

## Proposed Legislation from Other Organizations and Individuals

*The following petitions are subject to review by the Committee on Reference (Plan of Organization Section VII.A.7) as to whether or not they are in harmony with the call to the 2019 Special Session of the General Conference. If the Committee on Reference finds a petition to be in harmony, it is assigned to the legislative committee for action. If the Committee on Reference finds it is not in harmony, it is withdrawn. The Committee on Reference will report its actions in the first daily edition of the Daily Christian Advocate at General Conference.*

*Printed in order of petition number.*

### ¶49.

Petition Number: 90049-¶49-C-G; Brooks, Lonnie D. - Anchorage, AK, USA.

#### A United Way Forward - Brooks

Amend ¶ 49 by striking everything following the word “elected” in the first sentence as follows:

¶ 49. Article V.—The bishops shall have residential and presidential supervision in the jurisdictional or central conferences<sup>93</sup> in which they are elected. ~~or to which they are transferred. Bishops may be transferred from one jurisdiction 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 that receives a bishop by transfer from another jurisdiction may transfer to that jurisdiction or to a third jurisdiction one of its own bishops eligible for transfer, so that the number transferred in by each jurisdiction shall be balanced by the number transferred out; or (b) a jurisdiction may receive a bishop from another jurisdiction 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 served one quadrennium in the jurisdiction 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 committees on episcopacy of the jurisdictions that are involved.<sup>96</sup> 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 conference.~~

~~70. Amended 1980.~~

~~71. Amended 1992.~~

~~A bishop may be assigned by the Council of Bishops for presidential service or other temporary service in another jurisdiction than that which elected the bishop, pro-~~

~~vided that the request is made by a majority of the bishops in the jurisdiction of the proposed service.~~

~~In the case of an emergency in any jurisdiction or central 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 conference to the work of the said jurisdiction or central conference, with the consent of a majority of the bishops of that jurisdiction or central conference.~~

*[Enabling Legislation is found in Petition # 90080.]*

#### Rationale:

Ends homosexuality trials, retains authority of annual conferences to discern suitability for ordination, and regionalizes the episcopacy. Bishops retain authority for appointments. Clergy and local churches retain consultation in appointments. Clergy determine whom to marry to whom. Local churches have a year to withdraw from UMC, taking property with them.

### ¶27.

Petition Number: 90050-¶27-C-G; Brooks, Lonnie D. - Anchorage, AK, USA.

#### A United Way Forward - Episcopal Expenses - Brooks

Amend ¶ 27 by inserting a new ¶ 27.3 that shall read as follows:

¶ 27.3 To provide for the support, financially and otherwise, of the bishops serving in the jurisdiction or in retirement after having served therein.

*[Enabling legislation is found in Petition # 90081.]*

#### Rationale:

The regionalization of the episcopacy will not be complete until each jurisdiction is required to bear the cost of the support of its own bishops.

**¶2501.**

Petition Number: 90051-¶2501-!-G; Brooks, Lonnie D. - Anchorage, AK, USA.

**A Graceful Exit as a Way Forward**

Insert a new ¶ 2501.4 that reads as follows:

¶ 2501.4. Any other portion of Chapter Six, Section I to the contrary notwithstanding, during a period of time beginning on January 1, 2020, and ending after December 31, 2020, all the trust provisions that would otherwise apply to local churches of The United Methodist Church will be held in abeyance to enable those churches that choose to do so to discontinue their identification as United Methodist in law and in covenant and to retain possession of their property, real and personal, tangible and intangible. Churches that choose to withdraw from The United Methodist Church pursuant to this provision must immediately upon exercising this option remove from all buildings, structures, literature, publications, internet postings, and other public representations any and all United Methodist signs, emblems, logos, and other forms of identification as United Methodist. A decision to withdraw under this provision must be supported by at least two thirds (2/3rds) of the members present and voting at a church conference called as provided in ¶ 248 and at which the district superintendent presides, or at a church local conference as provided in ¶ 2527 at which the district superintendent presides. Any church choosing to withdraw under this provision will pay a withdrawal fee of 50 percent of its annual budget to the annual conference with which it is associated, where its annual budget is determined to be the average of total expenditures, less benevolent spending, as reported on the three most recent annual statistical reports submitted for that church. In addition such a church will pay all its apportionments for the entire year in which it withdraws. A schedule for meeting this obligation will be negotiated between the withdrawing church and the conference council on finance and administration.

**Rationale:**

Churches that cannot in conscience comply with the law of The United Methodist Church as contained in the *Book of Discipline* ought to be provided with a graceful way to withdraw, but should be required to compensate The UMC for any denominational investment that has accrued to it.

**¶362.**

Petition Number: 90052-¶362-!-G; Brooks, Lonnie D. - Anchorage, AK, USA.

**A Traditional Way Forward with Enhanced Enforcement**

Amend ¶ 362.1 as indicated following:

¶ 362. Complaint Procedures—1. . . . Whenever a person in any of the above categories, including those on leaves of all types, honorable or administrative location, or retirement, is accused of violating this trust, the membership of his or her ministerial office shall be subject to review. However, if the complaint alleges the respondent is in violation of any provision of ¶ 2702.1.(b), this review, the supervisory response, and the just resolution process herein provided will not be applicable, and the complaint will be treated as a judicial complaint according to the procedures described in ¶ NEW.

Insert a new paragraph to follow existing ¶ 2702 as follows:

¶ NEW Special Procedures Applicable for Allegations Relating to Chargeable Offenses Described in ¶ 2702.1.(b).

1. There shall be a special committee on investigation elected by each General Conference at its regular session. Nominations shall be made by each College of Bishops, each of which shall nominate four clergy members in full connection who are not bishops and four professing members. From this pool of candidates the General Conference shall elect four clergy members in full connection and three professing members to serve as members of the special committee on investigation, and the committee shall elect its own chairperson. In addition the General Conference shall elect four alternate clergy members and three alternate professing members.

2. Judicial Complaint—A complaint based on allegations that a bishop or clergy member of an annual conference has committed one or more of the offenses listed in ¶ 2702.1.(b) shall initially be served on the president and secretary of the Council of Bishops. Upon receipt of the complaint the president of the Council of Bishops shall forthwith deliver a copy of the complaint to the respondent, notify active bishops of the existence and nature of the complaint, and refer the complaint to an elder in full connection who is not from the same jurisdictional or central conference as the respondent, who shall serve as counsel for the Church. By agreeing to serve, counsel for the Church signifies his or her willingness to uphold the requirements of church law and the *Discipline*. Counsel for the Church shall represent the interests of the Church in pressing the claims of the person making the complaint. Counsel for the Church shall have the right to choose one assistant counsel without voice who may be an attorney. The counsel for the Church shall draft and sign the complaint as a judicial complaint, forward it to the special

committee on investigation (§ NEW.1), and represent the Church in the judicial process. The fair process provisions in § 2701 shall apply to this judicial process. The statute of limitations in § 2702.4 should be considered prior to the referral of a judicial complaint.

3. The counsel for the Church, as appointed under § NEW.2, shall prepare, sign, and forward the judicial complaint and all documentary evidence under consideration to the chairperson of the special committee on investigation, the person making the original complaint, and the respondent. The respondent shall be given an opportunity to submit to the special committee on investigation a written response to the judicial complaint within thirty days of receipt of the judicial complaint. The chairperson shall convene the special committee on investigation within sixty days of receiving the judicial complaint.

4. If five or more members of the special committee on investigation so recommend, the respondent will be suspended pending the conclusion of the trial process.

5. The procedures of the special committee on investigation shall be the same as those prescribed for a committee on investigation in § 2706.

6. The trial procedures to be followed are as specified in §§ 2707-2711, with the following exceptions and special provisions:

a) The presiding officer will be a bishop selected by the president of the Council of Bishops.

b) The trial pool will be the persons nominated to serve on the special committee on investigation who did not serve on the committee during its consideration of the charges against the respondent.

7. Any appeal from this process will be directed to the Judicial Council.

#### **Rationale:**

This change will bring to a close the practice prevalent in some parts of the Church wherein conformance to part of Church law is avoided through inappropriate use of the supervisory and just resolution provisions of the *Discipline*.

#### **¶10.**

Petition Number: 90053-¶10-C-!-G; Brooks, Lonnie D. - Anchorage, AK, USA.

### **USA Central Conference as Part of a Way Forward**

Amend §§ 10, 28, 30, and 31 as indicated following:

¶ 10. Article III.—There shall be central conferences for the church ~~outside the United States of America~~ as

determined by the General Conference and, if necessary, provisional central conferences, all with such powers, duties, and privileges as are hereinafter set forth.

...

¶ 28. Article I.—There shall be central conferences for the work of the Church ~~outside the United States of America~~ with such duties, powers, and privileges as are hereinafter set forth. The ~~number and boundaries of the central conferences shall be determined by the Uniting Conference.~~ Subsequently the General Conference shall have authority to change the number and boundaries of central conferences. The central conferences shall have the duties, powers, and privileges hereinafter set forth.

...

¶ 30. Article III.—The central 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 central conferences or by commissions appointed by them or by the General Conference. The ~~date and place of the first meeting succeeding the Uniting Conference shall be fixed by the bishops of the respective central conferences, or in such manner as shall be determined by the General Conference.~~

...

¶ 31. Article IV.—The central conferences ~~outside the United States~~ shall have the following powers and duties and such others as may be conferred by the General Conference:

Insert as follows a new paragraph immediately following existing ¶ 31.

NEW PARAGRAPH. The central conference that includes the United States shall have the power and duty to make such rules and regulations for the administration of the work within its boundaries including such changes and adaptations of the *General Discipline* as the conditions in the central conference may require, subject to the powers that have been or shall be vested in the General Conference.

Immediately prior to ¶ 540, change Section III title to read as follows:

Section III. Central Conferences Outside the United States

Following existing ¶ 567, insert a new Section as follows:

Section NEW. Central Conference of the United States  
Following the new Section title insert new paragraphs as follows:

NEW 1. There shall be a central conference whose boundaries shall include all the jurisdictional conferences, and it shall be called the Central Conference of the United States (CCUS), notwithstanding that it may include territory not included within the United States.

NEW 2. The active bishops in the jurisdictions, in consultation with the Interjurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy, shall appoint an Interim Committee on Organization (ICO) which shall be charged with the following duties:

NEW 2.1 The ICO shall choose the time and place for the convening of the initial gathering of the CCUS, and it is recommended that it gather immediately prior to and at the site of the General Conference of 2020.

NEW 2.2 The ICO shall recommend to the CCUS for action at its first gathering what committees and officers are required to ensure the functionality of the CCUS. The ICO shall work with the business manager of the General Conference in planning for the first gathering of the CCUS.

NEW 2.3 Delegates and reserve delegates to the CCUS shall be the most recently elected delegates and reserve delegates to the General Conference from any annual conference within the jurisdictions and shall represent those same annual conferences.

#### **Rationale:**

Creating a central conference for The UMC within the United States provides a forum for discussion of issues peculiar to the US and resolution of conflicts that would best be settled in such a setting. It need not be accompanied by the creation of additional structure or bureaucracy.

#### **¶604.**

Petition Number: 90054-¶604-G; Brooks, Lonnie D. - Anchorage, AK, USA.

#### **Constitutional Amendment Voting**

Add a new ¶ 604.14 as follows:

¶ 604.14. *Proposed Constitutional Amendments in Annual Conferences*—As provided in ¶ 59 of the Constitution it is the duty of each annual conference to provide an opportunity for its members to vote on amendments to the United Methodist Constitution as proposed by the General Conference. In each annual conference at the conclusion of such a vote it shall be the duty of the presiding officer to announce the result of the vote in that conference, including votes in favor, in opposition, and in abstention.

#### **Rationale:**

Processes in The United Methodist Church ought to be as open as possible, and nothing in existing UM law precludes the announcement in each annual conference of the result of its members' vote on proposed amendments to the Constitution.

#### **¶161.G.**

Petition Number: 90055-¶161.G-G; Stallsworth, Paul T. - Whiteville, NC, USA.

#### **Replace Par. 161.G**

Delete current paragraph ¶ 161.G *Human Sexuality*, and substitute the following:

¶ 161.G *Human Sexuality*—Because the Sexual Revolution is now undermining Christian teaching on human sexuality and harming countless unsuspecting people, the Church is compelled to propose its teaching with biblical clarity.

During his earthly ministry, Jesus speaks about marriage: “But from the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female.’ ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate” (Mark 10:6-9, also see Mathew 19:4-6 NRSV here and below).

In his statement on marriage, Jesus is guided by “the beginning of creation” (Mark 10:6). He draws twice from Genesis. First, from Genesis 1:27c: “male and female he created them.” And second, from Genesis 2:24: “Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh.” To teach on marriage, Jesus reaches back to God’s creation of humanity as male and female, and to what God intends for humanity (which is “fidelity in marriage and celibacy in singleness”). Furthermore, Genesis asserts: “God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply . . .’” (Genesis 1:28). And “God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good” (Genesis 1:31a).

In his statement, Jesus indicates (among other things) the covenantal context—the marriage of a man and a woman—for sexual relations. In marriage, two people are united by God to become one. The gift of unity God gives is embodied in the marital act; that is, the union of souls is reflected in the union of bodies. This one-flesh union is so powerful and creative that it can beget a child (or children), whom the mother and father can welcome, protect, and raise.

In his Letter to the Ephesians, St. Paul claims the union of husband and wife is a reflection of the union of Christ and his church. Paul writes: “‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.’ This is a great mystery, and I am applying it to Christ and the church” (5:31-32).

Therefore, the Christian understanding of marriage and sexuality is established at creation. It is revealed in Genesis, reinforced by Jesus Christ, and depicted in gos-

pel terms by St. Paul. This biblical witness to marriage, which runs throughout the canon, grounds the church's understanding of human sexuality.

Because of this scriptural witness, the church through the ages preached, taught, and practiced that sexual expression is reserved for husband and wife within the covenant of marriage. For 2,000 years, this teaching, proposed and observed with God's grace, has been essential in helping sustain Christians in discipleship, holiness, and true freedom. This teaching has assisted Christians in rightly loving God and neighbor. The church through the ages has also preached, taught, and practiced that sexual activities outside the marital covenant—for example, adultery, premarital sex, pornography-related sex, homosexual practice, and others—are indeed sins (and “incompatible with Christian teaching”); they are sins (among all other sins) for which Christ died, and for which forgiveness and freedom are available through the gospel.

The church's sexual morality is considered too rigorous and even mean-spirited by many in some contemporary societies. This is not new. This has been the case since the apostolic era of the church. However, often in spite of great cultural opposition, the church has lovingly proposed its sexual morality to its members as a witness to the world. The church through the ages has persisted in this difficult task because she considers this teaching to be not only faithful to the word of God, but also good for the people challenged by it and transformed by it. When this teaching is observed, marriages are strengthened; children are welcomed and nurtured; the weak are protected; the strong restrained; and all tend to flourish. When not observed, marriages are threatened and destroyed; marriage as an institution suffers; children are neglected; and the powerful generally have their way with the less powerful.

God's faithfulness is known by God's people through the ages and throughout the world. Because of God's faithfulness, our faithfulness to the covenants we make—baptismal and, for many, marital—is possible.

## ¶2501.

Petition Number: 90056-¶2501-!-G; Tull, Monte - Bethany, OK, USA for St. Mark's UMC Council.

### Abeyance of Trust Clause Enforcement

Passage of this petition would create a new subsection 2501.4 to the 2016 BOD.

If General Conference 2019 fails to change or does change either paragraphs 161.G or 304.3 regarding human sexuality, ordination and/or marriage, then: Enforcement of the trust clause (¶¶ 2501, 2503) shall be held in abey-

ance from the time of passage of this provision, or the date at which it is deemed enforceable, for a period of two (2) years, to allow charges/congregations to choose a regrettable yet amicable separation from The United Methodist Church connection, provided all the following criteria are met:

1. An affirmative vote to separate from The United Methodist Church by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of active professing members in good standing during a duly called and noticed church conference, and

2. Payment of all unfunded pension liability for the periods affected clergy were appointed to the charge/congregation, and

3. Repayment of all conference funds received by the charge/congregation within the two (2) calendar years preceding the date the vote is taken, and

4. Payment to the annual conference of two (2) times the most recent conference apportionment assessed to the charge/congregation, and

5. Payment of ten dollars (\$10 US) plus filing, legal, and other reasonable associated fees (but not including litigation costs or fees) to the annual conference to release all claims it has or may have pursuant to the trust clause, and

6. Assumption by the charge/congregation of all debts, mortgages, and encumbrances on real and personal property held by the charge/congregation.

No bishop, district superintendent, or pastor appointed to the charge shall delay or reject a request to call a church conference made by the church council or administrative board pursuant to this provision.

### Rationale:

With compassion and understanding for those who resolve that they can no longer remain a part of The UMC covenant, we offer a merciful and graceful way forward. A way of blessing rather than animosity, of healing rather than enmity, and peace rather than acrimony. Thank you for your consideration.

## ¶161.G.

Petition Number: 90057-¶161.G-G; Tull, Monte - Bethany, OK, USA for St. Mark's UMC Council.

### Definition of Gender

The following sentence is to be added at the end of ¶ 161.G):

For the purposes of interpreting all provisions of *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church* and Social Principles, a person's genetic gender at the time of

birth is to be considered the person's gender throughout his or her lifetime.

**Rationale:**

Whereas creation has order and purpose,  
Whereas each person is born either male or female,

**¶2500.**

Petition Number: 90058-¶2500-G; Ottjes, James - Van Buren, IN, USA.

**Disaffiliation - Ottjes - NEW Par. 2548**

Add new paragraph:

¶ 2548. Surrender of Charter of Local Church and Disaffiliation for Reasons of Conscience—A local church may surrender its charter from The United Methodist Church and disaffiliate based on the local church's declaration that it is in irreconcilable conflict for reasons of conscience with the provisions of *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church* on the practice of homosexuality and the blessing of homosexual unions. Such disaffiliation shall require:

- a) A minimum of ninety (90) days of study and discernment by the congregation
- b) The affirmative vote of two-thirds (66.7 percent) of the church's professing members present and voting at a duly called church conference
- c) Other provisions of the *Book of Discipline* shall not be a bar to such disaffiliation

Upon such surrender and disaffiliation, the local church shall be released from the provisions of ¶ 2501 and shall retain full rights to its property and funds, provided that any debts upon such property and any other debts payable by that local church are assumed by that local church. In the event of such proposed action, the bishop, the cabinet, annual conference board of trustees, and other appropriate individuals of The United Methodist Church shall facilitate the orderly and timely administration of this process.

[Renumber following paragraphs from existing ¶¶ 2548-2551.]

**Rationale:**

This petition was already approved by its committee at the 2016 General Conference. Then it was deferred by the Way Forward motion and so never received a final vote. We should not use property as a weapon to force people to remain within a covenant they can no longer support.

**¶2500.**

Petition Number: 90059-¶2500-G; Boyette, Keith - Spotylvania, VA, USA.

**Disaffiliation - Boyette - NEW Par. 2549**

Add new paragraph

¶ 2549. *Surrender of Charter of Local Church and Disaffiliation—A local church may surrender its charter from The United Methodist Church and disaffiliate based upon the local church's 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*, or with the way in which such requirements are being enforced, or with the resolution of those matters adopted by the 2019 General Conference, upon completion of the following steps:*

- a) A minimum of 30 days of study and discernment by the congregation; and
- b) The affirmative vote for disaffiliation of fifty-five percent (55%) of the church's professing members present and voting at a duly called church conference or two-thirds (66.7%) of the members present and voting at a duly called charge conference.

Upon such surrender and disaffiliation, the local church shall be released from the provisions of ¶ 2503 and shall retain full rights to its property and funds, provided that any debts upon such property and any other debts payable by that local church are assumed by that local church. In such event, the local church shall pay to the annual conference in which it is located the local church's proportionate share (determined in the same manner as its apportionment has been determined in the most recent annual conference year) of the net unfunded pension liability of the annual conference in which the local church is located as of June 30 of the preceding conference year. Such sum shall be deposited by the annual conference with the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits to be invested and held to satisfy the annual conference's unfunded pension liability. The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits shall determine the annual conference's unfunded pension liability as of June 30 of the preceding conference year and then shall deduct from such sum the annual conference's proportionate share of the unrestricted reserves of the boards and agencies of The United Methodist Church (General Church Unrestricted Reserves) and any unrestricted reserves held by such annual conference (Annual Conference Unrestricted Reserves) to arrive at the net unfunded pension liability of the annual conference. A sum equal to the amount by which the local church's proportionate share of the annual conference's unfunded pension liability is reduced shall

be deposited by the General Council on Finance and Administration from General Church Unrestricted Reserves and the treasurer of the annual conference from Annual Conference Unrestricted Reserves with the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits to be held and invested on behalf of the annual conference to be used to satisfy any unfunded pension liability of that annual conference.

In the event of such proposed action, the bishop, district superintendent, annual conference board of trustees, and other appropriate individuals of The United Methodist Church shall facilitate the orderly and timely administration of this process, including holding such church or charge conference within 120 days of the date on which the local church's pastor or church council requests such action, and executing such legal documents as are necessary to provide such local church or its successor with a deed not subject to any trust in favor of The United Methodist Church or the annual conference in which the local church is located.

Renumber following paragraphs from existing ¶¶ 2549-2552.

#### **Rationale:**

Churches should not be constrained to remain part of The United Methodist Church. For those who believe the best way forward is to disaffiliate, a path must be created to disaffiliate without the loss of property and in a ministry-affirming way.

#### **¶27.2.**

Petition Number: 90060-¶27.2-C-G; Hall, James - Luce-dale, MS, USA for Administrative Boards of Shipman & Winborn Chapel UMCs.

### **Require Global Ratification of Election of Bishops**

Amend ¶ 27.2 of The Constitution of The United Methodist Church as follows:

2. To elect bishops —subject, however, to the ratification of the next ensuing regular, special, or called General Conference, failing which the election of any bishop whose election is not ratified by a majority of such General Conference present and voting shall forthwith be vacated and held for naught — and to cooperate in carrying out such plans for their support as may be determined by the General Conference.

#### **Rationale:**

Requiring ratification by the General Conference of the jurisdictional election of bishops will provide a bet-

ter way forward by enhancing increased accountability of bishops to the global Church and increased amenability and accessibility between UM bishops and the global Church.

#### **¶37.**

Petition Number: 90061-¶37-C-G; Hall, James - Luce-dale, MS, USA for Administrative Boards of Shipman & Winborn Chapel UMCs.

### **Merge Western Jurisdiction into South Central Jurisdiction**

Amend ¶ 37 as follows:

Section VII. Boundaries

¶ 37. Article I.—The United Methodist Church shall have jurisdictional conferences 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.

#### **Rationale:**

Much confusion, antagonism, and upset has accompanied the perceived neglect, failure, and refusal of the Western Jurisdiction – in many minds and hearts – to honor Scripture, the *UM Book of Discipline*, and the rulings of the UM Judicial Council. Thus, it will provide a better way forward . . .

#### **¶161.G.**

Petition Number: 90062-¶161.G-G; Carroll, John J. - Union City, TN, USA. 1 Similar Petition

### **Retain Par. 161.G**

Retain ¶ 161.G with no amendment.

**Rationale:**

*The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, 2016* expresses our understanding of biblically based yet informed with tradition, reason, and experience Christian life and teaching, and has consistently held that the practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian life and teaching.

**¶16.**

Petition Number: 90063-¶16-C-G; Carroll, John J. - Union City, TN, USA. 1 Similar Petition

**Election of Bishops by General Conference**

Amend ¶ 16 Article IV.10 and other related ¶¶ as follows:

10) To fix a uniform basis upon which bishops shall be elected nominated by the jurisdictional conferences for the election by the General Conference and to determine the number of bishops that may be elected by central conferences.

Amend ¶ 46. Article II as follows: The bishops shall be elected nominated by the respective jurisdictional conferences for election by General Conference and ~~central 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 conference for those elected by such central conference.

Amend ¶ 49. Article V as follows: The bishops shall have residential and presidential supervision in the jurisdictional or central conferences<sup>93</sup> in which they are elected by the General Conference or to which they are transferred. Bishops may be transferred from one jurisdiction to another jurisdiction for presidential and residential supervision under the following conditions:

Amend ¶ 49. Article V.3 as follows: No bishop shall be eligible for transfer unless the bishop shall have served one quadrennium in the jurisdiction ~~that elected the bishop~~ that nominated the bishop for the episcopacy.

Amend ¶ 50 Article VI to read as follows: 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 by the ~~jurisdictions~~ General Conference of The United Methodist Church shall have ~~five~~ four-year tenure subject to re-election as per the rules of our heritage in The Evangelical United Brethren Church. Each bishop

elected by a central conference of The Methodist Church shall have such tenure as the central conference electing ~~him~~ the bishops shall have determined.<sup>95</sup>

Amend ¶ 405.2.a as follows: Jurisdictional conference ~~and central conference~~ delegates, in ~~electing~~ nominating candidates for bishops for election by General Conference and central conference delegates in electing bishops, shall give due consideration to the inclusiveness of The United Methodist Church with respect to sex, race, and national origin. In addition, consideration shall be given to the nature of superintendency as described in ¶ 401.

Amend ¶ 405.2.b as follows: The jurisdictional conferences are authorized to fix the percentage of votes necessary to ~~elect~~ nominate a bishop as a candidate for election by the General Conference. Central conferences are authorized to fix the percentage of votes necessary to elect a bishop. It is recommended that at least 60 percent of those present and voting be necessary to elect.

Amend ¶ 405.2.c as follows: Consecration of bishops may take place at the session of the conference ~~at~~ for which election occurs at a place and time designated by the conference...

Amend ¶ 422.1 as follows: Bishops, ~~although being~~ although being elected by ~~jurisdictional or central conferences~~ and General Conference, are elected general superintendents of the whole church.

Amend ¶ 501 as follows: The General Conference has full legislative power over all matters distinctly connectional (see ¶ 16, Division two, section II, Article IV, The Constitution). It has no executive or administrative power except for the election of bishops for a four-year term and additional terms if desired, and just resolution of complaints in regard to ¶¶ 2702.1 and 2702.2 "Chargeable Offenses."

Amend ¶ 543.3 as follows: When a central conference shall have been authorized to ~~elect~~ nominate bishops, such ~~elections~~ nominations shall be conducted under the same general procedure as prevails in the jurisdictional conferences for the ~~election~~ nomination of bishops. A central conference shall have the power to fix the tenure of bishops elected by the said central conference:

Amend ¶ 818.8 as follows: *Episcopal Pensions*—The pensions for the support of retired bishops elected by General ~~jurisdictional~~, or central conferences and the surviving spouses and minor dependent children of such deceased bishops shall be administered by the General Council on Finance and Administration in consultation with the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits and in accordance with such program and procedures as may from time to time be determined by the General Council on Finance and Administration with the approval of the General Conference. For service years beginning

January 1, 1982, and thereafter, the pensions for the support of bishops elected by ~~jurisdictional conferences~~ General Conference and those of their surviving spouses and dependent children shall include the benefits provided by the Clergy Retirement Security Program (or any successor bishop pension or retirement plan or program) and the Comprehensive Protection Plan of the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits. The pensions for the support of bishops elected by central conferences and those of their surviving spouses and, for service years beginning before January 1, 1982, the pensions for the support of bishops elected by ~~jurisdictional conferences~~ General Conference and those of their surviving spouses shall both include the benefits provided by the Global Episcopal Pension Program.

Amend ¶ 818.9 as follows: The General Council on Finance and Administration shall sponsor or participate in a group health care plan that covers bishops elected by ~~jurisdictional conferences~~ General Conference, in the United States.

#### **Rationale:**

The United Methodist Church is a continuation of the New Testament church, which has a Wesleyan heritage that embraces a distinct emphasis of mutual accountability (¶ 1117.2), this petition seeks to address and remedy the distress within the denomination that has brought forth the need of the 2019 Special Session . . .

#### **¶50.**

Petition Number: 90064-¶50-C-§-G; Carroll, John J. - Union City, TN, USA.

#### **Episcopal Tenure**

Amend ¶ 50 Article VI as follows: “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~~ nominated by the jurisdictions for election by the General Conference of The United Methodist Church shall have life a four-year term and continue as bishop only if re-elected by the delegates at each General Conference. Each bishop elected by a central conference of The Methodist Church shall have such tenure as the central conference electing ~~him~~ said bishop shall have determined.<sup>95</sup>

Amend ¶ 543.3 as follows: When a central conference

shall have been authorized to elect bishops, such elections shall be conducted under the same general procedure as prevails in the jurisdictional conferences for the nominations of bishops. A central conference shall have power to fix the tenure of bishops by the said central conference. The four-year tenure of bishops elected by General Conference brings a more equitable relationship between all our bishops in the Church.

Or delete ¶ 543.3.

#### **¶57.**

Petition Number: 90065-¶57-C-G; Carroll, John J. - Union City, TN, USA. 1 Similar Petition

#### **Appeal Decisions to General Conference**

Amend ¶ 57 Article III as follows: All decisions of the Judicial Council shall be final, except matters of appealed chargeable offenses. When the Judicial Council shall declare unconstitutional any act of the General Conference then in session, that decision shall be reported back to that General Conference immediately.

Amend ¶ 58 Article IV as follows: The General Conference shall establish for the Church a judicial system that shall guarantee to our clergy a right to trial by a committee and an appeal, and to our members a right to trial before the Church, or by a committee, and an appeal.<sup>101</sup> The complainant also has the same right of appeal as the respondent.

Amend ¶ 413.3.d.(i) as follows: . . . the reasons therefore in writing, a copy of which shall be placed in the bishop’s file, 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. If the complaint is dismissed, the complainant may appeal the dismissal to the Judicial Council for a just resolution which supersedes the College of Bishops’ decision. Complainant and respondent may appeal the Judicial Council’s decision to the delegates of the General Conference for a majority vote that is the final resolution.

Amend by deletion ¶ 413.3.d.iv

Amend ¶ 413.3.e as follows: . . . The provisions of ¶ 361.2 for fair process in administrative hearings shall apply to this administrative process. The complainant may appeal this dismissal to the Judicial Council for a just resolution which supersedes the College of Bishops’ decision. Complainant and respondent may appeal the Judicial Council’s decision to the delegates of the General Conference for a majority vote that is the final resolution.

Amend ¶ 501 as follows: The General Conference has full legislative power over all matters distinctively connectional (see ¶ 16, Division Two, Section II, Article IV, The Constitution). It has no does have executive or administrative power with reference to the election of bishops for four-year terms, and just resolution of complaint in regard to ¶¶ 2702.1 and 2702.2.

Amend ¶ 2609.9 as follows: The Judicial Council shall have jurisdiction to hear and determine all appeals from decisions of the jurisdictional appeals committee and the decision of the Judicial Council concerning chargeable offenses ¶ 2702.1 is binding upon the jurisdiction, it can only be appealed to the General Conference. The Judicial Council decision is in effect unless overturned by the majority vote of the General Conference delegates.

Amend ¶ 2701.1 by adding the following paragraph: ¶ 2701.1.e). Concerning ¶ 2702.1, the complainant has the same right of appeal as the respondent when the grounds for a complaint (¶ 2702.1) continue past the conclusion of the trial. Such appeals may eventually be decided by the majority vote of the delegates to the General Conference.

#### **Rationale:**

There is a need for right of complaint to appeal decisions of annual conference, and jurisdictional, and Judicial Council to the delegates of the General Conference for a just and fair resolution of chargeable offenses ¶ 2702.1 and ¶ 2702.2

This change would affect other paragraphs and the petition calls . . .

#### **¶2500.**

Petition Number: 90066-¶2500-G; Taylor, Leah - Houston, TX, USA.

#### **Disaffiliation - Taylor - NEW Par. 2553**

Amend, effective as of the close of the 2019 General Conference, Chapter Six, Church Property, by adding a new Section VIII. Disaffiliation of Local Churches Over Issues Related to Human Sexuality, then by adding a new ¶ 2553 as follows:

¶ 2553. Disaffiliation of a Local Church over Issues Related to Human Sexuality.

1. Basis—Because of the current deep conflict within The United Methodist Church around issues of human sexuality, a local church shall have a limited right, under the provisions of this paragraph, to disaffiliate from the denomination for reasons of conscience regarding a change in the requirements and provisions of the *Book of Discipline* related to the practice of homosexuality or

the ordination or marriage of self-avowed practicing homosexuals as resolved and adopted by the 2019 General Conference, or the actions or inactions of its annual conference related to these issues which follow.

2. Time Limits—The choice by a local church to disaffiliate with The United Methodist Church under this paragraph shall be made in sufficient time for the process for exiting the denomination to be complete prior to December 31, 2023. The provisions of ¶ 2553 expire on December 31, 2023 and shall not be used after that date.

3. Initial Inquiry to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church—If the church council of a local church determines that the church wishes to consider disaffiliation from The United Methodist Church under this paragraph, that church council shall submit a request to the district superintendent to begin this process. The district superintendent shall appoint a task force under ¶ 213 for the purpose of making findings and a recommendation to the district superintendent on whether the church will have a viable future within or outside The United Methodist Church. The provisions of ¶ 213.2 and ¶ 213.3 shall not apply. If the local church, as it exists at the time of the assessment, is found to have a viable future, the district superintendent shall call a church conference under ¶ 248 for the sole purpose of deciding whether to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church under this paragraph, based upon the reasons in ¶ 2553.1. If the local church is found to not have a viable future, the district superintendent shall recommend closure under ¶ 2549, or take other appropriate action, and all property of the local church shall remain with The United Methodist Church according to the provisions of ¶ 2549.

4. Decision Making Process—The church conference shall be conducted in accordance with ¶ 248 and shall be held within one hundred twenty (120) days after the district superintendent calls for the church conference. In addition to the provisions of ¶ 246.8, special attention shall be made to give broad notice to the full professing membership of the local church regarding the time and place of a church conference called for this purpose and to use all means necessary, including electronic communication where possible, to communicate. The decision to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church must be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the professing members of the local church present at the church conference.

5. Process following decision to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church—If the church conference votes to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church, the terms and conditions for that disaffiliation shall be established by the resident bishop of the applicable annual conference, with the advice of the cabinet, the annual conference treasurer, the annual conference benefits

officer, the director of connectional ministries, and the annual conference chancellor. The terms and conditions, including the effective date of disaffiliation, shall be memorialized in a binding Disaffiliation Agreement between the annual conference and the trustees of the local church, acting on behalf of the members. That agreement must be consistent with the following provisions:

a) Standard Terms of the Disaffiliation Agreement. The General Council on Finance and Administration shall develop a standard form for Disaffiliation Agreements under this paragraph to protect The United Methodist Church as set forth in ¶ 807.9. The agreement shall include a recognition of the validity and applicability of ¶ 2501, notwithstanding the release of property therefrom. Annual conferences may develop additional standard terms that are not inconsistent with the standard form of this paragraph.

b) Apportionments. The local church shall pay any unpaid apportionments for the 12 months prior to disaffiliation, as well as an additional 12 months of apportionments.

c) Grants. All grants received by the local church from the annual conference or its ancillary organizations within five (5) years from the date of disaffiliation shall be repaid.

d) Property. A disaffiliating local church shall have the right to retain its real and personal, tangible and intangible property. All transfers of property shall be made prior to disaffiliation. All costs for transfer of title or other legal work shall be borne by the disaffiliating local church.

e) Pension Liabilities. The local church shall contribute 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.

f) Other Liabilities. The local church shall satisfy all other debts, loans, and liabilities, or assign and transfer them to its new entity, prior to disaffiliation.

g) Payment Terms. The agreement shall specify the terms and conditions of the payment to the annual conference for any sums related to ¶ 2553.5. b, c, and e. The term of payment shall not exceed ten (10) years.

h) Disaffiliating Churches Continuing as Plan Sponsors of the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits Plans. The United Methodist Church believes that a local church disaffiliating under ¶ 2553 shall continue to share common religious bonds and convictions with The United Methodist Church based on shared Wesleyan theology and tradition and Methodist roots, unless the local

church expressly resolves to the contrary. As such, a local church disaffiliating under ¶ 2553 shall continue to be eligible to sponsor voluntary employee benefit plans through the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits under ¶ 1504.2, subject to the applicable terms and conditions of the plans.

i) Once the disaffiliating local church has reimbursed the applicable annual conference for all funds due under the agreement, and provided that there are no other outstanding liabilities or claims against The United Methodist Church as a result of the disaffiliation, in consideration of the provisions of this paragraph, the applicable annual conference shall release any claims that it may have under ¶ 2501 and other paragraphs of *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church* commonly referred to as the trust clause, or under the agreement.

#### **Rationale:**

Creates a consistent process for local churches who desire to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church over disagreements related to human sexuality to receive their property while reducing the impact on the annual conference by paying their portion of conference pension liabilities, and other financial considerations.

#### **¶161.C.**

Petition Number: 90067-¶161.C-G; Cunningham, Albert McMurtry - Wilmington, NC, USA.

#### **Marriage**

Add the three paragraphs below to ¶ 161 C) Marriage after the last sentence that reads, "We support laws in civil society that define marriage as the union of one man and one woman."

In The United Methodist Church our four theological sources are clearly stated as "Scripture, Tradition, Experience and Reason." See *Book of Discipline*, Part III. Doctrinal Standards and Our Theological Task, ¶ 105. Section 4 – Our Theological Task. Using all four of these sources, United Methodists as a denomination and individuals develop and exercise sound theological judgment.

We view Scripture as the word of God for the people of God. Scripture authenticates God's gift of sex to be only enjoyed within a marriage between a man and a woman. Additionally, in our nurturing community of faith, Scripture passages offer "Truth in Love" and hope of "Life Eternal" to sexually immoral people that they "will not inherit the kingdom of God" unless they are sanctified through Christ. (See ¶ 104. Section 3 – Our Doctrinal Standards and General Rules, "Of Sanctification," page 72

and “Article XI – Sanctification and the Christian Perfection,” page 75.)

The below nineteen passages of Scripture are offered as a basic body of work to increase our understanding of biblical law, God’s love, his promise and judgment. As a composite they are necessary to honor the sanctity of the marriage covenant in the eyes of God and for the salvation of souls. They are offered for United Methodist clergy and laity to prayerfully consider in developing sound theological judgment and personal actions. Leviticus 18:22; Leviticus 20:13; Matthew 15:19; Matthew 19:4-6; Romans 1:26-27; Romans 13:13-14; 1 Corinthians 5:1; 1 Corinthians 5:9-11; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 1 Corinthians 6:18-20; 1 Corinthians 10:8; Galatians 5:19-22; Ephesians 5:3-14; Colossians 3:5; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8; 1 Timothy 1:8-11; Hebrews 13:4; Jude 7; Revelation 21:8

#### **Rationale:**

Petition supports: “Traditionalist Plan” by “*Commission on Way Forward*”

Utilize sources for sound theological judgment: “Scripture, Tradition, Experience, Reason”

Remind General Conference: UMC Doctoral Standards and General Rules on Sanctification

List Scripture passages: Honor marriage covenant of one man and one woman in God’s eyes

#### **¶161.C.**

Petition Number: 90068-¶161.C-G; Souto, Alexandre Da Silva - New Milford, CT, USA for UM Queer Clergy Caucus. 2 Similar Petitions

#### **A Simple Plan #1 - Souto - Marriage - Par. 161.C**

Amend ¶ 161.C as follows:

*C) Marriage*—We affirm the sanctity of the marriage covenant that is expressed in love, mutual support, personal commitment, and shared fidelity ~~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. ~~We support laws in civil society that define marriage as the union of one man and one woman.~~

#### **Rationale:**

In the Wesleyan tradition we aim to live by the admonition to do no harm. Revising sections of the *Book of Discipline* that prevent people from being full participants in the life of The United Methodist Church alleviates some of the harm The United Methodist Church causes to . . .

#### **¶161.G.**

Petition Number: 90069-¶161.G-G; Souto, Alexandre Da Silva - New Milford, CT, USA for UM Queer Clergy Caucus. 3 Similar Petitions

#### **A Simple Plan #2 - Souto - Human Sexuality - Par. 161.G**

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.~~

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:**

In the Wesleyan tradition we aim to live by the admonition to do no harm. Revising sections of the *Book of Discipline* that prevent people from being full participants in the life of The United Methodist Church alleviates some of the harm The United Methodist Church causes to . . .

#### **¶304.3.**

Petition Number: 90070-¶304.3-G; Souto, Alexandre Da Silva - New Milford, CT, USA for UM Queer Clergy Caucus. 8 Similar Petitions

### A Simple Plan #3 - Souto - Qualifications for Ordination - Par. 304.3

Amend ¶ 304.3 as follows:

¶ 304.3. [Reserved] ~~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 practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching. Therefore self-avowed practicing homosexuals are not to be certified as candidates, ordained as ministers, or appointed to serve in The United Methodist Church.~~

#### Rationale:

In the Wesleyan tradition we aim to live by the admonition to do no harm. Revising sections of the *Book of Discipline* that prevent people from being full participants in the life of The United Methodist Church alleviates some of the harm The United Methodist Church causes to . . .

#### ¶310.2d.

Petition Number: 90071-¶310.2d-G; Souto, Alexandre Da Silva - New Milford, CT, USA for UM Queer Clergy Caucus.

### A Simple Plan #4 - Souto - Candidacy - Footnote 3 to Par. 310.2d

Amend footnote 3 of ¶ 310.2(d) as follows:

In adopting the statements in ¶¶ 304.2 and 310.2d on the moral and social responsibility of ordained ministers, the General Conference seeks to elevate the standards by calling for a more thoroughgoing moral commitment by the candidate and for a more careful and thorough examination of candidates by district committees and boards of the ministry. The legislation in no way implies that the use of tobacco is a morally indifferent question. In the light of the developing evidence against the use of tobacco, the burden of proof would be upon all users to show that their use of it is consistent with the highest ideals of the Christian life. Similarly, regarding beverage alcohol, the burden of proof would be upon users to show that their action is consistent with the ideals of excellence of mind, purity of body, and responsible social behavior.

Therefore, the changes here do not relax the traditional view concerning the use of tobacco and beverage alcohol by ordained ministers in The United Methodist Church. Rather they call for higher standards of self-discipline and habit formation in all personal and social relationships. They call for dimensions of moral commitment

that go far beyond any specific practices which might be listed. (See Judicial Council Decision 318.)

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.

For more than 200 years candidates for ordination have been asked Wesley's Questions, including ". . . Have they a clear, sound understanding; a right judgment in the things of God; a just conception of salvation by faith? . . ." (¶ 310). All candidates agree to make a complete dedication of themselves to the highest ideals of the Christian life and to this end agree "to exercise responsible self-control, by personal habits conducive to bodily health, mental and emotional maturity, integrity in all personal relationships, fidelity in marriage and celibacy in singleness, social responsibility, and growth in grace and the knowledge and love of God" (¶ 304.2).

The character and commitment of candidates for the ordained ministry is described or examined in six places in the *Book of Discipline* (¶¶ 304, 310.2, 324, 330, 333, and 335). These say in part: "Only those shall be elected to full membership who are of unquestionable moral character and genuine piety, sound in the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, and faithful in the discharge of their duties" (¶ 333).

The statement on ordination (¶ 304.2) states: "*The Church expects those who seek ordination to make a complete dedication of themselves to the highest ideals of the Christian life . . . [and to] agree to exercise responsible self-control by personal habits. . . .*"

There are eight crucial steps in the examination of candidates. They are:

(1) The self-examination of the individual seeking ordination as he or she responds to God's call in personal commitment to Christ and his church.

(2) The decision of the committee on pastor-parish relations, which makes the first recommendation to the charge conference when a member seeks to become a candidate for ordained ministry.

(3) The decision of the charge conference, which must recommend the candidate.

(4) The decision of the district committee on ordained ministry, which must recommend the candidate to the conference Board of Ordained Ministry and, where applicable, the decision of the district conference.

(5) The decision of the Board of Ordained Ministry, which must recommend deacon's ordination and provisional membership. See Judicial Council Decisions 513, 536, 542.

(6) The decision of the clergy members of the annual conference, who must elect candidates to provisional membership.

(7) The recommendation of the Board of Ordained Ministry for deacon's or elder's ordination and full membership.

(8) The election to deacon's or elder's ordination and full membership by the clergy members of the annual conference.

All clergy members of the annual conference are accountable as to character and effectiveness to the annual conference throughout their entire ministry.

The General Conference has made it clear in the "Doctrinal Standards and Our Theological Task" (Part III of the *Discipline*) that Scripture, tradition, experience, and reason are our guidelines. "United Methodists share with other Christians the conviction that Scripture is the primary source and criterion for Christian doctrine."

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 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." Also, "we affirm the integrity of single persons, and we reject all social practices that discriminate or social attitudes that are prejudicial against persons because they are single."

The General Conference affirms the wisdom of our heritage expressed in the disciplinary provisions relating to the character and commitment of ordained ministers. The United Methodist Church has moved away from prohibitions of specific acts, for such prohibitions can be endless. We affirm our trust in the covenant community and the process by which we ordain ministers.

In our covenant we are called to trust one another as we recommend, examine, and elect candidates for the ordained ministry and conference membership. *See* Judicial Council Decision 480.

#### **Rationale:**

In the Wesleyan tradition we aim to live by the admonition to do no harm. Revising sections of the *Book of Discipline* that prevent people from being full participants in the life of The United Methodist Church alleviates some of the harm The United Methodist Church causes to . . .

#### **¶341.6.**

Petition Number: 90072-¶341.6-G; Souto, Alexandre Da Silva - New Milford, CT, USA for UM Queer Clergy Caucus. 6 Similar Petitions

#### **A Simple Plan #5 - Souto - Unauthorized Conduct - Par. 341.6**

Amend ¶ 341.6 as follows:

¶ 341.6. ~~[Reserved] Ceremonies that celebrate homosexual unions shall not be conducted by our ministers and shall not be conducted in our churches.~~

#### **Rationale:**

In the Wesleyan tradition we aim to live by the admonition to do no harm. Revising sections of the *Book of Discipline* that prevent people from being full participants in the life of The United Methodist Church alleviates some of the harm The United Methodist Church causes to . . .

#### **¶613.19.**

Petition Number: 90073-¶613.19-G; Souto, Alexandre Da Silva - New Milford, CT, USA for UM Queer Clergy Caucus. 4 Similar Petitions

#### **A Simple Plan #6 - Souto - Funding - Par. 613.19**

Amend ¶ 613.19 as follows:

¶ 613.19. ~~To ensure that no annual conference board, agency, committee, commission, or council shall give United Methodist funds to any gay caucus or group, or otherwise use such funds to promote the acceptance of homosexuality or violate the expressed commitment of The UMC "not to reject or condemn lesbian and gay members and friends" (¶ 161G). The council shall have the right to stop such expenditures. This restriction shall not limit the Church's ministry in response to the HIV epidemic, nor shall it preclude funding for dialogs or educational events where the Church's official position is fairly and equally represented.~~

#### **Rationale:**

In the Wesleyan tradition we aim to live by the admonition to do no harm. Revising sections of the *Book of Discipline* that prevent people from being full participants in the life of The United Methodist Church alleviates some of the harm The United Methodist Church causes to . . .

#### **¶806.9.**

Petition Number: 90074-¶806.9-G; Souto, Alexandre Da Silva - New Milford, CT, USA for UM Queer Clergy Caucus. 5 Similar Petitions

### A Simple Plan #7 - Souto - GCFA Fiscal Responsibilities - Par. 806.9

Amend ¶806.9 as follows:

~~¶ 806.9. It shall be responsible for ensuring that no board, agency, committee, commission, or council shall give United Methodist funds to any gay caucus or group, or otherwise use such funds to promote the acceptance of homosexuality or violate the expressed commitment of The United Methodist Church “not to reject or condemn lesbian and gay members and friends” (¶ 161G). The council shall have the right to stop such expenditures. It shall not limit the Church’s ministry in response to the HIV epidemic.~~

#### Rationale:

In the Wesleyan tradition we aim to live by the admonition to do no harm. Revising sections of the *Book of Discipline* that prevent people from being full participants in the life of The United Methodist Church alleviates some of the harm The United Methodist Church causes to . . .

#### ¶2702.1.

Petition Number: 90075-¶2702.1-G; Souto, Alexandre Da Silva - New Milford, CT, USA for UM Queer Clergy Caucus. 2 Similar Petitions

### A Simple Plan #8 - Souto - 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 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; (ca) crime; (bd) disobedience to the order and discipline of The United Methodist Church; (ec) dissemination of doctrines contrary to the established standards of doctrine of The United Methodist Church; (fd) relationships and/or behavior that undermines the ministry of another pastor; (ge) child abuse; (fh) sexual abuse; (gi) sexual misconduct including the use or possession of pornography, (hj) harassment, including, but not limited to racial and/or~~

sexual harassment; ~~(ik)~~ racial, or gender discrimination; or ~~(jt)~~ fiscal malfeasance.

#### Rationale:

In the Wesleyan tradition we aim to live by the admonition to do no harm. Revising sections of the *Book of Discipline* that prevent people from being full participants in the life of The United Methodist Church alleviates some of the harm The United Methodist Church causes to . . .

#### ¶00.

Petition Number: 90076-¶00-C-G; Childs, Christopher E. - Marcus, IA, USA.

### Behavior of Clergy and Use of Church Property

Add a new paragraph to Section III of the Constitution, after paragraph 22.

General Conference shall not establish any prohibitions or requirements for the behavior of clergy or the use of church property without a seventy-five percent majority vote. Any standard of behavior for clergy or the use of church property can be removed with a twenty-five percent vote.

#### Rationale:

The UMC will always be a community of faithful Christians who disagree on the divisive issues of the day. The quadrennial fighting for control has distracted us from our mission. This resolution will refocus the Church away from opinions that divide us, toward the essentials that unite us.

This . . .

#### ¶328.

Petition Number: 90077-¶328-G; Nupp, John William - Ellicott City, MD, USA.

### Interpretation of Fidelity in Marriage for Deacons

Amend ¶ 328 as follows:

Deacons lead the congregation in its servant ministry and equip and support all baptized Christians in their ministry. The distinct ministry of the deacon has evolved in United Methodism over many years – the continuing work of the deaconess, the home missionary, and the diaconal minister. The Church, recognizing the gifts and impact of all predecessor embodiments of the diaconate and providing for the continuation of the office of the deaconess,

affirms that this distinctiveness is made visible and central to the Church's life and ministry through ordination and that the ministry of the deacon is a faithful response of the mission of the Church meeting the emerging needs of the future.

The Board of Ordained Ministry may therefore approve a candidate for the office of deacon who does exemplify the highest ideals of the Christian life that, according to the laws of the annual conference in which they serve, exhibit faithfulness in marriage and celibacy in singleness, for the sake of the ongoing mission of the church in the world.

Deacons are accountable to the annual conference and the bishop for the fulfillment of their call to servant leadership.

### **Rationale:**

Deacons enjoy a unique relationship within our connectional structure: linking the church to the world wherever they are appointed, yet never guaranteed an appointment. While various means have been suggested for making a way forward through congregational models, this solution occurs through a simple shift in the orders. Granting approval . . .

### **¶512.**

Petition Number: 90078-¶512-!-G; Dunnam, Maxie - Memphis, TN, USA.

### **Modified Traditional Plan - Dunnam - Global Episcopacy Committee - Par. 512**

Amend ¶ 512 to make the Global Episcopacy Committee responsible for accountability to the provisions of this plan by bishops and annual conferences.

¶ 512. ~~Interjurisdictional Committee on Global Episcopacy Committee~~—1. There shall be an ~~Interjurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy~~ a Global Episcopacy Committee elected by the General Conference consisting of one of the persons (designated by each delegation) nominated by their annual conference delegations to serve on the several jurisdictional or central conference committees on episcopacy. The committee shall meet not later than the fifth day of the conference session and at the time and place set for their convening by the president of the Council of Bishops and shall elect from their number a chairperson, vice chairperson, and secretary. The functions of this joint committee shall be:

a. ~~To~~ to discuss the possibility of transfers of bishops across jurisdictional or central conference lines at the forthcoming jurisdictional or central conferences for res-

idential and presidential responsibilities in the ensuing quadrennium;

b. To administer by its executive committee the complaint process for any complaints filed against bishops who are alleged to have not fulfilled their commitment under ¶ 2801.7a or who are alleged to have committed one of the chargeable offenses under ¶ 2702.1a-b. The executive committee shall use the process of ¶¶ 413 and 2704.1, but substitute for the president and secretary of the relevant College of Bishops. Any supervisory response shall be administered by two elders who are members of the executive committee as chosen by the committee and who are not appointed to serve in the jurisdiction or central conference where the respondent bishop is serving. A majority vote of the executive committee shall be required to dismiss a complaint as having no basis in law or fact, to refer a matter as an administrative complaint to the jurisdictional or central conference committee on episcopacy, to refer a matter to a counsel for the Church as a judicial complaint, or to request the council relations committee of the Council of Bishops to place a bishop on involuntary leave or involuntary retirement. The provisions of this sub-paragraph take precedence over any conflicting provisions in the *Discipline* not contained in the Constitution and are to be administered consistently with ¶ 2801.7.

c. To investigate allegations that an annual conference has not fulfilled its commitment under ¶ 2801.1a and by majority vote mandate remedial action or place the annual conference on the list of ¶ 2801.3. Any such action by the Global Episcopacy Committee may be appealed to the Judicial Council at its next scheduled session by the affected annual conference. Any sanctions imposed under ¶ 2801.4 shall take effect six months after the Global Episcopacy Committee acts or after an appeal is heard, whichever is later.

d. To monitor the changing landscape of annual conferences and bring recommendation to General Conference related to reorganization of the jurisdictional or central conferences that may be warranted based on the effects of annual conferences leaving the connection. Any recommendation for reconfiguring a central conference must also be considered by the Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters.

e. ~~and T~~ to review on the basis of missional needs an application from a jurisdiction which, by number of its church members as provided in ¶ 404, would experience a reduction in the number of its bishops, and recommend the number of bishops to which that jurisdiction should be entitled to the General Conference for determination by the General Conference. This provision regarding missional needs is enabling, and it is not constraining on the

power of General Conference to act in the absence of a recommendation from the committee.

It shall elect an executive committee consisting of the officers named above and ~~two clergy and two laypersons from the nominees to each jurisdictional committee, elected by that committee to conduct consultations with bishops and others interested in possible episcopal transfers. One of the persons elected from each jurisdiction shall be the chairperson, or the chairperson's designee, of the each jurisdictional or central conference committee on episcopacy.~~ The executive committee shall meet at the call of the chairperson, and it shall have plenary power for the full committee between full committee sessions. It shall be responsible to the ~~interjurisdictional~~ Global committee, and in fulfillment of that responsibility and in the interest of continuity of the work of the committee, the outgoing chairperson, or the chairperson's designee, shall present a report to the newly seated committee on the previous quadrennium's work as well as recommendations on what the coming quadrennium's work might include.

The Global Committee or its executive committee may meet for any of its functions via video or phone conference or other electronic means.

A record of the proceedings of the committee shall be kept by the Office of Episcopal Services of the General Council on Finance and Administration.

2. A bishop may be transferred across jurisdictional or central conference lines only when that bishop has consented to such transfer and has served at least one quadrennium in or under assignment by the jurisdiction or central conference in which the bishop was elected. Such a transfer shall be concluded when the committee on episcopacy of each jurisdiction or central conference involved has approved the transfer(s) by a majority vote of those present and voting, insofar as the transfer(s) affects those jurisdictions or central conferences. (See ¶ 49, Article V.)

3. ~~The Interjurisdictional Committee on Global Episcopacy Committee~~ shall be recognized as the official body through which cross-jurisdictional or cross-central conference transfers shall be arranged. Should a bishop request transfer, the bishop has the option to identify the receiving jurisdiction or central conference. A jurisdiction or central conference may request that a specific bishop be transferred or may indicate a willingness to accept a bishop transferring from another jurisdiction or central conference. Request for transfer from either a bishop or jurisdictional or central conference committees on episcopacy shall be received by the ~~Interjurisdictional Committee on Global Episcopacy Committee~~ by April 1 of the year preceding the year of jurisdictional or central conferences. ~~The Interjurisdictional Committee on Global Episcopacy Committee~~ will arrange consultation between bishop(s)

requesting transfer and the appropriate jurisdictional or central conference committee(s) on episcopacy by January 1 of the year of jurisdictional or central conference(s). Once the jurisdictional or central conference committee(s) on episcopacy has taken action, jurisdictional or central conference secretaries shall inform the ~~Interjurisdictional Committee on Global Episcopacy Committee~~ not later than August 1 two weeks following jurisdictional or central conferences.

4. ~~The Interjurisdictional Committee on Global Episcopacy Committee~~ will report to each General Conference the action taken during the previous quadrennium.

Amend ¶ 404.2b to change the name "Interjurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy" to "Global Episcopacy Committee."

¶ 404.2b) If the number of church members in a jurisdiction shall have decreased by at least 10 percent below the number of church members which had previously entitled the jurisdiction to its number of bishops, then the number of bishops to which it shall be entitled shall be determined on the basis of missional needs, as approved by the General Conference on the recommendation of the ~~Interjurisdictional Committee on Global Episcopacy Committee~~, provided however that said jurisdiction shall be entitled to no less than the number of bishops to which it would be entitled under subparagraph a) above. It shall be the responsibility of the affected jurisdiction, through its Committee on Episcopacy, to request consideration of its missional need for an exception, and in the absence of such a request, there shall be no obligation on the part of the ~~Interjurisdictional Committee on Global Episcopacy Committee~~ to consider such an exception nor to make any report on such an exception to General Conference. In no case shall there be any constraint on General Conference's power to act in the absence of such a recommendation or to reject any recommendation that might be received.

#### **Rationale:**

This petition strengthens the Traditional Plan by placing an elected, representative group in charge of holding bishops and annual conferences accountable to its provisions. An expanded and renamed Global Episcopacy Committee elected by General Conference includes equal representation from the central conferences, making accountability more uniform across the globe.

#### **¶2800.**

Petition Number: 90079-¶2800-!-G; Dunnam, Maxie - Memphis, TN, USA.

## **Modified Traditional Plan - Dunnam - 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 by secret ballot or electronic means (with the vote totals to be released publicly at the time of the 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 '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."

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 and report the vote totals publicly. 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. Such allegations shall also be addressed to the Global Episcopacy Committee for investigation and action (¶ 512).

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 March 31, 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. Effective September 1, 2020, such bishops shall no longer receive funding for expenses (housing, office, travel) from the General Council on Finance and Administration. Bishops who indicate to the Council president and to GCFA their intention to join a self-governing Methodist church formed under this paragraph shall be eligible to continue receiving expenses during a transition period until such transfer is complete, or until December 31, 2021, whichever is earlier.

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 Global Episcopacy Committee (¶ 512), which shall administer the complaint under the provisions of ¶ 413. By a two-thirds majority vote, the Council of Bishops may assume responsibility for administering such a complaint and taking action under ¶ 422.5 at any point until the complaint is referred to a counsel for the Church (¶¶ 413.3d, 2704.1).

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. All property, assets, and liabilities except for those related to pensions (see sub-paragraph b below) shall continue to belong to, and be the responsibility of, the departing annual conference. An annual conference shall not consider a switch in its affiliation 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 shall 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 annual conference withdrawing to form a self-governing Methodist church under this paragraph shall receive from general Church funds a one-time grant of \$200,000 on or after January 1, 2021, to assist with transitional expenses. The General Council on Finance and Administration shall include an allocation for such funding in the 2021-2024 quadrennial budget. At its discretion, GCFA may advance such funding to the relevant annual conferences out of unrestricted reserve funds held by one or more of the general boards and agencies, to be replenished over the quadrennium by apportionments.

f. 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 jurisdictional 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.

g. 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 in The United Methodist Church. 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 under this paragraph 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 Methodist 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 Global Episcopacy Committee (§ 512) shall monitor the changing landscape of annual conferences and bring recommendation to General Conference related to reorganization of the jurisdictional or central 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 through written agreements. 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 written 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. Other aspects of any continuing relationship between the self-governing Methodist church and The United Methodist Church may be established and implemented through a concordat agreement (§ 574).

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 and shall take precedence over any conflicting provisions in the *Discipline* that are not in the Constitution.

#### **Rationale:**

This petition strengthens the Traditional Plan by enhancing and clarifying accountability and by providing transitional funding for departing annual conferences. This paragraph provides a mechanism for ensuring that annual conferences and bishops uphold the *Discipline*, while also providing for a gracious exit for those conscience-bound not to do

#### **¶161.C.**

Petition Number: 90080-¶161.C-G; Brooks, Lonnie D. - Anchorage, AK, USA.

#### **Enabling Legislation for A United Way Forward (Petition 90049)**

All the following legislative acts shall be effective if, when, and only if the proposed amendment to ¶ 49 of the Constitution of The United Methodist Church shall be certified by the Council of Bishops. [*The proposed amendment may be found in Petition # 90049.*]

Amend paragraphs 161.C), 161.G), 304.3, 310, 341, 403, 406, 407, 409, 410, 414, 415, 422, 512, 524, 2501, and 2702 as indicated following:

¶ 161.C)Marriage—We affirm the sanctity of the marriage covenant that is expressed in love, mutual support, personal commitment, and shared fidelity between two people who are married to each other a man and a woman. We believe that God’s blessing rests upon such marriage, which is traditionally between one man and one woman, whether or not there are children of the union. We reject social norms that assume different standards for women than for men in marriage. We support laws in civil society that define marriage as the union of one man and one woman.

...

¶ 161.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.

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 historically has not condoned ~~does not condone~~ the practice of homosexuality and has considered ~~consider~~ 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.

...

¶ 304.3. 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 practice of homosexuality is considered by many to be incompatible with Christian teaching. ~~Therefore self-avowed practicing homosexuals are not to be certified as candidates, ordained as ministers, or appointed to serve in The United Methodist Church. Therefore, authority for discerning suitability for ordination continues to rest with the annual conference as provided in ¶ 33 of the Constitution, following candidacy procedures as provided in the *Book of Discipline*, and authority for making appointments continues to rest with the bishop after a consultative process to determine the suitability of such an appointment.~~

....

Amend ¶ 310.2.d), the footnote referenced therein, Footnote 3, beginning on page 232 as follows:

¶ 310.2.d), Footnote 3. ...

~~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 person seeking ordination and affirms its high standards.~~

For more than 200 years candidates for ordination have been asked Wesley’s Questions...

...

In the Social Principles, the General Conference has said that ~~“we do not condone the practice of homosexuality and consider this practice incompatible with Chris-~~

tian 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 people who are married to each other ~~a man and a woman~~. We believe that God’s blessing rests upon such marriage, which is traditionally between one man and one woman, whether or not there are children of the union. We reject social norms that assume different standards for women than for men in marriage.” Also, “we affirm the integrity of single persons, and we reject all social practices that discriminate or social attitudes that are prejudicial against persons because they are single.”

...

¶ 341.6. Ceremonies that celebrate ~~homosexual unions shall not be conducted by our ministers and shall not be conducted in our churches~~ marriages between two persons committed to one another as provided in ¶ 161.C may be conducted by United Methodist pastors and other persons authorized in the *Book of Discipline* only upon following the process provided in ¶ 340.2.a)(3)(a).

¶ 403.1.c) A vision for the Church. The role of bishop is to lead the ~~whole~~ Church in claiming its mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. The bishop leads by discerning, inspiring, strategizing, equipping, implementing, and evaluating the fulfillment of the mission of the Church. Working in partnership with the Council of Bishops, the cabinet and lay and clergy leadership of the annual conference, and the professing members of the Church, the bishop urges the ~~whole~~ Church to move toward the vision of sharing Christ with the world in fulfillment of our mission, faithful discipleship and “an even better way” of being Christ’s people in the world.

...

f)...The bishop shares with other bishops the oversight of the ~~whole~~ Church through the Council of Bishops...

¶ 406.3. Special Assignments—The Council of Bishops may, with consent of the bishop and the concurrence of the jurisdictional or central conference committee on episcopacy, assign one of its members for one year to some specific churchwide responsibility deemed of sufficient importance to the welfare of the total Church. In this event, a bishop shall be released from the presidential responsibilities within the episcopal area for that term. Another bishop or bishops, active or retired, ~~and not necessarily from the same jurisdictional or central conference~~, shall be named by the ~~Council of Bishops on recommendation of the~~ College of Bishops of the jurisdiction involved to assume presidential responsibilities during the interim.

¶ 407. Vacancy in the Office of Bishop—A vacancy in the office of bishop may occur due to death, retirement (¶ 408.1, .2, .3), resignation (¶ 408.4), judicial procedure (¶ 2712), leave of absence (¶ 410.1), or medical leave (¶ 410.4). In case assignment of a bishop to presidential supervision of an episcopal area is terminated by any of the above causes, the vacancy shall be filled by the ~~Council of Bishops on nomination of the active bishops of the~~ College of Bishops of the jurisdiction or central conference concerned...

¶ 409.1...However, when a retired bishop is appointed by ~~the Council~~ a College of Bishops to a vacant episcopal area or parts of an area under the provisions of ¶¶ 409.3, 410.1, or 410.3, that bishop may function as a bishop in the effective relationship.

¶ 410. Leaves—1. Leave of Absence—A bishop may be granted a leave of absence for a justifiable reason for not more than six months in consultation with the area committee on episcopacy and with the approval of the College of Bishops, and the jurisdictional or central conference committee on episcopacy, ~~and the executive committee of the Council of Bishops~~. During the period for which the leave is granted, the bishop shall be released from all episcopal responsibilities, and another bishop chosen by the ~~executive committee of the Council~~ College of Bishops shall preside in the episcopal area. Salary and other benefits shall be continued through the Episcopal Fund.

...

3. Sabbatical Leave—A bishop who has served for at least two quadrennia may be granted a sabbatical leave of not more than one year for a program of study or renewal in consultation with the area committee on episcopacy and with the approval of the College of Bishops and the jurisdictional or central conference committee on episcopacy, ~~and the executive committee of the Council of Bishops~~. During the period for which the sabbatical leave is granted, the bishops shall be released from the presidential responsibilities within the episcopal area, and another bishop or bishops shall be designated by the ~~Council~~ College of Bishops to assume the presidential duties. The bishop shall receive one-half salary and, where applicable, housing allowance for the period of the leave.

4. Medical Leave—Bishops who by reason of impaired health are temporarily unable to perform full work may be granted a leave of absence for a justifiable reason for not more than six months in consultation with the area committee on episcopacy and with the approval of the College of Bishops and the jurisdictional or central conference committee on episcopacy, ~~and the executive committee of the Council of Bishops~~. During the period for which the leave is granted, the bishop shall be released

from all episcopal responsibilities, and another bishop chosen by the executive committee of the Council College of Bishops shall preside in the episcopal area. Salary and other benefits shall be continued through the Episcopal Fund. If after the six-month time period is over the bishop is still unable to perform full work due to impaired health, disability benefits through the benefit program provided to the bishop should be applied for.

¶ 414.8. To promote and support the evangelistic witness of the whole Church.

¶ 415.6. To consecrate bishops, to ordain elders and deacons, to consecrate diaconal ministers, 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. ~~As these services are acts of the whole Church,~~ Text and rubrics shall be used in the form approved by the General Conference.

¶ 422. Council of Bishops—1. Bishops, ~~although elected by jurisdictional or central conferences,~~ are elected general superintendents of the whole Church.

...

4. ~~The Council of Bishops may assign one of its members to visit another episcopal area or Methodist-related church. 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.~~

Delete ¶ 512 in its entirety.

Delete ¶ 524.3.f) in its entirety.

Insert a new ¶ 2501.4 that reads as follows:

¶ 2501.4 Any other portion of Chapter Six, Section I to the contrary notwithstanding, during a period of time beginning on January 1, 2020, and ending after December 31, 2020, all the trust provisions that would otherwise apply to local churches of The United Methodist Church will be held in abeyance to enable those churches that choose to do so to discontinue their identification as United Methodist in law and in covenant and to retain possession of their property, real and personal, tangible and intangible. Churches that choose to withdraw from The United Methodist Church pursuant to this provision must immediately upon exercising this option remove from all buildings, structures, literature, publications, internet postings, and other public representations any and all United Methodist signs, emblems, logos, and other forms of identification as United Methodist. A decision to withdraw under this provision must be supported by at least two thirds (2/3rds) of the members present and voting at a church conference called as provided in ¶ 248 and at which the district su-

perintendent presides, or at a church local conference as provided in ¶ 2527 at which the district superintendent presides.

¶ 2702. 1. A bishop, clergy member of an annual conference (¶ 369), 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 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 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 or (j) harassment, including, but not limited to, racial and/or sexual harassment; or (k) racial or gender discrimination; or (l) fiscal malfeasance.

#### **Rationale:**

Ends homosexuality trials, retains authority of annual conferences to discern suitability for ordination, and regionalizes the episcopacy. Bishops retain authority for appointments. Clergy and local churches retain consultation in appointments. Clergy determine whom to marry to whom. Local churches have a year to withdraw from UMC, taking property with them.

#### **¶406.3.**

Petition Number: 90081-¶406.3-G; Brooks, Lonnie D. - Anchorage, AK, USA.

#### **Enabling Legislation for A United Way Forward (Petition 90050)**

All the following legislative acts shall be effective if, when, and only if the proposed amendment to ¶ 27 of the Constitution of The United Methodist Church shall be certified by the Council of Bishops. *[The proposed amendment may be found in Petition #90050.]*

¶ 406.3. Special Assignments—...In the event that more than one retired bishop is assigned to fulfill presidential responsibilities in one episcopal area, the Episcopal Fund jurisdiction shall be responsible only for the difference between the pensions paid the retired bishops and the remuneration of one active bishop. This assignment

may be renewed for a second year by a two-thirds vote of the Council of Bishops and majority vote of the jurisdictional or central committee on episcopacy, and the consent of the bishop and the College of Bishops involved. The bishop so assigned shall continue to receive regular salary and support.

¶ 408.1.d) If, however, the retired bishop accepts any one of the following assignments of churchwide responsibility, the General Council on Finance and Administration, after consultation with the Council of Bishops, shall set a level of compensation not to exceed a maximum determined by the General Conference on recommendation of the General Council on Finance and Administration with the compensation costs borne by the Episcopal Fund jurisdiction where the bishop has membership in the College of Bishops: (1) assignment of a special nature with direct relationship and accountability to the Council of Bishops, or (2) assignment to a general agency or United Methodist Church-related institution of higher education. Assignment of retired bishops to United Methodist Church-related institutions of higher education must be at the initiative of the institutions, with service not to exceed the mandatory retirement ages of the institutions.

If a bishop is assigned to a general agency or United Methodist Church-related institution of higher education, that agency or United Methodist Church-related institution of higher education will pay 50 percent of the compensation established by GCFA for the position. The general agency or United Methodist Church-related institution of higher education shall further assume all responsibility for the bishop's operational and travel expenses related to the assignment.

Compensation for any special assignment shall cease after the bishop has reached the mandatory age of retirement for all ordained ministers (¶ 358.1) or completes the assignment, whichever comes first, except that retired bishops elected by the Council of Bishops as Executive Secretary and Ecumenical Officer may continue to be compensated for such special assignment(s) throughout the terms of office. ~~No assignment to a jurisdiction, central conference, annual conference, or non-United Methodist agency shall qualify for additional compensation from the Episcopal Fund under the provisions of this paragraph.~~ The status of a retired bishop on special assignment shall, for purposes of housing and other benefits, be that of a retired bishop.

...

¶ 408.2.b) Vocational Retirement—A bishop who has served at least eight years in the episcopacy may seek retirement for vocational reasons and may be so retired by the jurisdictional or central conference committee on episcopacy on recommendation by the involved College

of Bishops. Such bishops shall receive their pensions as provided in ¶ 408.2a. If the employing entity provides or makes health insurance available to employees, then the bishop who retires under this provision will be insured under that program, whether or not the bishop is required to pay the premium for that coverage, and the Episcopal Fund jurisdiction will assume no future obligation to provide health insurance for the bishop or the bishop's family. . . .

...

¶ 408.3.b) A bishop, for health reasons, may be retired between sessions of the jurisdictional or central conference by a two-thirds vote of the jurisdictional or central conference committee on episcopacy upon the recommendation of one third of the membership of the involved College of Bishops. The affected bishop, upon request, shall be entitled to a review of his or her health condition by a professional diagnostic team prior to action by the involved College of Bishops. Notification of action to retire shall be given by the chairperson and secretary of the jurisdictional or central conference committee on episcopacy to the secretary of the ~~Council~~ College of Bishops and the treasurer of the Episcopal Fund jurisdiction. Appeal from this action may be made to the Judicial Council with the notice provisions being applicable as set forth in ¶ 2716. Upon such retirement, the bishop shall receive a pension to the extent permitted under the Clergy Retirement Security Program or the Global Episcopal Pension Program (or, in either case, any successor bishop pension or retirement plan or program), as either may apply. ~~(Effective at the conclusion of General Conference 2012)~~

¶ 410. Leaves—1. Leave of Absence—A bishop may be granted a leave of absence for a justifiable reason for not more than six months in consultation with the area committee on episcopacy and with the approval of the College of Bishops, the jurisdictional or central conference committee on episcopacy, and the executive committee of the Council of Bishops. During the period for which the leave is granted, the bishop shall be released from all episcopal responsibilities, and another bishop chosen by the executive committee of the Council of Bishops shall preside in the episcopal area. Salary and other benefits shall be continued ~~through the Episcopal Fund~~ as provided by the jurisdiction.

¶ 410.4. Medical Leave—Bishops who by reason of impaired health are temporarily unable to perform full work may be granted a leave of absence for a justifiable reason for not more than six months in consultation with the area committee on episcopacy and with the approval of the College of Bishops, the jurisdictional or central conference committee on episcopacy, and the executive committee of the Council of Bishops. During the pe-

riod for which the leave is granted, the bishop shall be released from all episcopal responsibilities, and another bishop chosen by the executive committee of the Council of Bishops shall preside in the episcopal area. Salary and other benefits shall be continued ~~through the Episcopal Fund~~ as provided by the jurisdiction. If after the six-month time period is over the bishop is still unable to perform full work due to impaired health, disability benefits through the benefit program provided to the bishop should be applied for.

¶ 413.3.d)(iii). All costs associated with actions taken pursuant to paragraph (ii), above, will be paid by the ~~Episcopal Fund~~ jurisdiction or central conference wherein the bishop has membership in the College of Bishops.

¶ 440. Funding—Funding for the ecumenical and interreligious ministries of the Church shall be provided by the Council of Bishops in one or more clearly identified line items in the ~~Episcopal~~ General Administration Fund budget request to General Conference.

¶ 450. Funding – In collaboration with the Council of Bishops, the Committee on Faith and Order shall propose its budget as part of the ~~Episcopal~~ General Administration Fund, to be approved by General Conference.

¶ 548. Bishops in Retired Relation—1. An ordained minister who has served a term or part of a term as a bishop in a central conference where term episcopacy has prevailed shall, upon retirement from the effective relation in the ministry, be paid an allowance from the ~~General Episcopal Administration~~ General Administration Fund in such sum as the General Council on Finance and Administration shall determine for the years during which the ordained minister served as a bishop.

~~¶ 614.1.b) The council shall report to the annual conference at each session the Episcopal Fund apportionment to the annual conference under the methodology approved by the General Conference and shall include in its recommended clergy support budget the amount determined by the treasurer of the General Council on Finance and Administration as necessary to meet this apportionment.~~

¶ 619.1.a)(5) The conference treasurer shall remit each month to the treasurer of the General Council on Finance and Administration the amounts received during the month for the General Administration Fund, ~~the Episcopal Fund~~, the Interdenominational Cooperation Fund, the Black College Fund, the Ministerial Education Fund, World Service Special Gifts, Advance Special Gifts, general Church special Sunday offerings (¶ 262), special churchwide appeals (¶ 819), and all other general causes not otherwise directed.

¶ 621. Apportionment Distribution—Each annual conference shall determine what plan and method shall be used in distributing the apportionments to its several

districts and charges for the ~~Episcopal Fund~~ support of the bishops of the jurisdiction (¶ 817.1), for the support of district superintendents and conference claimants, and for the Equitable Compensation Fund (¶ 625).

¶ 805.6. Financial Support—a) Financial support from general Church funds for the work of the council shall be from the following sources: (1) an on-ratio allocation from the General Administration Fund, in an amount determined by the General Conference; (2) fixed charges against the World Service Fund, ~~the Episcopal Fund~~, the Interdenominational Cooperation Fund, and such other general funds as the General Conference may authorize, on recommendation of the council. Fixed charges shall be in proportion to the funds' receipts.

¶ 806.1.a) The council shall make recommendations to the General Conference as to the amount and distribution of the ~~Episcopal Fund~~ and General Administration Fund, and, in consultation with the Connectional Table, other apportioned general funds.

¶ 808. Conference Payments of Apportioned Funds—1. The treasurer of the General Council on Finance and Administration shall, not less than ninety days prior to the session of each annual conference or as soon thereafter as practical, transmit to the presiding bishop thereof, to the president of the conference council on finance and administration, and to the conference treasurer a statement of the apportionments to the conference for the World Service Fund, the General Administration Fund, ~~the Episcopal Fund~~, the Interdenominational Cooperation Fund, the Ministerial Education Fund, the Black College Fund, the Africa University Fund, and such other funds as may have been apportioned by the General Conference.

¶ 810. Definition of General Funds—1. The terms general fund(s) and general Church fund(s), wherever they appear in the *Book of Discipline*, refer to: the World Service Fund; the General Administration Fund; ~~the Episcopal Fund~~; the Interdenominational Cooperation Fund; the Ministerial Education Fund; the Black College Fund; the Africa University Fund; World Service Special Gifts; general Advance Special Gifts; the World Communion Fund; the Human Relations Day Fund; the United Methodist Student Day Fund; the UMCOR Sunday Fund<sup>16</sup>; Peace with Justice Sunday Fund; Native American Ministries Sunday Fund; the Youth Service Fund; and such other funds as may have been established by the General Conference and have been specifically authorized by the General Conference to be raised on a churchwide basis.

Delete ¶ 818, including its title, in its entirety.

¶ 1806.12. It shall be the central agency marketing throughout the Church the following general Church funds: World Service Fund (¶ 812.1), Africa University Fund (¶ 806.2), Black College Fund (¶ 815), ~~Episcopal~~

Fund (§ 818.1), General Administration Fund (§ 813), Interdenominational Cooperation Fund (§ 819), Ministerial Education Fund (§ 816), Human Relations Day (§§ 824.1 and 263.1), UMCOR Sunday (§§ 821, 824.2, and 263.2), Native American Ministries Sunday (§§ 824.6 and 263.6), Peace with Justice Sunday (§§ 824.5 and 263.5), World Communion Sunday (§§ 824.4 and 263.3), United Methodist Student Day (§§ 824.3 and 263.4), the Advance for Christ and His Church (§§ 822 and 823), World Service Special Gifts (§ 820), Christian Education Sunday (§ 265.1), Golden Cross Sunday (§ 265.2), Rural Life Sunday (§ 265.3), Disability Awareness Sunday (§ 265.4), Youth Service Fund (§ 1208), and all other general Church funds approved by the General Conference, as well as any emergency appeals authorized by the Council of Bishops and the General Council on Finance and Administration (§ 819).

§ 2712.6. A bishop suspended from office shall have claim on the ~~Episcopal Fund~~ episcopal support program established by the jurisdictional or central conference for salary, dwelling, pension, and other related benefits. A bishop removed from office shall have no claim upon the ~~Episcopal Fund jurisdictional or central conference episcopal support program, except as specifically provided by that conference,~~ for salary, dwelling, pension, and other related benefits from the date of such removal.

#### **Rationale:**

The regionalization of the episcopacy will not be complete until each jurisdiction is required to bear the cost of the support of its own bishops.

#### **¶4.**

Petition Number: 90082-¶4-C-G; Carr, Jeffrey A. - St. Louis, MO, USA.

#### **Inclusiveness**

¶ 4. Article IV, after: “All persons without regard to race, color, national origin, status, or economic condition . . .” Add: “or sexual orientation”

#### **Rationale:**

In that Jesus never mentioned homosexuality in the New Testament, and that the few obscure references to it in Scripture are set within cultural/textual contexts far removed from the present day, I therefore propose that the 2016 *Book of Discipline* be amended as petitioned.

#### **¶161.G.**

Petition Number: 90083-¶161.G-G; Ryder, Jack E. - LaGrange, IL, USA. 1 Similar Petition

#### **Human Sexuality**

##### **¶ 161. II. THE NURTURING COMMUNITY**

*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.~~

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.~~<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup>. See Judicial Council Decision 702

#### **Rationale:**

This is the easiest way forward as this action removes restrictions related to sexual orientation. In this way, there is no condemnation nor commendation of homosexuality. No additional language is needed as conferences continue to decide who to ordain and clergy continue to decide who to marry.

#### **¶161.**

Petition Number: 90084-¶161-G; Crockett, Douglas E. - Highland Springs, VA, USA.

## One New Discipline Plan

Amend the introduction, and paragraphs A, C, and G of ¶ 161 as follows:

### ¶ 161. II. THE NURTURING COMMUNITY

In Christ, The United Methodist Church is a nurturing community for all people that helps save souls and equip disciples. We strive to be a community filled with and animated by the power and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. We reaffirm the truth of Scripture and centrality of the gospel. We recommit ourselves to the work of our traditional and prescient role of being a light among the nations and a protagonist of the message of the necessity of faith in Jesus Christ for eternal life.

The broader cultural community provides the potential for nurturing human beings into the fullness of their humanity. We believe we have a responsibility to innovate, sponsor, and evaluate new forms of community that will encourage development of the fullest potential in individuals. Primary for us is the gospel understanding that all persons are important—because they are human beings created by God and loved through and by Jesus Christ and not because they have merited significance. We therefore support social climates in which human communities are maintained and strengthened for the sake of all persons and their growth, and in which the basic human rights of every person to be, to become, to be cared for, to care for oneself, to direct one's own life, to protect one's life, to pursue happiness, and to receive forgiveness are respected. We also encourage all individuals to be sensitive to others by using appropriate language when referring to all persons. Language of a derogatory nature (with regard to race, nationality, ethnic background, gender, sexuality, and physical differences) does not reflect value for one another and contradicts the gospel of Jesus Christ.

A) Culture and Identity—We believe that our primary identity is as children of God. With that identity comes societal and cultural constructions that have both positive and negative impacts on humanity and the Church. Cultural identity evolves through our history, traditions, and experiences. The Church seeks to fully embrace and nurture cultural formation and competency as a means to be fully one body, expressed in multiple ways. Each of us has multiple identities of equal value that intersect to form our complete self. We affirm that no identity or culture has more legitimacy than any other. We call the Church to challenge any hierarchy of cultures or identities. Through relationships within and among cultures we are called to and have the responsibility for learning from each other, showing mutual respect for our differences and similarities as we experience the diversity of perspectives and viewpoints.

We do not condone all things in culture even the excesses and misuses of things that have good purposes among human beings. We recognize that the ability to determine when we should oppose cultural norms or not is an ongoing struggle for us. In times past the Church, in part and sometimes in whole, has failed to adhere in practice and policy to the cultural and biblical ideals of equal protection and basic human rights in matters of social justice. Our errors in such judgments of the past do not justify errors in the present. Nor do our errors of the past give us great confidence that we are not committing in the present, or will not unknowingly or unintentionally commit such errors in the future, and wrongly side with or against culture. Our church, by God's grace, in many cases, has ultimately sided with the biblical principles and cultural ideals of equal protection and basic human rights. We call upon the Church to continue to work toward that goal.

A) Homosexual Behavior—Homosexual behavior, if one considers it categorically a sin or that it can be a sin if misused or used to excess, is no worse and brings no worse punishment upon ourselves, our people or our nation than the inhumanities and atrocities we have allowed, condoned, or supported in the past and for which we later repented and now repent.

On homosexual marriage and ordination, we believe, in line with our biblical and cultural ideals of equal protection and basic human rights, that we should side with those policies and laws in culture that affirm the basic human rights of every person. We do not believe that the cultural morality of a particular historical period, including what seems to be the morality of the Bible, is entitled to our allegiance over those biblical values upon which all morality must be built.

We commit our church to the rights of homosexual persons to marry. This is not an approval of homosexual marriage as an alternative to heterosexual marriage among heterosexual persons but is an affirmation of the rights of homosexual persons to be who they are and exercise their basic human rights as homosexual persons.

### ¶ 161. II.

C) Marriage—We affirm the sanctity of the marriage covenant that is expressed in love, mutual support, personal commitment, and shared fidelity between a man and a woman two consenting adults. We believe that God's blessing rests upon such marriage, whether or not there are children of the union or the two are heterosexual. We reject social norms that assume different standards for women than for men in marriage. We support laws in civil society that define marriage as the union of one man and one woman.<sup>2</sup>

2. See Judicial Council Decision 694.

¶ 161. II.

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.

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 or condemn the practice of homosexuality and some United Methodists 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.<sup>3</sup>

3. See Judicial Council Decision 702.

**Amend the third paragraph of ¶ 304 as follows:**

**¶ 304. Qualifications for Ordination—**

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 practice of homosexuality is incompatible may not be compatible with some Christian teaching but the acceptance of a practice in the Church where it is prohibited in Scripture is certainly compatible with Christian practice. Therefore, self-avowed practicing homosexuals<sup>1</sup> in a committed monogamous relationship in marriage, or analogous to marriage where homosexual marriage is prohibited, are not to may be certified as candidates, ordained as ministers, or and appointed to serve in The United Methodist Church.<sup>2</sup>

1. “Self-avowed practicing homosexual” is understood to mean that a person openly acknowledges to a bishop, district superintendent, district committee of or-

ained ministry, Board of Ordained Ministry, or clergy session that the person is a practicing homosexual. See Judicial Council Decisions 702, 708, 722, 725, 764, 844, 984, 1020.

2. ~~See Judicial Council Decisions 984, 985, 1027, 1028~~

**Amend the second paragraph and footnote 3 of ¶ 310 as follows:**

**¶ 310. Candidacy and Certification for Licensed and Ordained Ministry— . . .**

2. Candidates seeking to become certified for licensed or ordained ministry shall: . . .

d) agree for the sake of the mission of Jesus Christ in the world and the most effective witness of the gospel, and in consideration of their influence as clergy, to make a complete dedication of themselves to the highest ideals of the Christian life as set forth in ¶¶ 103-105; 160-166. To this end they shall agree to exercise responsible self-control by personal habits conducive to bodily health, mental and emotional maturity, fidelity in marriage and celibacy in singleness, social responsibility, and growth in grace and the knowledge and love of God.<sup>3</sup> The local church is encouraged to assist candidates with the expenses of candidacy;

(FN) 3. In adopting the statements in ¶¶ 304.2 and 310.2d on the moral and social responsibility of ordained ministers, the General Conference seeks to elevate the standards by calling for a more thoroughgoing moral commitment by the candidate and for a more careful and thorough examination of candidates by district committees and boards of the ministry. The legislation in no way implies that the use of tobacco is a morally indifferent question. In the light of the developing evidence against the use of tobacco, the burden of proof would be upon all users to show that their use of it is consistent with the highest ideals of the Christian life. Similarly, regarding beverage alcohol, the burden of proof would be upon users to show that their action is consistent with the ideals of excellence of mind, purity of body, and responsible social behavior.

Therefore, the changes here do not relax the traditional view concerning the use of tobacco and beverage alcohol by ordained ministers in The United Methodist Church. Rather they call for higher standards of self-discipline and habit formation in all personal and social relationships. They call for dimensions of moral commitment that go far beyond any specific practices which might be listed. (See Judicial Council Decision 318.)

The General Conference, in response to expressions throughout the Church regarding homosexuality and ordination, reaffirms the present language of the Discipline acknowledges that some are opposed to the ordination of homosexuals but reaffirms its commitment to Scripture

regarding the character and commitment of persons seeking ordination and affirms its high standards for all.

For more than 200 years candidates for ordination have been asked Wesley's Questions, including ". . . Have they a clear, sound understanding; a right judgment in the things of God; a just conception of salvation by faith? . . ." (§ 310). All candidates agree to make a complete dedication of themselves to the highest ideals of the Christian life and to this end agree "to exercise responsible self-control, by personal habits conducive to bodily health, mental and emotional maturity, integrity in all personal relationships, fidelity in marriage and celibacy in singleness, social responsibility, and growth in grace and the knowledge and love of God" (§ 304.2).

The character and commitment of candidates for the ordained ministry is described or examined in six places in the *Book of Discipline* (§§ 304, 310.2, 324, 330, 333, and 335). These say in part: "Only those shall be elected to full membership who are of unquestionable moral character and genuine piety, sound in the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, and faithful in the discharge of their duties" (§ 333).

The statement on ordination (§ 304.2) states: "*The Church expects those who seek ordination to make a complete dedication of themselves to the highest ideals of the Christian life . . . [and to] agree to exercise responsible self-control by personal habits. . . .*"

There are eight crucial steps in the examination of candidates. They are:

(1) The self-examination of the individual seeking ordination as he or she responds to God's call in personal commitment to Christ and his church.

(2) The decision of the committee on pastor-parish relations, which makes the first recommendation to the charge conference when a member seeks to become a candidate for ordained ministry.

(3) The decision of the charge conference, which must recommend the candidate.

(4) The decision of the district committee on ordained ministry, which must recommend the candidate to the conference Board of Ordained Ministry and, where applicable, the decision of the district conference.

(5) The decision of the Board of Ordained Ministry, which must recommend deacon's ordination and provisional membership. See Judicial Council Decisions 513, 536, 542.

(6) The decision of the clergy members of the annual conference, who must elect candidates to provisional membership.

(7) The recommendation of the Board of Ordained Ministry for deacon's or elder's ordination and full membership.

(8) The election to deacon's or elder's ordination and full membership by the clergy members of the annual conference.

All clergy members of the annual conference are accountable as to character and effectiveness to the annual conference throughout their entire ministry.

The General Conference has made it clear in the "Doctrinal Standards and Our Theological Task" (Part III of the *Discipline*) that Scripture, tradition, experience, and reason are our guidelines. "United Methodists share with other Christians the conviction that Scripture is the primary source and criterion for Christian doctrine."

In the Social Principles, the General Conference has said that we "do not condone or condemn the practice of homosexuality and some 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 ~~a man and a woman~~ an two consenting adults. We believe that God's blessing rests upon such marriage, whether or not there are children of the union or the two are homosexual."

We reject social norms that assume different standards for women than for men in marriage." Also, "we affirm the integrity of homosexual and single persons, and we reject all social practices that discriminate or social attitudes that are prejudicial against persons because they are homosexual or single."

The General Conference affirms notes the wisdom of our heritage expressed in the disciplinary provisions relating to the character and commitment of ordained ministers. However, we believe, in line with our biblical and cultural ideals of equal protection and basic human rights that we should side with those policies and laws that affirm the basic human rights of every person. We do not believe that the cultural morality of a particular historical period, including what seems to be the morality of the Bible, is entitled to our allegiance over those biblical values upon which all morality must be built. Among those values are "equal protection and basic human rights." The United Methodist Church has moved away from prohibitions of specific acts, for such prohibitions can be endless. We affirm our trust in the covenant community and the process by which we ordain ministers.

In our covenant we are called to trust one another as we recommend, examine, and elect candidates for the ordained ministry and conference membership. See Judicial Council Decision 480.

**Amend paragraphs six and seven and footnote 35 of § 341 as follows:**

**¶ 341. Unauthorized Conduct—**

~~6. Ceremonies that celebrate homosexual unions shall not be conducted by our ministers and shall not be conducted in our churches.<sup>35</sup>~~

7. ~~6.~~ No pastor shall re-baptize. The practice of re-baptism does not conform with God's action in baptism and is not consistent with Wesleyan tradition and the historic teaching of the church. Therefore, the pastor should counsel any person seeking re-baptism to participate in a rite of reaffirmation of baptismal vows.

~~35. See Judicial Council Decision 1115.~~

**Amend paragraph 19 of ¶ 613 as follows:**

**¶ 613. Responsibilities—The council shall have authority and responsibility to perform the following functions:**

19. To ensure that no annual conference board, agency, committee, commission, or council shall give United Methodist funds to any ~~gay~~ caucus or group promoting sexuality without the benefit of marriage, or otherwise use such funds to promote the acceptance of ~~homosexuality~~ sexuality without the benefit of marriage or violate the expressed commitment of The UMC “not to reject or condemn lesbian and gay members and friends” (¶ 161G). The council shall have the right to stop such expenditures. This restriction shall not limit the Church's ministry in response to the HIV epidemic, nor shall it preclude funding for dialogs or educational events where the Church's official position is fairly and equally represented.<sup>59</sup>

59. See Judicial Council Decision 1054.

**Amend the introductory and ninth paragraphs and footnote 13 of ¶ 806 as follows:**

**¶ 806. Fiscal Responsibilities—**All monies contributed by a local church to any of the general funds of the Church, as listed or defined in ¶ 810.1, and such other funds as may have been authorized by the General Conference shall be held in trust by the council and distributed only in support of the ministries of the respective funds. The council shall be accountable to The United Methodist Church through the General Conference in all matters relating to the receiving, disbursing, and reporting of such funds, and agencies receiving such funds shall be fiscally accountable to the council. In the exercise of its fiscal accountability role, the council shall have the authority and responsibility to perform the following functions: . . .

9. It shall be responsible for ensuring that no board, agency, committee, commission, or council shall give United Methodist funds to any ~~gay~~ caucus or group promoting sexuality without the benefit of marriage, or otherwise use such funds to promote the acceptance of ~~homosexuality~~ sexuality without the benefit of marriage or violate the expressed commitment of The United Methodist Church “not to reject or condemn lesbian and gay

members and friends” (¶ 161G). The council shall have the right to stop such expenditures.<sup>13</sup> It shall not limit the Church's ministry in response to the HIV epidemic.

13. See Judicial Council Decisions 597, 1264.

**Amend the first paragraph of ¶ 2702 and footnote 13 as follows:**

**¶ 2702.** 1. A bishop, clergy member of an annual conference (¶ 370), local pastor,<sup>9</sup> clergy on honorable or administrative location, or diaconal minister may be tried when charged (subject to the statute of limitations in ¶ 2702.4)<sup>10</sup> with one or more of the following offenses: . . .

(b) practices declared by The United Methodist Church to be incompatible with Christian teachings,<sup>12</sup> ~~including, but not limited to: being a self-avowed practicing homosexual; or conducting ceremonies which celebrate homosexual unions; or performing same-sex wedding ceremonies;~~<sup>13</sup> (g) child abuse;<sup>15</sup> (h) sexual abuse;<sup>16</sup> i) sexual misconduct<sup>15</sup> 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.

9. See Judicial Council Decision 982.

10. The statute of limitations went into effect as law on a prospective basis starting on January 1, 1993. All alleged offenses that occurred prior to this date are time barred. See Judicial Council Decisions 691, 704, and 723. . . .

12. See Judicial Council Decisions 702, 984, 985, 1185.

~~13. The language beginning “including but not limited to . . .” first appeared in the 2004 Book of Discipline; effective January 1, 2005.~~

**Rationale:**

We do not believe that the cultural morality of a particular historical period, including what seems to be the morality of the Bible, is entitled to our allegiance over those biblical values upon which all morality must be built. Among those values are “equal protection and basic human rights.”

**¶00.**

Petition Number: 90085-¶00-C-!-G; Boyette, Keith - Spotsylvania, VA, USA.

**Dissolution of UMC Plan #1 - Boyette - Constitutional****CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS (requires 2/3 vote)**

1. Add New ¶ 62, entitled “Plan of Dissolution,” as a new “Division VI – Dissolution” as follows:

¶ 62. Plan of Dissolution—All conflicting provisions of the Constitution and *Book of Discipline* are hereby suspended for the purpose of implementing a plan of dissolution. The dissolution shall make available at least two new entities, one providing full inclusion for LGBTQI+ persons in marriage and ordination, and another maintaining the church's current teaching and provisions regarding marriage and ordination for LGBTQI+ persons. Additional entities may be proposed by groups during the initial implementation. Provisions that do not conflict with implementation of the plan shall continue in force until the termination of The United Methodist Church is declared. At the conclusion of the implementation process, all assets and liabilities of The United Methodist Church shall have been equitably divided among the two or more entities which shall become the successor denominations, and The United Methodist Church shall cease to exist.

2. 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 2020 General Conference shall meet solely for the purpose of implementing the plan of dissolution.

*[Enabling legislation may be found in Petition #90086.]*

#### **Rationale:**

Irreconcilable differences exist within The United Methodist creating an existential crisis. Dissolution would free the church from these differences, allowing the resulting entities to move forward in ministry as they are led by God.

#### **¶2800.**

Petition Number: 90086-¶2800-!-G; Boyette, Keith - Spotsylvania, VA, USA.

### **Dissolution of UMC Plan #2 - Boyette - Enabling Legislation**

[The following provisions would be enacted only if Petition #90085 (New Para. 62 and Amend Para. 14) is enacted through the canvass of annual conference votes by the Council of Bishops.]

The following process is enacted to implement the constitutional amendment permitting a plan of dissolution. The secretary of the General Conference shall work with the bishops to ensure that voting on the ratification

of this constitutional amendment begins with the regularly scheduled annual conference sessions after April 1, 2019, and is completed by March 31, 2020. The Council of Bishops shall certify whether or not this amendment has been adopted as soon as practicable after April 1, 2020 and not later than April 30, 2020.

1. The Council of Bishops shall oversee the implementation of the plan and serve as a clearinghouse of information for clergy and congregations desiring to affiliate with an entity different from the one chosen by their annual conference.

2. *Founding Teams*—In anticipation of the approval of the constitutional amendment, the 2019 special session of General Conference shall (subsequent to its approving the foregoing constitutional amendment by the required two-thirds vote) elect a ten-person team for each new entity that desires to form, consisting of four laypersons, four clergypersons, and two bishops. Nominations shall be taken in writing to the General Conference secretary as a slate of ten for each entity, beginning after the adoption of the amendment and concluding in time for the slates to be published at least 24 hours prior to the election being held. Accompanying each slate shall be a brief statement of the distinctive formative principles of the entity proposed to be formed by that slate. Each new entity group is responsible to ensure that its slate consists of persons who agree to the formative principles of that proposed entity. The plenary session of 2019 special General Conference shall determine by majority vote whether or not to certify each slate and proposed entity as put forward without change.

3. *Descriptive Documents*—In the 14 months following the adjournment of the 2019 special session of General Conference, each team shall write and approve a vision and mission description for its particular entity, including a one-page summary. These documents shall be the initial guide for decision-making by bishops, annual conferences, clergy, congregations, and church institutions about the entity with which they will affiliate. The descriptive documents shall be publicly released at the time when the Council of Bishops certifies that the constitutional amendment has been ratified.

4. *Episcopal Affiliation*—a) Provided that the constitutional amendment enabling the plan to go forward is certified as having been adopted, not later than June 30, 2020 each active and retired United Methodist bishop shall elect to relate to one of the entities described in the descriptive documents (Part 3). These selections shall be compiled by the Council of Bishops and made public by June 30, 2020. Bishops shall relate to both the new entity and their former geographical jurisdiction until the transition is completed.

b) Following June 30, 2020, the College of Bishops for each new entity may convene and begin working with the corresponding Founding Team to plan for the new entity.

*5. Annual Conference Affiliation*—a) By June 30, 2021, votes shall be held by secret ballot in each annual conference as to which new entity that annual conference will hereafter belong. A simple majority vote shall suffice. The vote of each annual conference shall be confirmed by the Council of Bishops and be final. If the annual conference does not cast a majority vote for joining any of the new entities, the annual conference shall affiliate with the entity that receives the plurality of votes, and the assets and liabilities of the conference shall be divided among the relevant entities under Part 11.

b) Each annual conference shall also elect a delegation to the organizing conference of their selected entity, consisting of the same number of delegates who were elected to the previous General Conference. If clergy are elected who later indicate their desire to affiliate with another entity, these clergy become ineligible to serve. Lay members elected become ineligible to serve if the local church to which they belong votes to affiliate with another entity. Annual conferences shall elect sufficient numbers of reserve delegates to ensure a full delegation. Legislation may be proposed by each annual conference for the organizational conference of their new entity.

*6. Congregational Affiliation*—a) Congregations will automatically continue to belong to the annual conference to which they previously belonged unless the congregation takes action to change affiliation. Congregations who dissent from the affiliation of their annual conference will have until February 28, 2022 to indicate, by majority secret ballot vote of a duly called church conference (§ 248), their decision to be placed in an annual conference of another entity. If the congregation does not cast a majority vote for joining any of the new entities, the congregation shall affiliate with the entity that receives the plurality of votes. Any minority group within a congregation may organize a new congregation affiliating with a different entity. All dissenting congregations shall remain part of their former annual conference until the conclusion of the organizing conference of the new entity.

b) Churches wishing to change affiliation to another entity after February 28, 2022, may do so only under the provisions of the entity to which they belong at the time and the entity with which they desire to affiliate.

c) The dissenting churches in each annual conference shall convene a conference for their entity, consisting of the lay members of the original annual conference from those congregations or their elected substitutes, along with those clergy who have indicated their desire to af-

filiate with that entity. This special conference shall take place between April 1 and June 30, 2022. This special conference shall elect one clergy and one lay delegate and alternates to serve at the entity's organizing conference.

*7. Clergy Affiliation*—a) Clergy shall have until March 31, 2022 to notify their bishop of their desire to serve in another entity. Their bishop shall forward the names of these clergy to the College of Bishops of the receiving entity. Conference membership will continue in the former conference until a transfer to another annual conference is complete.

b) Subsequent to their original affiliation, but at least 30 days prior to the organizing conference of the new entity, clergy may elect to switch affiliation, but it shall require the approval of a majority of the Founding Team and College of Bishops of the new entity (voting as one body). After that 30-day deadline or after the new entity has formed, clergy may elect to withdraw from their original entity to unite with another one under the provisions of their original entity and conditioned upon the provisions of the new entity they wish to join.

c) All pension benefits earned by clergypersons in The United Methodist Church shall remain intact in whatever successor entity they affiliate with, backed by the assets of the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits or its successor organization(s) and the successor(s) of the clergyperson's former annual conference.

*8. Organizing Conferences*—a) The colleges of bishops of the respective new entities shall call a special organizing conference for each of the new entities. The conferences shall take place during May 2023.

b) At the organizing conference for each entity, the constitution and bylaws of the entity shall be adopted. The entity shall determine whether to continue with bishops and annual conferences, and if so, how they shall be configured. Each entity shall provide for supervision, connection, and pastoral assignment over the area of countries in which the entity has congregations.

c) Each entity shall create a system for assisting clergy desiring to change affiliation in obtaining membership status in the new entity, in obtaining an appointment in the new entity, and/or in obtaining a transitional appointment. Clergy may continue to serve in an entity other than the new one with which they desire to affiliate until a suitable appointment is found in their new entity. During the time of this transitional appointment, they shall abide by the provisions of the entity in which they are appointed.

*9. Institutional Affiliation*—Any church-related institution that is affiliated with, but not owned by, an annual or jurisdictional conference must choose their affiliation and relationship to the church following the organizing of the new entities and the possible redrawing of annual

conference boundaries. The institution, by its own internal processes, may choose to continue affiliation with the successor annual, jurisdictional, or central conference with which it was previously affiliated, change its affiliation to a new entity, seek affiliation in multiple entities at the same time, or remove its church affiliation entirely. An institution's request to affiliate with a different entity or annual, jurisdictional, or central conference other than the successor to its original conference is contingent upon approval by that entity or conference.

10. *Congregational Property*—The trust clause of each local congregation's property shall be held and administered by the entity with which the local church chooses to affiliate (§§ 2501, 2503). Any of the new entities may choose to modify or dispense with the trust clause entirely. All assets and liabilities previously incurred by a local congregation shall remain with that congregation in its new affiliation, based on the majority or plurality vote of the church conference. This provision shall not, however, preclude a voluntary negotiation dividing some or all of the congregation's assets and liabilities among separating portions of the congregation.

11. *Annual Conference Property*—Assets and liabilities held by an annual conference shall remain with that conference. Local churches and clergy withdrawing from an annual conference to join a new entity are relinquishing any individual share of the assets or liabilities of that conference, except for pension liabilities owed to clergy. Where the conference's affiliation vote under Part 5(a) is less than 75 percent, the conference's assets and liabilities shall be divided proportionally between the entities involved, based on the number of original professing members who are members of each new entity as of May 30, 2023. The assets so divided shall be no less than, and the liabilities so divided no greater than, the amounts on the books at the time the new entities are organized (May 30, 2023).

12. *Jurisdictional or Central Conference Property*—Assets and liabilities held by former jurisdictions and central conferences of The United Methodist Church shall be assumed by the entity chosen by plurality vote of the aggregate number of members in the several annual conferences of that former jurisdiction or central conference. Where the aggregate affiliation vote is less than 75 percent, the conference's assets and liabilities shall be divided proportionally between the entities involved, based on the number of original professing members who are members of each new entity as of May 30, 2023. The assets so divided shall be no less than, and the liabilities so divided no greater than, the amounts on the books at the time the new entities are organized (May 30, 2023).

13. *General Church Property*—a) Assets and liabilities held by boards and agencies of The United Methodist Church shall be recorded as of May 30, 2023. These assets and liabilities shall be divided among the various new entities based on the number of original professing members joining each new entity as of May 30, 2023.

b) The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits, The United Methodist Publishing House, and/or United Methodist Committee on Relief may choose to become independent nonprofit corporations that serve more than one of the new entities that are formed. Such a decision shall require a two-thirds (2/3) vote of its board of directors and a majority vote of the organizing conference of each new entity to be served. Assets and liabilities held by these agencies (serving at least two of the new entities) shall not be divided between the entities that are being served by them, but held by the agency in order to continue serving. If all the new entities are not being served by a given agency, its assets and liabilities shall be divided between the agency itself and the new entities it is not serving, based on the number of original professing members who are members of each new entity as of May 30, 2023.

14. *Arbitration*—a) At all levels (annual conference up through general Church), division of assets and liabilities shall be accomplished through negotiation among the parties involved, taking care to honor the restrictions imposed upon designated funds and trusts. Accounting firms and/or mediators may be employed in this process, with the costs thereof shared by the entities involved at whatever level.

b) Disputes over the division of assets and liabilities shall be settled in binding arbitration by the Judicial Council. Each annual, jurisdictional, or central conference or new entity shall present its case in written form, and the Council shall make the final determination of an equitable division of assets and liabilities. The expenses of any special meetings or travel incurred by the Council for such purposes shall be borne by the conferences engaging in arbitration. The decision of the Council is final and shall not be appealed to the secular courts. The Judicial Council shall complete its arbitration decisions by December 31, 2025.

c) Disputes over proper implementation of this plan may be appealed to the Jurisdictional Committee on Appeals and then to the Judicial Council by the parties involved. Costs of such appeals are to be shared by the parties. The decision of the Judicial Council is final and shall not be appealed to the secular courts.

d) Distribution of assets and liabilities shall take place as soon as practicable, based upon the terms negotiated by the parties involved. Negotiated agreements shall be in place in all instances by December 31, 2024. If an

agreement cannot be reached by December 31, 2024, it shall automatically enter the binding arbitration process with the Judicial Council. Parties may submit to binding arbitration before that date upon mutual consent.

e) The various corporations or property-holding organizations of The United Methodist Church shall dissolve their corporation or organization when all assets and liabilities have been distributed to the new entities. The General Conference and all other unincorporated, non-property-holding organizations of The United Methodist Church shall cease as of May 30, 2023.

f) The Jurisdictional Committees on Appeals and the Judicial Council members and alternates in place as of December 31, 2022, shall continue to serve until December 31, 2025, regardless of which entity they affiliate with, for the purpose of hearing appeals and resolving property disputes relating to the implementation of this plan (Parts 14b-d).

15. Implementation Dates—The following deadlines shall be observed:

April 1, 2019—Ratification votes begin in annual conferences

March 31, 2020—Ratification votes in annual conferences are completed

April 30, 2020—Deadline for Founding Teams to submit their descriptive documents to the Council of Bishops

April 30, 2020—Deadline for Council of Bishops to certify the results of the ratification vote; public release of the descriptive documents for each entity

June 30, 2020—Bishops must indicate publicly which entity they will affiliate with; College of Bishops of each new entity begins working with corresponding Founding Team to plan for the new entity

June 30, 2021—deadline for annual conferences to vote on which entity to affiliate with; election of delegates to organizing conferences

February 28, 2022—deadline for local congregations to vote to join a different entity from the one approved by their annual conference

March 31, 2022—deadline for clergy to indicate to their bishop which entity they wish to affiliate with

June 30, 2022—deadline for dissenting congregations as an annual conference group to elect delegates to the entity with which they are affiliating

May 2023—organizing conferences are held for the new entities

May 30, 2023—recording of all assets and liabilities subject to division; General Conference and all other non-property-holding organizations of The United Methodist Church cease; number of professing members of The United Methodist Church who have joined each congregation in the new entity is to be reported to that entity's

governing body; negotiations begin on dividing annual conference, jurisdictional, central conference, and general church assets and liabilities where needed

December 31, 2024—deadline for negotiated agreements to be in place on division of assets and liabilities

December 31, 2025—deadline for arbitration decisions to be completed by Judicial Council

### **Rationale:**

Irreconcilable differences exist within The United Methodist creating an existential crisis. Dissolution would free the Church from these differences, allowing the resulting entities to move forward in ministry as they are led by God.

### **¶4.**

Petition Number: 90087-¶4-C-G; McRoberts, Sean - Iowa City, IA, USA.

### **Inclusiveness**

Amend ¶ 4:

... no conference or other organizational unit of the Church shall be structured so as to exclude any member or any constituent body of the Church because of race, color, national origin, ~~status~~ ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or economic condition nor shall any member be denied access to an equal place in the life, worship, and governance of the Church because of race, color, gender, national origin, ability, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or economic condition.

### **¶2702.1.**

Petition Number: 90088-¶2702.1-G; McRoberts, Sean - Iowa City, IA, USA.

### **Chargeable Offenses**

Amend ¶ 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 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; . . .

### ¶161.C.

Petition Number: 90089-¶161.C-G; Malone, Donald M. - Washington, DC, USA.

#### Sexual Practices

A. Amend ¶ 161.C) to read as follows:

C) *Marriage*—We affirm the sanctity of the marriage covenant that is expressed in love, mutual support, personal commitment, and shared fidelity between ~~a man and a woman~~ two spouses of the same sexuality who are mutually attracted to one another. 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. ~~We support laws in civil society that define marriage as the union of one man and one woman.~~

B. Amend the second and fourth textual paragraphs of ¶ 161.G) to read as follows:

Although all persons are sexual beings whether or not they are married, sexual relations are affirmed only in the covenant of a monogamous, ~~heterosexual~~ marriage between persons of the same sexuality who are mutually attracted to one another.

.....

..... reconciling relationships with God, with others, and with self. The United Methodist Church does not condone ~~the practice of homosexuality~~ homosexual acts and practices by heterosexuals and considers ~~this practice them~~ incompatible with Christian teaching. We affirm that . . . . .

C. Amend ¶ 304.3. as follows:

.....highest standards of holy living in the world. ~~The practice of homosexuality is~~ Homosexual acts or practices by heterosexuals are incompatible with Christian teaching. Therefore, ~~self-avowed practicing homosexuals~~ heterosexual persons engaging in such acts or practices are not to be certified as candidates, ordained as ministers, or appointed to serve in The United Methodist Church.

D. Delete footnote 1. to ¶ 304.3.

E. Amend ¶ 310.2.d) footnote 3 [the third textual paragraph that appears on p. 232 of the printed 2016 *Discipline*] as follows:

The General Conference, in response to expressions throughout the Church regarding homosexuality homosexual acts or practices and ordination, reaffirms . . . . .

F. Amend ¶ 310.2.d) footnote 3 [the last textual paragraph that appears on p. 233 of the printed 2016 *Discipline*] as follows:

In the Social Principles, the General Conference has said that we “do not condone ~~the practice of homosexuality~~ homosexual acts and practices by heterosexuals and consider ~~this practice them~~ 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 ~~a man and a woman~~ two spouses of the same sexuality who are mutually attracted to one another. We believe . . . . .

G. In ¶ 341., delete subparagraph 6.

H. Amend ¶ 613.19. to read as follows:

To ensure that no annual conference board, agency, committee, commission, or council shall ~~give use~~ United Methodist funds to any gay caucus or group, or otherwise use such funds to promote the acceptance of ~~homosexuality~~ homosexual acts or practices by heterosexuals or violate . . . . .

I. Amend ¶ 806.9. to read as follows:

It shall be responsible for ensuring that no board, agency, committee, commission, or council shall ~~give use~~ United Methodist funds to any gay caucus or group, or otherwise use such funds to promote the acceptance of ~~homosexuality~~ homosexual acts or practices by heterosexuals or violate . . . . .

J. Amend subsubparagraph (a) of ¶ 2702.1. to read as follows:

(a) immorality including, but not limited to, not being celibate in singleness or not faithful in a ~~heterosexual~~ marriage;

K. Amend subsubparagraph (b) of ¶ 2702.1. to read as follows:

(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 engaging in sexual acts or practices which are inconsistent with one’s sexuality;~~

#### Rationale:

Our Church doesn’t love people whose attractions to members of their own sexes are innate results of their minority biological sexuality as it loves heterosexual biological majority members. Homosexual biological status is fixed at birth, even if not apparent then.

Thus, we violate the Second Great Commandment. God may punish . . .

**¶304.3.**

Petition Number: 90090-¶304.3-G; Brooks, Lonnie D. - Anchorage, AK, USA.

**Fully Inclusive Way Forward - Qualifications for Ordination - Brooks**

Amend ¶ 304.3 as follows: 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 practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching. Therefore self-avowed practicing homosexuals are not to be certified as candidates, ordained as ministers, or appointed to serve in The United Methodist Church.~~

**Rationale:**

In answer to the call of the gospel for the Church, as the body of Christ, to be fully inclusive of all people, the portions of the *Discipline* that have negative impact on the lives of LGBTQ persons ought to be stricken.

**¶310.2d.**

Petition Number: 90091-¶310.2d-G; Brooks, Lonnie D. - Anchorage, AK, USA.

**Fully Inclusive Way Forward - Candidacy Footnote - Brooks**

Amend ¶ 310.2.d) Footnote 3 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 people a man and a woman. We believe that God’s blessing rests upon such marriage, whether or not there are children of the union.

...

**Rationale:**

In answer to the call of the gospel for the Church, as the body of Christ, to be fully inclusive of all people, the

portions of the *Discipline* that have negative impact on the lives of LGBTQ persons ought to be stricken.

**¶2702.1.**

Petition Number: 90092-¶2702.1-G; Brooks, Lonnie D. - Anchorage, AK, USA.

**Fully Inclusive Way Forward - Chargeable Offenses - Brooks**

Amend ¶ 2702. 1 as follows:

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~~ 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; ...~~

**Rationale:**

In answer to the call of the gospel for the Church, as the body of Christ, to be fully inclusive of all people, the portions of the *Discipline* that have negative impact on the lives of LGBTQ persons ought to be stricken.

**¶47.**

Petition Number: 90093-¶47-C-!-G; Berggren, Ken - Calhoun, KY, USA.

**COB Annual Vote of Confidence Plan #1**

Amend ¶ 47 as follows:

¶ 47. 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 plan for the general oversight and promotion of the temporal and spiritual interests of the entire Church and for carrying into effect 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.

The council shall conduct an annual trial of every bishop. The trial will consist of a statement from the bishop giving reasons that they should hold the office and then a vote of confidence from the council. In years when bishops are elected, these trials shall be conducted after

the last jurisdictional conference and before new bishops are installed. The trials may be conducted electronically through e-mail or other modes of instant communication without the physical presence of all bishops. The support of a three-fourths majority of active bishops on the council will be required to retain the office of bishop. The vote may be immediately appealed verbally, in writing by e-mail or other mode of instant communication by the bishop in question or any other bishop on the council. After the statement of appeal is considered by the active bishops, a second vote of confidence with the same requirements is final.

#### **Rationale:**

This change allows bishops to police themselves. It outlines a simple procedure to express their support for one another. It is called a trial and appeal to avoid conflict with ¶ 20. If a bishop loses support of a significant minority of their colleagues, then removal is warranted.

#### **¶50.**

Petition Number: 90094-¶50-C-G; Berggren, Ken - Calhoun, KY, USA.

#### **COB Annual Vote of Confidence Plan #2**

Amend ¶ 50 as follows:

¶ 50 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 by the jurisdictions of The United Methodist Church shall have life tenure with the approval of the Council of Bishops. Each bishop elected by a central conference of The Methodist Church shall have such tenure as the central conference electing him shall have determined with the approval of the Council of Bishops. The jurisdictional 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 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 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.

#### **Rationale:**

This change makes the approval of the Council of Bishops one of the requirements to remain in the office of bishop. It gives the council the authority to remove a bishop who has broken covenant with their colleagues. If a bishop loses support of a significant minority of their colleagues . . .

#### **¶401.**

Petition Number: 90095-¶401-G; Berggren, Ken - Calhoun, KY, USA.

#### **COB Annual Vote of Confidence Plan #3**

Amend ¶ 401 as follows:

¶ 401. Task—The task of superintending in The United Methodist Church resides in the office of bishop and extends to the district superintendent. . . . The formal leadership in The United Methodist Church, located in these superintending offices, is an integral part of the system of an itinerant ministry and requires the approval of the whole Church expressed in an annual vote of confidence by the Council of Bishops.

#### **Rationale:**

This change adds to the qualifications of a bishop the support of the whole Church which is best expressed by their colleagues on the council. If a bishop loses support of a significant portion of the church, then removal is warranted.

#### **¶413.1**

Petition Number: 90096-¶413.1-G; Berggren, Ken - Calhoun, KY, USA.

#### **COB Annual Vote of Confidence Plan #4**

Amend ¶ 413.1 as follows:

¶ 413. Complaints Against Bishops—1. Episcopal leadership in The United Methodist Church shares with all other ordained persons in the sacred trust of their ordination. The ministry of bishops as set forth in *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church* also flows from the gospel as taught by Jesus the Christ and proclaimed by his apostles (¶ 402). A bishop must maintain the approval and support of colleagues in the Council of

Bishops. Whenever a bishop violates this trust or is unable to fulfill appropriate responsibilities, continuation in the episcopal office shall be subject to review. This review is over and above the annual vote of confidence from the Council of Bishops. 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 of justice, reconciliation, and healing may be realized.

#### **Rationale:**

The proposed vote of confidence by the Council of Bishops is not the same as a "complaint" but can result in the loss of office since, by this proposal, all bishops must maintain the council's approval. If a bishop loses support of a significant minority of their colleagues, then removal . . .

#### **¶2702.2.**

Petition Number: 90097-¶2702.2-G; Berggren, Ken - Calhoun, KY, USA.

#### **COB Annual Vote of Confidence Plan #5**

Amend ¶ 2702.2 as follows:

2. A bishop, clergy member of an annual conference, or diaconal minister may be brought to trial when the appropriate body recommends involuntary termination. The Council of Bishop's annual vote of confidence on every bishop (described in ¶ 47) shall be considered a trial and appeal when it results in an involuntary termination.

#### **Rationale:**

This paragraph clarifies that the proposed vote of confidence by the Council of Bishops can result in the loss of the office of bishop since the process is a trial and appeal. If a bishop loses support of a significant minority of their colleague, then removal is warranted.

#### **¶413.1.**

Petition Number: 90098-¶413.1-!-G; Berggren, Ken - Calhoun, KY, USA.

#### **General Conference Administrative Power**

Amend ¶¶ 413.1 and 501 as follows:

¶ 413. Complaints Against Bishops—1. Episcopal leadership in The United Methodist Church shares with all other ordained persons in the sacred trust of their ordination. The ministry of bishops as set forth in *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church* also flows from the gospel as taught by Jesus the Christ and pro-

claimed by his apostles (¶ 402). Whenever a bishop violates this trust or is unable to fulfill appropriate responsibilities, continuation in the episcopal office shall be subject to review. 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 of justice, reconciliation, and healing may be realized. If the General Conference brings the complaint then the review and resolution will be conducted by the neutral annual conference chosen by the General Conference.

¶ 501. Definition of Powers—The General Conference has full legislative power over all matters distinctively connectional (see ¶ 16, Division Two, Section II, Article IV, The Constitution). It has no executive ~~or~~ but some administrative power. When the General Conference brings a complaint against a bishop, jurisdiction, annual conference or other United Methodist entity, it will also specify a venue for seeking a just resolution by trial or other process in a neutral annual conference within the central conferences. The expense of that process shall be borne by the General Conference.

#### **Rationale:**

This allows the General Conference to hold accountable those UM entities that express defiance to the *Discipline*. Since we cannot get along in the United States, then it is time to seek the help of wiser brothers and sisters in the central conferences which are vibrant.

#### **¶49.**

Petition Number: 90099-¶49-C-!-G; Berggren, Ken - Calhoun, KY, USA.

#### **Jurisdiction to Central Conference Partnerships**

Amend ¶ 49 as follows:

¶ 49. Article V.—The jurisdictions and central conferences shall form partnerships each quadrennium. These partnerships rotate according to a schedule:

2020) West-Congo, North Central-Germany, North-east-West Africa, Southeast-Philippines, South Central-Central and South Europe, Africa-North Europe and Eurasia

2024) West-North Europe and Eurasia, North Central-Congo, Northeast-Germany, Southeast-West Africa, South Central-Philippines, Central and South Europe-Africa

2028) West-Africa, North Central-North Europe and Eurasia, Northeast-Congo, Southeast-Germany, South Central-West Africa, Philippines-Central and South Europe

2032) West-Central and South Europe, North Central-Africa, Northeast-North Europe and Eurasia, Southeast-Congo, South Central-Germany, West Africa-Philippines

2036) West-Philippines, North Central-Central and South Europe, Northeast-Africa, Southeast-North Europe and Eurasia, South Central-Congo, Germany-West Africa

2040) West-West Africa, North Central-Philippines, Northeast-Central and South Europe, Southeast-Africa, South Central-North Europe and Eurasia, Congo-Germany

2044) West-Germany, North Central-West Africa, Northeast-Philippines, Southeast-Central and South Europe, South Central-Africa, North Europe and Eurasia-Congo

Bishops elected in a jurisdictional conference shall be sent to their central conference partner and bishops elected in the central conference will be sent to their jurisdictional partner unless they are not partnered with a jurisdiction. Central conferences without a jurisdictional partner may partner with the other non-aligned conference, or they may elect their own bishops.

The jurisdictional conferences shall meet at the same time as their partnered central conference maintaining connections through e-mails and other forms of instant communication such as video conferencing through the Internet. The jurisdiction will carry the burden of the cost of these electronic connections.

The bishops shall have residential and presidential supervision in the jurisdictional or central conferences in which they are elected or to which they are sent or to which they are transferred. Bishops may be transferred from one jurisdiction 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 that receives a bishop by transfer from another jurisdiction may transfer to that jurisdiction or to a third jurisdiction one of its own bishops eligible for

transfer, so that the number transferred in by each jurisdiction shall be balanced by the number transferred out; or (b) a jurisdiction may receive a bishop from another jurisdiction 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 served one quadrennium in the jurisdiction that elected or received 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 committees on episcopacy of the jurisdictions 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 conference.

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

In the case of an emergency in any jurisdiction or central 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 conference to the work of the said jurisdiction or central conference, with the consent of a majority of the bishops of that jurisdiction or central conference.

#### **Rationale:**

Partnerships strengthen connections within the global church. Bishops would be missionaries, apostles, cross-cultural ministers. A process similar to COWF would result as conservatives learn to deal with progressive leadership and progressives engage thoughtful, passionate traditionalists. We say unity is valuable. These partnerships prove we mean it.

## Notes



## Notes

