business shall remain unfinished.

903 *Rule 28. Procedure for Amending by Substitution*

904 (1) When a resolution or committee report is properly before the Conference for
905 consideration and action, even if amendments are pending, a substitute may be
906 offered by any delegate moving that the same be substituted for the report,
907 resolution, or amendment under consideration. The substitute shall be an
908 alternative to what is before the body and not simply a negation of the main
909 motion.

910 (2) Debate on the motion to substitute will be limited to the question of
911 substitution only. No amendments to the main motion or the substitute will be
912 considered during this period of initial consideration.

913 (3) Following the debate on the motion to substitute, a vote on substitution will
914 occur. If the motion to substitute prevails by majority vote, the substitute motion
915 becomes the main motion. If the motion to substitute fails to receive a majority
916 vote, the original main motion remains on the floor for consideration. Debate
917 including the offering of amendments moves forward on the main motion as per
918 the rules of procedure.

919 (4) The motion for the previous questions shall not be in order on the motion to
920 substitute until opportunity has been given for at least two speakers on each side
921 of the question.

922 *Rule 29. Minority Report*

923 A minority report may be attached to a report from a legislative committee in
924 the following manner:

925 (1) Delegates intending to offer a minority report must notify the chair
926 of the committee within two hours (excluding breaks) of final
927 committee action on the relative petition.

928 (2) The chair of the legislative committee shall receive the minority
929 report signed by 10 persons or 10% of the legislative committee
930 membership (whichever is less) who voted against the proposal, whose
931 names shall be attached to the request. A reserve delegate may sign the
932 minority report only while seated as a voting delegate in the legislative
933 committee or if seated at the time the committee acted upon the relevant
934 petition. The committee and minority reports shall be submitted and
935 presented together in the *Daily Christian Advocate*.

936 (3) A minority report shall be presented as a substitute for the report of
937 the committee, in conformity with Rule 28 and Rule 36 respectively,
938 and it shall be managed in the plenary according to Rule 28 for
939 substitute motions. The signers of the minority report shall select one of
940 their signers to present the report as a substitute motion. In closing
941 debate on the motion to substitute, the delegate presenting the minority
942 report shall speak first and the presenter of the committee report shall be
943 last.

944 (4) If the motion to substitute the minority report for the majority report
945 prevails by majority vote of the plenary, the minority report becomes
946 the main motion. If the motion to substitute fails to prevail by a majority
947 vote of the plenary, the majority report of the committee remains on the
948 floor as the main motion for consideration. Debate including the
949 offering of amendments moves forward on the main motion as per the
950 rules of procedure.

951 *Rule 30. Unlawful Motion After Speech*

952 After making a speech on a pending question, a delegate may not make a
953 motion that would limit or stop debate without first relinquishing the floor.

954 *Rule 31. Exceptions to Majority Vote*

955 A majority of those voting, a quorum being present (*Book of Discipline* ¶ 506),
956 shall decide all questions, with the following exceptions:

957 (1) A one-fifth vote of the Conference shall be required to request a
958 Judicial Council decision (*Book of Discipline* ¶¶ 56.1, 2609.1).

959 (2) A one-fifth vote of the Conference shall refer a matter to the
960 Committee on Ethics.

961 (3) A non-delegate may be invited to a full legislative committee or sub-
962 committee either by invitation of the chair or by one-third (1/3) vote of
963 either body to speak for no more than three (3) minutes on any one
964 matter.

965 (4) One-third of those present and voting shall suffice to sustain a call
966 for a recorded vote in case the decision of the presiding officer is
967 challenged (See Rule 15.2).

968 (5) A tie vote sustains the presiding officer (Rule 3.1).

969 (6) A two-thirds vote shall be required to sustain a motion to suspend
970 (Rule 41) or amend (Rule 42) the rules; to set aside a special order
971 (Rule 33.1); to consider a special order before the time set therefore; to
972 sustain the request of the Committee on Courtesies and Privileges for
973 the presentation of any person after the sixth day of the General
974 Conference (See Section VII.A.3).

975 (7) A two-thirds vote shall be required to sustain a call for the previous
976 question.

977 (8) A two-thirds vote shall be required to approve a proposal for a
978 constitutional amendment (*Book of Discipline* ¶¶ 59-61).

979 *Rule 32. Reconsideration*

980 A motion to reconsider an action of the body shall be in order at any time if
981 offered by a delegate who voted with the prevailing side. If the motion proposed

982 for reconsideration was non-debatable, the motion to reconsider shall be non-
983 debatable (See Rule 23).

984 *Rule 33. Regular Calendar and Consent Calendar*

985 (1) The Secretary of the General Conference shall keep the Calendar which
986 includes the orders of the day and the reports of committees (See Rule 39).
987 Business placed on the calendar shall be considered in the order recommended
988 by the Committee on Agenda and Calendar, unless by two-thirds vote of the
989 Conference, an item is taken up out of order (See Rule 31.6).

990 (2) Whenever possible, a legislative committee shall recommend for adoption
991 only one calendar item for each paragraph or sub-paragraph in the *Book of*
992 *Discipline*. All other related petitions shall be combined for rejection or referral.

993 (3) Action from a legislative committee shall be placed on the Consent Calendar
994 if:

995 (a) No more than ten votes were cast against the prevailing position in
996 the committee;

997 (b) The item has been previously published in the *Daily Christian*
998 *Advocate*;

999 (c) The item has been in the hands of delegates for at least 24 hours;

1000 (d) The item is neither a constitutional amendment nor one having
1001 financial implications; and

1002 (e) No minority report is attached (See Rule 29).

1003 (4) The *Daily Christian Advocate* shall clearly identify the Consent Calendar,
1004 which will list items in three sections sub-headed as follows:

1005 (a) Disciplinary Items Recommended for Adoption.

1006 (b) Non-Disciplinary Items Recommended for Adoption.

1007 (c) Items Recommended for Referral.

1008 (5) The Consent Calendar shall be called up daily pursuant to Rule 2. Adoption
1009 of the Consent Calendar by vote of the Conference shall be deemed action on all
1010 calendar items on the Consent Calendar.

1011 (6) If an error in assignment of a Consent Calendar item is discovered and
1012 reported by the legislative chair to the Coordinator of the Calendar, the
1013 Coordinator of the Calendar shall have the authority to report the error to the
1014 plenary session for reconsideration.

1015 (7) Any 20 delegates may have a Consent Calendar item removed by having
1016 such a request on file with the Secretary of the General Conference by 3:00
1017 P.M. of the day the calendar item first appears in the *Daily Christian Advocate*.
1018 Reserve delegates may sign requests to remove item from the Consent Calendar
1019 only while seated as voting delegates. Such items shall be called up in the
1020 regular order of business.

1021 (8) Items lifted from the Consent Calendar may not be returned to the Consent
1022 Calendar.

1023 *Rule 34. Report of Non-Calendar Items*

1024 (1) In addition to calendar items to be presented to the plenary, each legislative
1025 committee shall report all items not presented in the following categories:

1026 (a) Petitions not acted upon because another petition dealing with the
1027 same subject was acted upon.

1028 (b) Petitions not supported by the legislative committee. The committee
1029 shall report the vote of the committee.

1030 (c) Petitions assigned to but not considered by the legislative
1031 committee.⁵

1032 (2) These reports shall be printed in the *Daily Christian Advocate*.

1033 (3) Any 20 delegates may have an item in (1)(b) or (1)(c) above presented to the
1034 plenary by having such a request on file with the Secretary of the General
1035 Conference by 3:00 P.M. of the day the item first appears in the *Daily Christian*
1036 *Advocate*. Reserve delegates may sign requests to present an item in (1)(b) or
1037 (1)(c) above only while seated as voting delegates. Such items shall be called up
1038 in the regular order of business while the chair of the relevant committee is on

⁵ *The Book of Discipline 2016* ¶ 507.11 requires that all petitions submitted to the General Conference shall receive a vote of a legislative committee. The disciplinary requirement takes precedence over this sentence.

1039 the platform. Those supporting consideration of said items shall select one of
1040 their number to present the item to the plenary.

1041 *Rule 35. Rules of Order of Legislative Committees*

1042 The rules of order of the General Conference, except for Rule 7, shall be
1043 observed in meetings of standing legislative committees insofar as they apply.

1044 *Rule 36. Duties and Prerogatives of Legislative Committees*

1045 (1) Following orientation of officers, committee leadership, utilizing the
1046 resources of its petitions coordinator, shall evaluate the petitions assigned to the
1047 committee, establish priorities, and outline the committee's work on the basis of
1048 those priorities unless it is given special instructions by the General Conference
1049 (See Section VII.A.(7)(a)).

1050 (2) A legislative sub-committee chair shall ensure that all votes taken within a
1051 sub-committee are recorded and reported to the legislative committee plenary on
1052 the forms provided by the Secretary of the General Conference.

1053 (3) When a petition or resolution or any similar item is referred to one of the
1054 legislative committees, it shall be understood that the whole question with
1055 which the item has to do is referred to that committee for such action as it may
1056 deem wise. Every matter supported by the legislative committee shall be
1057 reported to the plenary with a motion to adopt or a motion to refer to a board,
1058 council, commission, or committee either for action or for report to the next
1059 General Conference.

1060 (4) Committees shall report to the Conference upon all matters referred to them
1061 by the Conference, directly or through the Committee on Reference. Committee
1062 reports on resolutions, petitions, etc., shall cite the same, identifying them by
1063 numbers they bear respectively in the published reports of the Committee on
1064 Reference or in some other suitable manner.

1065 (5) When a committee ascertains that another committee is, or in its judgment
1066 should be, considering a subject that the former is considering, it shall report the
1067 matter to the Committee on Reference for such adjustment as the situation may
1068 require.

1069 (6) The chairperson of each legislative committee shall coordinate the report of
1070 the committee to the plenary.

1071 (7) When the chairperson of a committee is not in agreement with a report
1072 adopted by the committee, it shall be the chairperson's duty to state the fact to
1073 the committee. The committee shall elect one of its members for the
1074 presentation and discussion of the report in the plenary. If, in such a case, the
1075 committee shall fail to select a representative, the chairperson shall designate a
1076 member to represent the committee, and said representative shall have all the
1077 rights and privileges of the chairperson in relation to such a report.

1078 *Rule 37. Unfinished Business in Legislative Committee*

1079 Any legislation not acted upon by the legislative committee at the time of the
1080 Saturday evening adjournment of the first week of General Conference shall
1081 remain unfinished (See Rule 1.6 & See Section VII.G.3(d)).⁶

1082 *Rule 38. Legislative Committee Report to the Daily Christian Advocate*

1083 (1) As quickly as material can be prepared, each secretary of a legislative
1084 committee shall present each of the committee's reports to a recorder assigned
1085 to the committee. The recorder will prepare the report and the report will be
1086 approved and signed by the chair, vice-chair and secretary. After the report has
1087 been approved, it will be electronically transmitted to the Coordinator of the
1088 Calendar. A calendar number will be assigned and it will be published as
1089 approved.

1090 (2) Committee and minority reports that propose changes in the *Book of*
1091 *Discipline* shall give the paragraph number to be affected and shall be prepared
1092 in the following manner: Existing words used as reference points shall be in
1093 quotation marks; words to be deleted shall be in strike through; words to be
1094 added shall be bolded. In the publication of these reports, the *Daily Christian*
1095 *Advocate* will use the same convention (See Rule 40).

⁶ *The Book of Discipline 2016* ¶ 507.11 requires that all petitions submitted to the General Conference shall receive a vote of a legislative committee. The disciplinary requirement takes precedence over Rule 37.

1096 *Rule 39. Published Reports in Possession of Conference*

1097 Reports submitted by the committee according to the deadline, as announced by
1098 the Secretary of the General Conference, shall appear in the next day's *Daily*
1099 *Christian Advocate*. The report as published in the *Daily Christian Advocate* is
1100 the official copy, subject only to grammatical or other obvious editorial changes
1101 and shall be regarded as in the possession of the Conference. On the day
1102 following its first appearance in the *Daily Christian Advocate* or any time
1103 thereafter, a report is in order for consideration at the pleasure of the conference.
1104 The same rule shall apply to a minority report from any committee (See Rules
1105 22, 29).

1106 *Rule 40. Preparation and Publishing of Reports*

1107 (1) All committee reports shall be prepared using the approved General
1108 Conference Legislative System.

1109 (2) The report to the Coordinator of the Calendar for items voted in committee
1110 shall include the name of the committee, its total membership, the number
1111 present at the time the item was adopted, and the number voting for and against
1112 the item.

1113 (3) Reports of the legislative committees shall be published in the *Daily*
1114 *Christian Advocate* at least one day before being presented for consideration by
1115 the Conference. Committee reports with minority reports shall be published in
1116 sequence, and so numbered.

1117 (4) Every effort should be made by the secretary of the legislative committee to
1118 report consecutively all petitions that address the same issue.

1119 **VI. Suspending, Amending, and Supplementing**

1120 *Rule 41. Suspension of the Rules*

1121 The operation of any of the provisions of the Plan of Organization and Rules of
1122 Order may be suspended at any time by a two-thirds vote of the Conference
1123 (See Rule 31.6).

1124 *Rule 42. Amending Rules*

1125 The Plan of Organization and Rules of Order may be amended or changed by a
1126 two-thirds vote of the Conference; provided the proposed change or amendment
1127 has originated in the Committee on Plan of Organization and Rules of Order or
1128 has been presented to the Conference in writing and referred to this committee,
1129 which committee shall report thereon not later than the following day (See Rule
1130 31.6).

1131 The Plan of Organization and Rules of Order as adopted at the opening session
1132 shall be published in the next *Daily Christian Advocate*.

1133 *Rule 43. Robert's Rules of Order, Supplemental Authority*

1134 In any parliamentary situation not covered by the Plan of Organization and
1135 Rules of Order, the General Conference shall be governed in its action by the
1136 current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order*.

Legislative Process

Petitions are sent by agencies, conferences, churches, and individuals.



The Petitions Secretary assigns petition numbers. The numbers indicate the legislative committee, the chronological order, if it affects the Constitution, if there are any financial implications, if there is global significance, and whether the petition applies to the *Book of Discipline*, the *Book of Resolutions*, or other.



The Committee on Reference reviews the assignments by the Petitions Secretary. It has authority to combine petitions and make new assignments to legislative committees as deemed necessary.



Requested changes in the *Book of Discipline* and the *Book of Resolutions* and other petitions are printed in the *ADCA*.



Legislative committee acts upon petitions and makes recommendations to plenary session.



Recommendations are reported as approved by legislative committee officers to the Coordinator of the Calendar, assigned a calendar number, and printed in the *DCA*.



Plenary (the whole assembly) session acts upon calendar items.



The actions are used to update the *Book of Discipline* or the *Book of Resolutions*. The *DCA* becomes the official journal of the General Conference.

General Conference Parliamentary Procedure Chart

To Do This:	You Say This:	(See Key Below)					
		I	S	D	A	Vote	R
SECONDARY MOTIONS IN ORDER OF PRECEDENCE							
Adjourn	<i>"I move to adjourn."</i>	No	Yes	No	No	Maj	
Call an intermission	<i>"I move we recess until . . ."</i>	No	Yes	No	Yes	Maj	
Suspend further consideration of an issue, especially in an emergency	<i>"I move we table the motion . . ."</i>	No	Yes	No	No	Maj	
End debate and amendments	<i>"I move the previous question . . ."</i>	No	Yes	No	No	2/3	R
Limit or extend the limits of debate	<i>"I move the debate be limited (or extended) to . . ."</i>	No	Yes	No	Yes	Maj*	R
Postpone debate to a specific time	<i>"I move to postpone this matter until . . ."</i>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Maj	R
Have the matter studied further	<i>"I move that this matter be referred to . . ."</i>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Maj	R
Amend a motion, including amend by substitution	<i>"I move to amend by . . ." or "I move to substitute . . ."</i>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Maj	R
Postpone indefinitely (Kills the main motion)	<i>"I move to postpone indefinitely."</i>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Maj	R
MAIN MOTION (Introduction of a Petition)							
Introduce New Business	<i>"I move that . . ."</i>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Maj	R
INCIDENTAL MOTIONS (Pertaining to the business under consideration)							
Correct an error in parliamentary procedure	<i>"I rise to a point of order"</i>	Yes	No	No	No	Chair Rules	
Obtain advice on parliamentary procedure	<i>"I raise a parliamentary inquiry"</i>	Yes	No	No	No	Chair Rules	
Request information	<i>"Point of information."</i> (must be in form of a question)	Yes	No	No	No		
Question the ruling of the presiding officer	<i>"I appeal the chair's decision."</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Maj	R
Suspend the rules temporarily	<i>"I move to suspend the rules so that . . ."</i>	No	Yes	No	No	2/3	
BRING A MATTER BACK BEFORE THE ASSEMBLY							
Take up a matter previously tabled	<i>"I move that we take from the table . . ."</i>	No	Yes	No	No	Maj	
Reconsider previous action (May be made only by a member who voted previously on the prevailing side)	<i>"I move to reconsider the vote on . . ."</i>	No	Yes	**	No	Maj	

I = Interrupt Speaker?; S = Second Needed?; D = Debatable?; A = Amendable?; R = May be Reconsidered.

*See GC rule 9.4 (an exception to usual 2/3 vote parliamentary procedure).

** See GC Rules 23 and 32.

Abbreviations and Codes

Petition Packets

During General Conference, petition packets, including copies of each multiple submission, will be issued to the Committee on Reference and the legislative committees to which they are assigned. Any delegate desiring to see a petition packet may contact the petitions secretary.

Petition Text

Proposed deletions to existing material are indicated by ~~strike through~~.

Proposed additions to existing material are indicated by single underline.

Each petition is numbered using the following code:

Petition Coding:

- First series of numbers Chronological listing of petitions (begins with 90001)
- Petition Number Positions 1-5
- Separator 1 Position 6 Value “-”
- The type of petition determines the next several positions.*
- Discipline* paragraph number with Petition Symbol ¶XXXX.XXXX
- Petitions with an even one hundred number (200, 400, 1200, etc.) indicate that the petition requests a new paragraph.
- Or resolution number RXXXX
- R9999 indicates that a petition requests a new resolution.
- Or the word, “NonDis” for a petition that does not deal with *Discipline* paragraphs or resolutions
- Separator 2 Next Available Position Value “-”
- The type of petition determines the next position.*
- “C” if a petition impacts the Constitution, all other petition types are not signified in the Petition Identification Code.
- The financial indicator code occupies the next available position.*
- Blank if petition does not impact budget.
- Or “\$” if petition has Financial Implications for an existing budget line item.
- Or “!” if petition has Financial Implications for a new budget line item.
- The global indicator code occupies the next available position.*
- Blank if petition does not impact the global church.
- Or “G” if petition impacts the global church.

General Agencies

- | | | | |
|-----------------|---|------------------|--|
| GBCS | General Board of Church and Society | GCSRW | General Commission on the Status and Role of Women |
| GBOD | General Board of Discipleship (Discipleship Ministries) | GCUMM | General Commission on United Methodist Men |
| GBGM | General Board of Global Ministries | GBUMPH | General Board of The United Methodist Publishing House |
| GBHEM | General Board of Higher Education and Ministry | UMW | United Methodist Women |
| GBPHB | General Board of Pension and Health Benefits (Wespath) | | |
| GCAH | General Commission on Archives and History | | |
| GCOC | General Commission on Communications | | |
| GCFA | General Council on Finance and Administration | | |
| GCRR | General Commission on Religion and Race | | |

Other Organizations

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| CT | Connectional Table |
| OCUIR | Office of Christian Unity and Interreligious Relationships of the Council of Bishops |
| SCCCM | Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters |